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The Review

Hamtramck

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11401 JOS CAMPAU
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Quick Hits

Calling on volunteers for winter

Everyone loves a good neighbor.

And the City of Hamtramck is looking for volunteers to help out with some winter duties for those in need.

We'll let Max Gilginas, Hamtramck Community Involvement Coordinator, explain:

"It's been quite a year in our little town. With the help of the City of Hamtramck, The Rotary Club of Detroit, and our dedicated volunteers, the Every Neighbor program aided 25 households in keeping up to code this summer, doubling our previous summer.

"We are now shifting to winter, and to caring for our neighbors who are unable to keep their walkways free of snow and ice. This means keeping their sidewalks and cars cleaned, shoveled and salted, and it takes a lot of coordination and volunteer energy.

"We are seeking volunteers and donations, and hope you can find a few hours or dollars to make a difference. Salt, shovels, snacks, rewards for volunteers, and businesses that will allow our volunteers to warm up are also very much needed and can be donated directly. All benefits go directly to Hamtramck Mutual Aid and this program.

"If you need help, please don't hesitate to contact us. In order to reach as many of those in need as possible, we limit this to owner occupied

Continued on page 6

— HAMTRAMCK'S NEWSPAPER OF RECORD —

Restoring a city treasure: 'Hamtramck Disneyland,' piece by piece

By Sean Bieri
 Special to The Review

When Dmytro Szyrak passed away in 2015, at the age of 92, he left behind an amazing creative legacy in the form of the sprawling, towering, spinning, rattling, light-span-gled spectacle he built between the two garages in his backyard on Klinger, something he called "Hamtramck Disneyland."

Mr. Szyrak, a Ukrainian immigrant who came to the States after World War II and who worked for General Motors for 30 years, started work on Hamtramck Disneyland around 1990.

The installation became a riot of found objects – fan blades, rocking horses, thrift store paintings, mannequins, and lawn ornaments – as well as hand-built carousels, whirligigs, marching soldiers and more, all adorned with Christmas lights.

Miniature models of a helicopter, a missile platform, and the Concorde airliner are docked in the yard, and a six-foot windmill animates mechanical figurines on its reverse side when it spins in the breeze.

Hamtramck Disneyland eventually became a renowned work of "folk art," the subject of magazine and newspaper articles as well as a documentary short film, and a tourist attraction that has drawn thousands of people to Hamtramck from around the world.

But, when he died, Mr. Szyrak also left behind a question: in the absence of its creator, what would become of this unique artwork? There were fears his creation would simply be scrapped, and the two houses sold off.

However, thanks to the efforts of a group of local

artists and concerned residents, Hatch Art – a local arts organization formed in 2006 by Chris Schneider and a handful of like-minded artists (myself included) – was able to acquire the two lots, and begin the work of restoring the site.

Hatch Art had previously rehabbed the abandoned Hamtramck police station on Evaline, converting it into an arts space featuring a gallery, workshop, photographic darkroom, and classroom, with artists' studios in the former office cubicles upstairs. With that experience under our belts, we felt ready to take on the challenge of preserving Hamtramck Disneyland (we call it "HDL" for short).

There were, actually, multiple challenges.

First, since we planned on renting out the four units on the property to help with upkeep of the site, both houses needed extensive work to get them up to code. (Homeowners will perhaps not be surprised to hear that this is an ongoing project.)

Likewise, the two garages, which had served as supports for much of the artwork as well as workshop and storage space for Mr. Szyrak, were sagging badly and required a lot of effort in order to shore up the roofs and get both buildings rewired.

Then there was the artwork itself. Mr. Szyrak had worked on Hamtramck Disneyland well into his later years, climbing up onto tall ladders to tinker with some toy or light fixture at an age when even younger folks would maybe rather stick to their recliners.

But the elements had

Continued on page 2



Student decline will be costly to HPS

By Charles Sercombe

Hamtramck Public Schools now has more than one financial blow to deal with.

Not only does the district have to grapple with the loss of \$750,000 a year for building maintenance from the consistent defeat of a school millage renewal, but also less money due to the loss of students enrolled.

According to the district, there are about 109 fewer students enrolled in the schools compared to last year – which translates to a loss of about \$9,600 per student of state financial support.

That will amount to a financial hit of a little over \$1 million.

According to the district's head count, there are 2,953 students enrolled this year compared to 3,062 last year, which is according to state figures.

It is unknown, at this point, what the district plans to do to beef up enrollment for next year. Unlike in previous years, there was little effort by the district to attract students this school year.

The Board of Education did not meet in November, and school Superintendent Jaleelah Ahmed has not responded to emails from The Review.

The board will be meeting this month on Dec. 13.

The district suffered a financial blow this year when voters twice overwhelmingly rejected a 3-mill tax renewal for district maintenance costs.

The district can continue to seek voter approval for the millage renewal, which would last for 10 years, but it appears there is little chance voters will be swayed, at least in the near future.

While Superintendent Ahmed did not respond to requests for comment by The Review, she did post a letter on the subject in the

Continued on page 4

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Restoring a city treasure: ‘Hamtramck Disneyland,’ piece by piece Cont. from front page

taken a toll on the site by the time Hatch took over. Aside from damage and wear sustained by the myriad objects on the structure, much of the lumber that was supporting the whirligigs and rocking horses and such had succumbed to weather and rot.

Some sections were being held up only by a few cables and rods; cut a wire, and a whole section might slough off onto the ground.

The art site’s infrastructure, never very easy or safe to access even in its heyday, was in danger of falling down, either during a storm or just randomly over time. The decision was made to dismantle this infrastructure, after saving as many of the distinctive arches and peaks

Mr. Szylak had designed as possible.

In its place, we’ve built a new structure, designed to be a platform that can act as both a base for the many whimsical objects the site is known for, and as a safe place to stand on and work for those installing them.

The platform has a stepped-back design to make its upper sections visible from the alley, and to keep the art from encroaching on the power lines that run along the alley.

Now that this new central structure is nearly complete, the next phase will be repopulating the site with the wonderful clutter it’s famous for.

We’ve been making sure to put as many fun art objects on display as we can during the construction phase, so there’ll always be something cool for visitors to see, and to let folks know the site is still alive and kicking. Thanks to the help of many contributors – from professional, aspiring, and hobbyist artists, to neighborhood kids and everyday folks – there are lots of colorfully painted horses and cut-out marching figures to greet the many local and international tourists who still stop by the site every week.

The helicopter has been recently repainted and the windmill put into working order, and there

are new novelties to see, like a PVC pipe “rocket” on a launch pad and a gallery of strange found artworks on the outside garage walls.

In the months and years to come (because this is going to be a long-haul project) Hatch will need the contributions of many hands and imaginations to restore “HDL” to a state of chaotic beauty. Hamtramck Disney-

land began as one man’s amazing vision.

Now, it’s our hope that it will become a community effort that will keep Mr. Szylak’s creative spirit alive while reflecting the many voices of Hamtramck and its visitors.

(If you’d like to help with our efforts, you can make a monetary contribution by visiting www.gofundme.com and searching for Hamtramck Disneyland to find our ongoing fundraiser. To contribute your talent and creativity, contact Sean Bieri at hdl.sean@hatchart.org.)



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First Sunday in Advent

Dec 4 – Holy Mass 9 am
Dec 6 - Rorate Mass 7 pm
Dec 8 – Solemnity of the Conception of the BVM 7 pm
Dec 9 – Take-out only Soup Kitchen 2-4 pm
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Sunday, Dec. 24th
Christmas Eve – Fourth Sunday in Advent
9:00 am Holy Mass

Monday, Dec. 25th
Christmas Day - Solemnity of the Nativity of our Lord
12 Midnight Shepherds' Mass (Pasterka)
9:00 am Holy Mass

Tuesday, Dec. 26th
Feast of St. Stephen, Proto-Martyr (Msza Św. w j. polskim)
10:00 am Holy Mass

Wednesday, Dec. 27th
Solemnity of Saint John, Apostle & Evangelist
7:00 pm Holy Mass (Blessing of Wine)

Thursday, Dec. 28th
Observance of Holy Innocents, Martyrs
7:00 pm Holy Mass

Saturday, Dec. 30th
Solemnity of the Holy Family
10:00 am Holy Mass



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This week at the Library . . .

December 1, 2023

Hoopla: Want to get a new read without having to brave the cold? We understand. That is why we would like to remind you that card holding patrons of our library can get access to hoopla, massive online collection of ebooks, audiobooks, digital magazines, movies, TV shown, and more. Good news for manga aficionados: Kodansha Publishing is now offering titles on hoopla, as well. Enjoy Find a link to this awesome resource on our website www.Hamtramck.lib.mi.us by checking under the eResources tab.

Chess Club: Something new just for you. Games held on this Thursdays at 3:30 pm right here in the library. Open to newbies, experienced pros, and all those in between.

Family History: Explore the digital options available to you for preserving your family history research. Let the Library of Michigan help you organize. Their next ZOOM presentation will highlight apps & software commonly used to digitize historical photos, personal records, and other documents. View this seminar on Thursday, December 7th, at 6:30 PM. Visit www.michigan.gov/lmpublicprograms to register for this event.

Story Time: Get you kids together and drop in on our Wednesday afternoon Story Time at 12 noon and on Mondays at 3:45 pm. Presented by guest readers from Hamtramck Federation of Teachers.

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

Exercise Classes: The last classes for the 2023 of Tai Chi classes will be held on Friday at 10 am and adoptive yoga classes held on Tuesdays at 2:30 pm. As always, these group workout sessions are presented by the RIM Foundation and are open to the public. Comfortable clothes recommended, Space is limited.

Kanopy: Have you watched absolutely everything on your streaming services and are still in need of thoughtful entertainment? Give Kanopy a try. Dive into the humongous collection of critically acclaimed films both foreign and domestic, as well as documentaries and educational series that Kanopy has on offer. Stream titles anywhere on your personal smart device for free after signing up with your library card info. Find a link to this awesome resource on our website www.hamtramck.lib.mi.us by checking under the eResources tab.

Jan Brett: Grab a blanket and warm up with a good book. For those with youngsters, we suggest picking up a children’s story by this author born on December 1, 1949. Whether you like original folktales or want to try a spin on a classic, Brett’s work will be fun for the whole family. Her books give vivid detail to faraway places and cute creatures not only through her writing but through her illustrations, too.

Library is located at 2360 Caniff Avenue, Phone (313) 733-6822
Or visit its website at <http://hamtramck.lib.mi.us> for on line catalog
Attachments for printing, faxing or scanning send to hamtramcklibrary@gmail.com

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Deadline for classifieds for next week is Thursday at Noon

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Hamtramck Public TV-19

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

What's on this coming week?
Bruce Harkness Photography Presentation,
Exclusive Conversation with Mayor Amer Ghalib,
ESL Classes for the 2023-24 school year
Local events, Library programs,
Interviews, Council meeting highlights,
Evenings with authors, and more.....

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

Hamtramck Public TV is broadcasting from Hamtramck Public Library
On Comcast Channel 19 and streaming on YouTube Live (24/7) *Google "Hamtramck Public TV", and click on link "Hamtramck Public TV"*
Or go to YouTube; Hamtramck Public TV; Hamtramck Public Library; videos

To place community announcement call the Library at 313-733-6822
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Announcements submitted by 10 am
Will go on air the same day (evening)

Care Rescue LLC will be holding a car auction

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Crime Watch: Shooting on Caniff presents few clues

By Charles Sercombe
Crime was on the upswing this past week in Hamtramck.
The most notable incident was a shooting that happened early Friday morning on Caniff near the public library.
According to sources, almost 30 shots were fired at a few houses and, also, a car.
Surprisingly, there were no injuries and, at this point, little information is known about who did the shooting – or the motive for it.
On social media, there was criticism, by some, about the lack of information released by the city.
The Review reached out to Police Chief Anne Moise for an explanation.
“This matter is still under investigation, but we did receive reports of property damage that were alleged to have been caused by an unknown person, or persons, firing multiple rounds in the area on Caniff near Fleming,” Moise said.
“We strongly suggest that anyone that may have information on this event, please contact Hamtramck Police Department.
“In addition, this incident was not reported immediately, so (in the future) the public is requested to contact police immediately if they hear or see anything suspicious, especially events of shots fired.”
In another incident last week, an elderly woman, walking in the intersection of Yemans and Brombach, was struck and killed by a driver.
According to sources, the driver said he did not see the woman. He remained at the scene. The driver has not been arrested, and it is undetermined whether he will be facing future charges.
The police department did not release the woman's name.
Three years ago, Hamtramck was awarded a small state grant to beef up police patrols in an effort to enforce pedestrian safety measures.
At that time, the time the city was averaging about three pedestrian injuries from vehicles per year.
A number of years ago, a state insurance study ranked the intersection of Holbrook and Jos. Campau as one of the worst in the state for pedestrians.
The main cause for this is the distance from one corner to the other.
In a related matter, the number of reported incidents of reckless driving has increased in recent weeks, with last week being no exception. Most of the reports involve drivers on Gallagher, south of Holbrook.
In other recent local crime news, a number of businesses on Jos. Campau, Caniff and Conant have all reported break-ins.

Student decline will be costly to HPS

Cont. from front page
district's Facebook page.
She said, in part:
“Moving forward, we remain dedicated to providing the best educational experience and opportunities for our students. We will continue to seek solutions, to adapt, and to overcome challenges with the same resolve we've always had. Your feedback, involvement, and advocacy for our schools are critical as we navigate the path ahead. ...
“Let's view this not as a setback, but as a stepping stone to engage in deeper conversations and to explore new avenues for progress.”

By Charles Sercombe
This week's Crime Log covers Nov. 21-24.
Tuesday, Nov. 21
• A complaint was made about an animal in the 8700 block of Jos. Campau.
• At a little after noon-time, officers, responding to a call from the 3800 block of Holbrook about a male who said he was being threatened with a knife, arrested another male for domestic assault.
• A downed utility pole was reported on Holbrook.
• A trash can was reported stolen on Prescott.
• A complaint was made about a disorderly customer at a business on Conant.
• Officers attempted to pull over a driver in a stolen vehicle, but the driver sped off.
• Following a traffic stop, a person was arrested for

possessing a narcotic.
• A theft was reported on Jos. Campau.
Wednesday, Nov. 22
• A vehicle was reported stolen on St. Aubin.
• A hit-and-run accident occurred on Holbrook.
Thursday, Nov. 23
• A break-in was reported at a business in the 2000 block of Caniff.
• A vehicle was reported stolen from a Caniff business.
• A complaint was made about a disorderly person on Yemans.
• A break-in was reported on Trowbridge.
Friday, Nov. 24
• A domestic assault was reported in the 12000 block of Dyar.
• Gunshots were reported in the 2300 block of Holmes. Gunshots were also reported on Caniff.
• A break-in was reported on Jos. Campau.

Odds & Ends

Continued from page 4

competition where participants can demonstrate their gaming prowess and promote mental health awareness.

- VR Gaming Experiences: Engage with state-of-the-art virtual and augmented reality games that emphasize mental health themes.

- #GameOnForMentalHealth Social Media Challenge: Share your high scores on social media for a chance to win exciting prizes.

- Art and Mental Health Workshops: Conducted by the Mi-Sci team and DWIHN Art Therapist, these sessions invite attendees to express themselves creatively while focusing on mental well-being.

actively while focusing on mental well-being.

- Coffee Talk with Dr. Faheem: An informal session to discuss mental health and gaming with Dr. Faheem.

- Youth United One-on-One Conversations: Engage in meaningful dialogues about mental health and gaming.

The event is included with a general admission ticket and can be purchased at www.mi-sci.org.

Mi-Sci is located at 5020 John R. Street in Midtown, Detroit, and is open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Tuesday through Sunday and until 8 p.m. on the first Friday of every month

Quick Hits

Cont. from front page

homes.

“We also ask that you use us if you haven’t any other options. We would also be grateful if you can return some help in any way that you are able – writing letters, making phone calls, treats for your

volunteer, or any other skill you have can be vital to your community.

“You can find a sign up on <https://forms.gle/jSkJtwjPHvYE1U5b8> or on Facebook.

“You can also call (313) 800-5233, extension 326, or email mgilginas@hamtramckcity.com if you need help signing up, or have questions.”

SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESS

Coming Events

SATURDAY, Dec. 9, 2-4 p.m. – Take-out only Soup Kitchen at Holy Cross P.N.C. Church, 2311 Pulaski at Fleming. Everyone is welcome!

Nominations Encouraged for Michigan Lottery’s Excellence in Education Awards to Honor Outstanding Educators

The Michigan Lottery is celebrating 10 years of recognizing outstanding educators with the 2023-24 Excellence in Education awards. During the program’s 10 years, the Michigan Lottery has recognized more than 300 public-school educators across Michigan and highlighted the impact they have in their respective communities.

Nominations are currently open, and parents, students, school staff members, and others are encouraged to nominate outstanding public-school educators for awards. All public-school employees may be nominated for the awards, which recognize educators who go “above and beyond” to make a difference in the lives of children. To nominate a public-school educator, go to <https://www.michigan-lottery.com/excellencein-education>.

“Public-school educators play a critical role in our students’ lives by serving as role models, offering encouragement and motivation, and teaching critical skills that prepare Michigan’s students for future success,” said Acting Lottery Commissioner, Jessica Weare. “The Lottery’s Excellence in Education awards shine a light

on dedicated educators who go above and beyond for their students and inspire them to reach their full potential.”

The Michigan Lottery established the Excellence in Education awards in 2014 to recognize outstanding public-school educators across the state during the school year.

One outstanding educator will be selected each week and will receive a \$2,000 cash prize. At the end of the school year, one of these weekly award winners will be selected to receive the Lottery’s Educator of the Year award and will receive a \$10,000 cash prize.

Winners of the weekly award are featured in a news segment on the Lottery’s media partner stations: WXYZ-TV in Detroit, FOX 17 in Grand Rapids, FOX 47 in Lansing, WNEM-TV in Saginaw, and WWTW-TV in Traverse City.

The winner of the 2023 Educator of the Year award was Kathryn Kluzak, a kindergarten teacher at Robert L. Green Elementary in East Lansing.

Hundreds of educators were nominated during the 2022-23 school year, which was the ninth year of the Excellence in Education awards program. Thirty-four of these nom-

inees, including Kluzak, were selected to win a weekly award.

Previous winners of the Educator of the Year award:

2022 – Spencer Vanderheide, a high school teacher with Kenowa Hills High School in Grand Rapids.

2021 – Janice Smith, a school social worker at Fisher Magnet Lower Academy in Detroit.

2020 – Megan Sidge, an Autism Spectrum Disorder teacher at Hickory Woods Elementary in Walled Lake.

2019 – Stewart Kieliszewski, an Earth science, biology, mechatronics, and media teacher for eighth through 12 graders at the Uby Community Schools.

2018 – Kerri Moccio, a first-grade literacy intervention specialist at Bedford Elementary School in Dearborn Heights.

2017 – Linda Holzwarth, a social studies teacher at Portage West Middle School in Portage.

2016 – Daniel Carr, a Spanish and sports mar-

keting teacher at Waverly High School in Lansing.

2015 – Michael Craig, a special education teacher at the Charles Drew Transition Center in Detroit.

Excellence In Education award nominees should demonstrate the following qualities:

Excellence – Their work consistently helps students and/or their schools or school districts advance to higher levels of academic achievement.

Dedication – They consistently go above and beyond expectations to help students succeed.

Inspiration – Their work inspires others around them to exceed expectations either academically or professionally.

Leadership – They demonstrate clear leadership skills in their positions with their school or school districts.

Effectiveness – The nominee’s work has clear and positive results on the educational advancement of students within the school or school district.



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