



FAIR FOOD: Second generation picks poutine **PAGE 2A**



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Swinging lakeside hangout

Cooled by a steady breeze off of White Bear Lake, Abe Townley, Jacob Dalhoff and Shea Niccumb adjust some of their equipment while hanging in hammocks in West Park near Memorial Beach Saturday, Aug. 17.

District secures land for elementary school in Hugo

BY SARA MARIE MOORE
VADNAIS HEIGHTS EDITOR

White Bear Lake Area Schools found more preferable land for a new elementary school in Hugo.

Purchase agreements for two parcels of land just north of the post office west of Highway 61 were approved by the school board at its Aug. 12 meeting. Purchase agreements for four properties located on Everton Avenue N. just north of Frenchman Road in western Hugo were executed this winter. Those agreements have now been rescinded.

“The land under consideration will better meet the needs of the district for a variety of reasons, including site location and access, total acreage, quality of soil, and anticipated overall cost,” the district stated.

Details of the new purchase agreements were discussed during a closed meeting. According to Washington County property records, the parcels are almost 140 acres together. The larger agricultural and residential parcel is about 133 acres and its 2019 total property value is listed at about \$1 million. A 4-acre residential property next to it is listed as worth a total of about \$313,000.

Much of the land is wetland, said Superintendent Wayne Kazmierczak. “There is 30 to 35 really good acres of buildable land there.”

SEE **SCHOOL LAND**, PAGE 8A

Water Gremlin stands its ‘contaminated’ ground

BY DEBRA NEUTKENS
EDITOR

ST. PAUL — Water Gremlin and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) have a difference of opinion.

After finding more contamination at the manufacturing plant in White Bear Township, pollution regulators asked Water Gremlin to voluntarily cease operation of its coating process.

Water Gremlin refused to comply. This is the company that illegally spewed a toxic chemical called trichloroethylene, or TCE, into the air for at least 17 years. The company agreed to discontinue use of TCE in a stipulation agreement signed March 1. That same agreement required Water Gremlin to complete a remediation assessment of possible soil and groundwater contamination at its facility.

At a media briefing Aug. 15, pollution regulators announced that more issues have been found.

Most concerning, according to Sarah Kilgriff, land and air compliance manager, is the dichloroethylene, or DCE, discovered under the building. DCE is the main chemical in FluoSolv, a solvent Water Gremlin is using as a replacement for TCE.

“Obviously, there is a pathway for DCE to get under the slab,” Kilgriff said.

High levels of TCE have also been found in soil vapor below the building. In some places, solvents were 33 times the state health limits, according to MPCA. “Relatively low levels” of TCE were found in shallow groundwater not used for drinking and lead was detected in soil sediments and surface water on the site in relatively low concentrations.

SEE **BRIEFING**, PAGE 9A



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Protesters assemble on the sidewalk in front of Water Gremlin Aug. 19 to express chemical emissions grievances.

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