

Dan Vandal is back at city hall as St. Boniface's councillor.

## Evening

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The new faces also include Brenda Leipsic, the well-established fundraising and marketing consultant who emerged victorious after a tough race in River Heights, and Grant Nordman, the Assiniboia Chamber of Commerce stalwart who won in St. Charles.

Council's wild card is Dan Vandal, returning to his old seat in St. Boniface after yielding it to Franco Magnifico for half a term. Vandal's lefty politics are out of step with Katz's new right-leaning council, but he's also pragmatic and experienced. It remains to be seen whether Vandal will join opposition councillors such as Fort Rouge's Jenny Gerbasi as public thorns in Katz's side.

For one night, at least, there were handshakes, air kisses and back-slaps. City hall was bedecked with potted flowers. White-coated caterers wanded the crowd offering nibbles. Councillors and visitors wore their party frocks and mingled with local luminaries such as Winnipeg Chamber

of Commerce chair Trevor Sprague, hotelier Leo Ledohowski, provincial Intergovernmental Affairs Minister Steve Ashton and Association of Manitoba Chiefs Grand Chief Ron Evans. Despite the pomp, there were a few light moments yesterday.

Coun. Bill Clement won approving nods for his newly-trim physique. The once portly councillor lost more than 30 pounds on the door-knocking circuit in his Charleswood ward, and his new suit still seemed baggy.

And the ever-theatrical Coun. Russ Wyatt got a laugh when he took a shortcut across the council chamber to receive his certificate of election during the ceremony.

"That's why Coun. Wyatt likes cutting red tape," quipped Katz.

And rookie Coun. Jeff Browaty got a pleasant shock to learn he'd be seated beside Katz in the semi-circle of chairs on the council floor.

The seats are arranged alphabetically, so no one can jockey for the spot at Katz's right hand.

➔ [marryagnes.weich@freepress.mb.ca](mailto:marryagnes.weich@freepress.mb.ca)

# Pool ball swinger found not guilty

for trouble.

The April 2004 incident began when the victim went looking for his girlfriend following a fight with her.

He had been released from a psychiatric ward days earlier following a drug overdose and was behaving erratically, according to several witnesses. The victim admits he was drunk.

His girlfriend took off, and the victim ran into another woman during his search for her, which carried into the backyard of a nearby home.

The woman claims he grabbed her and was acting in a threatening manner, prompting her to call Battison over for help.

Crown attorney Dale Harvey told jurors Monday there is no question Battison crossed the line with his reaction.

"This is not a case of saying (the victim) deserved what he got. (Battison) wasn't defending anything. He recognized a chance to teach him a lesson and he took it," said Harvey.

"Clearly he went too far, hitting an unarmed man repeatedly with a weapon."

Defence lawyer Ryan Army said his client never intended to inflict serious damage but had every right to take action.

"No one deserves to lose an eye. But as he told police, he wasn't going to wait

and see what this crazy guy was going to do to (his girlfriend)," said Army.

"He's not required to carefully weigh his options when forced to defend himself. Ask yourself what you would do."

Police were eventually called to the scene and found the victim suffering a serious eye injury.

Winnipeg police Const. Jeremy Cull told jurors earlier in the trial the victim was unco-operative with police and repeatedly swore at officers as they took him to the Grace Hospital for medical care.

Page Fielding watches the Transcona Collegiate choir perform last night.

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