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The Review

Hamtramck

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Quick Hits

NYE party is called off

New Year's Eve has been cancelled.

Well, no, not the actual day, but the New Year's Eve celebration that the Downtown Development Authority was planning in the Hamtramck Town Center parking lot at Jos. Campau and Holbrook.

There were going to be bands and food and much merriment, all for \$20 per person.

But an unwanted guest made its appearance first.

Yes, that's right. Mean old Covid is now surging, with a new variant called omicron.

Mark Hausner, the show's producer, issued this statement:

"In our current COVID environment, safety and timing are issues concerning our group right now. We plan to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Hamtramck with other events in the summer, followed by a year-end celebration to ring in 2023!"

Folks, if you haven't done so yet, get yourself vaccinated and boosted. And stay masked up while out in public.

Happy New Year

— HAMTRAMCK'S NEWSPAPER OF RECORD —

Part Two: Looking back at the second half of 2021

By Charles Sercombe

As we say every year, Hamtramck is chockful of news.

The year 2021 was no exception.

Here is Part Two of our Year in Review.

JULY

Another summer, another flood.

Once again, Hamtramck suffered massive flooding after a heavy rain, although we weren't the only city to experience that.

Several older communities in the metro area also recorded widespread flooding. And, according to weather experts, the problem is here to stay – no thanks to climate change.

The best solution that can be hoped for is a massive investment in the area's infrastructure.

Otherwise, word to the

the city's largest outdoor annual gathering was back on.

What didn't return, though was the Polish Day Parade. In fact, it's never coming back to Hamtramck at all.

Parade organizers told The Review that the parade will take place in Warren next year, but no date was set.

A Warren man was charged with shooting to death a 20-year-old Hamtramck man. This was the second homicide of the year.

The suspect, along with others, shot into a group of males playing basketball in the area of Buffalo and Yemans. The motive, police said, was retaliation for a previous incident.

This year's Fourth of July celebration had a special twist. A group of baseball

number of buildings it owns.

The district actually purchased two buildings: the former People's Community Services, located at 8633 Jos. Campau; and the former Social Security building, at 9324 Conant.

At the district's State of the District Address, Superintendent Jaleelah Ahmed said the Jos. Campau building was purchased for \$527,500, and the Conant building was purchased for a little over \$1.4 million.

The district initially planned to convert the Conant building into classrooms. However, later in the year that plan was scrapped. It's not known what the district plans to do with the buildings.

Later in the month, the district had more exciting news: The federal government had earmarked millions of dollars for the district to make its buildings safe from the Covid pandemic.

The long-awaited bike path that connects Hamtramck to Detroit – and beyond – got a financial shot in the arm.

Sort of.

US Representative Brenda Lawrence, along with a host of local, Detroit, Wayne County and state officials, held a press conference, announcing a multi-million-dollar infrastructure package.

million is targeted for completing the Joe Louis Greenway project, which includes the construction of a 27-mile bike path that connects to Hamtramck.

The project is named after Joe Louis, the famed

federal government awarded \$2.6 million for renovation of the structure.

The sound of music was once again heard in the streets of Hamtramck.

After taking a year off because of the Covid pan-



Old-timey baseball came to the historic Hamtramck Stadium for some July Fourth fun.

wise: don't store anything of value in your basement.

Some Hamtramck High School students had had enough of the city's littering problem. So, they organized a student-lead group called LEAP (Leaders of Environmental Awareness and Preservation) and set out to spread awareness of the problem, and get people more involved in combatting litter.

Hamtramck's party of the year was back on.

After taking last year off because of the Covid pandemic, organizers of the Hamtramck Labor Day Festival announced that

enthusiasts put together an old-timey version of baseball at the historic Hamtramck Stadium.

The players did not use gloves, and played by a set of rules from the 1860s.

About 100 baseball fans watched the game – despite an intense heat and blistering sun.

The stadium also got an extra boost toward its renovation: The Wayne County Commission announced that it was awarding the stadium \$850,000 for the project.

The Hamtramck Public School District announced that it had expanded the



Renovation of Hamtramck Stadium got a financial shot in the arm thanks to a Wayne County grant.

Out of a \$16.2 million news about the Hamtramck Baseball Stadium. It was announced that the



Congresswoman Brenda Lawrence announced that the federal government will be funding the Joe Louis Greenway project, which will run through Hamtramck, Detroit and Dearborn.

Detroit boxer.

The aid package was part of what was called the "INVEST in America Act."

AUGUST

Mayor Karen Majewski survived another election challenge, despite a harsh social media campaign against her, and serious doubt among election watchers about her chances.

Majewski came in second, behind newcomer Amer Ghalib, in Tuesday's Primary Election.

Ghalib, who has no experience in city government, beat Majewski by less than 400 votes.

There was more good

demical, the Hamtramck Music Fest made its return. The festival is usually held in March, but the pandemic prevented that from happening once again this year, the same as with last year.

With more events now being allowed, and more public gatherings too, organizers decided to shoot for a summer version of the festival.

Although there were fewer venues offering to host the annual event this year, there were still enough to accommodate well over 100 bands and performers.

Mask up, students.

That was the word from the Hamtramck Public School District about what to expect with the return of in-classroom learning in the fall.

All students and staff were – and still are – required to wear masks while inside school buildings.

For those parents who wished to continue having their children learn remotely via virtual lessons, the district required that they sign up – and make a commitment.

According to the recent



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Happy New Year

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UNIQUE POLISH BEERS

Part Two: Looking back at the second half of 2021

Continued from front page

Census count, Hamtramck is one of the fastest growing cities in the country – population-wise, that is.

The Census revealed that there are now over 6,000 more people living here than 10 years ago – the last time the Census was conducted.

That is a 28 percent jump in population. There are officially 28,433 residents here.

Hamtramck police suspended their crackdown on jaywalkers and other pedestrian law enforcement after the controversial arrest of a man on the southend last Saturday.

Some in the community said the arrest was unwarranted and needlessly alienated the public. The department later said it would dismiss all jaywalking tickets.

Hamtramck lost one of its favorite bar owners.

Brad Ruff, who had just sold Kelly's Bar on Holbrook, died while riding a motorcycle in Eastpointe. A driver blew through a stop sign and struck him.

Brad's wife, Patti, was also on the bike, and was, herself, badly injured.

Say goodbye to free parking in the city's business district. New high-tech parking meters were installed – and plenty of folks were not happy about that.

The hourly meter cost also came as a shock to many.

It's \$1 per hour now, with a maximum allotted time for being able to park in the same space set at three hours.

To this day, the new meter system remains controversial.

to say about the new champs:

"I'm surprised it took so long! I never thought it would take 62 years, but I wish them the best."

from a variety of sources, including a Wayne County grant for \$850,000, and \$2.6 million from several other sources, which included:

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SEPTEMBER

Hamtramck got some company in the history books of the Little League World Series.

A team from Taylor became the second team ever in Michigan to win the series.

Hamtramck's team won it all in 1959, while being led by the incomparable Art "Pinky" Deras, who served as a dual threat both with his hitting and pitching.

Deras, 75, had this



A new high-tech parking meter system was installed, and it was instantly hated by the public.

Hamtramck Labor Day Festival saw a welcome return, after taking a year off due to Covid.

The weather was perfect, people showed up, bands played, the canoe race was wet and wild, Big Time wrestlers put on a crazy show, and what more can you say?

Hamtramck Stadium; the Hamtramck Parks Conservancy; the Detroit Tigers Foundation; the Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Foundation; the Kresge Foundation; the Michigan Municipal League Foundation; and the National Park Service/Department of the Interior.



Although the Hamtramck Music Fest was cancelled in March because of Covid, the festival was held in the summer.

There was one noticeable difference this year: some things were scaled back a bit. There were fewer food vendors than usual, and just one performance stage.

Hamtramck never rests. Just as the Caniff Ave. reconstruction project was getting buttoned up, two other city projects got underway.

Renovation of the Hamtramck Stadium grandstands was one of them.

Funding for the job came

In other improvement news, a sidewalk replacement plan was ongoing. This project was scaled down, no longer proposing to charge property owners, but instead financing a smaller version with a \$100,000 budget in city funds.

This year, the following streets had their worst sidewalk slabs replaced:

- Denton, between Lumpkin and Jos. Campau

Continued on page 3

December 31, 2021

This week at the Library . . .

Game Night: Join us and your friends in the library for the weekly game night on Fridays at 4 pm. We have some quick and easy party game favorites to help break the ice.

John Hope Franklin: This historian was born on January 27th 1915. His father was a civil rights lawyer who defended victims of the Tulsa rape massacre and John himself helped further the cause of integration through his involvement in the case of Brown vs Board of Education. His most well known book is "From Slavery to Freedom", which you can check out for yourself at the library along with some of his other works.

Emancipation Proclamation: On January 1, 1863 President Abraham Lincoln freed the slaves in the states rebelling against the Union.

Ellis Island: This terminal in New York Harbor was opened on January 1, 1892. Over 20 million new arrivals to America were processed there until its closing in 1954.

Alaska: In January 3, 1959, Alaska was admitted as the 49th state with a land

mass almost one-fifth the size of the lower 48 states combined.

Space Shuttle: On January 5, 1972, President Richard Nixon signed a bill approving \$5.5 billion over six years to build and test the NASA space shuttle.

Impeachment: On January 7, 1999 the first presidential impeachment trial in 130 years began as members of the U.S. Senate were sworn in by Supreme Court Chief Justice William Rehnquist to decide whether President Clinton should be removed from office for perjury and obstruction of justice.

ESL Classes: The classes are held four days a week, from Monday to Thursday, from 9 am to 2:30 pm. The program is free to all Hamtramck residents.

Current Library Operating Services: - Present level of services provides for book pick-ups, copying, printing, faxing, scanning, limited use of computers (with proper distancing) and limited stay in the library (with proper distancing). To print files ahead of time please send attachments for printing to hamtramcklibrary@gmail.com. Face masks are recommended.

Library is located at 2360 Caniff Avenue, Phone (313) 733-6822
Or visit its website at <http://hamtramck.lib.mi.us> for on line catalog
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Second Front Page

Part Two: Looking back at the second half of 2021

Continued from page 2

- Alice, between Lumpkin and Jos. Campau
- Lumpkin, between Denton and Holbrook
- St. Aubin, between Denton and Holbrook

And, also, Wayne County was overseeing the repaving of Conant. It was the summer of orange barrels. A former Hamtramck police officer, charged with assaulting two people he arrested back in 2014, was sentenced to three years in federal prison.

Ryan McNerney, 45, of Grosse Ile Twp., was charged with the crimes back in 2018, and pled guilty to using excessive force, and to violating the civil rights of one victim.

The matter was resolved in a plea deal with the US Justice Department.

The local Yemeni-American community held a rally in Zussman Park to protest the death of a California man visiting his homeland.

According to various media reports, Abdelmalik Alsanabani, 30, had recently traveled to Yemen, arriving in the southern part of the country. He was intending to travel to his hometown in the northern part of Yemen, where he planned to visit his mother.

However, on the way there, he had to go through several checkpoints. At one of those checkpoints, militia men accused him of being connected with a rival political party, and was subsequently tortured and killed.

OCTOBER

Hamtramck joined thousands of other communities nationwide in cracking



The Yemeni mural on the southend was saved from obstruction.

the city's road budget.

The installation of these traffic safety devices also came at a time of increased outcry by residents over speeders in their neighborhoods.

In other words, they wanted more speed humps.

Hamtramckans are not alone.

The Detroit Free Press re-

ported that there are over 17,000 requests from different areas of the City of Detroit for speed humps.

The program proved successful; more speed humps will be installed in the coming year.

A deal was reached to save the Yemeni mural, located at Jos. Campau and



City Attorney James Allen

overseeing the district during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Her leave of absence also came at a time of turmoil in the district. Over 20 teachers, administrators and staff members resigned during a single month.

Later it was announced that Nagil Nagi, who is the district's English Language Director, would be the Interim Superintendent.

Ahmed is scheduled to come back after Jan. 10.

It was also announced that Michelle Imbrunone, the district's head of Human Resources, took a leave of absence. No reason was given.

Hamtramck joined the growing list of Michigan cities with a high lead con-

tent in the drinking water.

The city administration issued a press release saying that a recent batch of water samples from 42 houses showed six of them having slightly more lead particles in the water than is considered safe.

According to lab results, those six sample houses had 17 parts per billion of lead, just over 15 parts per billion (which triggered an alert).

However, the city said there was no need to panic. Residents were told to allow water from their taps to run for a few minutes before consuming it or using it for cooking.

It was also recommended to install a filter.

A proposal to fire City Attorney James Allen and his law firm was met with the sound of silence from city councilmembers.

Councilmember Carrie Beth Lasley submitted a series of resolutions at a council meeting, to fire Allen, but did not get a motion by her colleagues to entertain a vote.

Allen and the city were recently named in a federal lawsuit filed by Charles Blackwell of Farmington Hills.

Continued on page 5



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Dec. 31 – Solemnity of Holy Family
Holy Mass 10 am

Jan. 1 – Solemnity of Circumcision of our Lord
Holy Mass 10 am

Jan. 8 – Soup Kitchen Take-out only
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Four speed humps were installed in the city. City officials later decided to install more to reduce speeding vehicles.

down on speeders in residential neighborhoods.

How? Speed humps (not speed bumps).

Speed humps have less of an incline that speed bumps, which traffic experts say can lead to drivers going out of control.

Hamtramck installed four speed humps, two on Charest St. in front of Hamtramck High School, which has long been a nightmare for residents there (who have suffered through high schoolers speeding down their street), and two on Hanley St. where the Tau Beta School is located.

This was considered a pilot project, and it cost about \$18,000 for supplies, installation and signs. Funding came out of

Goodson, from becoming obstructed from view.

Local social action group OneHamtramck issued a press release, touting the end of a three-year negotiation to save the mural they initially commissioned back in 2011, and which was realized two years later by Chilean muralist Dasic Fernandez.

A developer had planned to build a commercial building in the empty lot next to the mural.

In an unexpected move, Hamtramck Public Schools Superintendent Jaleelah Ahmed took a leave of absence.

Ahmed had been on the job since 2019, and recently received a contract extension.

In her letter, Ahmed said

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HOLIDAY HOURS

Thurs., Dec. 30
8am-5pm

Friday, Dec. 31
New Year's Eve
8am-3pm

Closed Jan 1 & 2
Open Monday, Jan. 3

Happy New Year!



VIRTUAL LEARNING SCHEDULE UPDATE



COVID-19 TESTING

Hamtramck Public Schools and Prestige Specialty Pharmacy are providing weekly, optional COVID-19 testing!

During the Virtual Learning Week of **January 3 - 7**, all **Hamtramck Public Schools staff, students and families can receive PCR testing for COVID-19** at the available times and locations*:

Monday, Jan. 3 - Early Childhood Elementary from 2 - 3 p.m. and Dickinson East Elementary from 3:30 - 4:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Jan. 4 - Hamtramck High School from 3:30 - 4:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Jan. 5 - Kosciuszko Middle School and Dickinson West Elementary from 3:30 - 4:30 p.m.

Thursday, Jan. 6 - Holbrook Elementary from 2 - 3 p.m. and Tau Beta School from 3:30 - 4:30 p.m.

*Families can seek testing at schools closest to their homes. Testing location is not dependent on your child's specific school.

Contact Melanie Pieknik, District School Nurse, at mpieknik@hamtramckschools.org or 313.454.1645 for more information



School Bell

HPS news

We are excited to announce that Hamtramck Public Schools' Health Center has been awarded funding from the @ChildrensFndn to continue its eyeglasses program and health services.

The Hamtramck School-Based Health Center provides free healthcare services to all HPS students, with a focus on serving new immigrant children who can seek wellness opportunities free of charge.

Hamtramck SEES is a program at the Health Center that gives eye exams and glasses for up to 150 HPS students per year, to ensure our children have every opportunity to grow and excel.

These programs are essential to improving the

health and wellness of children and families in our community, and we're thrilled to continue serving Hamtramck in this capacity.

Covid testing

In an effort to make COVID-19 testing as easy and accessible as possible for our schools, Hamtramck Public Schools is providing weekly, optional testing throughout campus for our staff and students.

No appointments are necessary. The testing is available for all HPS staff, students and families. Here are dates and times:

Monday, Jan. 3 – Early Childhood School (2-3 p.m.); Dickinson East (3:30-4:30 p.m.)

Tuesday, Jan. 4 – Hamtramck High School (3:30-

4:30 p.m.)
Wednesday, Jan. 5 – Kosciuszko Middle School and Dickinson West (3:30-4:30 p.m.)

Thursday, Jan. 6 – Holbrook Elementary (2-3 p.m.); Tau Beta (3:30-4:30 p.m.)

Happy Kwanzaa

"Kwanzaa is a pan-African celebration of heritage and culture and family and community (celebrated Dec. 26-Jan. 1).

The principles and the manner of observing the holiday lift up traditional values that are key to our lives," says Janine Bell, African Diaspora culture and heritage professional and founder of the Elegba Folklore Society.

We wish everyone who is celebrating Kwanzaa a great holiday.

Obituaries

ANDERSON



Hans Evert Anderson, of Hamtramck and Sweden, passed away

peacefully on December 15, 2021, at the age of 80, surrounded by his loving, close-knit family.

Born in Hässleholm, Sweden, in 1941, his

family emigrated to America in 1953, and settled in Utica, Michigan. He graduated from Utica High School and continued his studies at Oakland University.

His insatiable curiosity led to a remarkable range of interests and talents, including mathematics, photography, art, literature, and music.

He was knowledgeable about architecture, particularly the work of Albert Kahn, and could just as easily discuss the structure of a sonata as great works of literature.

Hans was also an avid traveler and great lover of nature and the outdoors, and his unconventional adventures took him across the country and around the world. An ardent champion of social and environmental causes, Hans was an out-of-the box thinker who believed that lived experience was more important than social norms and conventions.

A resident of Hamtramck for 21 years, Hans was affectionately known by neighbors as "Mr. Yellow" because of the color of his house.

He was passionate about the value of education and was an enthusiastic and tireless tutor of neighborhood children in writing and math.

He was always willing to listen or lend a hand, whether by hosting informal gatherings in his yard or repairing bicycles. Generous and modest, he was a reliable friend and supporter to all who knew him.

He is survived by his daughter Kendra (Pete Johnson) of Colorado, his sisters Elsa-Britt, Greta (his twin), Ingrid, Eva, and Mary, as well as granddaughters Mia and Leila and 11 nieces and nephews. He is predeceased by his parents Algot and Anthea Anderson.

A celebration of his extraordinary life is being planned for the spring.

WAYNE COUNTY TREASURER'S OFFICE



Property tax payment plans are available now!

Interest Reduction Stipulated Payment Agreement (IRSPA)

This payment plan reduces the interest rate from 18% to 6% for eligible taxpayers. To sign up, you must own and live in your home, and have a Principal Residence Exemption (PRE) and ID that proves residency.

Distressed Owner Occupant Extension (DOOE)

This program is not available to everyone. If you own and live in the property, and are suffering financial hardship you may qualify for this program. Proof of ownership, occupancy, and hardship are required.

Stipulated Payment Agreement (SPA)

Available to everybody, this plan allows a taxpayer to pay taxes pursuant to a payment schedule. The plan will avoid foreclosure provided that payments are submitted per the agreed upon schedule.

Pay As You Stay Payment Agreement (PAYSPA)

Only for those who have first applied for their local municipality's Poverty Tax Exemption (PTE) and received an approval. Once notified by your local Assessor's office and deemed eligible, our office will mail you a notification letter with your Reduced Amount Due. You will have the option of paying a lump sum (additional 10% off) or enrolling into a PAYSPA.

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

The final date to enter into a payment plan will be **March 14, 2022**, and the last day to pay your forfeited taxes will be **March 31, 2022**.

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



Did You Know?



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Review: Opinion Page

Part Two: Looking back at the second half of 2021

Continued from page 3

The lawsuit claimed that Allen violated the Americans with Disabilities Act and attempted to suppress Blackwell’s First

For the first time ever, a Yemeni-American will be the city’s new mayor. Amer Ghalib trounced Mayor Karen Majewski in



Mayor Karen Majewski was defeated in the November election, thus ending her 16 years in office. Political newcomer Amer Ghalib is the new mayor.

Amendment rights. Blackwell, 28, said he was shot in the back in a drive-by shooting that left him paralyzed from the waist down. Blackwell, a self-described government watchdog, had been sending Allen numerous Freedom of Information Act requests over matters in the City of Inkster, where Allen is also the city attorney. A spat between the two developed, and Allen sent multiple emails to Blackwell mocking his handicap. Allen, through his law firm, issued a press release apologizing for his language.

“I can explain what led me to the point of stupidly using inappropriate and hyperbolic language directed at Mr. Blackwell, but I cannot excuse it. “I resorted to language born of frustration built up over 18 months, but I do not condone and I apologize for the language I used. I was wrong.”

As the November General Election got closer, there was wide speculation about whether history would be made in the mayoral election.

Mayor Karen Majewski was facing a tough – if not impossible – re-election challenge from candidate Amer Ghalib, who had never held local elective office.

Ghalib came out as the top vote-getter in the primary election last August, pulling 364 votes ahead of second-place finisher Majewski.

Last August, Majewski was optimistic she could recover.

“I’m confident that we can make up the deficit and win the general,” Majewski told The Review at that time.

This wasn’t the first time Majewski had to come from behind, but in previous elections she had only a handful of votes to overcome.

Ghalib, a Yemeni-American, represented the emerging political muscle of the Yemeni community.

NOVEMBER

Yes, Hamtramck’s November election made history.

the election by an almost 3-to-1 margin.

Not only did that make history, but also for the first time ever, an entire city council and mayor are all Muslim. That made national – and international – news. It is quite likely that this is also a first-ever for the country.

That political influence will affect any future controversial ballot proposals, such as those pertaining to gay rights and marijuana retail sales. Both of those issues have been controversial in Hamtramck, and are especially sensitive for the mostly social-issue conservative Muslim community.

On both of those issues, Majewski had been a supporter.

Ghalib, 41, ran on a platform of change being needed. While he professed to have “bold” ideas to fix the city’s financial and infrastructure problems, he did not offer specifics, other than that he would work with the council and administration.

Majewski, 66, was seeking a fifth term, and will have served 16 years as mayor by the end of her term on Dec. 31. Had she won and then served out the term, Majewski would have been the city’s longest-serving mayor.

She is now also the last in line of those of Polish heritage to have been the city’s mayor since Hamtramck became a city 100 years ago.

This was a deadly year in Hamtramck. The city recorded its fifth and sixth homicides for the year.

A man and his girlfriend were shot to death in his apartment at the Rotana building on Caniff Ave.

An acquaintance of theirs was charged with the murders. The motive was, apparently, a robbery.

As police overtime costs increased, the city council refused two proposals to hire more officers.

City Councilmember Fadel Al-Marsoumi was behind both proposals. His proposals, however, came at a time when there had been talk nationwide to “defund” police departments. That backlash came after numerous me-

dia reports of minorities, particularly African-Americans, being killed by officers during arrests.

As it turned out, the city was awarded almost \$500,000 from a federal grant to hire more police.

Details of that plan have yet to be worked out.

Will Hamtramck see any of the newly passed national infrastructure funding?

That was the multi-million-dollar question city officials were pondering.

Recently, a \$1.2 trillion infrastructure bill was passed by congress, and Michigan is slated to receive \$10 billion to fix bridges and roads, as well as for a slew of other projects.

But one of the key earmarks for the state’s funding – and of keen interest to Hamtramck – is for replacing lead service lines for drinking water.

Hamtramck recently discovered, through a sample from six households, that the lead level was just over what is considered safe to consume.

Many older households in the state are still outfitted with old lead water lines.

The estimated cost to fully replace all the city’s lead service lines is \$55 million. According to the city, it costs \$10,500 to replace each lead line leading into a residence.

About 500 lines have already been replaced in the last two years. The state has mandated that each community replace lead lines within 20 years – but the state is not providing funding.

The city later learned, through Congresswoman Brenda Lawrence, that the state is in line to receive \$1.3 billion for communities to replace their lead service lines.

Hamtramck is virtually guaranteed a piece of that pie.

DECEMBER

Outgoing City Councilmember Carrie Beth Lasley struck out twice in trying to censure Mayor Karen Majewski and City Manager Kathy Angerer.

Lasley, whose term ends on Dec. 31 – the same day that Majewski’s ends – said the two deserved the censures over the handling of a grant from five years ago that went toward city park improvements.

Lasley accused Angerer of “misappropriating” \$5,419. She obtained a letter from a Wayne County official, through a Freedom of Information Act request made last August, that outlined the alleged mishandling.

The city was not forced to pay back the amount, but instead the amount was deducted from the

Continued on page 6

Other Voices: Guest Editorial

Public school athletic programs: They’re more than ‘just sports

By Brian Anderson

HPS Athletic Director

For many students, school sports are much more than an afterschool activity. Athletics provide a way for kids to interact with their peers, exert energy and be a part of a team working towards a common goal.

We know that sports programs are key to improving health and student performance. In fact, a 2020 study shows a 6% increase in academic scores in student-athletes and finds that 4.8% of student athletes have higher self-esteem from participating in athletics.

Students involved in athletics show increased physical and mental health and elevated academic performance through better time management, and other skills learned on and off the field.

I consider myself fortunate to serve as the athletic director for Hamtramck Public Schools. My position at HPS began

in 2018 with the goal of growing our sports offerings for all scholars, and the coaches matched my enthusiasm beyond my expectations.

Throughout the past three years, I have seen first-hand the great strides we have made.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, we pivoted quickly to virtually recruit players and practice safely and separately. We grew our men’s basketball program from 25 athletes to just over 40. We also created a women’s basketball team that now has 11 players and growing.

Wrestling was hit the hardest by the pandemic’s barriers, but Hamtramck’s wrestling coach still made sure each athlete was engaged in school and practicing individually.

Throughout it all, we kept our student-athletes updated with the latest news, protocols and events.

The success of our

programs today is one of the many reasons we are so grateful for our Hamtramck community. Our students and coaches love sports, use them to build connections with one another and tap into school pride.

These programs excel because of our family atmosphere and the way we ensure that our students know they are cared for beyond the game.

As an athletic director, it is my privilege to witness firsthand what happens when dedicated student-athletes, coaches, teachers and staff all work together on and off the field.

Athletic success seeps into our classrooms and homes. With encouragement, care and passion, I see our students thriving, and I am excited to see just how far they will go.

If you have questions or would like to sign your child up for an HPS sports team, please contact me at: Banderson@hamtramckschools.org.

Odds & Ends

Swearing in... Hamtramck will kick off 2022 with a bang – and secure a place in history too.

On Jan. 2, 2022, there will be the ceremonial swearing in of the city’s new elected officials at the Hamtramck High School Community Center.

The address is 11350 Charest St., which is just a block’s length north of Caniff Ave. The community center is adjacent to the high school, to the south.

The doors will open at 12:30 p.m. The program starts at 1 p.m.

Those being sworn in include:

- Mayor-Elect Amer Ghalib (the city’s first Yemeni-American mayor)
- Councilmember-Elects Adam Albarmaki, Amanda Jaczkowski and Khalil Refai (giving the city an all-Muslim council, thought

to be the first in the nation; while Ms. Jaczkowski’s last name is undeniably of Polish origin, she converted to Islam)

Light refreshments will be served. Masks are strongly encouraged.

Reminder... This is the season of giving, and Hamtramck has two worthy organizations that could use a financial helping hand.

Detroit Friendship House is one of those organizations. They are a Baptist-ministered charity that focuses primarily on food distribution to the needy, especially through their pantry.

They currently distribute these edible goods from their location at 9540 Conant Ave., Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2 to 4 p.m., and Saturdays from 9 to 11 a.m.

They also supply clothes, Christmastime toys, and more, to the needy. Take them (or mail them) a check, made out to Detroit Friendship House (9540 Conant Ave., Hamtramck MI 48212).

Then, there are those who have advocated for years for the city’s homeless cats: HCAT, or Hamtramck Cat Assistance Team. Led by the dynamic duo of Chris Wilinski and Heide Zdral, they are unable to do their terrific fundraising Christmas spaghetti dinner this year (COVID, what else), so their need is greater than ever.

Go to their GoFundMe.com page and make a donation if you can. Help them by promoting them as a tax-deductible option to other cat lovers you may know.

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Part Two: Looking back at the second half of 2021

Continued from page 5

city’s yearly Community Development Block Grant. Mayor Majewski was included in her censure proposal because the mayor did not reveal the incident to the public which, had it been made known, might have prevented Angerer from being appointed as city manager, Lasley said. Majewski declined to comment on the matter. City Manager Angerer, however, lashed out at Las-

ley at the meeting, saying that the accusation was “inaccurate” and “libelous.” “Nothing criminal happened,” Angerer said, adding that Lasley made “baseless allegations.” Angerer also noted that Lasley did not give her the courtesy of first asking what happened with the grant. Hamtramck’s newest, and smallest, park was of-



A “pocket” park was created on Trowbridge St.

ficially welcomed. Residents and city and county officials held a dedication for “Salam Peace Park.” Salam is Arabic for “peace”, so yes, technically it’s called “Peace Peace Park.” This is no ordinary park. It’s what urban designers call a “pocket” park – which is a single city lot that has been converted into a park, with the goal being to provide a neighborhood with green space for kids and adults. The lot for the park, located at 2134 Trowbridge St., which is between Lumpkin and St. Aubin, was donated by a resident who wishes to remain anonymous. Funding for creating the park came from an online crowdfunding effort, which raised \$25,000. An additional \$22,000 was contributed by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation through its Public Spaces Community Places program. Hamtramck Public Schools students will get

an extra week to stay home after their winter holiday break. But that doesn’t mean they get an extended vacation. The school district announced it is temporarily returning to at-home virtual learning, from Jan. 3 through Jan. 7. Students will return to in-person classroom learning on Monday, Jan. 10. The stay-at-home directive was a result of rising concern over the recent increase in COVID-19 cases. Interim Superinten-

dent Nabil Nagi said that he has been monitoring the Covid cases with the Wayne County Health Department. The move comes after some teachers raised concerns over Covid at a school board meeting. One teacher suggested returning to virtual learning because several of her students had talked about travelling over the break, and she feared that would cause a spread of the virus. Hamtramck veterans unveiled a new memorial for those who died in service. Veterans, city employees and others gathered

ber of VFW 4162, said the memorial is “not about war, but to freedom.” The recent shooting deaths at Oxford High School, located north of Detroit, has some local teachers concerned about their safety. At December’s Hamtramck School Board meeting, several teachers spoke out about their concerns. One common complaint made was that some students were joking about the shooting, where four students died and several others were injured. Tiffany Stano, a 5th grade teacher at Dickinson West, said that the district needs to adopt a “zero-tolerance” policy when it comes to students joking about violence. “If it can happen in Oxford, it can happen here,” Stano said. She added: “We are worn down; we are tired and we are scared.” A source knowledgeable about security issues confirmed that there is ongoing security training for staff and students. The district has had occasional threats, but they have been rare, and ultimately proved to be hoaxes. Well, that’s it for 2021. We suspect that the new year will be even more interesting with a new political leadership now in place. Happy New Year, readers!



A new memorial honoring Hamtramck veterans was installed in city hall.



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By Charles Sercombe This week's Crime Log covers Dec. 20-26.

Monday, Dec. 20 • Officers were sent to Henry Ford Hospital to talk with a resident about a possible assault. • A suspicious situation was reported in the 2400 block of Denton St. • A theft was reported in the 12000 block of Selfridge St. • An agent for a business in the 12100 block of Jos. Campau Ave. reported having trouble with a customer.

Tuesday, Dec. 21 • Two complaints were made about someone causing noise in the 2200 block of Wyandotte St. When officers arrived, no noticeable noise could be heard. • A dispute over a cab ride was reported in the 2000 block of Caniff Ave.

Wednesday, Dec. 22 • A person in the 2200 block of Danforth St. complained about harassing phone calls. • A domestic disturbance was reported on Casmere St. • A suspicious situation was reported on Selfridge St.

Thursday, Dec. 23 • A hit-and-run accident occurred in the 3400 block of Holbrook Ave. • A noise complaint was made in the 9400 block of Charest St. • A hit-and-run accident was reported on Holmes St. • A domestic disturbance was reported on Dyar St. • Family trouble was reported on Trowbridge St.

Friday, Dec. 24 • A man riding a bike in the area of Hanley and Gallagher was seen going

ing into backyards. • A complaint was made about loud music coming from vehicles in the area of Yemans and Ellery. • A report was made about three suspicious people in the 11700 block of Sobieski St. • A domestic assault was reported in the 2200 block of Danforth, but officers later determined that no assault had occurred.

Saturday, Dec. 25 • Several parking complaints were made.

Sunday, Dec. 26 • A man was arrested in the 12000 block of Selfridge St. for domestic assault. • A man said that, while in the area of Jos. Campau and Nagel, he got into an argument with two others, and one of the suspects pointed a handgun at him. The suspects fled. • A man entered a business in the 9500 block of Jos. Campau Ave. bleeding from his head and asking for assistance from officers. • A woman was arrested in the 11400 block of Charest St. for domestic violence. • A domestic assault was reported in the 2200 block of Wyandotte St. Officers interviewed two people at the scene and determined that no assault took place. • An assault happened in the 12000 block of Grand Haven St. • A break-in was reported in the 3800 block of Holbrook Ave. • A domestic incident was reported on Poland St. • A person was arrested, following a traffic stop, for possessing narcotics.

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Coming Events FISH FRY – The Moose Lodge, 9421 Conant Ave., is offering a fish fry dinner on the first and third Fridays, 2-7 p.m. Call (313) 871-9115, or (313) 753-2026 to place your order. Free delivery for seniors living in Hamtramck. SUNDAY, Jan. 2, 12:30 p.m. – The swearing into office of the new Hamtramck mayor and three city councilmembers, at the Hamtramck High School Community Center, 11350 Charest. Masks are strongly encouraged. SATURDAY, Jan. 8, 2-4 p.m. – Take-out only soup kitchen at Holy Cross P.N.C. Church, 2311 Pulaski at Fleming. Everyone is welcome! MONDAY, Jan. 17, 9-11:30 a.m. – MLK 24th Annual Prayer Breakfast, sponsored by the Concerned Women of Hamtramck, \$20 for adults, \$15 seniors and students, Hamtramck Community Center, 11350 Charest St.



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A woman with dark, curly hair is looking down at a tablet computer she is holding. She is wearing a light-colored sweater and a necklace with a red heart pendant. The background is a blurred indoor setting.

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