

Sports: After avoiding upset in 1st round of NCAA tourney, Gophers will face Ole Miss today at Williams Arena. **C1**



White Bear Lake: Adult, 3 children found dead in house fire. **A2**

Sunday Life: Minn. woman's collection of thrifted wool skirts now an exhibit in New York. **E1**

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St. Thomas envisions 'mid-campus'

How the university wants to grow in St. Paul and the challenges it faces

By Frederick Melo
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INSIDE: St. Thomas' major building projects dating back to 1997. **A20**

Homeowners living near the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul have long asked their academic neighbor to provide more parking on campus, especially in light of the recent construction of a new Division I hockey and basketball arena drawing fans by the thousands.

Officials with the state's largest private university have said they'd love to comply, and they even have a site or two in mind — such as the Anderson Park-

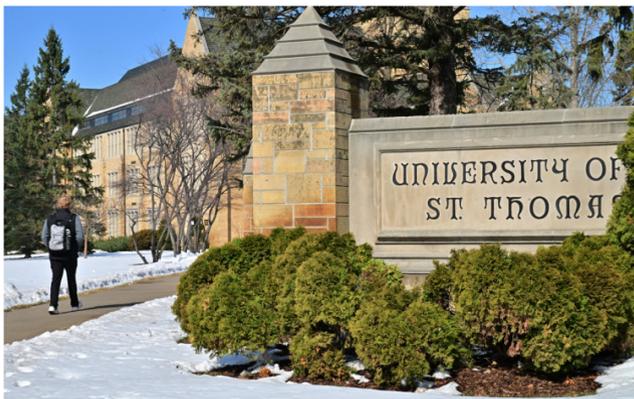
ing Facility at Grand and Cretin avenues. However, a binding agreement hammered out with residents more than 20 years ago limits building heights, which would prevent them from adding two stories at Anderson Parking without eliminating the building's rooftop observatory.

Along a similar vein, students on campus have pinned for more retail spaces to visit within walking distance of campus beyond a Davanni's Pizza on Grand Avenue. St. Thomas officials

pointing to the example of a more vibrant stretch of Grand bisecting Macalester College have said they have ideas that could help them facilitate just that — if only the university's 2004 conditional-use permit agreement with the city didn't require large front lot setbacks.

"If they could add dorm buildings with retail spaces on the ground level like shops and cafes, I think the neighborhood wants those things," said Tim Flanigan, a neighborhood resident active in multiple community groups.

See **UNIVERSITY** on Page A20



A person walks on the University of St. Thomas campus in St. Paul on Thursday. **JOHN AUTEY — PIONEER PRESS**

LUNCHROOM LESSONS



Derek Huseby, right, lead custodian at Mahtomedi Middle School, talks with Dawson Johnson, 12, in the school's lunchroom on Wednesday. Each week, Huseby posts different questions as a way to connect through conversation with the middle schoolers.

JOHN AUTEY — PIONEER PRESS

Mahtomedi Middle School custodian uses polls and puzzles to connect with students

By Mary Divine
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Custodian Derek Huseby knows that some students at Mahtomedi Middle School find him a little intimidating.

Huseby, who is 6-foot-1 and 220 pounds, has a beard, and tattoos up and down his arms and neck. He wears a diamond stud in each ear.

"I know I can come off as scary because of how I look, and I don't want to be that," Huseby said Wednesday. "I'm really just a big giant teddy bear."

When Huseby — known as "Mr. Derek" to the students — started working at the school last fall, one of his duties was to oversee the students as they sort their lunch waste into the trash, recycling and compost bins. He's also in charge of making sure dirty silverware "doesn't get thrown away by mistake," he said.

Huseby decided to launch a weekly conversation starter to get to know the students — and for them to get to know him. Twice a week, he prints out a question and tapes it above the bins in the cafeteria.

"I thought, 'Hey, instead of

just standing there looking like a scary guy, how about I come up with a fun way of interacting with the kids by playing games," he said. "I'm a father myself. I love interacting with kids."

On Wednesdays, Huseby posts questions such as "Who is your hero?" and "What's your favorite kind of animal?" — plus a riddle.

On Thursdays, he conducts an informal poll using two metal bins filled with water; students vote by throwing their fork or spoon into the bin of their choosing. Sample polls: "Who will win the Super Bowl?" "Cats or dogs?"

"Winter Olympics or Summer Olympics?" Results of the poll are posted on Fridays.

On special Fridays, Huseby also posts a puzzle for students to answer. The first girl and first boy to get the correct answer win a cookie, he said.

"There's more than just playing games," Huseby said. "I want them to be able to actually put the fork in the bin and not throw it away. I wanted to see them smile, give them something to talk about, and feel safe and see that I'm not a stranger."

See **HUSEBY** on Page A16

WAR IN IRAN

Iran targets British-U.S. base

The attack raises concerns about missile capabilities

By Samy Magdy,
Jill Lawless and
Sam Mednick
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Iran targeted a joint U.K.-U.S. base in the Indian Ocean, and Iran's main nuclear enrichment site was struck again, as the war in the Middle East entered its fourth week.

Iran's attack on the Diego Garcia air base — about 2,500 miles away — suggested Tehran has missiles that can go farther than it had previously acknowledged, or that it had used its space program for an improvised launch.

See **IRAN** on Page A8

MINNESOTA

Medicaid anti-fraud plan OK'd by feds

State officials await word on withheld federal funding

By Alex Derosier
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Trump administration officials have approved a Minnesota Department of Human Services plan to address fraud in state programs. It should free up hundreds of millions in Medicaid funding that the federal government moved to temporarily withhold.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services has approved Minnesota's "corrective action

See **MEDICAID** on Page A5

EAST METRO

Metro Transit's Gold Line marks 1st anniversary

Ridership is below projections on Woodbury-downtown bus route

By Talia McWright
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Last year, more than 430,000 rides were taken between Woodbury and downtown St. Paul on Metro Transit's new Gold Line bus rapid transit service,

according to the Metropolitan Council.

"I think that is something that is very, very exciting and shows that there was an actual need in the east metro for this," said Deb Barber, a Met Council member and Transportation Committee chair.

Sunday marks one year since Metro Transit's Gold Line went into operation. Its purpose is to provide people with more options for travel to their key destinations from Woodbury to downtown St. Paul, Barber said. The bus runs every day from around 5 a.m. to midnight with service every 10 to

15 minutes on weekdays and 15 to 30 minutes on weekends, according to Metro Transit.

The bus drives most of its route on a dedicated lane, marked in red, called a guideway. No other vehicles are allowed on the guideway and that helps the bus deliver a more speedy commute.

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