

School prep

The St. Louis Park School District prepares for another school year, with staff training already underway. **Page 8**



Park title

St. Louis Park won its fourth Class A state amateur baseball title with an 8-0 win Aug. 21. **Page 25**

Thursday, Aug. 25, 2022



A group including One Good Deed's Michelle Christensen and Golden Valley Mayor Shep Harris chat.



(SUN PHOTOS BY NATALIE CIERZAN)

The mural painted by artists Laura Halley Hensley and Sara Strother Michalick on the side of the Golden Valley share shed.

Hopkins Men's Shed build community shed for park

A dedication ceremony, ribbon-cutting and community painting event was held on Aug. 13 to honor their work

By **NATALIE CIERZAN**
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Thanks to the Hopkins Men's Shed, Golden Valley's Medley Park has a new community shed to go with its first community garden opening next spring.

Among many partners who also do-

nated their time to make the community shed and the Medley Park garden possible, the Hopkins Men's Shed donated more than 200 hours of their time building the shed from a Home Depot kit and priming the shed for painting. They also helped put together some of the items that would go inside of the shed for the city.

The shed was built with grant money that community service organization One Good Deed received from HR Block and Nextdoor's "Make Every Block Better" program, which totaled \$12,000 to be used for the community's Medley Park projects.

"We get together to support each other, to come together, to celebrate our lives

and the community. We do support the community as much as we can and this is one of our major projects," said Dan Pierce, a member of the Hopkins Men's Shed.

The Hopkins Men's Shed is a community group of nearly 25 retired men

See **Shed**, Page 2

SeeSnake set to swim through St. Louis Park water mains

Pilot project will measure pipe thickness and look for leaks

By **SETH ROWE**
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Water pressure in water mains prevents easy

inspection of the pipes, but St. Louis Park leaders responding to high-profile breaks this year hope a device that swims through them can help.

The city sought proposals from companies to help determine the condition of water main sections under Minnetonka Boulevard, Cedar Lake Road and Louisiana Avenue.

Pure Technologies proposed the use of its Smart-Ball technology for about \$98,000. The PICA Corporation offered the use of its Pipers technology for \$209,000 or its SeeSnake system for \$323,000.

City staff recommended the SeeSnake plan to evaluate the pipe wall thickness, pointing out that the other two tech-

nologies provided advanced leak detection but didn't examine the thickness of the pipe wall itself.

"Once it starts leaking, there's already a hole in the pipe," Engineering Director Debra Heiser said in explaining the recommendation to the City Council Aug. 15.

She later added, "The idea behind (measuring

wall thicknesses is we can catch that leak before it becomes a leak."

The SeeSnake device uses an electromagnetic signal to measure wall thickness along with acoustic monitoring to help find leaks.

Including excavation to reach the pipes, the work is estimated to cost about \$400,000 in all. Funding

will come from water utility funds and from bonding money that had been previously slated to go toward the city's pavement management project next year.

The city considers the plan to use the SeeSnake technology under the three streets as a pilot

See **Pipes**, Page 6



(FILE PHOTO COURTESY OF THE CITY OF ST. LOUIS PARK)
A city photo shows flooding from a water main break earlier this year in St. Louis Park. The city suffered from two breaks in the same area along Minnetonka Boulevard in the Texa-Tonka Neighborhood. The first break occurred May 21 with the second break occurring June 3. Dozens of homes flooded from the water main breaks and sewer backups. The city approved up to \$4 million in spending for affected residents to contribute toward cleaning up and repairing the damage.

Pipes

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

project to determine whether the system works well.

“We are the first city in Minnesota to use this particular technology, so we’re really looking forward to moving ahead,” Heiser said.

Successful use of the technology could lead to savings over time “in addition to increased assuredness and feelings of security,” according to the staff recommendation.

The report says, “The results will provide us with information on individual pipe segments, so instead of replacing everything, we would only replace segments with problems.”

Heiser noted that the cost to replace a typical water main is about \$4 million a mile, not including street rebuilding above the line. The monitoring could help the city plan to target the relatively small percentage of problem areas instead.

The segments selected would be in areas with proposed road work in coming years. The city plans to reconstruct Cedar Lake Road and Louisiana Avenue between 2023 and 2025. Hennepin County plans to work on Minnetonka Boulevard between Highway 169 and Edgewood Avenue in 2024.

The water mains in the affected areas date back to 1951.

The SeeSnake device can swim freely through water mains or can be tethered with a cable as it measures the walls with magnetic waves.

“This means that locations that are not leaking yet but are a high probability of failure can be found before they break,” the staff report says.

The device is about 12 feet long and slightly less than a foot in diameter. Its size, only slightly smaller than the water mains themselves, will require brief water service interruptions, potentially for up to four hours at a time.

Staff and the PICA Corporation plan to conduct the assessments before winter begins this year.

The investigations follow major water main breaks along Minnetonka Boulevard in the Texa-Tonka Neighborhood that eventually led the City Council to

approve up to \$4 million to address the damage to residential properties following an outcry.

Councilmember Sue Budd noted that an analysis of the first break May 21 indicated that soil erosion may have contributed to the burst.

“That’s the type of thing we’d be able to detect,” Heiser said of the SeeSnake technology.

Budd also inquired about the use of the technology elsewhere.

“They have had successful applications in other areas of the country,” Heiser replied. “It’s just this is the first time they’ve mobilized and come to Minnesota.”

Asked by Councilmember Margaret Rog about how the city will know if the technology works, Heiser said, “We get a report back, and it’s very likely it will have some pipe (weaknesses) or leaks and things. We will then dig those up, and if it is exactly what they said in the report, we’ll know it works.”

Councilmember Tim Brausen said he is not necessarily comfortable with the price of the technology amid budgetary pressures for the city. However, he said he believes it is warranted considering the millions of dollars the city is paying to address the major water main breaks this year.

“Anything we can do to get out in front of the problem is really significant,” he said.

Separately, the City Council is also lining sewer pipes near water mains on Minnetonka Boulevard between Texas and Quebec avenues and sealing up manholes in the area to block the path of water from future water main breaks. The effort is designed to decrease the risk of the large-scale damage from sewer backups that occurred at dozens of properties after the pipe breaks earlier this year.

The strategies will help the city make targeted efforts to prevent more serious problems before they occur, Mayor Jake Spano said.

Of the SeeSnake device, Spano said, “I don’t have an expectation that this is going to be the silver bullet that solves our problem, but it might be part of a silver buckshot of solutions that we use to try and mitigate aging infrastructure in our community.”

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Reunions



Mound Westonka Class of 1992 30 Year Reunion

Come join us to Celebrate our 30 Year Class Reunion! Catch up with classmates and share memories from our past.

Saturday, August 27th from 4-8pm at Excelsior Brewery then continue the fun on the Wharf at Maynard’s on Lake Minnetonka. Casual ~ come and go as you’re available.

Looking forward to seeing as many of you as possible! Please spread the word! Send questions to westonka92@gmail.com

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Obituaries

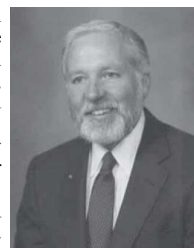
Robert Frances Miller

Robert Francis Miller passed away on May 5, 2022. Bob came from a long line of Millers in Hopkins, born on April 2, 1938, to father Archie Miller and mother Ruth (Elmquist) Miller.

He is preceded in death by his mother, father, brother Jerri, and sister-in-law Rita.

He is survived by, Jim Miller, Virginia Miller, Wanda Miller, and his three sons, Rod (Alison), Matt (Sarah), and Marshal (Ann); grandchildren Jeremy, Kitty, and Nora.

Bob preferred not to have a ceremony upon his death. The family would like to host a celebration of Bob’s life on Wednesday, October 26, 2022, from 5 to 8 p.m., at the Hopkins Center for the Arts, 1111 Mainstreet, Hopkins, MN. There will be no formal program. Friends can join the family for an opportunity to share stories of how Bob has touched our lives. In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to the Hopkins Historical



Roger W. Patch

Roger W. Patch, Sr. of Wayzata and Long Lake, MN; and of Sanibel and Fort Myers, FL, passed away in Buffalo, MN on August 14, 2022 at the age of 97 years, 8 months.

Born to parents Frederick M. Patch and Lydia W. Patch in the Village of Wayzata on December 6, 1924, Roger graduated from Wayzata High School and served in the U.S.

Army until 1946. He married Pauline (Polly) Kuss Patch also from Wayzata on June 4, 1949. He studied Architecture at the University of Minnesota, then achieved his Masters of Architecture in 1950 at Harvard University, Cambridge, MA. Roger and Polly built their original (much photographed) family home, which still stands, in Long Lake. They had six children, Darcy, Dana, Fred, Polly Ann, John and Roger Jr. (deceased).

Roger and Don Erickson founded the firm Patch Erickson Madson Architects, Inc. in 1955 in Wayzata, Minnesota. Shortly thereafter moved to offices in Minneapolis where they practiced architecture for 26 years. Their designs can be found all across the Mid-West. The firm specialized in commercial architecture that touched the humanity of the Mid-West including schools, hospitals, nursing homes and retirement communities, civic centers, fire stations, banks, stores, and religious buildings. Roger was the architect chosen to design the original Target Stores. Polly was sure he got the contract because of her riding with “The Long Lake Hounds”. Roger knew it was the design he did for the Wayzata City Hall that was appreciated for it’s unique rounded entry. See his work here [<http://www.patchericksonmadson.com/>] Retiring from the firm in 1981, Roger and Polly moved to Sanibel, Florida where they enjoyed Florida island life, occasional real estate and consulting work in retirement. Eventually moving to Fort Myers, Roger was a loving caregiver to Polly until she passed away in 2018. Polly was a charter member of the Minnetonka Center for the Arts, an accomplished artist, real estate broker, horsewoman and boat captain. Roger was her best audience and frame creator. As a mentor too many, Roger was loving and kind, dedicated to family; honorable, reliable, responsible, persistent and hard working.

Survived by his sister Lucia Patch Adams and five of his children: Darcy Haislet (Tim), Dana Thomas, Fred Patch (Mary), Polly Johnson (Ed), John Patch (Diane). A private family gathering for Roger will be held later this Fall. Interment will be in the Summit Park Cemetery, Wayzata, MN.

The Peterson Chapel in Buffalo, MN assisted the family with funeral arrangements.

On-line condolences can be directed to www.thepetersonchapel.com

