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**Early** 

voting

begins

The 2020 General Elec-

On Saturday, Hamtramck

City Clerk August Gitschlag

mailed out absentee bal-

lots to those who asked for them - over 4,600.

Hamtramck isn't the only

The state Secretary of

Office is reporting that 2.5

city experiencing heavy ab-

sentee ballot (AV) voting.

**By Charles Sercombe** 

tion is now in motion.



### **Quick Hits**

### What's the way forward?

By Alan Madlane

SEMCOG, the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments, took a recent open survey of area residents' opinions on balancing the local government budgets, including when under duress.

The results have shown what we focus on as priorities in a post-COVID economy.

Asked what area residents valued most in their community, answers were "a safe place to live" - which may strike some as incongruous, given later results about public safety - and sound "infrastructure.'

Younger respondents were more varied in their answers to this question, also valuing "diversity," "quality public transportation" and "quality walking/biking infrastructure."

Asked then what services should be prioritized for funding, the top responses reverted to "schools" and "fire and police services."

Notable perhaps in their absence are once highly-valued libraries.

Fire services, quality water service and schools were again mentioned as things few respondents wanted to

### — HAMTRAMCK'S NEWSPAPER OF RECORD —

# Non-profit organization meets the needs of many in our community

By Alan Madlane

Emina Ferizovic is the founder of the Hamtramck non-profit relief center J&E Community Relief (located at 11816 Jos. Campau Ave). We asked her a few questions by email about her non-profit.

The Review: So let's start with you. Are you sole administrator of the nonprofit, or are there others that should also be mentioned? What was the impetus behind creating the non-profit? When did you open your doors? Ferizovic: I'm the founder

of J&E Community Relief. However, our vice president Sabiha Trokic, our amazing board members and our hard-working volunteers are who keep J&E Community Relief going.

In 1996, at age 12, I came to Hamtramck - as a refugee from Bosnia. I have always felt the need to give back to this community, and help those in



J&E Community Relief has grown from a grassroots organization to one that provides several services to the community - including much needed food giveaways. Photo supplied by J&E Community Relief.

J&E Community Relief was born in August of 2018; we opened a very small food pantry. Sejla Basic was our first donor, who came to us with a car full of nonperishable food. We split the food into 10 separate packages that were then delivered to our first 10 clients.

are feeding over 5,000 board and I were all new to

individuals monthly, and providing weekly hot meals every Sunday to 260 homeless mothers and children.

The Review: Did anyone have any experience running a non-profit before this? Was it the same type, or different? How many years, and where?

Now, two years later, we Ferizovic: No, my entire

this experience.

I wanted a diverse board that was willing to do their own research, and bring to the table all the problems our community was facing.

After collecting data, and reaching out to our community through social media, we discovered that many families were facing food insecurity. Teen

**Continued on page 4** 

#### million AV ballots have already been requested - a whopping 350 percent increase compared to this time in the 2016 presidential election. At the rate it's going, this

presidential election, Nov. 3, is going to top the 2016 turnout when over 6,200 Hamtramck voters participated.

Early voting nationwide has also been extremely popular.

Voters across the country are being urged to vote by absentee because of the ongoing COVID-19 outbreak.

The ballot this year is lengthy, as is usual for a presidential election, as it will include various judgeships, the race for US Senator, in which Gary Peters (D) is the incumbent, three local ballot proposals and four seats on the school board.

If you wish to vote by absentee ballot, you have plenty of time, although voters are being urged to return the ballots as soon as possible because of the ongoing slowdown of mail delivery.

"Voting absentee is a safe and secure option,

Continued on page 4

# Advocate for city charter proposals explains his position

**By Charles Sercombe** 

Hamtramck's ballot proposals (1 and 2) ask voters whether they want to eliminate the city charter sections that establish the police and fire departments, along with each department's chiefs.

If voters agree to this change in the charter, the city council would be given authority to come up with an alternative way to provide those services.



**Scott Klein** 

proposals have stirred vigorous debate in the community - which is mostly being played out on social media.

This week, we asked the person behind a website (Keep Hamtramck Safe, which can be found at www.mimaps.org) dedicated to promoting "yes" votes on the proposals, Scott Klein, to explain his position.

Klein is a former resident, city councilmember and member of a nowdefunct City Charter Commission, which delivered the current city charter.

Next week, a representative from the Hamtramck Firefighters union will have his turn to explain the firefighters' opposition to the proposals.

### Review: What is the purpose of your website?

Klein: The purpose of website, www.mi-

Continued on page 2



# **Coping with COVID-19**

**Take breaks** from the news



Take care of your body

Make time to unwind

Set goals

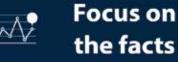
and priorities







**Connect with** others



### Advocate for city charter proposals explains his position Cont. from front page

maps.org, is to offer a reasoned, sensible, and rational voice that is often lacking in debates around public safety, a voice that otherwise would have been absent as voters consider Hamtramck's future.

#### Review: Why are you concerned about a Hamtramck charter revision issue?

Klein: I've been involved in Hamtramck politics and

elections for nearly 25 years. I served on both the Hamtramck Charter Commission in 2002, and on City Council from 2003 until 2010.

I am heavily invested in the success of Hamtramck, which includes finding solutions that keep Hamtramck solvent. This ballot measure very much speaks to solvency.

Review: Are you being paid to work on this web-

### site? If so, by whom?

Klein: Beginning with Preserve Our Park's campaign to save the ball field at Veterans Park the first time, in 1996, I have always volunteered my time because I believe in Hamtramck.

There is support for passing the charter amendments. What is lacking are people willing to step forward and speak in opposition to the status quo, because they know how mean and nasty campaigns can be in Hamtramck.

This certainly continues to be a deterrent to civil engagement in the city. This creates a space for someone like me who has been maligned over the years, sometimes rightly and sometimes not. Obviously, I have pretty thick skin.

#### Review: What would you like to see happen with providing police and fire services? Is there more than one alternative you have in mind?

Klein: There is a strong argument for replacing the sections of the charter with an ordinance. I expect the city manager's administration, which has shown itself to be both careful and conservative, to approach any change cautiously.

What would be in order is a study group appointed by the city manager, which would include residents and stake holders to make recommendations on ways to move forward. Based on that report, the city manager could make recommendations and craft an ordinance governing public safety in Hamtramck going forward.

### **Review: How will the city** save money by adopting a different way of providing police/fire services?

Klein: It depends on the changes ultimately recommended by the city manager, and what the council adopts. There is a ceiling, somewhere in the million-dollar range, that can be reached without effecting the quality of service provided.

Review: If a public safety department is one



### City of Hamtramck Notice of Public Hearing **City Council**

The City of Hamtramck City Council will conduct a public hearing on Tuesday, October 20, 2020 at 7:00pm via Zoom and streaming live on the city's Facebook page

(https://www.facebook.com/CityofHamtramck/) due to the inability to gather in person because of COVID-19 concerns. The public is invited to virtually attend and comment or to make written comments before the date of the hearing. Address written comments to Alex Iseri, 3401 Evaline St., Hamtramck, MI 48212. Information about how to log on to the Zoom meeting can be found at Hamtramck.us or by calling Alex Iseri at (313) 800-5233 ext. 316.

The subject of the hearing is:

Approval for a new Industrial Facilities Tax Exemption certificate for J.A.S. Investments LLC, 8800 Conant

Please note: This notice is posted in compliance with PA 267 of 1976 as amended (Open Meetings Act), MCLA 41.71 a (2) (3) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The City of Hamtramck will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services, such as signers for the hearing impaired and audio tapes of printed materials being considered at the Meeting to Individuals with disabilities at the Meeting or Public Hearing upon 10 day notice to the City Clerk's Office. Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the Hamtramck City Clerk by writing or calling the Clerk's Office at 313-800-5233 x. 342



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হ্যামট্রামিক হাউসিং কমিশন (এইচ্ এইচ্ এস্) বর্ণ, গোত্র, ধর্ম , জাতীয় উৎস, লিঙ্গ, বিকলাঙ্গ বা পারিবারিক অবস্থানের ভিত্তিতে কারেও অবজ্ঞা করেনা । সেকশান ৩ এর যোগ্যতাসম্পন্ন আগ্রহীদের র্ািমেঁফ.মড়া এ নিবন্ধন কর্তে অনুরোধ করা যাচেছ ।



Hamtramck Housing Commission (HHC) does not discriminate on the alternative, that approach seems to have a negative reputation, and some communities that tried that have even switched back to having separate police and fire departments. How do you respond to this?

Klein: I do not remember anyone in city government saying public safety department is what will happen when the proposal passes, other than voices in support of the status quo.

This campaign is saying is its time to start the discussion on how public safety is delivered in Hamtramck going forward. The only way to have that discussion is to vote yes.

#### **Review: Would residents** still get the services they are used to?

Klein: Yes. Nothing in the proposal will prevent Hamtramck from continuing to provide public safety services from the day it passes. Anyone who says different is just trying to scare people, which is what happens around this sort of issue.

Fear works, and that's why opponents of this proposal are engaging in fear mongering instead of presenting their own vision of how public safety can be reformed.

#### Review: What are some misconceptions about changing the charter as proposed?

Klein: There is no legal requirement that public safety departments be included in the city charter. Excluding public safety departments from the charter does not mean that the departments would disband. In fact, other than the position of

city manager, the rational for including any department head in the city charter is questionable.

Review: The reaction from people on social media has been largely in opposition to these charter revisions. What would you say to those folks?

Klein: Vote. There are 13,164 registered voters in Hamtramck.

#### Review: Anything else you would like to add or comment on?

Klein: Currently, Hamtramck subsidizes the Detroit Fire Department. Hamtramck firefighters are paid more than Detroit pays their firefight-

The vast majority of fire runs Hamtramck preforms are responding to Detroit calls. Last year, Hamtramck reported an average of two calls in the city every month. The rest of the calls in a month are for fires in Highland Park and Detroit. There's nothing wrong with that, we all are better off when we work together.

The best question to ask is, are you getting the best value for your tax dollars under the current arrangement, which benefits Detroit more than it does Hamtramck? They (Detroit) get an extra firehouse full of highly paid firefighters for free.

And if you agree that this is not the best value, the only way to replace the status quo is to vote "yes" on proposals 1 and

Any individual able to medically tolerate a face covering

### must wear a covering over his or her nose and mouth

such as a homemade mask, scarf, bandana, or handkerchief

when in any enclosed public space.





# This week at the library

### The Hamtramck Public Library is open!

The following limited services are now available: Limited Walk-ins: (Ten persons at a time) Book drop-off and pick-up. Copying, Printing, and Faxing Computers are available by appointment only. Please call (313)733-6822.

Send attachments for printing to: hamtramcklibrary@gmail.com Search the online catalog for a book you want. Stop in and we will fetch it for you, or call us, and we will set it aside for you! Wear a mask and practice social distancing to keep us all safe.

Take a well-deserved break and ask someone to read to you! Check out audiobooks at the library!

On our website, click on "Catalog." In the "Search" area, type in "audiobooks." On the left side, you will see a list of libraries. Click "Show more" until Hamtramck Library shows up. We have over 350 audiobook titles to choose from.

Alternatively, in the list on the left side, click on "Collection" and then click on "audiobook collection." A list of 20,066 titles will appear!

Place your desired title on hold, and a few days later, you can pick up your audiobook here, take a break, and start listening! There are also a number of ESL audiobooks available if you are learning English. It's a great way to improve your English skills.

In The Review last week, Robert Przygocki was featured in a front-page article. We wish to feature him here as a way of thanking him for his consistent and generous support of the Hamtramck Library over the past twenty years or so.

### THANK YOU, ROBERT PRZYGOCKI!

You are a true library hero.

For more information about events at the library call (313) 733-6822, or visit its website at http://hamtramck.lib.mi.us where you can also access the online catalog. The library is located at 2360 Caniff.

# Second Front Page

# Virus update: State offers free college for essential workers

**By Alan Madlane** 

Michigan has become the first state in the union to offer some frontline workers, from the CO-VID-19 pandemic crisis, tuition-free college.

In a program modeled after the old GI Bill which among other things helped soldiers returning from World War II pursue college degrees tuitionfree - Michigan's program, dubbed "Futures for Frontliners," offers adults who do not already have a college degree (or even a high school diploma) a free option to do so.

The program is for not only medical personnel (many of whom will obviously already have a degree), but more pointedly for workers in manufacturing, nursing homes, grocery stores, retail, delivery jobs, and sanitation, among others.

Among those listed as championing the effort - and it is unclear whether that involves contributing financially to it - are listed 32 state business associations, among them the Small

Michigan, Business Leaders for Michigan, and others; eight major corporations (Consumers Energy and DTE; Kroger, Target, Meijer and Walmart; and Home Depot and Lowe's); 13 AFL-CIO branches and seven other unions; and three dozen named state legislators.

To be eligible for the

program, applicants must fulfill the following requirements: Be a Michigan resident; have worked in a designated "essential industry" at least parttime for a minimum of 11 of the 13 weeks between April 1 and June 30 of this year; have been required by their jobs to work outside their homes at least some of the time between those same dates; not have previously earned an associate or bachelor's degree; not be currently in default on a federal student loan; and complete an application (called a Futures for Frontliners scholarship ap) by the last day of this year.

Go to Michigan.gov/

Business Association of Frontliners for more info.

In a second bit of coronavirus related news, the governor has authorized a return of the returns.

We're talking about returnable bottles here. and the fact that, beginning on Oct. 5, there will be a Phase 2 put into play about the bottle return process for the state.

beginning Basically, on that date, any facility that accepts returns and uses "reverse vending machine"-style returns think those big blue machines in the lobbies of most grocery store chains - must reopen those machines, using any or all of the following guidelines as they see fit (other places that use in-person collection may open, at their own discretion):

The limit is still \$25 worth of bottles and cans per person, as per prior state law; places may choose to limit or expand hours of collection; limit the number of machines they put back into operation; periodically close the machines for cleaning and supply management;

and/or implement other procedures or restrictions as necessary "to promote safety, efficiency, or both."

This essentially returns this process to its pre-closure operational procedures, with added discretion for stores to dictate when they close for extra cleaning, in particular.

If you don't want to return your cans and bottles, the state urges you to instead recycle them.

If you do, the state is supposed to receive 75% of the monies automatically deposited into the Cleanup and Redevelopment Trust Fund, while the other 25% is returned to the retailers.

For more info, go to Michigan.gov, and under the Treasury Department find the "Notice Regarding Phase 2 of Michigan's Re-Established Bottle Deposit Returns. Finally, we have newly handed-down Executive Orders 2020-183, -184 and -185 from September 25, the first of which at least should, for the most part, be a peo-

Continued on page 8



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A complete list of safety guidelines will be provided October 4 - Sunday Mass at 9:00 am

October 10 - Soup Kitchen (For Take-out only) 2-4 pm. Everyone welcome! October 17 - Drive-Thru/Take-out Polish Dinner, Cash only - \$10 Adult / \$5 Child 12 & Under Mask to be worn for pick-up

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- Full Sports Program
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- AP Honor Roll Recipient
- Art, Music, Band
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- Intervention System (PBIS)

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- CTE Program
- Virtual Learning Programs



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**Dickinson West** 

**Dickinson East** Elementary 3385 Norwalk (313) 873-9437 K - 6th Grades

K - 6th Grades

**Early Childhood** Elementary

11680 McDougall (313) 891-3200 Pre K - 2nd Grades

> Holbrook Elementary 2361 Alice

(313) 872-3203 K - 8th Grades

Tau Beta School 3056 Hanley

(313) 892-3811 K - 8th Grades

Kosciuszko Middle School

2333 Burger (313) 365-4625 7th - 8th Grades

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### Non-profit organization meets the needs of many in our community

#### **Continued from front page**

moms were struggling to provide clothing and other necessities for their newborn babies, and some parents couldn't afford to prepare their children for a new school year.

So this is what we decided to tackle first. Each volunteer and board member would use his or her personal Facebook page explain to their followers what we were doing, and ask for donations.

Donations of food and baby clothing started pouring in. Only three weeks after we opened our doors, we held our first Back-to-School and Mom-To-Mom events.

Hundreds of students received new backpacks filled with school supplies. We received so much baby clothing, that after taking care of all the local moms who reached out to us for help, we found ourselves delivering packages also to moms in Dearborn, Highland Park, Melvindale, Allen Park; even mailing packages to Grand Rapids.

The Review: So, J & E Community Relief, come into being in August of 2018. Where are you located, and why did you choose that location? Are you renting the space, or did you buy the building? Do you still get most of the items by donation alone, or in other ways now as well?

Ferizovic: We are located at 11816 Joseph Campau Ave. in Hamtramck. With the help of our sponsors, we are able to rent our facility, with a goal of purchasing this building in the future.

Gleaners Community
Food Bank is where we
purchase most of our
food. Gleaners' free aisle
is a huge help – in the
months where we don't
raise enough money for
food purchases, those free
items help out a lot.

A local food distributor – UBC Food Distributors in Dearborn – has been very generous; they have donated thousands of pounds of food to us so far. During this COVID-19 crisis, Farmers to Families Food Box Program and Tom Maceri & Son have each reached out, and together have donated close to 3,000 boxes of fresh produce over the past three months.

The Review: How do you choose what items to put out on the floor; what's your criteria for inclusion? What will you do with any unwanted stuff after a period of time – particularly perishables? How long is that period of time usually, before you deal with unwanted items?

Ferizovic: We choose items based on our clients' needs.

By having a diverse board, we are able to include and communicate to everyone, including many clients who do not speak English.

We also work closely with a remarkable group



**Emina Ferizovic** 

of women from Eastern Michigan University's Center for Health Disparities Innovation and Studies. They provide material for our clients in three different languages: English, Arabic and Bangla.

Rachel Bessire and Sarah Lally from the center go out of their way to help our clients understand the importance of good nutrition, healthy lifestyles, and how to reduce the risk of chronic diseases.

# The Review: What are the center's hours? How did you decide on them?

Ferizovic: COVID-19 has forced us to reduce our hours. Food distribution is currently occurring only twice a month, every first and third Tuesday of each month at 10:30 a.m.

We do our best to provide enough food to last our clients for two weeks. Other events are scheduled separately, and are announced on our Facebook page, J&E Community Relief, and also on our Instagram page (JECR. US). We recently had our

Back-to-School event, and our Mom-To-Mom one is coming up mid-November.

The Review: Your nonprofit is a bit unusual, in that you also have food items, in addition to nonfood ones. What percentage of what you give away is food, versus nonfood, approximately? Are there any special considerations when you are dealing with food, such as pest control?

Ferizovic: Before we could partner up with Gleaners Community Food Bank, we were required to take a course to learn how to safely handle food.

We've had multiple inspections; our building is sprayed every six months for pest control. The temperatures in our refrigerator and freezer are checked weekly. The safety of our clients is our number one priority.

Sixty percent of the assistance we provide is related to food. We are now branching out, bringing in other services and resources.

In December of 2019, we added a youth center that included a book club, homework club, many different workshops (for example, one called "The Journey to Self Confidence"), and an art class.

In March of 2020, we were forced to close down due to the pandemic, but we will be restarting these programs as soon as it is safe enough for

children and young adults to gather again.

The Review: Do you have any plans to open any other similar non-profits if this one keeps doing well? Where would you go?

Ferizovic: At this time we do not have a plan to open a similar non-profit. Our goal is to grow this organization. We want to focus on being a place that will empower adults and children, and help them prepare for a better future.

### The Review: Can people help in other ways?

Ferizovic: People can help by making donations to us, or by volunteering.

The Review: Other than your Facebook page, how do you get word out to people that you exist, and does that seem to be working so far?

Ferizovic: It looks like you also post other help-

ful community info on your Facebook page too, such as the notice about the free online breastfeeding classes put on by Wayne County Health Communities and the Eastern Michigan University REACH Project. So, people should check your Facebook page regularly for all types of community help news, right?

Ferizovic: Our Facebook and Instagram pages are how we reach most of our clients.

We want to create a longterm solution for our neighbors in need. Teaming up with other organizations has helped us bring useful resources, educational materials and employment opportunities to those clients.

And yes, community members should check out our page often for upcoming events, as well as for any job openings that are available through Sentech Services.

# Early voting begins

### Continued from front page

and I encourage all voters who have requested a ballot to fill it out, sign the back of the envelope, and return it as soon as possible by mailing it or hand-delivering it to their clerk's office or drop box," said Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson in a recent press release.

"Voters can be confident that, in Michigan, all correctly submitted absentee ballots will be counted."

You can also register to

vote on the day of the election at the Hamtramck City Clerk's Office. To do so you must have a Michigan ID, and bring one document proving residency, including name and address, in either digital or paper form. Acceptable documents include:

- Current utility bill
- Bank statement
- Paycheck or government check
- Other government document



effort.

### From the Superintendent In her latest message on

Facebook, Superintendet Jaleelah Ahmed had this to say:

The email from a par-

ent at Berkley High School made my month!

While it is essential that we always want our students to aim high, work hard as they build their character, it is important that they know that manners MATTER when things go their way and when things don't go their way.

It is also important that they know how to lose, that they understand defeat, that they embrace these challenges as much as they savor the moments of success. Sometimes the biggest lessons are when we lose. I am very proud of our COSMOS, Mr. Anderson and all of our amazing coaches. The following is the email that I received from the parent:

"My son plays soccer for

the Berkley High School Varsity team. Last night, the Hamtramck team played at our field and suffered a 5-0 loss.

"I wanted to take a quick

fered a 5-0 loss.

"I wanted to take a quick moment to share with you how impressed our parents were with your boys' behavior and attitudes. Your boys played hard the entire game and exhibited

great sportsmanship and

attitudes, despite a losing

"Soccer is a physical game and when BHS players were knocked down, your players were the first to offer a hand to help them up. When BHS players were issued (deserved) yellow cards, your players didn't mock and applaud (like we've seen from other schools), they simply took the ball to the spot for a restart of the game.

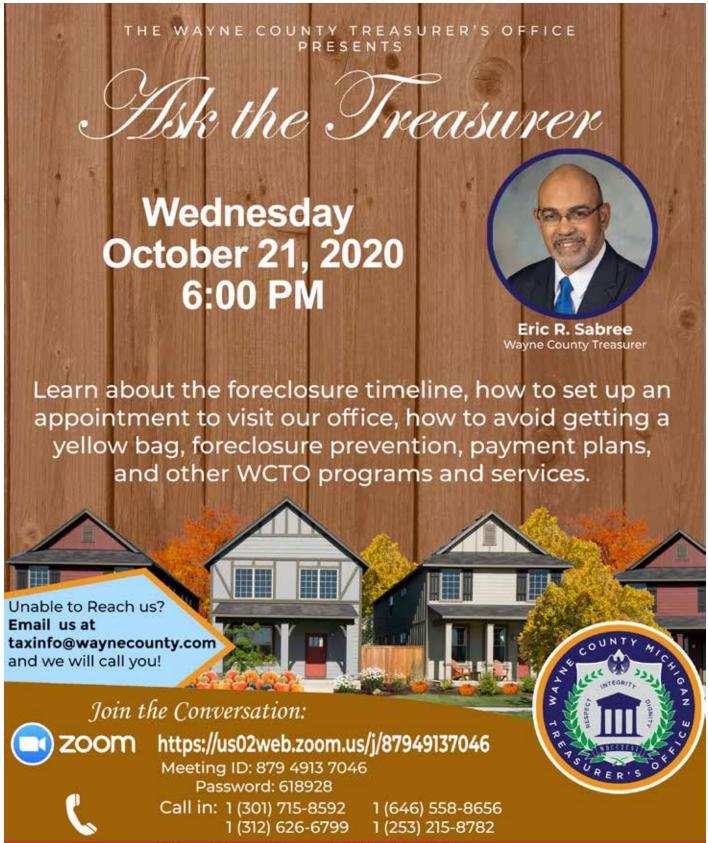
"When BHS scored"

against your team, your boys didn't pass blame to each other and get upset (like we've seen from other schools), they simply grabbed the ball and ran to the center line to kickoff, offering support and a positive comments to each other saying, 'Let's get it back.'

"After the game, our par-

ents typically wait outside the gate to gather our boys to head home. Your team came out first to head to the bus and most of us said, 'Good game boys,' your guys were appreciative, said 'thank you' and 'take care.'

"As you are aware, high school boys' behavior can be ugly at times. Please know how well your Varsity Soccer Team represented your school and district last night. Fine young men!!"



Wayne County Treasurer's Office- Eric R. Sabree

Treasurer.waynecounty.com

WCTOCommunity@waynecounty.com | (313) 224-5990

400 Monroe Street 5th Floor Detroit, MI 48226

# Review: Opinion Page

# In Our Opinion

# Sewer line repairs still have a long way to go

Hamtramck's struggle to fix its ailing sewer system continues to inch forward.

The city council recently OK'd spending \$4.9 million from the water department's budget to begin the next phase of improvements.

While this action is needed and appreciated, Hamtramck still has a long way to go.

As in, multi-millions of dollars in improvements a staggering sum that no one can say will ever be raised. The city is like many other older inner-city communities: we have a number of infrastructure issues that have long been neglect-

You can blame past

elected officials, but there was little they could have done because these repairs – to our streets and water and sewer lines would have always cost huge sums of money. Few cities can afford it.

There is one group of folks we can squarely blame: Voters.

Back in the 1950s, Hamtramck voters were asked to adopt a special property tax millage to hook up to a sewer line running underneath Conant that would have solved most of our backup issues when heavy rains can cause flooding.

But voters, for whatever reasons, rejected that opportunity.

Those who followed them have been paying city administrations and for that missed opportunity. Many households have had to contend with cleaning out raw sewage from their basements a task that is expensive and unpleasant.

There really is only one funding source left that the city can turn to: the federal government.

Hamtramck cannot afford these needed improvements, but the federal government diverts a lot of our tax revenue to funding a bloated military budget.

For a fraction of what we dump into the military, Hamtramck and many other cities could make the improvements that they need.

America needs to re-examine its priorities, and invest beck into itself.

# Other Voices: Guest Editorial

### To our family, friends and neighbors in Hamtramck

"This election occurs in a time of global pandemic, a time when there is hardship, sickness, suffering and death. But this election also occurs in a time of great divisions that are deep, dangerous and potentially injurious to Democracy. "

(Bishop Michael Curry, Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church in Amer-

By Anita and Gary Sagan-

Casting a ballot that counts in the November 3rd Election has become a critical and challenging act for so many people in our country. As citizens who want to cast a ballot that is counted, we must think hard about what is the safest way to vote as well as what is the most effective way to get our Ballot to our City Clerk's Office in time to be counted.

Well over 50% of voters in Michigan have expressed a desire to Vote by Mail with an Absentee Ballot in the November Election. In the August Primaries this year, the number of Absentee Ballots was overwhelming! So many people in our city and our state want to avoid long lines, closely gathered crowds and accept the wisdom of wearing a mask to save lives.

Yet, over 10,000 votes were not counted in the August Primaries because of postal delays ... they did not arrive in time to be counted. These will be precious votes in November; how can make sure that all votes cast will be counted?

Last week, a Michigan judge ruled that a Ballot postmarked by Nov 2 and received within 2 weeks of the election must be counted. In her decision, the Judge confirmed that she was presented with convincing information that the USPS has been compromised by federal level management practices that have resulted in a notable slowing down in the delivery of mail, of Absentee Ballots and of medicine.

HOWEVER, the Michigan GOP has appealed this ruling and it is possible it will be overturned. It seems wise, therefore to make sure each of our ballots arrives by 8 p.m., Nov. 3rd,

The GOP controlled Legislature has also delayed hearings and rulings for months on requests that simply give local election officials the time and resources to honestly take in and process the overwhelming number of Absentee Ballots that will ar-

rive in their offices in this

2020.

historical 2020 Election. Much more time is needed to properly process an Absentee Ballot compared to a Ballot cast at a Polling Precinct on Nov. 3rd. Recently the Senate granted one day (Nov 2nd) for Election Workers to process Absentee Ballots so that they could be more quickly be tabulated on Election Day. (City Clerks state wide had asked for 5 days.)

Hopefully the State House will support this measure as well. What we need is a State Legislature that believes in the integrity of our State Election Officials and Workers and give them reasonable time and resources so that every honest ballot cast will

(Anita and Gary Saganski are Hamtramck residents.)

So, I thought that we

would all be united to fight

a brutal enemy that already

took the lives of more than

200,000 Americans - re-

gardless of their age, col-

or, or place of residence,

much less their certificate

Following the orders of

the Michigan governor, I

closed my office, and kept

watching the daily briefings

of the state and federal

officials, in full confidence

that we are the country of

science, and sooner not

later we will find a way to

conquer that invisible en-

At least, that's what the

daily briefings of Andrew

Cuomo, governor of New

York, and Gov. Gretchen

Whitmer of Michigan in-

But, instead, I saw the

presidential administration

work in denial against ev-

ery effort doctors and sci-

entists were doing to con-

Even wearing a mask

became so politicized, dig-

ging more deeply into the

trench dividing the country,

with calls to liberate the

states that mandate the

minimal guidelines to stop

LIBERATE MICHIGAN!!!

Then we saw the tele-

the spread of the virus.

tain the pandemic.

emy, united together.

spired in me.

of naturalization.

be counted.

discrimination.

# Odds & Ends

Free detectors... Na-Fire Prevention Week is Oct. 4-10, and the Hamtramck Fire Department is spreading the word by offering free smoke detectors.

The department has about 200 to give away, and about 100 batteries to go with them.

Unfortunately, in this era of COVID, the department can't come out to your house or apartment this year to install them.

The department also reminded the public that most household start in the kitchen. Why there? A lot of folks will start cooking, and then get distracted, and leave the kitchen while something is still cooking.

Before you know it, a

fire erupts and spreads very quickly.

By having a detector near the kitchen, you can prevent a fire from spreading even further. To get one, all you have to do is pick it up at the fire station.

Call the department at (313) 305-4503 for more information and to schedule a pick-up.

### A warning about what could happen here and south, with no political

By Sami Bilani

Don't let the Lebanese civil war repeat itself in America.

In September 1991, I moved to the United States with my pregnant wife and 4-year-old son Sany.

The civil war in Lebanon was already over. Lebanon lost over 200,000 lives in a devastating self-destructive war that continued for 15 years. The population of Lebanon was a little bit more than four million when the war started.

Comparing both US and Lebanese populations, 200,000 Lebanese lives is equivalent by percentage number to over 16 million Americans if, God forbid, the US experienced what Lebanon suffered.

Besides the economic reasons to move out of Lebanon, my wife and I didn't want our children to go through what we went through. We believed that the US is the real democracy of the world, and its constitution protects all human rights, and there is no way on earth the US will even come close to any conflict between its own people.

In 1995, I graduated from New York University College of Dentistry, moved with my wife and two sons to Michigan, and opened my own dental practice in the city of Hamtramck, where I am still practicing

Things started changing after the 2016 election. The normal political disagreements between people started turning into

hate and disgrace. Hamtramck is a very diverse city.

When you walk in the streets you will hear every accent you can imagine. Otherwise, it's like Babylon where everyone uses their own native languages. But we all loved it and never had any problem with it.

It's like a multicultural place where you learn something new every day. Isn't that what America is about? Isn't that why I moved my family here - to be away from lethal political or religious conflicts? Isn't that why I taught my children to love America: because of its diversity, which made it the land of opportunities?

Why do we discriminate now between people who have an accent and people who don't? If this is a real American and this is not, where does my family be-

I still speak English with an accent, but my two sons don't. So, if my wife and I are naturalized Americans, but with an accent, while my younger son is an American by birth with no accent, where would my older son belong, being a naturalized citizen with no accent?

Bad memories of the divided Lebanese society started looming over my thoughts. I kept brushing them away, in disbelief that this is happening in America. But the thoughts and the nightmares kept coming, reminding me of how the Lebanese civil war started.

Then COVID-19 made it

It hit our shores early

this year: east, west, north

even worse.

Seriously?

vision footage of men, armed with guns, attacking the capitol in Lansing. Heavily-armed men with no official status attacked the capitol because the governor insisted on applying science and following data trying to save the lives of Continued on page 8

# Crime Watch:

### Detroit takes the lead in battling whippets

### **By Charles Sercombe**

You can file this one as kind of a crime, and kind of not.

One thing it is for sure, communities are increasingly finding out, is a nui-

Last year we reported on the phenomenon of clubgoing young adults - and teens - getting high off what's commonly called "whippets."

Whippets are small metal containers - the size of a large bullet – that contain nitrous oxide gas. Abusers

then tap into them, and inhale the gas, getting high for a few moments.

They are normally used in whipped cream cannisters as a propellent.

Whippets are readily available at gas stations, markets, and, of course online – including on Ama-

It is not illegal to sell them, but underage folks are not supposed to buy

Anyway, the thing about those little containers is that, once they are used,

they are discarded. You can seem them in the city-owned parking lot on Caniff, or anywhere on the streets throughout town.

While this has been a problem in Hamtramck for awhile, it appears other cities are just now becoming aware of them - especially in southwest Detroit.

The online news publication Deadline Detroit recently reported on an effort in southwest Detroit to make folks more aware of the problem.

Continued on page 8

### The Hamtramck Review Published every Friday

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# ()bituaries

### SUWALKOWSKI



Sandra Ann Suwalkowski, 69, died September 26, 2020.

Sandra Ann Suwalkowski of Hamtramck, was granted her Angel Wings on September 26, as she was surrounded by her family. She was born on August 7, 1951, to Bruno and Anna Gasiewski (deceased). She was the beloved wife of Joseph J. Suwalkowski Jr.; loving mother to Joey (Maggie), Becky, and the late Renee; cherished grandmother to Olivia and Josephine. Sandy is also survived by her eldest brother, Chris (Dell), Stanley; twin sister, Susie Gasiewski; brother in laws, Jim and Larry (Ann) Suwalkowski.

A memorial Mass will be scheduled for a later

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made in Sandra's name to the Capuchin Soup Kitchen, 1820 Mt. Elliott St., Detroit, MI



# **Coming Events**

SATURDAY, Oct. 10, 2-4 p.m. - Take-out Soup Kitchen at Holy Cross P. N.C. Church, 2311 Pulaski at Fleming. Everyone Welcome.

**SATURDAY, Oct. 17, 4-6 p.m.** – Drive-thru/Takeout Polish Dinner at Holy Cross P.N.C. Church, 2311 Pulaski at Fleming. Cash only: \$10 Adult/\$5 Child 12 & under. Menu: Porkchop, Kielbasa, Pierogi/ sour cream, Sauerkraut, Mashed potatoes/gravy, Dessert. Cars will be staged in parking lot for delivery in front of church. Masks to be worn for pick-up.

### Dedication ceremony held for new baseball field

**By Charles Sercombe** 

Legendary baseball player Norman "Turkey" Stearnes finally had his homecoming at Hamtramck's historic baseball stadium.

Unfortunately, he died back in 1979.

But his two daughters were on hand to witness the official dedication of the stadium's field which has been named in Stearnes' honor - on Tuesday afternoon.

Stearnes was of the old Negro baseball league back in the 1930s, and played with the Detroit Stars at the Hamtramck Baseball Stadium, which was built in 1930 and is one of only a handful of such stadiums still standing.

The stadium is undergoing a massive multimillion-dollar renovation, including a newly installed infield.

Mike Williams, President of the Friends of Historic Hamtramck Stadium, an organization that has been key in unearthing the historical importance of the site, said that the transformation of the stadium would make the former Negro league players "proud."

Ahmed. Jaleelah the Superintendent of the Hamtramck Public School District, said the stadium serves as a "symbol of determination" for black players overcoming prejudice, and making their own mark in this country.

The Negro league existed at a time when the all-white major leagues barred African-American players. It wasn't until the 1940s that the color line was broken in the major leagues.

Scenes from the dedication ceremony held at Hamtramck's historic baseball stadium. The field was officially named in honor of legendary baseball player Norman "Turkey" Stearnes. Upper right: Stearnes' daughters and grand-daughter were given honorary baseball jerseys.







# **Quick Hits**

Cont. from front page

see any cuts made in. Public service, doubt in light of recent controversies, was a bit thornier, with four percent wanting to defund departments totally, and another 17 percent suggesting that "budget cuts should be considered," according to the SEMCOG news release.

people wanted to see any cuts made even in the almost certain event of a budgetary shortfall, which is almost certainly an unrealistic

About 25 percent of the responses came from local government officials.

SEMCOG Executive Director Kathleen Lomako thanked everyone who participated in the survey.

"These results will be help for local governments moving forward in an uncertain environment," she said. "The results are also important as we work on the region's next Economic Development Strategy."

A Michigan-based 501 non-profit called Cobalt Community Research prepared the results.



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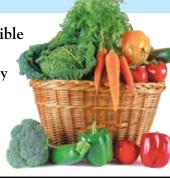


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12829 St. Louis, 2 story, 5 BR, upper and lower each have kitchen, bath, dining and living rm, Palo Diane 248-659and 2325.

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#### By Charles Sercombe

This week's Crime Log covers Sept. 22-28.

#### Tuesday, Sept. 22

- A resident reported that her vehicle was struck by another vehicle on Neibel St.
- A hit-and-run accident occurred at Caniff near Brombach.
- A small fire was started by an unknown suspect in the area of Florian and Latham.
- An employee at a business in the 8900 block of Jos. Campau reported that a former employee was phoning employees and harassing them.

### Wednesday, Sept. 23

- A person overdosed on drugs and died in the area of Charest and Eva-
- A resident was ticketed for being disorderly.

### Thursday, Sept. 24

- Officers responded to a break-in alarm in the 2600 block of Florian St. An open door was discovered, but there were no suspects found.
- A resident reported a theft that occurred in the

2200 block of Danforth St.

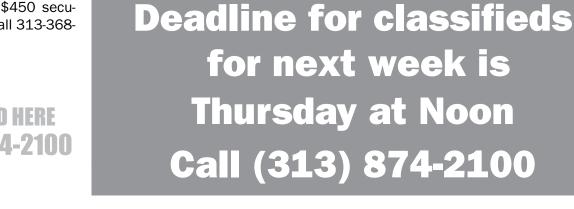
 A Detroit resident was arrested, after a traffic stop, for being wanted on a Hamtramck warrant.

### Friday, Sept. 25

- A juvenile ran away from home in the 12000 block of Selfridge St.
- A driver of a white Dodge Durango crashed through a fence at a residence on Andrus St. The driver fled the scene.

#### Saturday, Sept. 26 · At about 11 p.m., a

- large fight was reported in the 3900 block of Christopher St. · Officers responded to
- multiple car accidents at Nagel and Caniff. A driver was arrested for drunk driving.
- A hit-and-run accident occurred at Caniff and St. Aubin.
- · A Botsford St. resident reported that someone damaged their backyard gate.
- · A Jacob St. resident reported that their trash can was stolen.
- A resident of Dearborn Continued on page 8



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### Continued from page 7

was arrested for drunk driving, and for carrying a concealed weapon without a permit.

### Sunday, Sept. 27

- At almost 1 p.m., two suspects were arrested for breaking into a residence.
- · A suspect was arrested for malicious destruction of property that occurred on Holbrook Ave.
- · Two suspects fired a gun at a security camera at a residence on Jacob
- · A resident reported that her son was assaulted by another juvenile while at Pulaski Park. The victim said he fled without taking his bike. The bike was not found.

#### Monday, Sept. 28

- · A Highland Park resident said that, while in the 11000 block of Conant Ave, they were assaulted.
- · At a little after 11 p.m., two residents were arrested for an assault that happened in the 2300 block of Commor St.



### HAMTRAMCK HOUSING COMMISION

12025 DEQUINDRE, HAMTRAMCK, MI 48212 SEPTEMBER 8 - DECEMBER 18

**BREAKFAST & LUNCH** 

9:00 am - 12:00 noon Mon-Fri



Distribution Location: COMMON AREA IN FRONT OF

### A warning about what could happen here cont. from page 5

Michiganders?

Then one month later came calls to defund the police force from the other side of the aisle. All this sounded very familiar: Was I reliving the tragic history of Lebanon before its civil war all over again?

On April 26, I heard the devastating news of Dr. Lorna Breen, the emergency room doctor in New York who committed suicide after a serious depression caused by what she saw and went through while treating the COVID-19 patients.

It was crushing news for me, as a health provider and as a father.

Things got worse when I kept hearing people, including some of my pa-

In Hamtramck, besides

about the trend, little to

nothing has been said by

Not so in southwest De-

Deadline Detroit quoted

Frank Venegas Jr., of "The

Southwest Detroit Whippet

Wipe Out Campaign," as

"This behavior can be in-

credibly dangerous — and

even fatal in some instanc-

es — and creates a public

safety issue when thou-

sands of empty cartridges

Review

The

troit.

saying:

city officials.

battling whippets cont. from page 5

reporting

tients, still denying the pandemic and calling it a hoax.

I wanted to yell and scream, cry and shout: people, please, get back to your senses. We started losing our health providers not by natural death or infection diseases, but by giving up, saying, by Dr Breen's own words "I couldn't do anything to save their lives."

I felt the guilt eating me up. I am a healthcare provider, but I am just sitting doing nothing while my colleagues, medical doctors, end up taking their own lives because they are not able to save all the lives.

I wanted to call Dr. Breen's family to share the loss with them, but backed

"The small cartridges

get in our tires and cause

flats and blow-outs and is

a danger to pedestrians,

cyclists and those travel-

We have only one

(tongue-in-cheek) sugges-

tion for Hamtramck of-

ficials, who have not be-

come aware of the littering

problem of this issue. Why

not take a metal detector,

collect all the empty whip-

pet containers, and use

them to fill the large pot-

holes at the Caniff parking

ing on scooters."

off, realizing that much more has to be done, and has to be done fast.

So, I went with my wife and broke the concrete of my parking lot, replaced it by top soil, designed a garden, ordered a memorial stone, dug a 42-inch hole for its base and poured concrete in it, planted trees, and roses, mulched in between, then hired a muralist to do the mural on the wall of my office.

All this was done in only two weeks. I had the feeling that we are running out of time, and that we have to fight a war in order to stop a war.

The war of science and humanity against ignorance, selfishness and self-destruction. I thought that this was the least I could do to remember the thousands of Americans who lost their lives to the COVID-19 pandemic, and to pay a tribute to Dr. Breen and all doctors, nurses and frontliners who remind us of what President Obama once said: There is no blue America or red America, but only the United States of America.

(Sami Bilani, DDS, is a practicing dentist in Ham-

Virus update: State offers free

### college for essential workers **Continued from page 3** ple pleaser, as it reinsti-**Detroit takes the lead in**

tutes some long-awaited freedoms.

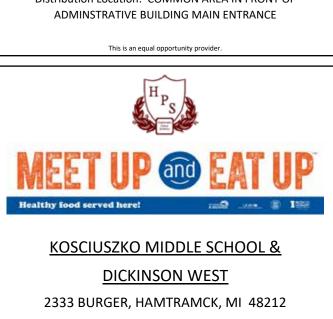
Specifically, it authorizes the reopening, within some fairly strict guidelines - more on those in a minute - of indoor theaters and cinema complexes, and performance venues; as well as bowling alleys, bingo halls, indoor rock and wall climbing facilities, trampoline parks, and more.

The guidelines are a bit tricky, in the sense that many venues will have to calculate their percentages of allowed occupancy. Indoor facilities are generally allowed a maximum

but it could be less than that - perhaps far less depending on the square footage of the facility.

You are allowed either 20 persons per 1,000 square feet of floor space, or else 20 percent of your normal fixed capacity, whichever is higher, without exceeding the maximum of 500.

Executive Order 2020-185 may prove a bit less popular, as it mandates masks for all school attending children in grades K-5 in all lower Michigan sectors except Sector 6, which is the Traverse City sector. All school personnel are also bound by the mandate.



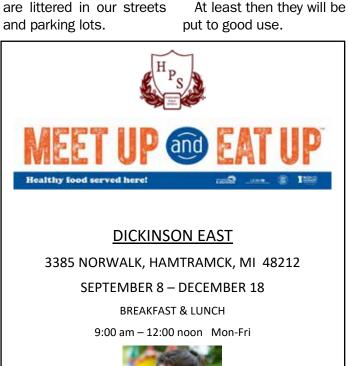
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9:00 am - 12:00 noon Mon-Fri



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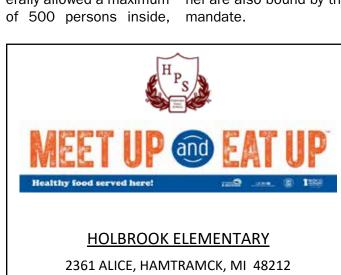
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SEPTEMBER 8 - DECEMBER 18 **BREAKFAST & LUNCH** 

9:00 am - 12:00 noon Mon-Fri



Distribution Location: MAIN DOOR ENTRANCE ON GRAYLING ST.

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### TAU BETA ELEMENTARY

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SEPTEMBER 8 - DECEMBER 18

**BREAKFAST & LUNCH** 

9:00 am - 12:00 noon Mon-Fri



Distribution Location: MAIN DOORS ENTRANCE

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### **EARLY CHILDHOOD ELEMENTARY**

11680 McDOUGALL, HAMTRAMCK, MI 48212

SEPTEMBER 8 - DECEMBER 18

**BREAKFAST & LUNCH** 

9:00 am - 12:00 noon Mon-Fri



**CHAREST STREET** 

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SEPTEMBER 8 – DECEMBER 18 **BREAKFAST & LUNCH** 

9:00 am - 12:00 noon Mon-Fri



Distribution Location: WEST FRONT DOOR OF HIGH SCHOOL ON **CHAREST STREET** 

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