

The Review

Hamtramck

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Quick Hits

City is hosting a tree-planting block party

By Charles Sercombe

Now that spring is finally here (and crossing our fingers it stays awhile), it's time do something spring-like.

Such as planting – as in, planting trees. And it just so happens the city is kicking off its “Grow Hamtramck” campaign this Saturday, April 18, with a tree-planting party.

Well, count us in.

It's all kicking off with a block party next to Pulaski Park, starting at 10 a.m. and running until 1 p.m.

Expect plenty of fun activities, including:

- Educational sessions to teach about the benefits of trees
- Tree planting workshops
- Free giveaways
- Crafts
- Touch-A-Truck – a chance for kids to see bucket trucks up-close
- Music and more

According to a city press release:

“This will double as the City's Arbor Day celebration. The entire Hamtramck community is invited – especially those who live in the neighborhood close to the block party.”

The tree planting is part of a four-year project to plant 1,000 trees – all thanks to a grant.

You can get a free tree planted at your residence simply by calling the city at (313) 800-5233, extension 818. Or, you can request a tree by emailing the city at: treerequests@hamtramckcity.gov.

That's not the only spring thing happening.

On Saturday, May 2, the Beautification Commission is hosting its bi-annual city-wide clean-up.

Volunteers are asked to pitch in from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. but, really, any amount of time, on any day, that you can spare to make your neighborhood shine more will be appreciated.

Continued on page 2

— HAMTRAMCK'S NEWSPAPER OF RECORD —

TOAST of the TOWN

We're in the jailhouse now

By Charles Sercombe

It's hard to believe that it's been 20 years since Hamtramck's own art collective, Hatch, took over the old police station.

Seems like just a few years ago that a group of artists with a vision and plan to transform the police station into an art gallery and artists' studios.

Trust us, some of the powers-that-be at the time had a hard time wrapping their heads around the concept.

Oh, if those walls in the old police station could talk. Toast spent many years at the station gathering the latest police log information, and making the rounds visiting detectives on the second floor.

But that was back in the day, when information wasn't strictly monitored and the press had easy access. That tightening-up-on of information has only become more so as the years have gone by.

This isn't the time and place to recount the ugly episodes Toast witnessed there, nor the horror stories we've heard about having the unfortunate luck of spending a weekend in the department's lockup.

It was medieval, if you catch the drift.

Getting permission to sell the building to the Hatch collective was no easy process, and some city officials preferred the notion of putting the building on the market.

But, thankfully, cooler heads prevailed, and the transfer of ownership to the non-profit group was approved.

Anyway, last Saturday was the 20th anniversary celebration for Hatch, and the gallery was packed shoulder-to-shoulder.

We ran into head honcho Chris Schneider, and invited him to say a few words on how that 20-year journey evolved, plus whatever else he wanted to talk about.

He had plenty to spill about the project – and more.

Let's let Chris tell the tale:

“At the very beginning, back in 2005, I was ser-

ving on the Hamtramck Beautification Committee. My responsibility was to do shows of local artists in City Hall. Eric Tungate, the city's Economic Development Director, approached me about creating an organization for artists.

“At the time, there were a lot of artists living in the area but no dedicated art spaces or organizations. I asked several of the artists I had shown at city hall to get together and discuss possibilities. Among them were Suzanne Baumann, Sean Bieri, and Matt Fezell, all of whom lived in Hamtramck.

“In 2006, after several meetings, we decided to create an artist collective called Hatch. It had a membership, and with members we put on art festivals in town, created exhibitions in make-shift spaces, and offered art workshops to people of all ages. We applied for non-profit status, and received it.

“In 2009, Tungate approached Hatch and offered to sell us one of the many city-owned properties in town if we promised to convert it into an art center, pending city council approval.

“At the time, a very high percentage of properties in Hamtramck were abandoned and owned by the government due to tax defaults. They were all in tremendous disrepair, but we decided the old police station would make for an intriguing new home. We presented our plans to city council and they approved it unanimously, at first renting it to us and then deciding to sell it.

“It took us three years of mostly volunteer work to restore the building to the point

Continued on page 2



Kidnapping case goes national

By Charles Sercombe

Thanks to tips from the public and fast police work, a 16-year-old female who was allegedly kidnapped early Monday morning was rescued.

The female is a student at Frontier International Academy, who was waiting at a bus stop at Edwin and Pulaski at about 7 a.m. on Monday morning.

That's when a male sus-



Donald J. Fields

pect armed with a gun abducted her and forced her into his vehicle, according to police.

The student was found by police officers within a half-hour, thanks to tips from fellow students who helped police track down her location via their cellphones.

The suspect, who Mayor Adam Alharbi said has a criminal history that includes rape, was apprehended without incident.

“This appears to be an isolated incident,” said Police Chief Hussein Farhat, at a press conference held in city hall. “It happened very quickly.”

The suspect, Donald J. Fields, 48, of Detroit, was arraigned Thursday morning in Hamtramck 31st District Court, where he was charged with two counts of first-degree criminal sexual conduct, one count of kidnapping, one count of possession of a firearm by a prohibited person, one count of felonious assault, and five counts of felony firearm. He was also charged as a habitual offender, third offense.

Fields is being held without bond and is being held in Wayne County Jail.

During his arraignment on Thursday, Judge Alexis Krot said she denied bond because Fields “is the ultimate public safety risk to this community.”

Krot said that this alleged assault is “every parent and child's nightmare – a child abducted

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It's Time to Pray, Please Join Us

We are a Multicultural Parish Family
Sunday English Mass 9 a.m.
Sunday School 10 a.m.
Everyone is Welcome to Worship with Us

Sunday, April 19, Holy Mass
9:00 am Third Sunday in Easter

Apr 21 – Holy Mass 9 am

Apr 25 – Feast of St. Mark,
Evangelist Holy Mass 9 am

Apr 25 – Drive-thru Take-out only
Polish Dinner 4-6 pm
Menu: Pork Chop, Kielbasa, Pierogi/
sour cream, Sauerkraut, Mashed
Potatoes/gravy, & Dessert
\$15 Adult/\$8 Child 12 & under



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We're in the jailhouse now

Continued from front page

of it being usable, (but finally), in 2012, we opened it to the public with exhibitions, studios, and workshops. Since then, Hatch has eliminated our membership requirement so that it would be easier for anyone interested to be involved."

The gallery wasn't the only project that Hatch became involved in.

"In 2016, following the death of Dmytro Szylak, Hatch purchased Hamtramck Disneyland to save it from destruction. In the 10 years since, we have relied on volunteer help to rebuild and grow the installation in hopes of bringing this tourist attraction back to its past glory. Every year it gets closer and closer to that goal as it draws visitors from all over the world and is featured in numerous travel guides," Schneider said.

Back to the gallery: "Currently, Hatch has 19 artist renters, five who live in apartments at Hamtramck Disneyland, and 14 who rent studio space at Hatch Gallery. Along with donations, this covers the cost of operation – we do not rely on grants or federal funding, although we have received several one-time grants.

"Hatch is a true grassroots organization, run primarily by volunteers with a board of directors who are artists themselves, including Baumann, Bieri, and Fezell who have helped run this from the very beginning."

And what are the future plans?

"We still have the energy to keep growing. Many people are involved in Hatch now, and each person comes brimming with ideas. We are hoping to establish a book-publishing arm, focusing on art and comics," Schneider said.

"We would like to greatly expand public programming, including art workshops, performances, and lectures. We would like to bring back our artist residency program at Hamtramck Disneyland, which brought artists from all over the world until it had to be closed due to the (pandemic).

"We would like to see Hamtramck Disneyland become ever-more grand, a true spectacle with lights and lots more moving parts. Immediately, though, we would like to finally finish restoring the building, replacing all the windows, making the entrance ADA-compliant, and repairing our crumbling back wall."

Winding it up, Schneider added:

"Currently, Hatch shows artwork in three different spaces: the Hatch Gallery, The Jail Cell (a real jail cell now used for installation art), and Cafe 1923.

"We have monthly events including figure drawing, board game night, movie night, and synth night. We offer occasional drop-in art workshops open to anyone. Hamtramck Disneyland is outdoors and can be experienced any time: located at 12087 Klinger, but best seen from the alleyway.

"We also help bring big events to Hamtramck, being the fiscal sponsor to the Hamtramck

Labor Day Festival, and have partnered with The Discovery Channel, the Detroit Pistons, Detroit City Football Club, the Knight Foundation, the Kresge Foundation, and others to host public one-time events."

Haven't checked out the gallery yet? Be sure to look them up online for their public hours and any other information at: hatchart.org.

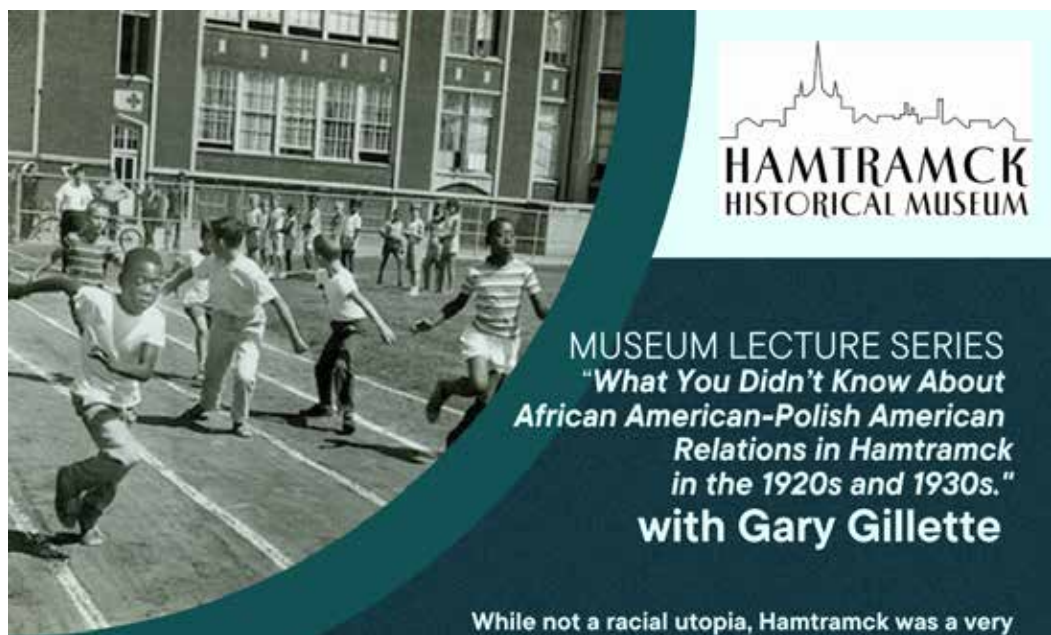
When it comes to good food and great times, Hamtramck has plenty to offer. In this column, we'll talk about what's happening at our bars, restaurants and at other events throughout the city.

Quick Hits

Cont. from front page

Volunteers are asked to meet up at one of the following locations, where supplies will be provided.

- Hamtramck City Hall – 3401 Evaline
- Pope Park – 10037 Jos. Campau
- Veterans Park – 8640 Joseph Campau
- Sarah Garrett Park – 11361 Dequindre



**HAMTRAMCK
HISTORICAL MUSEUM**

MUSEUM LECTURE SERIES
**"What You Didn't Know About
African American-Polish American
Relations in Hamtramck
in the 1920s and 1930s."**
with Gary Gillette

While not a racial utopia, Hamtramck was a very progressive city in terms of race relations. The original Hamtramck village council and the first city council both included Black council members. African Americans could own their own houses in the city and Hamtramck Public Schools were integrated (both unlike Detroit). This talk will focus on the African American-Polish American cooperation and civil rights actions in Hamtramck in the 1920s and 1930s.

RESCHEDULED DATE: Sat., May 16th at 1 p.m. - \$5

Hamtramck Historical Museum, 9525 Jos. Campau

Register here: hamtramckhistory.com. Tickets also available at the door.

This week at the Library . . .

April 17, 2026

Medicare: A team from Priority Health will conduct a meeting answering questions about Medicare options. The next presentation will take place on Wednesday, May 6 at 2:15 pm.

Earthquake: The San Francisco Earthquake struck at 5:13 am on April 18, 1906, followed by a massive fire from overturned wood stoves and broken gas pipes. The fire raged uncontrollable for three days resulting in the destruction of over 10,000 acres of property and 4,000 lives lost.

Battle of San Jacinto: This battle between Texans led by Sam Houston and Mexican forces led by Santa Anna took place on April 21, 1836 near present day Houston. The Texans decisively defeated the Mexican forces thereby achieving independence.

"In God We Trust": That phrases appeared on all newly minted U.S. coins by the Act of Congress after April 22, 1864.

William Shakespeare: He was born on April 23, 1564 in Stratford-on-Avon, England. Renowned as the most influential writer in the English language, he created 36 plays and 154 sonnets, including Romeo and Juliet, Hamlet and The Merchant of Venice.

Library of Congress: It was established in Washington D.C. on April 24, 1800. It is American's oldest federal cultural institution and the world's largest library. Among the 145 million items in its collections are more than 33 million books, 3 million recordings, 12.5 million photographs,

5.3 million maps, 6 million pieces of sheet music and 63 million manuscripts. About 10,000 new items are added to the collection each day.

LOTE4Kids: This collection of over 2000 digital books in 50+ languages can be accessed by you anytime from your computer or other smart devices. All this is free with the use of your library card. They even have stories in ASL. Find a link to this awesome resource for kids on our website www.hamtramck.lib.mi.us under the eResources tab.

Exercise at the Library: The RIM Foundation was begun exercise classes again this fall. On Tuesdays, its back to Yoga at 2:30 pm. and on Fridays, it is Tai Chi at 10:00 am. To register for the program, stop by the library circulation desk.

Story Time: These programs conducted by the library staff are scheduled for Wednesdays afternoon at 4:00 pm. All children are invited.

OverDrive: What more can your library card get you? How about OverDrive's enormous collection of digital materials. Whether searching overdrive.com or using their Libby App, you will have quite the selection of ebooks, online periodicals and audio books to pick from. Plus, Kanopy, with its smorgasbord of foreign and classic films, documentaries, and educational series, is now under the OverDrive umbrella. Find links to both of these media repositories on our website www.hamtramck.lib.mi.us.

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

POLISH GENEALOGY WORKSHOP



Learn more about
your family with
Valerie Koselka!

- During this workshop participants will learn to use Polish resources to locate ancestral parishes and use websites to find metrical records. Note: Attendance at the first workshop was not required to attend this one.

Sat., May 9, 2026

- 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
- Includes workshop and lunch
- \$40
- Register at hamtramckhistory.com

9525 Jos. Campau, Hamtramck MI 48212

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Review: Opinion Page

In Our Opinion

Recall elections often do more harm than good

We are hesitant to keep focusing on what's going on among Hamtramck's elected officials, but the growing political division has also caught the attention of the public.

People here, it appears, are ticked off with the antics they see at city council meetings.

The number one person who is getting the most attention and criticism is Councilmember Mohamed Hassan.

And now, there appears to be a recall effort growing to toss Hassan out of office.

In our experience,

recall elections are messy, and cause only further division in the community. There are no winners in a recall election.

At one time, it was fairly easy to get approval by Wayne County election officials to mount a recall. The law simply required that the recall language was clear.

It was said that you could recall an elected official for shooting President Lincoln, despite that incident happening 150 years ago.

Lansing lawmakers wised up and raised the standards for

mounting a recall. There's a good chance now that any recall proposal gets shot down by election officials.

We understand the frustrations of the public. Councilmember Hassan is indeed disruptive and rude.

But we've seen worse antics before that resulted in no blowbacks.

We caution those behind the recall effort to think twice about moving forward. These elections have often had the effect of making things worse, not better.

Kidnapping case goes national

Continued from front page

on the way to school. He is a danger to public safety."

The judge also noted that Fields claimed he had no prior criminal history despite his record, which also influenced her decision to deny bond.

"There's not a bond that can be set to keep the community safe from Mr. Fields," she said.

Farhat praised the quick work by officers and detectives.

"I believe a child's life was saved because of the officers," he said. "The suspect wasn't able to get far."

The kidnapping case

took an unexpected turn when the suspect and teen walked into a gas station at Conant and Nevada, just north of Hamtramck, where the suspect ordered the teen to pay for cigarettes.

The clerk at the gas station became alarmed when the teen silently mouthed the word "Help."

That clerk, Abdulrahman Abohatem, came out from his enclosure and separated the teen from the suspect. The clerk then walked the suspect outside just as Hamtramck police officers were pulling up.

Abohatem told media outlets: "I see the police outside. I point to him. I go, 'That's the guy.'"

The suspect was apprehended without incident.

Abohatem received praise for his handling of the situation.

The incident quickly got the attention of various media outlets locally, statewide and nationally. A report of the incident was also broadcast on ABC's "Good Morning America."

Mayor Alharbi said he

hopes that, if the suspect is found guilty, he will face the "highest maximum punishment permitted by law. We will make sure he gets what he deserves."

A resident, Um Hamza, said on social media that her daughter was on a school bus to Frontier shortly after the abduction. That's when her daughter became aware of the incident, saying:

"One girl comes running and crying saying her friend was just kidnapped. She (the victim) was walking to the bus stop when a guy wearing a mask snatched her."

Frontier is a charter school located on Conant. It is not part of the Hamtramck Public School District.

The president of the HPS Board of Education, Abdulmalik Algahaim, said the incident is a reminder for parents to be aware.

"As in any instance that threatens the safety of our children, it is very important they know what to do. Please speak with your children on a daily basis about their day to see if anything has happened that would cause alarm," Algahaim said.

Hamtramck's police department says it will step up patrols, and at Tuesday's city council meeting, the department received the go-ahead to purchase more Flock surveillance cameras.

Odds & Ends

Correction ... In the recent School Bell column about students participating in an oratorical contest, the name of student Faiza Azrin was misspelled.

We apologize for the error.

For the life of vinyl ... For the next few weeks, for more than one reason, music lovers and vinyl collectors: Rejoice!

This Saturday (April 18) is Record Store Day, happening on Saturday, April 18. It's a celebration to highlight the small, independent record stores and give them an annual boost (or two, or some years, three, but mostly now two, in mid-April and around Black Friday in late November; the July one seems to have died out as overkill).

All that said, Hamtramck's indie stores aren't formally participating, those being The Record Graveyard (2610 Carpenter, west of Jos. Campau at Mackay) and Detroit Threads (10238 Jos. Campau, south of Caniff at Trowbridge).

They will be open, however, and you never know what they might be doing on that day when all is said and done.

Plenty of stores are listed on the official Record Store Day website (recordstoreday.com), the closest one to Hamtramck being Jack White's store Third Man Records in the Wayne State area, about seven miles away.

Personal favorite stores (just for their names alone) include Ripe Records in Grosse Pointe Park, Weirsville Records in Mt. Clemens, Big Me Records in Livonia, Vinyl People Records in Westland, Wazoo Records in Ann Arbor, Street Corner Music in Oak Park and Electric Crown Records in Flint.

This year Bruno Mars is the RSD "Ambassador." A special offer for the day includes a chance to win a large, special Neil Diamond collection, and there are listening previews planned, and sometimes live, in-store performances (planned or impromptu, relatively)... you just never know.

But you will probably have a good time. Recommended.

As if that isn't enough, on Sunday, May 3, from 10 a.m.-6 p.m. at East-

ern Market's Shed 5, the second annual Detroit Vinylfest takes place.

A brainchild of the folks behind long-running Bookfest, this free-to-the-public event will feature some 80 vendors of vinyl records, CDs, cassette tapes, posters, music memorabilia and so forth.

"It's about digging through the crates, meeting artists, and keeping record culture alive in a city that helped define modern music," crowed founder Ryan M. Place.

Scheduled appearances include those by reps of the Motown Museum; former Slipknot percussionist Chris Fehn; Ghostly International Records co-founder Matthew Dear; Submerge Distribution's Cornelius Harris; legendary poster artist Mark Arminski; and more.

A slate of DJs will spin throughout the day, including Harris, Frank Raines, Isaac Prieto, Paul Karat-sinides, Dezi Magby, Rick Wilhite, Raul Rocha, and Ameera.

Eastern Market is located at 2934 Russell St., Detroit.

For more info, contact music@detroitvinylfest.com

Whew! Bang a gong! Get it on!

Footlights going to our heads ... And here's a reminder, now that we're all un-cocooning from Winter's wrath, of the fine live theater that exists just a few miles from here, inside the Fisher Building and at the Opera House.

It's brought to you by Broadway in Detroit, compiling the best in available touring shows from the recent Tony nominees and winners, plus revivals of old favorites and more.

It's almost all musicals nowadays, with very few "straight plays," also known as those with nothing sung, coming across the boards.

But if you love expert dance and song and can't easily get to, or afford, Broadway in New York City, give Detroit's version a try. It's virtually the same level of quality for a lot less money and hassle, with gated or structure parking – free! (remember to take a pic of that QR code in the theater's lobby so you don't get charged) – merch tables; cocktails, wine and beer, and so much more.

See you there!

Ants in your plants ... The National Pest Management Association (NPMA)'s entomological experts want people to know what to look for as far as ants go, since we're easing our way into pest season again.

Let's start with the fact that we are wrapping up Ant Awareness Week, which runs from April 12-18.

The NPMA's most recent survey found that only about 1 in 4 adult Americans can correctly identify various common ant species, even though they may look and behave quite differently.

Take the Carpenter Ant, for example. Common here in Michigan and the Detroit area, they are always found near wood, their main food source. They can even be winged in some cases or phases.

Odorous House Ants – those little tiny black ones – can enter easily, given their small size, and once a scout identifies a food source in your home, like crumbs on the floor, or unswept pet kibble, you may soon thereafter find a steady trail of them coming and going.

Red Imported Fire Ants build conspicuous nests that are relatively easy to spot and eradicate – thankfully, as their stings are painful, and they can defend against perceived threats aggressively.

We hadn't heard of this next specie until just recently, but apparently (since 1932, when they were first spotted in the U.S.), we've been dealing with some invasive little buggers known as Asian Needle Ants.

These also sting, like fire ants (stings potent enough to rival those of bees, wasps or hornets, such that even a single one can send a person into anaphylactic shock) but are trickier because of their habit of making their homes in rotting wood, mulch, garden underbrush, etc.

In spite of how long they've been in the U.S., though, there has yet to be a report made about them being spotted in Michigan. Kind of odd, being as they've been in this country so long.

And it may just be a matter of time, as they have

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Place an Ad in The Review Today
(313) 874-2100

Coming Events

SATURDAY, April 25, 4-6 p.m. – Drive-thru Take-out Polish Dinner at Holy Cross P.N.C. Church, 2311 Pulaski Street at Fleming. \$15 Adult/\$8 Child 12 & under. Menu: Pork Chop, Kielbasa, Pierogj/sour cream, Sauerkraut, Mashed Potatoes/gravy, Dessert. Cars will be staged in parking lot for delivery in front of church.

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Advertisers should check their ad following first publication. The newspaper shall not be liable for failure to publish an ad, for a typographic error or errors in publication except to the extent of the cost of the ad for the first day's insertion. Adjustments for errors is limited to the cost of that portion of the ad wherein the error occurred. We reserve the right to classify, revise or reject any classified advertisement.

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Deadline for classifieds for next week is Thursday at Noon
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Hamtramck Public TV-19

April 17 2026

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

What's on this coming week?

News from City Council and Hamtramck School Board

Jazz Concert by Phil Hale,

Short announcements made by the City Administration, Monthly meeting of the Hamtramck Board of Education

Eid Al-Fitr and of Islamic Holy Month of Ramadan

Piast Institute Drug Free Community Zoom Meeting

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", and click on link "Hamtramck Public TV"; Or go to YouTube; Hamtramck Public TV; Hamtramck Public Library; Videos, or Live

To place community announcement call the Library at 313-733-6822
Or email: HamtramckTV@gmail.com
Announcements submitted by 10 am
Will go on air the same day (evening)
To upload video files go to bit.ly/hamtramcktv



By Charles Sercombe

This week's Crime Log covers April 7-13.

Tuesday, April 7

• At 2 a.m., a disorderly person was reported in the 9700 block of Conant.

• A break-in was reported at a business in the 9600 block of Jos. Campau.

• A theft was reported in the 5100 block of Yemans.

• A reckless driver was reported in the area of Goodson and Jos. Campau.

• A male suspect was arrested for assaulting two officers, and for fleeing and eluding. The suspect was also charged with possessing dangerous drugs.

Wednesday, April 8

• A fight was reported in the 11600 block of Fleming.

• At midnight, a complaint was made about noise in the 12000 block of Dyar.

• An illegal dumping was reported on Jos. Campau.

• A stolen vehicle was recovered on Evaline.

• A suspect was arrested on Whalen for assault.

• A disturbance was reported in the 12000 block of Grand Haven.

Thursday, April 9

• A vehicle was broken into in the 11500 block of Jos. Campau.

• A complaint was made about a juvenile in the area of Jos. Campau and Goodson.

• A suspect was arrested for possessing a stolen vehicle.

• Drag racing was reported in the area of Jos. Campau and Caniff.

• A reckless driver was reported in the area of Gallagher and Roosevelt.

• Reckless drivers were reported in the area of Jos. Campau and Zinow.

Friday, April 10

• A domestic assault

was reported in the 2200 block of Goodson.

• Officers, responding to a call about a disturbance in the 12000 block of Selfridge, arrested a suspect for trespassing.

• A disorderly male was reported in the 11300 block of Conant.

Saturday, April 11

• A domestic assault was reported in the area of Belmont and Conant.

• An incident of indecent exposure was reported in the 3200 block of Hanley. Another incident of indecent exposure in the 2000 block of Caniff resulted in an arrest of a suspect.

• A theft from a vehicle was reported in the 3000 block of Goodson.

• A fight was reported in the 9100 block of Jos. Campau.

• A hit-and-run accident was reported in the area of Hanley and Jos. Campau.

Sunday, April 12

• Following a foot chase, a suspect was arrested for possessing a stolen vehicle.

• A complaint was made about an animal on Prescott.

• A domestic assault was reported in the 11600 block of Lumpkin.

• A suspect was arrested in the 3000 block of Trowbridge for being disorderly.

Monday, April 13

• Trespassing was reported in the 9400 block of Conant.

• At 5:30 a.m., a suspect was arrested in the 12000 block of Lumpkin for robbery, and for property damage.

• At about 7 a.m., a suspect was arrested for kidnapping a juvenile who was walking on Lumpkin.

• A complaint was made about a juvenile on Florian.

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

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PreK program expansion

Michigan is expanding its "PreK for All" program to include home-based child care providers for the first time through a new pilot initiative – broadening access to no-cost, high-quality pre-kindergarten for families and creating new opportunities for small child care businesses across the state.

PreK for All provides free, high-quality early learning to Michigan four-year-olds, helping families save on child care costs while preparing

children for kindergarten and beyond. This pilot builds on that effort by expanding options for families and strengthening Michigan's mixed-delivery system.

The pilot will also include a comprehensive evaluation to assess how home-based providers can best deliver PreK for All. PreK for All enrollment is now open for families. Learn more at MiPreKforAll.org.

SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESS





City Hall Insider ...

What is our City Council up to these days?
We have the highlights of the latest council meeting.

By Charles Sercombe

The city council met on March 24, and all council members were in attendance.

It was announced that a tree-planting block party will happen on April 18, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The planting will happen in Pulaski Park.

The program is being funded by a grant. The city has also been named a "Tree City" by the Arbor Day Foundation, in partnership with the United States Forest Service and the National Association of State Foresters.

Isabel Allaway, the manager of the Community Economic Department, said the city's designation "opens up some different resources for our city staff, and grant opportunities."

Activities at the planting are expected to include:

- Educational sessions to teach about the benefits of trees
- Tree planting workshops
- Free giveaways
- Crafts
- Touch-A-Truck – a chance for kids to see bucket trucks up-close
- Music

The Hamtramck Parks Conservancy gave an update. The Executive Director of the conservancy, Tom Habitz, said the organization has "made a lot of strides."

He said the conservancy has attracted various grants that funded a number of upgrades in Veterans and Playfair parks. The basketball and tennis courts are getting redone and, soon, restrooms will be installed at the historic baseball stadium.

During public comment, Ahmed Sharaf Aldeen said the council needs to give the city manager "full power, so the city will move on." He questioned why the council was attempting to take control of the city after just hiring a new manager.

"You hired him, and then you want to take his position," he said.

In an email, Phillip Kwik complained about a mosque at the end of his street on Lumpkin that broadcasts the call to prayer before 6 a.m. – the earliest the city allows it to be broadcast.

In the three incidents he cited, the mosque broadcast the call just minutes before 6 a.m.

"This is not the first time that this mosque has broadcast the call to prayer outside of legal hours," Kwik said.

A resident complained that the mayor and city council are violating the city charter.

"The city charter is not optional. It must be respected," the resident said.

The resident also said that the hiring process of the city manager raised concerns about whether it was fair and transparent. The resident said the city

has faced lawsuits from past hirings that did not work out.

In the meantime, the resident said the city's roads "are in terrible condition."

Lynn Blasey asked the council what it is doing to protect residents from ICE agents arresting suspected illegal aliens.

"I fear for the safety and security of our communities," Blasey said.

Naji Choudhury said that women in the community are not being "included enough in public spaces."

"Let's build a plan," Choudhury said, to include more women in city planning and events.

He said he's hearing from the community a desire to have Councilmember Nayeem Choudhury censured for his comments about residents on social media, some of which have been criticized for being vulgar.

(Some of the comments include calling a female resident a "fake bitch," and a political rival a "douchebag.")

Choudhury said the councilmember's comments are "not a good look for the city."

A way to combat this, he said, is for city officials to receive social media training.

"When lines are crossed, there should be accountability," Choudhury said. "There should be apologies being made. Let's just get better with the social media, guys."

Councilmember Nayeem Choudhury defended his comments, saying "It's my freedom of speech, my freedom of expression."

He said that some people used "derogatory words against me," and attacked his deceased father.

"These people (have) nothing to do, and they are wasting our time," Councilmember Choudhury said. "They're just starting instigations and drama and chaos."

Mayor Adam Alharbi said he "encourage(s) everybody to participate: women, men, everybody in our city. We do want our women leaders to step forward."

Councilmember Mohamed Hassan, speaking as a resident from the lectern for the public, complained about the city's ambulance service.

He said he waited over 20 minutes for an ambulance to respond to a medical emergency his wife was having. He also said he suspected one of the ambulance crew of being drunk.

Mayor Alharbi said the city will look into the matter, and that, down the road, will consider restoring the fire department to be providing ambulance service.

In old business, a lengthy discussion was held on whether to establish an employment sub-commit-

tee of the council, for it to have a hand in the hiring process of city employees and appointees.

Mayor Alharbi said that would violate the charter, which gives that job to the city manager.

Councilmember Hassan said the council's role wouldn't conflict with the (city) charter. "If the council wants to do it, we can do it," he said.

City Attorney Odey Meroueh said the city manager is in charge of all hiring and firing, but the council can form a sub-committee.

City Manager Adel Al-Adlani said councilmembers are welcomed to give their input on hiring employees.

The council approved a resolution to form the committee.

A lengthy discussion was held on whether to consolidate supervision of the Downtown Development Authority, Building Department, Code Enforcement and Community Development all under the banner of the Community Economic Department.

The request to consolidate the departments was made by City Manager Al-Adlani.

Mayor Alharbi questioned whether putting the

departments under the supervision of the community economic department director will "distract" the director from her main job.

Al-Adlani said it's a matter of being able to focus on getting grants for the city.

He said the city can't "move forward without grants." Al-Adlani said the city is currently seeking a \$6 million grant, and that Jos. Campau now has a 25 percent vacancy rate for its commercial spaces.

The council voted down the proposal.

The council approved a contract with a company to secure buildings and properties that pose a danger or hazard to the public.

The council also approved the purchase of two police vehicles at a combined cost of \$98,000, and another \$54,000 to outfit them. The purchase will be covered by the police department's narcotic fund.

In another lengthy discussion, the council rejected a proposal by the mayor to stop adding items to the council agenda as the meeting starts.

Alharbi said this would restrict adding new items, so that only those of an emergency nature can be considered, as specified by the city charter.

Councilmember Mohamed Hassan disagreed,

saying "The system we have is very good."

He insisted that the council has the right to add items.

"I'm not going to give my power to you," Hassan told the mayor.

The mayor said that the city charter is being violated when items that are not an emergency are added at the last minute to the agenda.

"This sets a standard," Alharbi said. "That's how we work together. We set the rules and standard for us to operate."

He stressed that adding items to the council agenda at the start of meetings deprives the public from being informed ahead of time, and then having enough time "to come and place their public comments. That's the issue here."

Councilmember Abu Musa agreed with Councilmember Hassan, saying, "I don't want to give up my right."

The mayor questioned "What the heck is the point of having the agenda in the first place and adding resolutions by a certain deadline? What's the point of the charter?"

In another matter, the council rejected a proposal to create a social media policy for community input on the city's Facebook page. Mayor Alharbi said there are comments that are racist or

have nothing to do with the subject matter.

As of now, comments are not monitored by the city administration on the city's social media sites.

This resolution, he said, would allow the city to monitor its social media pages and what comments are allowed.

Councilmember Musa questioned whether this would create a new position in the city. The mayor explained that it is only a policy to adopt.

Councilmember Hassan noted that Hamtramck has become "chaos media city."

Hassan said that only the mayor can "speak on behalf of Hamtramck city – nobody else. ... We don't want to bring the chaos here."

City Manager Al-Adlani requested the matter be set aside so he can determine whether this will result in one of the city's employees being distracted from their regular job duties.

"The goal is good, but discuss that with me first because I have to see (if) you are going to drag one of my team and distract him from doing his job," Al-Adlani said.

The annual street closure of part of Belmont, from the Jos. Campau alley to Jos. Campau, for the upcoming monthly Night Bazaar was approved af-

Continued on page 6



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City Hall Insider ...



Continued from page 5

ter a lengthy discussion.

Councilmember Nayeem Choudhury questioned what Night Bazaar is about. He was concerned that taxpaying businesses would face unfair competition from vendors.

"It is hurting the person who's paying taxes every month, paying insurance, paying employees," he said. "It is not fair to the business owners."

Isabel Allaway, of the CED, explained that the event takes place just once a month, starting in May, for a total of five months.

She said that there is no financial impact

to nearby businesses. She said the event is to encourage "emerging businesses" to establish themselves.

Mayor Alharbi said that this event has happened for the past two or three years.

"It makes the city look nice," Alharbi said. "It attracts people from other cities. ... It's one of the nice things that we do in the city."

City Manager Al-Adlani added that the event also creates "a sense of place" for the community.

But Councilmember Choudhury questioned

how the city benefits.

"Who's behind this? ... Who is the Night Bazaar? I don't see the community attending there," he said.

Allaway said the event is under her direction, and that about 600 people attend each event.

The council approved the project.

Councilmember Choudhury talked about comments directed at city officials on social media, saying that people are "continuously nagging. They are derogatory words, very bad words and calling out continuously."

Mayor Alharbi said that as an elected official, the public has a right to "attack us."

Odds & Ends

Continued from page 3

been identified in Ohio, Wisconsin, and elsewhere close, although they are seen most (so far) in the Carolinas, Georgia and Alabama.

Nor are ants the only spring/summer tiny crawling pest we need to be vigilant about: The NPMA also stresses to be watchful for mosquitoes, termites and ticks (the latter have really seen an, you'll forgive, up-tick in the past couple summers), and we might add grubs, centipedes

and certain spiders such as the Brown Recluse to that list.

In general, stay aware of standing water pooling up after rains, etc., and try to mitigate it. If you have a birdfeeder, change it daily with fresh water from the hose, or consider one that stays running to keep the water circulating.

With ticks, check yourself (or have someone else check you) for them on your skin or clothes after coming in from any

walk through taller grass or weeds.

Many of these pests are more than just sources of an itchy bite or painful sting; they can be carriers of maladies from Lyme Disease to encephalitis to west Nile virus and more.

In short, spend a few minutes online or with a good reference book or three. A little time now may save you a lot of grief later.

You could start by checking out nmapestworld.org for more info and tips from the NPMA.

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