Newer roads, schools, housing

State’s new capital budget loaded with SW Side improvement funds

By Tim Hadac

The recently passed state capital budget includes a wealth of funds to address the needs of the Southwest Side.

Perhaps the most eye-popping is $150 million earmarked for use by the Illinois Department of Transportation to make a grade separation between the Belt Railway tracks and either 63rd Street or 65th Street, just east of Harlem Avenue.

“Never in my life did I expect to see an underpass at 65th and Nottingham,” said Clearing resident Bill Woelke, who as a truck driver for decades and now a school bus driver, knows the frustration of tie-ups caused by slow-moving or even stopped freight trains on 63rd and 65th Streets. “Whoever got these funds deserves a big, big pat on the back.”

The funds were earmarked by action taken by Illinois House Speaker Michael J. Madigan (D-22nd), who was low key about the development when he spoke briefly last week with the Greater Southwest News-Herald.

He noted the notorious slow pace of the Illinois Department of Transportation in terms of bringing projects to fruition, recalling that as far back as 1972, he had worked to earmark funds for the Central Avenue Overpass—a project that would have linked Clearing with Bedford Park and Burbank, but which never happened.

Other IDOT projects have similarly stalled, including an underpass at 54th and Central and one at Southwest Highway and Maplewood.

While many in the Clearing neighborhood have cheered the new funds, some remain skeptical.

“I hope it happens… it’s exciting to hear about $190 million being put in for an underpass—but I’ll believe it when I see it,” said Marge Wisniewicz, a 43-year resident of the community. “I’ve seen promises come and go on these things. It looks like [Speaker] Madigan did his part. Now it’s up to state government to do its part. I hope that Governor Pritzker gets on IDOT to make this happen.”

We’re sick of these tie-ups caused by the railroads.” Also in the new capital budget is $98 million for SW Side improvement funds for the Central Avenue Overpass—a project that would have linked Clearing with Bedford Park and Burbank, but which never happened.

- Greater Southwest News-Herald file photo

Cool cars cruise Archer

A stretch of Archer Avenue that still is designated a No Cruising Zone, according to a city ordinance passed in the early 1990s, was loaded with cool cars last Friday evening. The celebration of the automobile was the annual Archer Cruise Night, sponsored this year by the Garfield Ridge Chamber of Commerce and the Garfield Ridge Neighborhood Watch.

More photos on page 8.

- Greater Southwest News-Herald photo by Mary Hadac

Impasse passed

Namaste teachers OK new pact

By Joan Hadac

Eighth graders are set to graduate this afternoon at Namaste Charter School in the McKinley Park neighborhood, as the entire school community breathes a sigh of relief, now that a threatened shutdown will not occur.

Earlier this month, Chicago Teachers Union negotiators reached a tentative work agreement that the CTU ranks and file voted to accept five days later.

Namaste teachers were at an impasse with the school community in terms of contract negotiations. The school business and community members represented by CTU that they were committed to strengths the Namaste community meeting with parents and other school community members to talk about the agreement and ongoing efforts to support and strengthen the Namaste school community.

Officials at Namaste have remained silent on the new work agreement, as they did on an earlier allegation by CTU that they were “currently reviewing final language for publishing. We also expect to schedule a school community meeting with parents and other school community members to talk about the agreement and ongoing efforts to support and strengthen the Namaste school community.”

Details of the new pact have not yet been released.

Union officials told the Greater Southwest News-Herald this week that they are “currently reviewing final language for publishing. We also expect to schedule a school community meeting with parents and other school community members to talk about the agreement and ongoing efforts to support and strengthen the Namaste school community.”

U.S. Bank closing local branches

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INSIDE THIS WEEK’S NEWS-HERALD

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DENISE FLETCHER

Denise Fletcher (née Dey), age 65, passed away peacefully at age 65, surrounded by her loving family. She is survived by her children, Dana (Ezra) Petrillo, Lynden (Kenny) Fletcher, Amy Fletcher and Michael. Fionia, Alex, Dylan and Quinn; great-grandchild, Ilsa. She is preceded in death by her brother, Dwayne Dally and her sister, JoAnn Dally. She is survived by her grandchildren, Jordan, Madison, Alex, Dylan, Addyson, Michael Jr., Fionia, Alex, Dylan and Quinn; great-grandchild, Ilsa. She is preceded in death by her brother, Dwayne Dally and her parents, Harold and Nina Whipple.

Visitation was held June 6 at Damar-Kaminski Funeral Home, 7861 S. 88th Avenue, Justice. Funeral was held June 9 at Damar-Kaminski Funeral Home & Crematorium 7861 S. 88th Ave., Justice, IL 60458.

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Will honor memory of Father McDonnell

By Joan Hadac

Less than a year after a little girl scraped her knee at a asphalt parking lot.

Five years after that playlot was built, it was named in honor of the memory of the late Father John J. McDonnell, former St. Mary SOS pastor, who died in 2018.

"It is appropriate to make our body fit for every good work," said the Rev. Roger Corrales-Diaz, current pastor, just before he blessed the newly named playlot. "God approves of recreation for the relaxation of the mind and the exercise of the body."

García fights Trump on USCIS shutdowns

From staff reports

U.S. Rep. Jesús "Chuy" García (D-4th) and Adriano Espaillat (D-NY) recently announced the inclusion of what they called important language in Appropriations Committee Chairwoman Lucille Roybal-Allard for helping us understand that the House Appropriations Committee include language to keep the offices open.

In its draft report, the Appropriations Committee expressed concern about the plan and lack of congressional and stakeholder engagement. It directs USCIS to refrain from implementing a plan to close the offices until the agency consults with stakeholders and Congress on the rationale for closing these offices, potential costs and budget savings, and how services and personnel will be impacted.

"Every day President Trump finds new ways to attack immigrants and make it harder for people to come to the United States and pursue the American Dream," García said. "I am thankful to Appropriations Committee Chairwoman Nita Lowey and Homeland Security Subcommittee Chairwoman Lucille Roybal-Allard for helping us stand against the closing of USCIS offices overseas. We must hold this Administration accountable and require them to provide services that USCIS should be providing."

Last month, García and Espaillat, along with Rep. Kathleen Rice (D-NY) introduced legislation to prevent USCIS from closing the offices without proper congressional oversight and approval.

St. Mary SOS playlot gets a name

The playlot under construction in spring, 2014. – Supplied photo

As the playlot acquires its new name, the Rev. Roger Corrales-Diaz spreads holy water among St. Mary Star of the Sea students to bless the space.

- Greater Southwest News-Herald photo by Mary Hadac

Will honor memory of Father McDonnell

By Joan Hadac

Less than a year after a little girl scraped her knee during recess at St. Mary Star of the Sea School, parents mobilized and built a soft-surface playlot to get boys and girls off the asphalt parking lot.

Five years after that playlot was built, it was named in honor of the memory of the late Father John J. McDonnell, former St. Mary SOS pastor, who died in 2018.

"It is appropriate to make our body fit for every good work," said the Rev. Roger Corrales-Diaz, current pastor, just before he blessed the newly named playlot. "God approves of recreation for the relaxation of the mind and the exercise of the body."

Chicago Police Officer George Perez, a St. Mary SOS dad and a member of the parish Building Committee, recalled how quickly the playlot was pulled together. "As a school resource officer, I worked at a lot of different schools, and I would see these nice little playgrounds in such schools at St. Richard, St. Nick’s, St. Turibius and St. Gall," he told the assembled students, teachers, parents and parishioners.

"We had to raise about $8,000 in six weeks. We ended up raising $22,000 in two months—proving that we can accomplish anything when we come together as a school, as a parish and as a community."

In partnership with KaBOOM! (a national non-profit dedicated to safe play spaces for children) and the Glenview-based Reedy Industries, the soft-surface playlot was built. Today, it features a jungle gym and slides, as well as a Little Library that encourages people to read donated children’s books.

Bringing history to life

Earlier this spring, fourth and fifth graders at St. Richard School in Archer Heights brought history to life at a kind of “living wax museum” held in the school's gymnasium. Each child chose a figure from history, researched that person’s biography, and then dressed and acted as that person before other students at the school. Children chose figures as Rosa Parks, Jane Goodall, Abraham Lincoln, Neil Armstrong, Mae Jemison, Astrid Lindgren, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and more. “The kids were studying non-fiction, so to bring it to life I wanted them to really get in the feel of it,” said teacher Ashley Zundel. “Non-fiction is not an especially popular genre among students, especially fourth and fifth graders. I wanted them to choose a person from history that they really connected with. Now they’re the experts about the person they picked.”

Greater Southwest News-Herald photos by Mary Hadac
Warrant of attempted child luring

An attempted child luring in the Scottsdale neighborhood has prompted the Chicago Police Department to issue a community alert.

On June 12, police said that on May 25, between the hours of 5 and 6 p.m. in the 8500 block of South Talman, a man in his late 30s to 40s attempted to lure three preteen girls into his house by offering them the pizza. The offender stood behind a fence while waving his hand for them to come into his house. The victims fled the scene without being able to view the offender.

In the wake of the crime, police advise everyone to:
- Be aware of your surroundings.
- Call 911 to report any suspicious persons, vehicles, or activity in your neighborhood.
- Do not let children walk or play alone. Identify safe havens along your child’s route to school and home.
- Always be aware of your surroundings.

Those with useful information to share are encouraged to call the CPD Area Central Bureau of Detectives at (312) 747-8380 and refer to incident number JC-297296.

Reputed gang member slain in alley

A 39-year-old man was shot and killed as he stood in an alley in the 6400 block of South Talman at 10:36 p.m. Sunday, June 16. The victim’s identity was not immediately disclosed by authorities. He was shot in the back and was taken to Advocate Christ Medical Center. Another man, 43, with the victim was hit in the leg. He also was taken to Advocate Christ, where his condition stabilized. No one is in custody. Both victims are reputed gang members, a law enforcement source said.

Two men shot on Francisco

Two men—ages 30 and 43—were in serious condition Tuesday, June 11, after they were shot while standing on a sidewalk in the 6400 block of South Francisco at about 8:45 p.m. Tuesday, June 11. The older man was shot in the buttocks, and the younger man was hit in the back and leg. They took themselves to Holy Cross Hospital and were later transferred to Mount Sinai Hospital, where he was pronounced dead. No offenders are in custody.

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POLICE REPORTS

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Teen shot dead on the street

A 15-year-old boy was shot in the upper back and killed as he stood on the street in 2350 block of West 66th Street at 8:08 p.m. Sunday, June 15. The teen, whose identity had not been released by authorities earlier this week, was transported to Comer Children’s Hospital, where he was pronounced dead. No offenders are in custody.

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Police reports information is provided by law enforcement agencies. Charges are not evidence of guilt. They are a record of police actions taken, and people charged with a crime are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.
U.S. Bank closing local branches

M inneapolis-based U.S. Bank is cutting more than 20 local branches as it drastically reduces its presence in the Chicago-area, including the south suburbs.

The bank has announced it will close 21 of its 156 full-service branches by the end of June.

U.S. Bank is the latest financial institution to scale back its brick-and-mortar operations in the Chicago-area.

First Midwest has announced closings in the wake of its acquisition last year of Bridgeview Bank, Bank of America has announced it will close 16 Chicago-area branches this year, and Fifth Third Bank announced it would be shuttering as many as 50 branches after its purchase of MB Financial earlier this year.

Some of the U.S. Bank branches have already closed, in Flossmoor, Lyons, Orland Park, Evergreen Park, Oak Lawn, and 8317 S. Western Ave. in Chicago. Others are closing in the next two weeks, including 5830 W. 35th St. in Cicero, on June 20; and 12004 S. Pulaski Road in Chicago. Others are in Flossmoor, Lyons, Orland Park, Evergreen Park, Oak Lawn, and 8317 S. Western Ave. in Chicago. For more information, visit bobbong@bobbongbusiness.com.

From staff reports

The Chicago Department of Aviation (CDA) and Midway Airport recently cut ribbon for the newest retail offerings at Midway International Airport.

Ink by Hudson stores on Concourses A and B are the 16th and 17th concession locations to open at the airport. They are part of a three-year, $75 million concessions expansion that is transforming the concessions lineup for the first time in 20 years.

“INK by Hudson provides passengers with the best reading destination and a literary oasis at the airport,” said CDA Commissioner Jamie L. Rhee. “We welcome the variety of books, stationery and unique gifts that the Ink stores offer to the discerning traveler.”

While built around a core offering of books, and the Hudson Group’s decades-long passion for bookselling, Ink by Hudson’s concept emphasizes an eclectic collection of toys, gifts, necessities, and indulgences, from timeless quality pieces to pop culture phenomena.

The concessions upgrade is part of the ongoing Midway Modernization Program (MMP) that is improving the Midway passenger experience by expanding concession options, expanding the security checkpoint, and enhancing the terminal parking garage.

The MMP is a nearly $400 million investment in the future of Midway International Airport. It’s the largest improvement program at the airport in nearly 20 years and will upgrade travelers’ experience flying from, to, or through Midway. The MMP is expected to create more than 2,500 jobs and includes amenities, such as updated and expanded concessions, a vastly improved passenger screening experience, and improved parking facilities.

The celebrations at Midway follow the recent openings of new retail and dining offerings throughout the airport, bringing the number to 17 out of a total of 70 to be established by Midway Partnership by 2020.

The new Concourse CDA says will be going into that site.

A building that had been home to many businesses on the northwest corner of that intersection in Countryside, was being torn down last week. The city is not sure what a large demolition crew busy there.

ALSIP, on June 25.

St. in Cicero, on June 20; and 12004 S. Pulaski Road in Chicago. Others are in Flossmoor, Lyons, Orland Park, Evergreen Park, Oak Lawn, and 8317 S. Western Ave. in Chicago. A large monument sign welcoming visitors to Countryside, recently installed, remains on the corner.

MetroSouth announces it will close

Blue Island-based Metro South Medical Center announced to the state last week that it plans to close its doors by the end of the year.

Blue Island Mayor Domingo Vargas spoke out against the closure and said he was organizing a summit meeting of federal, state and local “shareholders” to discuss the impending closing.

“We need a hospital in the south land given that hospitals are part of a three-year, $75 million concessions expansion that is transforming the concessions lineup for the first time in 20 years. ink by Hudson provides passengers with the best reading destination and a literary oasis at the airport,” said CDA Commissioner Jamie L. Rhee. “We welcome the variety of books, stationery and unique gifts that the Ink stores offer to the discerning traveler.”

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The new Concourse A Food Hall features a number of locally-inspired restaurants, including Arami Sushi, Billy Goat Tavern, Woodgrain Neapolitan Pizza, Nuts on Clark, Reilly’s Daughter and an iStore. Other hometown brands include BIG & little’s, Big & little’s Daughter and an iStore.

A statement from the CEO John Walsh, in part, said, “…the data is clear that patient needs have changed – here and across the country. Enormous half-empty hospitals are not what the future of health care looks like.”

The 314-bed hospital at 12935 Gregory St. is the largest private employer in the area with over 800 workers. MetroSouth points to six hospitals and emergency rooms within 10 miles of Blue Island to pick up the patient loads.

Founded in 1905 as St. Francis Hospital, the facility was saved from a similar plan to close in the summer of 2008 when a for-profit operator bought it and renamed it. It was sold in early 2012 to a subsidiary of publicly traded Community Health Systems.

MetroSouth operators, in a news release, said that years of decreasing patient volumes, increasing market saturation, reduced insurance reimbursement and ongoing operational losses contributed to the hospital’s decision. Officials said that pretax losses last year totaled $8.4 million and are expected to surpass $10 million this year.

The hospital also operates six medical clinics in Chicago and the suburbs, including Alsip, Calumet Park and Palos Heights, that would be affected by a closure.

If you see a new business in town or wonder what happened to an old favorite, drop me a line at bobbong@hot mail.com. You can track business openings and closings at bobbon@gonbusiness.com.
I don’t need a day to remember my father

My dad was a great guy. It’s never too late to celebrate your father. I remember a strong person who never complained to everyone and took a long path and moved on. He didn’t blame others, but just pushed forward.

My dad, George, lived at a time when things were far better. He was from a bygone era in a society that has more to celebrate than to mourn.

Dad worked hard. He would walk to the bus on 87th and Jeffery, pay 25 cents and work down 167th, first for Sinclair Oil Company, where he was laid off before he could qualify for his pension, and then later for Northern Trust Bank, where he was laid off because he was “too old.”

I remember waiting for the bus to arrive. Dad would get off at Calumet Park, which used to be a park for everyone before it was named for just some, and be wearing his long, dark-camel hair coat and dark fedora. He actually carried a brief case.

He lived this country. Immediately after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, this legal immigrant and his legal immigrant brother enlisted in the military and fought the Nazis without a complaint. It took a lot to become a citizen. But Dad did the work. He learned English perfectly, waited patiently for his citizenship papers and stood proudly to swear the oath. The hard work was worth it then and it is worth it now.

Yes, Dad smoked, Camel unfiltered cigarettes. One pack a day. Humphrey Bogart smoked them, but Dad smoked them to survive the war. “More doctors smoke Camels than any other cigarette,” the advertisement boasted.

Dad respected everyone, even though not everyone always respected him. Being Arab American made his life challenging in the 1940s, ’50s and ’60s. He celebrated his heritage in a community that at one time was proud to be Arab, but that today has deteriorated into extremist religious fanaticism.

Dad didn’t hate anyone. We lived in a neighborhood where we were the outsiders. We understood what it was like to be stared at because of the dark color of our skin — olive was dark. Dad lived at a time when people lived among their own and tried to respect everyone else. We lived in an Arab-Jewish neighborhood when Arabs and Jews actually got along. There was the Polish neighborhood. The Jews were tearing down the Polish neighborhood. The black neighborhood. The Asian neighborhood. There was some overlap, but rarely a problem. Apologies were accepted because “everyone makes mistakes.”

The values that he lived by — fairness, respect, hard work, that universes were things that could not be said out loud because the words were so disrespectful and demeaning — just to oneself, but to yourself.

He lived at a time when the goal was to get an education, find a good job, buy a home and raise a family to abide by the laws, respect your neighbors and never say anything had about anyone else. That was the way back then.

We actually sat down—not just on Sundays, but every night—to enjoy a family meal together. “Family” had meaning. Dad lived at a time when families were big and families were together—celebrating their lives, not checking up on each other on Facebook. You actually had to put effort into maintaining your relationship with your relatives: writing letters, taking pictures and that took decades and then give your relatives.

Dad lived at a time when the telephone was a nuisance, not an excuse to get in trouble.

Dad never yelled at the TV set. He lived at a time when the mainstream media was a resource of information, not a source of lies, distortions and bias. When Ed Sullivan would come on TV and introduce new talents and exotic colors and examples that could not be said out loud because the words were so disrespectful and demeaning—just to oneself, but to yourself.

The good news is that higher education funding model, but that means state funding for the new formula must now rise by at least $350 million. The governor said he wanted to continue making those sorts of investments in K-12 in the future.

Ask whether higher education needed its own “evidence-based” funding model, Pritzker said he’d heard the concept was kicking around, but couldn’t commit to something that wasn’t a reality.

Money isn’t everything. Some of our universities are much better led than others. Higher education is getting a big and sorely needed boost from the state’s new infrastructure program, which will allow the institutions to fix up their dilapidated campuses and finally move some of them into the 21st century.

Has Illinois started to turn the corner here? I would say it has taken a step in that direction. The first step has been to start digging the hole. But solving this problem by making the state more competitive with those who love poaching our students is still a very long way off. We need more than platitudes.

Rich Miller also publishes Capitol Fax, a daily political newsletter, and CapitolFax.com.
Cool cars cruise Archer

Auto enthusiasts from across the Southwest Side, as well as nearby suburbs, converged on Archer Avenue last week to take part in the Archer Cruise Night, an annual event established in 2014 and hosted this year by the Garfield Ridge Chamber of Commerce and the Garfield Ridge Neighborhood Watch. Classic cars ranged from a century-old Ford to newer muscle cars. – Greater Southwest News Herald photos by Mary Hadac

Justice resident George Heslop and his Lake Buggy wooden car, a curiosity on local streets for more than four years. Heslop took 18 months and 7,000 man hours to build the unique, quirky car.

Brookfield resident Kevin Lizyk, who cruised Archer Avenue when he was a teenager, shows off his yellow 1932 Ford, which he started working on 19 years ago. A fan of the film American Graffiti, Lizyk actually had the front fender of his street rod autographed by actor Paul Le Mat, who played the John Milner character in the iconic cruising film.

Garfield Ridge resident Robert Horvatth shows the 1955 Chevy that his family has owned ever since his father bought it new.

Garfield Ridge residents Ken and Peg Forte show off their gleaming, red Plymouth Fury.

Garfield Ridge resident Leo Dilger Jr. shares the vintage beauty of his 1928 Ford Model A roadster—which had belonged to his late father, Leo Dilger Sr.

Lyons resident Tim Harvey shows off his 1968 GTO convertible, which he has owned for the last six years.

What’s old is new again, as illustrated by Garfield Ridge resident Robert Navratil. His first car was a Ford Falcon—and last year he came full circle, buying a 1963 Falcon with a muscular 302 engine.

Volunteers like GRNW member Timothy Blazina helped the event run smoothly, helping pedestrians cross Archer safely so they could enjoy the show.
A Family Owned Business Providing Over 60 Years Of Dependable Service To Satisfied Customers
SXU dips into Public League for next women’s hoops coach

Corry Irvin, who led Whitney Young to three state championships, will succeed Bob Hallberg

From staff reports

The woman who built a Chicago Public League girls basketball program into a perennial state powerhouse will succeed Bob Hallberg as head coach of the Saint Xavier women’s hoops team.

Saint Xavier announced June 12 the hiring of Corry Irvin, who has overseen Whitney Young for the past 18 seasons.


“We are thrilled to welcome Corry to Saint Xavier,” said SXU president Dr. Laurie Joyner. “Coach Irvin brings an impressive breadth of knowledge and experience to our women’s basketball program, and has demonstrated that she is deeply committed to fostering academic accomplishment, athletic excellence and student success.”

Irvin has experience at the collegiate level, having served as an assistant under legendary head coach Doug Bruno at DePaul from 1999-2001. Irvin was responsible for recruiting for the Blue Demons and oversaw the team’s pre-season workout program.

Irvin called Saint Xavier “a tremendous university with a history of women’s basketball success.”

Irvin will become the second head coach in Saint Xavier women’s basketball history after Hallberg, who led the Cougars to 23 Chicagoland Collegiate Athletic Conference regular season and tournament titles since the program’s inception in 2000. Saint Xavier advanced to the NAIA national championship game in 2016 and the NAIA Fab Four in 2017.

Hallberg, of Oak Lawn, built the Cougars program beginning in 1999, and has served as athletics director beginning in May 2001. The women’s basketball program under his leadership reached the 100-win mark in its fourth season of existence, has achieved at least 20 wins in every season of its existence, and advanced to the NAIA National Tournament each of the last 13 seasons. The Cougars won a program-best 31 games in 2010 and 2015.

Hallberg played high school basketball at Leo under Jim Arnenberg and continued his playing career at Chicago Teachers College, now Chicago State, under Spin Salario. Hallberg received his degree in physical education from George Williams (Ill.).

Hallberg’s first coaching job was at Kennedy High School. In his five years there, his teams went 93-16 (.853).

In 1971, Hallberg was named the head men’s coach at Saint Xavier College. His teams won 127 games and two conference titles over the next six years.

That success earned a call from Chicago State in 1977. Chicago State was looking for a coach to lead its program into the NCAA Division I ranks. Hallberg responded with a 10-year run in which his teams averaged 25 wins a season.

In his first season at Chicago State, the Cougars placed third in the NAIA National Tournament and was ranked as the No. 1 small-college team in the nation. In 1985, his team set a record for the most NCAA Division I victories (16) for a program in its first season of Division I competition. During his tenure, Chicago State held the NCAA record for consecutive home victories at 75.
Red Stars on international soccer stage

Kerr stars with Australia; 4 shine on U.S. squad

From staff reports

“Suck on that one” were the words echoed around the globe after Chicago Red Stars forward Sam Kerr and Australia silenced critics in a comeback victory against Brazil last week.

This week, the Matildas were looking to once again prove their “haters” wrong and secure a spot in the Round of 16 against Jamaica on Tuesday.

The Matildas have been fighting for World Cup survival since former Red Stars Christiane put Brazil up 2-0 in the 38th minute of their Matchday 2 encounter. It was then Australia started to fight back and clawed their way out of a deficit. Kerr didn’t technically get on the scoresheet but essentially produced two “phantom” goals. After Australia scored a goal to cut the Brazil lead to one, she made a run that lured Brazilian goalkeeper Babá off her line, clearing the way for Chloe Logarzo to tie the game at 2. Eight minutes later, another run by Kerr forced the Brazil defense back and make a play on the ball, one that resulted in a defender heading the ball into her own net to give the Matildas a 3-2 victory.

With a new breath of life and a spirit fitting of the motto “Never Say Die,” Australia had a chance to advance to the Knockout Stages with a result against Jamaica. The Reggae Girlz’ welcome to the World Cup was a 3-0 loss to Brazil, which was followed up by a 5-0 loss to Italy.

Jamaica wasn’t expected to make much noise in the tournament, considering their FIFA ranking of 53, but the team possesses talent ready to deliver another twist in the Matildas’ story.

The talk of the World Cup for the Reggae Girlz has focused on goalkeeper Sydney Schneider, a 20-year-old who currently plays in college for UNC Wilmington. Against Brazil, she made a terrific penalty kick save against Debinha and followed it up by stopping another kick from the spot in their following game against Italy, though a foul gave the Italians a chance to retake the spot kick.

On the other end of the pitch, Jamaica has another budding star in Khadja “Bunny” Shaw. The 22-year-old is the reigning SEC Offensive player of the year, scoring 27 goals in 35 appearances for the University of Tennessee and has a similar outstanding goal ratio for her country, scoring 31 goals in 24 appearances.

Australia entered the game as the favorites, as they currently sit 6th in the FIFA rankings and momentum fully on their side after last week’s result.

Four Red Stars Players Shine in U.S. WNT Win

It was another banner performance for the U.S. Women’s National team in their 3-0 victory over Chile in their second group stage game.

All four Red Stars players earned the start and propelled the reigning champions to the eighth consecutive tournament.

U.S. Coach Jill Ellis made seven changes to the starting lineup for Sunday’s game, including the additions of Morgan Brian and Tierna Davidson.

The latter made her World Cup debut at 20 years of age, becoming the sixth player under the age of 21 to start a Women’s World Cup match for the U.S. WNT and the youngest player since 1995 to start.

Davidson was the top overall pick in the 2015 NWSL College Draft and wasted no time making an impact on the global stage, dishing out two assists in 35 minutes, both coming from set pieces.

The first of her assists was the premiere of the Chicago Red Stars connection to the global stage. Davidson whipped in a corner to Chicago teammate Julie Ertz, who made her trademark run at the near post and headed the ball into the goal to double the lead for the U.S. WNT in the 26th minute. It was Ertz’s 19th international goal and her 14th from a set piece but marked her first-ever goal in the World Cup.

Nine minutes later, Davidson once again delivered off a corner kick, finding Carlì Lloyd for the veteran’s second goal of the game and gave the Americans a commanding 3-0 lead over La Roja.

Ertz, Davidson, and goalkeeper Alyssa Naeher did their part in stunting the Chilean offense. La Roja was limited to a single shot through the 90 minutes. Brian played the full 90 minutes and was an instrumental part of a U.S. midfield that controlled the game with 72% of the possession held.

Naeher earned her second clean sheet of the tournament and has 26 career clean sheets in 46 international appearances.

The American victory sealed their place in the knockout stages of the tournament, joining Sweden out of Group F.

The matchup between the two teams would determine who enters the Round of 16 as the top seed in the group. Kickoff was scheduled for yesterday.

Catalyst Maria star makes all-state

Catalyst Maria star Bashaarah Muhammad has been selected to the Illinois State All-Star team by the Illinois Basketball Coaches Association (IBCA) this year. A Chicago Lawn resident, Muhammad was among those fated earlier this month at a ceremony in Pontiac, Ill. During the regular season, the senior star averaged 21.5 points per game, 11 rebounds and 6.4 assists. She also made the CPS City All-Star second team, was her team’s MVP for four straight seasons. Academically, she is a member of the National Honor Society.

– Supplied photo

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DLS softball stars are all-conference

De La Salle Institute softball stars (from left) Autumn Rizzo, Valencia Burnette and Kayla Sanchez were recently chosen to the 2019 All-Girls Catholic Athletic Association White Division Softball Team. All three just entered their junior years. Burnette, a Pilsen resident, also made the All-GCAC Team last season. This season, she batted .440 in conference play and drove in 13 runs scored and seven RBI. Burnette played shortstop and center field for the Meteors. Rizzo, a Clearing resident, hit .423 against GCAC White competition, with two home runs and 11 RBI. She also scored four runs as De La Salle’s starting catcher. Sanchez, an Archer Heights resident, recorded a .303 batting average and drove in 13 runs and 10 RBI in 30 games as the team’s starting first baseman. The Meteors ended their season with an overall record of 14-12 and won the IHSSA Class 3A Evergreen Park Regional championship before losing to Lemont in the Class 3A Nazareth Academy Sectional semifinals. – Supplied photo

FRIDAY, JUNE 21, 2019 GREATER SOUTHWEST NEWS-HERALD

SOUTHWEST SPORTS
Neighbors making Scottsdale a better place

Last week, on our way to my son’s soccer practice, we drove past the traffic circle on 57th, where the street meets Kolmar and Scottsdale. I noticed a group of people working tediously to remove weeds and shrubbery. I wondered if they were part of the Chicago Area Project organization that has been working on cleaning up the neighborhood. I told my husband to drop me off so I could investigate. He did and on his way to drop off my son to his practice.

It turns out it was a group of neighbors (Miguel Sanchez, Lorena Lopez, Adriana Navarro, Antonio Lopez and Arcelci Castillo) who came together to clean up the circle as it had become an eyesore with all the weeds.

The neighbors mentioned this has become a yearly task as the City will not come out to do anything with it. It was really nice to see the neighbors working hard together on keeping up with more than just their home. Kudos to these hardworking neighbors!

St. Bede Parish is having summer English classes. Registration and test will take place at 9 a.m. Saturday, June 22 at the parish center. The course itself is free, and there is a $10 registration fee.

The next Scottsdale Neighborhood Watch general meeting will be held at 11 a.m. Saturday, June 29th at Scottsdale Park. This will be a very interesting meeting, as they will be having an “active shooter” presentation. Eighteenth Ward Ald. Derrick Curtis is hosting a pet health fair from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, June 29 in the north parking lot at 8359 S. Pulaski. If your pets need vaccines, you might want to take advantage of this low-cost vaccine clinic. Please note, all dogs must be on a leash and all cats must be in a carrier. This is a cash only clinic. For prices and additional information, please call (773) 284-5057. I also thought that maybe putting vinegar on the St. Turibius area, mark your calendars August will soon be here. So, if you are in the St. Turibius area, mark your calendars for Aug. 17. The date is for the St. Turibi us Parish festival. It runs from 5:30 to 10 p.m. Maybe I will see you there.

Don’t forget to load up your your Hispanic food next Saturday, the 29th. The Hispanic community of St. Turibius will be selling delicious food after the 4 p.m. Mass. If we ever get summer weather, it will be time to head on out to our Chicago Park district’s water playgrounds and pools. They are open for business and will remain open through Labor Day, Sept. 2. To find a pool near you, visit chicagoparkdistrict.com or call (773) 363-2225 or for more general information call 312 742-PLAY.

Mary Stanek
West Elsdon & Archer Heights correspondent
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Taking a LEAP at Lee School

On Saturday, June 22 the 5th Annual Quotable Art Fest will take place at the corner of 63rd and Karlov, from noon to 7 p.m. There will be art vendors and music and activities for people of all ages. This event will highlight the visual arts through workshops and showcases. The Expo Col
tective and the Latino Organization of the Southwest and the Chicago Area Project are partnering to make this possible.

The West Lawn Branch Library, 4020 W. 63rd St. is hosting several events this month. There will be a Yoga For Everyone class and several other events.

After raising four kids and making school choices and decisions for many years, I must tell you about an exciting educational opportunity at Richard H. Lee Elementary School, 6448 S. Trap.

With the close of the school year comes the culmination of another great year for Lee School, as they continue to implement personalized learning at the school. Lee educators are working with Chicago Public Schools and national nonprofit, LEAP Innovations to make the success of every child personal - by tailoring the learning experience to their strengths, interests and needs.

Through personalized learning, the team at Lee has created opportunities for students to actively guide and shape individual learning at their own pace and progress on a daily basis. Students work either in small groups with their peers or by themselves to meet their goals. Their progress is based on a competency in topics, rather than an inflexible classroom schedule.

Lee's principal, Lisa Epstein, is deeply motivated to ensure that Lee students are prepared for the future. She believes that personalized learning recognizes and builds upon each student's potential.

She chose to work with LEAP. The school has seen strong academic growth as a result of implementing personalized learning - with the school's National School Attainment Percentile in reading nearly doubling. Lee is among 140 schools LEAP has worked with to implement this new model for learning.

If you have any questions about Lee School's personalized learning work, call them at (773) 535-2255. I wish this program had been available many years ago when my kids were in school.

The next CAPS meeting for Beats 83 and 833 will take place at 7 p.m. Tuesday, June 25 at West Lawn Park, 4223 W. 65th St.

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"My victory is being there for my family!" veterans returning home face many challenges. With the right help, Branded can be an important transition back into family life. Every day, DVI helps more than one million veterans of all generations - connecting them to the health, disability, and financial benefits they’ve earned. Help support more veterans for Victory. Go to DVI.org.
NAMASTE
Continued from Page 1

Considering shutting down the school, established in 2004 in the old Sts. Peter and Paul School space at 3737 S. Paulina.

CTU officials claimed that the Namaste board of directors considered shutting down “in an effort to block educators at the school from gaining a union contract.”

“It is extremely upsetting to hear that the bosses at Namaste would rather close that school than provide classroom resources,” CTU President Jesse Sharkey said several weeks ago.

“The students there deserve better, their parents deserve better and our educators deserve better.”

“Our union will fight to protect the Namaste community from this charter operator, which is using students as pawns and threatening what is probably the most heinous attack you can impose on a school.”

Namaste officials have refused to comment on the CTU allegation, and the school’s website and social media sites do not mention it at all.

Negotiations began in September at the start of the 2018-2019 school year. CTU presented an economic offer to management in October with a desire to reach a settlement by April. The Namaste board didn’t issue a counter-proposal until mid-May, union officials said.

Two extended bargaining sessions were held last month and were the first time school finances were discussed, according to union negotiators. Namaste management acknowledged its control of healthy reserve funds that it is reportedly refusing to use. Namaste is funded by Chicago Public Schools, and reserve funds that it is recently holding are said to be needed for equal pay.

Namaste’s board didn’t reach a settlement by April. The operators said no—and not only did they say no, they threatened to shut the school down instead of listening to their teachers and staff, or providing for their students.”

Namaste educators recently held a National Labor Relations Board vote in response to continued efforts by the school’s board to decertify the union. The vote failed for the third time.

But now that the impasse has passed, everyone is breathing a sigh of relief. Yesenia Davalos, whose granddaughter attends Namaste, said that recent weeks “have been stressful for all of us.”

“I want our teachers to have a living wage and good working conditions, but I wonder if the union or the school administration considered the effect on the children and their families. When word got around about the school possibly shutting down, I know some of the kids were crying. Then you have the parents, scrambling to make plans to see if they can get their kids in other schools. I’m glad there’s a happy ending, but this was not a good thing to go through.”

Funds
Continued from Page 1

for IDOT to work to muffle noise caused by heavy braking by freight trains at the Belt Railway’s Clearing Yard. The high-pitched squealing noise—fondly known to some in the community as the “magic whistle” because of its mildly eerie sound, especially at night—have reportedly gotten louder in recent years. Some in Bedford Park—especially those at the hotel and office complex at 65th and Cicero—have complained about the sounds.

The state’s new capital budget also will fund:

• $12 million to the Southwest Organizing Project for acquisition and renovation of vacant buildings for affordable housing.

• A total of at least $1.8 million to Metropolitan Family Services, which provides social services from a number of locations, including a building at 6422 S. Kedzie.

• $1.25 million to the Brighton Park Neighborhood Council for construction of a new facility.

• $900,000 for elevator upgrades at Curie High School.

• $650,000 to WINGS for capital improvements. WINGS operates a domestic violence shelter in Chicago Lawn.

• $500,000 for constructiing ADA-compliant ramps on sidewalks in the 18th Ward.

• $500,000 to Little Company of Mary Hospital for costs associated with capital improvements to the Electrophysiology Lab.

Since its founding 15 years ago, Namaste Charter School has placed a unique emphasis on children’s health as an integral part of learning and development. Nutrition education for children is common.

People from across the Southwest Side are invited to attend the annual Patriot’s Day Parade, set for Friday, June 28. The event will step off at 7 p.m. from Archer and Lotus, heading west to Merrimac, where it will turn south and end in Wentworth Park with fireworks, clips and colds, followed by a family-oriented film at dusk. The patriotic celebration is sponsored by U.S. Rep. Dan Lipinski (D-3rd) and typically includes a wide range of marching units from across the district, including police and fire departments, chambers of commerce and individual businesses, marching bands, schools and churches, civic associations and neighborhood watches, car clubs and more.

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• $225,000 for lighting and signage at Back of the Yards College Prep.

• Some $75,000 for property acquisition and re-development for the Chicago Lawn.

• $125,000 for capital improvements at Nightingale School.

• Some $30,000 to the Inner City Muslim Action Network of Chicago for costs associated with new lighting for the Martin Luther King Living Memorial in Marquette Park.

While some Republicans and a few downtown news organizations have described the capital budget as loaded with pork and goodies, West Lawn resident Julio Reyes does not see it that way.

“Using our tax dollars to build better roads, reduce train tie-ups, improve our schools and parks, rebuild old housing, fund social service agencies—these are all good, solid things that will improve the quality of life in the neighborhood,” he said. “These aren’t goodies. These are improvements that we need and deserve.”
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**NEW LISTING: 5801 S. NARRAGANSETT AVE**

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