

## RESTORATIVE JUSTICE: Just what is it?

By TESHA M. CHRISTENSEN

Michele Braley has been wrestling with the issue of justice for a long time.

She's part of the Seward Longfellow Restorative Justice (SLRJ) group formed 18 years ago when residents of the two neighborhoods came together to explore how they could grow restorative justice practices in their neighborhoods.

"The creation of SLRJ is a story of grassroots volunteer engagement that I hope still inspires the community today. There were several earlier initiatives including a long-running peacemaking circle in Seward," said Braley.

"After many conversations and much planning SLRJ received its first referral in 2005 for an incident of graffiti on a business in Seward."

The Messenger asked Braley

to explain what restorative justice is and how it works.

### What is "restorative justice"?

Braley: While many people know restorative justice through the modern movement it is not a new idea. Restorative justice has its roots in Indigenous teachings. One of these influences, as I understand it, is the idea that harm between individuals is a breaking of relationships that requires the community's assistance to repair. Another is that there is no one universal truth – the goal of restorative justice is not to respond to one "truth" (i.e. what law was broken) but to understand the harm caused, from each person's perspective, and to work together to make a plan to repair the harm.

Another way to describe re-

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE » 14-15

## Terry Willis completes march from Alabama to George Floyd Square



## 1,000 miles

On July 12, Terry Willis (wearing white headband) completed his 1,000-mile march from Huntsville, Ala., to his destination in Minneapolis – 38th St. and Chicago Ave. S., – where George Floyd was killed by police. As Willis arrived, the growing crowd was jubilant, chanting "Terry, Terry" and "One man, two feet," Willis' slogan for his journey. A trumpeter played "Lift Every Voice and Sing" as an emotional Willis paid quiet tribute to Floyd beneath a canopy decorated with flowers that marks the site of his death. Willis began the trek on June 2, marching for "Change, Justice and Equality." As he told reporters just before walking the final leg from the Mall of America that morning, "It's for all of us to be seen as equals. That's it. All of us to be seen as equals. That's it. It's so simple. So simple." Mayor Jacob Frey issued an official proclamation naming July 12, 2020 Terry Willis Day. ~ by Jill Boogren

## You don't have to leave to seek help

*Casa de Esperanza offers hope, resources to help families live free of violence*

By TESHA M. CHRISTENSEN

Need someone to walk with you as you get out of domestic violence? That's what Casa de Esperanza offers women, children and men.

It's hard to nail down exactly what the Midway non-profit Casa Esperanza does because they do a little bit of everything.

Teresa Burns currently manages the Casa de Esperanza shelter, and worked as an advocate before that. "I have done everything from accompany a mom for her ultrasound to registering kids for school," she observed.

Domestic abuse overlaps with every aspect of life, she pointed out, including physical health, safety, mental health, public benefits, education, criminal court, housing, and more. So Casa de Esperanza does too.

"Domestic violence isn't an isolated topic. It impacts someone's entire life. So our advocacy



This series seeks to put a face on domestic abuse and intimate partner violence. Read past articles on our web site.

matches that," said Burns.

"I feel so blessed to have the opportunity to be part of an organization that has a dedicated group of advocates and other staff that give their all, each and every day. We believe community is the answer to ending domestic violence. We must all work together to make that happen," stated Casa de Esperanza CEO Patti Tototzintle.

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## Why is city excluding neighborhood residents?

*Neighborhood leaders concerned Minneapolis, state plans for rebuilding aren't including voices from community*

By TESHA M. CHRISTENSEN

Why is the city leaving Longfellow residents and businesses out of its plans for rebuilding along E. Lake St.?

At a Zoom meeting on Thursday, July 23, of the 12 local leaders in attendance, only two had been approached by the city and only one was part of the mayor's rebuilding task force.

People of Color and Indigenous (POCI) Caucus member and District 63 Senator Patricia Torres Ray of southeast Minneapolis has been looking for a plan she can advocate for at the state capitol, and is starting to worry about the lack of one.

"I'm absolutely shocked the city doesn't have a plan. I'm starting to ask if that is intentional," said Torres Ray.

She added, "I'm very



Melanie Majors of the Longfellow Community Council (left) and Senator Patricia Torres Ray (63) have questions about the city's lack of a plan for rebuilding and whose voices are being included.

alarmed about the fact that we don't have our act together. I find it hard to understand why we are so chaotic."

"I find it so shady that there is zero inclusion of residents or the two African American Neighborhood Executive Directors in



Corcoran and Greater Longfellow," stated Longfellow Community Council Executive Director Melanie Majors. "I think it's intentional people are being left out of the conversation."

The Minnesota House PROMISE Act passed on June 19 will help rebuild the areas damaged by civil unrest and it has now gone to the Senate. Torres Ray has many concerns about the new and complex redevelopment corporation being created and its ability to use eminent domain, among other things. She encouraged people to read the bill to learn more about it, and offered to provide an overview of the bill during a separate meeting. She has questions about how the redevelopment

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CONVERSATIONS:  
Pros and cons of police  
reform vs. police-free future

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BACK TO SCHOOL  
South High Foundation  
helps student in crisis

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Local and national staff, along with Carmen Yulín Cruz (mayor of San Juan, Puerto Rico), and Teresa Rodriguez, from Univision, who served as the emcee of Casa de Esperanza's 35th Anniversary Gala, Adelante Esperanza in May 2018.

## You don't have to leave to seek help

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### Rights and options

Casa de Esperanza offers Minnesota's only 24-hour bilingual domestic violence helpline: 651-772-1611. Staff conduct an intake over the phone to help figure out what assistance is needed. In-person meetings are done at a location the caller identifies as comfortable and easy to access, observed Burns. Sometimes that is in their own house or that of a friend. Sometimes it is at a coffee shop that offers some privacy.

"The role of the advocate is to inform and to advocate," explained Burns. The advocate gives information on options, and helps think through pros and cons. The advocate shares resources and encouragement. "Once a decision is made, our job is to help," added Burns.

"Big picture, we make sure someone is aware of their rights and knows what their options are."

Advocates attend order for protection hearings, accompany people to appointments, and help them navigate the various systems out there.

Staff work within the Hennepin County Domestic Abuse Service Center in the basement of the government center in downtown Minneapolis, and at the Bridges to Safety office at St. Paul City Hall.

Advocates help fill out and get copies of police reports, and offer walk-in hours at the Midtown Safety Center, 2949 Chicago Ave. across from the Global Market. (This office was damaged in the Uprising after George Floyd's death.) They also collaborate with the Mexican consulate, the Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota, and the Tubman Center. They have staff at various high schools, including El Colegio (4137 Bloomington Ave.) and Longfellow High School in Minneapolis, and Agape High School in St. Paul.

Staff operate El Refugio, a 12-person shelter in St. Paul that is open to anyone in the state. While it is one of the smallest shelters in the state, it is part of the Day One network of service providers in Minnesota. They serve about 35 families each year in the shelter, and about 300 families overall through their programs.

Formed in 1982, Casa de Esperanza (or House of Hope) is recognized as the largest, most

respected Latina organization in the country focused on ending gender-based violence and is increasing its capacity to respond to sexual assault and human trafficking. Through the National Latin@ Network for Healthy Families and Communities, they offer training and technical assistance across the country; advance public policy initiatives; and lead community-based research on the intersections of domestic violence and Latina realities.

Casa de Esperanza staff work with clients to identify goals. They base their work on the belief that each person is the expert on their own situation. "I don't know this person that is using abuse against you. You know this person. I'm here to talk through it with you," said Burns.

### COVID-19 effects

During the Stay at Home/Stay Safe order, phone calls have doubled, but most people are staying put for now. Domestic violence programs across the state are expecting an influx of calls after the order ends and people go back to work. They know they're not hearing from people who are isolated, and don't have the opportunity to make safe calls.

Calling for help is one of the things that sparks violence, Burns pointed out, and leaving is one of the most dangerous times for a survivor and children.

Some are using COVID-19 as a threat against their victims, which includes refusing to exchange children, and exposing others to the virus. Some threaten that if a call for help is made, they'll say they have coronavirus so that no one will come assist the survivor.

If you're experiencing physical abuse or property damage, Burns encourages you to take a photo and send it to a safe location such as a Google drive or a friend, and then delete it from your phone.

Police reports can be filed after the fact, and having evidence of scratches, bruising or damage can be part of that.

They can also be used when filing an order for protection (OFP), used when there is a romantic relationship past or present, the parties live together, or share children together. Another option is to file a harassment order, which has broader criteria than an OFP, or a No Abuse order.

Burns stressed that even with

the Stay at Home/Stay Safe order, people can still seek shelter, and domestic violence programs are still operating across the state. Casa Esperanza has a webpage devoted to COVID-19 resources.

Organizations are partnering with hotels to offer more social distancing and to boost the capacity.

One of the most common things an abuser does is isolate a victim and block their ability to connect with friends and family, so Burns urges people to reach out to someone they haven't heard from in awhile to check in.

### 'All of us know someone'

"Statistically all of us know someone in an abusive relationship," said Burns.

Domestic violence impacts all cultural and ethnic groups at the same rate of 28-33%, Burns said. "It looks different in every culture and country."

For Latinas in the Twin Cities, domestic violence often has a component associated with the threat of deportation. "There are a lot of misconceptions about people's rights, even when people have legal status and are doing everything according to the books," said Burns. "There are a lot of fears and stories," some related to the historic trauma migrant workers have experienced in Minnesota.

Language is also a barrier. Asking for help is hard, and asking for help in a language that is not your native language makes it even tougher. "The legal system across nations looks really different," Burns observed, and many refugees come with a distrust of state institutions. Many people don't know what their legal rights are, and don't know that some things are basic human rights.

"People are able to seek protection under the law regardless of immigration status," Burns said.

### Why don't they just leave?

"There's not one specific reason," stressed Burns. It's a combination of factors.

Finances are one barrier, especially in an economic crisis when unemployment is high. "The idea of picking up and leaving – especially with children – may just be unrealistic," she pointed out. Within the Latina community, many people are already working two to three jobs to make ends meet.

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# VOICES

## against

# VIOLENCE

This series seeks to put a face on domestic abuse and intimate partner violence. Read past articles on our web site.

## Domestic Abuse Service Center

>> The Domestic Abuse Service Center (DASC) serves people who are victims of actual or threatened violence committed by a person with whom they have had a romantic or sexual relationship, or people who have lived together.

>> At DASC, District Court staff will help people at no cost complete the paperwork requesting a temporary Order for Protection (OFP). Several other city, county and advocacy agencies are on site at DASC to help people deal with domestic violence. Free services also include access to police and city of Minneapolis or Hennepin County prosecutors for victims of domestic abuse; advocacy and referral for housing, counseling, and financial assistance for victim/survivors of domestic abuse; on-site playroom and interpreter services. Advocates from several culturally specific agencies are available.

>> It is located in the lower level of the Hennepin County Government Center, 300 S 6th St. in Minneapolis.

## Helpful apps

Casa de Esperanza is developing an app. In the meantime, here are two others to consider:

>> DocuSAFE is a free documentation and evidence collection app recently released by the National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV).

>> VictimsVoice provides a legally admissible way for victims to document abuse incidents in a safe, secure, consistent, and complete manner through an annual subscription. Financial help available. It can't be found in an app store but is available at victimsvoice.app.

## YOU DON'T HAVE TO

>> from 2

Plus it is often still expected that a woman will stay home, so she will need to build a whole new skill set to be formally employed. That might include language access, education and training – which costs money to get. Many Latinas had high-paying jobs in their home countries but can no longer work at those in the United States because they have to re-earn their certifications.

Throw in kids, school, and activities on top of the low-paying job and it can be very difficult. A two-bedroom apartment at market rate is \$1,100 a month, and to afford that a person needs to make a liveable wage of \$19 an hour.

Women don't leave because things are not black and white, and there's a lot of gray matter, Burns observed.

"Life is complicated. Abusive relationships are not abusive all the time."

The partner who uses abuse isn't always like that, she stressed. It isn't that every minute has been miserable. There are genuine good times. So, the good memories and the idea that the person can change keeps women in a relationship. "We all have a desire to love and be loved. It's normal for a person to be torn," she said.

Burns continues to believe that people who use abuse are capable of change – if they want to and it is self-initiated.

That said, she thinks people instinctively know that leaving will be very dangerous, and they recognize there will be consequences to splitting up.

"A survivor once told me: 'The physical stuff, the bruises go away with time. What someone has said does not,'" remarked Burns.

Women are told, "You are too dumb to learn English. No one else will ever love you. I'll kill you if you leave."

This emotional and verbal

abuse, along with the physical, financial, and sexual abuse, also work against a survivor when they try to leave.

What is abuse? "It's power and control over another person," explained Burns. Much of this is achieved through fear, intimidation and threats. They may be told if they don't stay, their vehicle will be damaged. The partner may punch holes in the wall so that the other has to pay the damages, which affects their financial well-being and ability to get another apartment.

Those who do leave often suffer post-separation abuse when the children are used to manipulate and threaten the other parent. The person who uses abuse may also turn the extended family and church community against the survivor so that they are cut off from support and resources. They may harass them at work, via social media, through cyber stalking, and through text messages. Because they are co-parenting, the survivor can't block the abuse.

## You don't have to leave to seek help

Casa de Esperanza staff are mythbusters.

One of the most common swirls around the idea of "abandonment." If someone leaves the home in Minnesota, they will not suffer any consequences associated with "abandonment," which is common in other countries, said Burns. In Minnesota, property is owned jointly by both married parties and remains that way even if someone leaves.

On the other hand, if a child is born to an unmarried couple, the mother automatically has full legal and physical custody.

Those who don't want to get divorced for religious reasons can opt for a legal separation instead.

And maybe the biggest myth is that people don't have to leave a relationship to seek help.

More at casadeesperanza.org or call the 24-hour bilingual helpline at 651-772-1611.

# BACKYARD CONVERSATIONS

## Inspectors seek to build bridges between law enforcement,community

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

The Fifth Police Precinct is the nearest precinct building to the Longfellow and East Nokomis neighborhoods, since the Third went up in flames last month. Inspector Amelia Huffman commands the Fifth Precinct, and said, "The days following the killing of George Floyd were the saddest of my 26-year-career with the Minneapolis Police Department."

Huffman expressed deep concern over the current state of the city, and feels the tension is fueled by focusing on differences. She said, "At the end of the day, we need to get to know each other as human beings. Before a police officer puts on a uniform, he or she is just a person."

Toward the goal of fostering understanding, Huffman said she and her staff are making themselves available to participate in small group discussions with residents of the Fifth Precinct. She

doesn't think large group forums are effective at times of such heightened tensions. She said, "If you're having a few neighbors over for a socially distanced get together in the yard and want to have a conversation, we'd love to join you. Let's get to know each other better."

Inspector Sean McGinty is in charge of the Third Precinct, albeit without a building. He is also available to attend backyard conversations of this kind. He said, "I am not afraid to have difficult conversations. The entire city is reeling from this tragedy, and the Third Precinct most of all. I would love to share from a leadership perspective, and to answer any questions that I can."

Both inspectors Huffman and McGinty are interested in small group gatherings in safe, backyard environments. What they envision is very different from the interactions of old when police officers would visit neighborhoods on National Night Out and let kids sit in their squad cars. This would be a chance to talk in depth with knowledgeable officers about neighborhood concerns and the



Inspector Amelia Huffman commands the Fifth Precinct in South Minneapolis. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

changing state of the police experience in Minneapolis.

It is a good-faith effort to build bridges across the chasm of misunderstanding that exists between law enforcement and the community at large.

To set up a backyard conversation, email Third Precinct Inspector Sean McGinty at sean.mcginty@minneapolismn.gov or Fifth Precinct Inspector Amelia Huffman at amelia.huffman@minneapolismn.gov, depending on where you live.

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## #PressIsNotTheEnemy - so why are the police acting like it?

Over 148 journalists were attacked by police in the United States between May 28 and June 4, 2020.

Yes. I said 148.

Yes, by the police.

Yes, in the United States.

Over 100 of those attacks happened between May 28 and June 1 as journalists covered the protests after George Floyd's murder by a white police officer here in Minneapolis at Chicago and 38th.

At the investigative news website Bellingcat, senior investigator Nick Waters, who tracked the incidents jointly with the U.K. Guardian, said, "Although in some incidents it is possible the journalists were hit or affected accidentally, in the majority of the cases we have recorded the journalists are clearly identifiable as press, and it is clear that they are being deliberately targeted. This pattern of violence against journalists is replicated in several cities, but appears most intense in Minneapolis."

Yep. Right here.

Over one-third of these attacks against the news media happened here.

Attacks on the media were reported across 24 states and in Washington, D.C. Denver, Colorado and Los Angeles recorded the most attacks outside Minneapolis, with 10 incidents each, reported the Guardian.

According to the U.S. Press Freedom Tracker, there were more than 300 total press freedom violations during that time.

That's:

- 49+ arrests
- 192 assaults
- 42 equipment/newsroom damage

Assault category breakdown:

- 69 physical attacks
- 43 tear gasings

- 24 pepper sprayings
- 77 rubber bullets/projectiles

The majority of these violations were done by local police departments, but some were by state troopers and National Guard.

In comparison, only 11 journalists were injured by protesters.

"I've never seen so many incidents with police and reporters simultaneously in different cities. Tension between cops and reporters is nothing new. Aggression on reporters in multiple locations nationally at same time is something different," tweeted Maggie Haberman of the New York Times.

Veteran reporter John M. Donnelly tweeted, "CNN reporter on Lafayette Square says on air that a DC police officer struck the CNN cameraman with a baton, even though the cameraman was holding, um, a camera and a credential. These incidents keep piling up."

Journalists have compared their experiences in war-torn countries with what they experienced in Minneapolis. "I've covered protests involving police in Ferguson, Mo., Baton Rouge, La., Dallas and Los Angeles. I've also covered the U.S. military in war zones, including Iraq and Afghanistan. I have never been fired at by police until tonight," said L.A. Times reporter Molly Hennessy-Fiske.

As reported by Bring Me The News: *Many of the assaults on media were shown on live television, with reporters from FOX 9 seeing rubber bullets smash their station vehicle windshield, along with WCCO reporters Jeff Wagner and Mike Max seen on live TV running from tear gas and rubber bullets. Star Tribune reporters Ryan Faircloth and Chao Xiong were attempt-*

**Too much coffee**

By **TESHA M. CHRISTENSEN**,  
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*ing to drive home near Lake Street when Faircloth said they "mistakenly turned down a street that was blocked off at the end," and "before we had a chance to reverse, the Guard/ State Patrol fired rubber bullets at our car without warning." The shattered glass cut Faircloth's face and arm and left shards of glass inside their vehicle.*

And then there's photojournalist Linda Tirado. Shot by a rubber bullet in the face, she is permanently blind in her left eye.

Yes. This happened in the Twin Cities. By those who are supposed to serve and protect. It didn't happen in a country that lacks a Bill of Rights.

Instead, it occurred in a place where freedom of the press is protected by the First Amendment.

At least, it is supposed to be. I'm seriously questioning what happened, and what this means for our country.

For 231 years, this language has been the hallmark of the United States of America, and what sets this nation apart from so many others:

*Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.*

What does it mean for the country when this is violated?

When it is broken in very direct, very blatant, very violent ways by the folks who are supposed to protect it?

In Cleveland, Ohio, journalists were specifically forbidden by the police to be outside covering anything happening in the city on May 31.

What were they trying to hide? Those without anything to hide aren't threatened by folks with pens, paper and cameras.

I'm not the only one asking that question.

I'm not the only one outraged.

As City Pages reported:

*The American Civil Liberties Union of Minnesota filed a class-action lawsuit Tuesday, June 2 on behalf of reporters targeted by law enforcement while covering protests. The respondents include the city of Minneapolis, Minneapolis Police Chief Medaria Arradondo, police union president Bob Kroll, Department of Public Safety Commissioner John Harrington, and State Patrol Colonel Matthew Langer.*

*The lawsuit demands an injunction to stop police from attacking journalists, a declaration that they violated multiple constitutional amendments, and damages.*

*"Law enforcement is using violence and threats to deter the media from vigorously reporting on demonstrations and the conduct of police in public places," said ACLU-MN Legal Director Teresa Nelson.*

*"We depend on a free press to hold the police and government accountable for its actions, especially at a time like this when police have brutally murdered one of our community members, and we must ensure that justice is done. Our community, especially people of color, already have a hard time trusting police and government. Targeting*

*journalists erodes that public trust even further."*

Linda Tirado has filed her own lawsuit.

Minneapolis also faces a class-action lawsuit brought by protesters.

"Journalists have always been targets of criticism and back in the 1960s they were also targeted by police," said Robert Mahoney, the deputy executive director of the Committee to Protect Journalists. "But there was an understanding that journalists were necessary and it was incumbent on police forces to allow them to do their job. That has changed."

Why? Why has it changed?

Is it because of President Trump's constant attacks on the press? He has tweeted the phrases "Fake News" and "Enemy of the People" over 800 times since getting elected. As I've been saying for years, just because you don't like what's in the news doesn't mean it is fake. Just because you wish someone was doing something else and you read about it in the newspaper doesn't mean there's something wrong with the newspaper. In fact, you should be thanking news sources for the information.

I hope this marks a turning point in America. I hope we've been sufficiently shocked by where our policies and attitudes have brought us, and we're dedicated to real change.

There's a lot for us to be shocked about these days, and much to work to change. This is one of those important issues. I hope you start talking about it, reading about it, and working in support of journalists.

Oh, and you might see me out and about wearing my #PressIsNotTheEnemy shirt. You might find my kids sporting their own #DemocracyDiesInSilence t-shirts. Maybe you need one, too.

## Letters to the Editor

### City charter vote only way to long-lasting change

Dear Editor:

In "Community partnership provides repair vouchers instead of tickets," Margie O'Loughlin presents the Lights On program as a chance for "improving police-community relations" and "healing" after the police killing of Philando Castile four years ago after he was stopped for a broken tail light. The claim is absurd. Philando Castile was killed because he was Black, not because his car needed repairs.

If Philando Castile's death is to be not entirely in vain, we need more than a program; we need a vote on the Minneapolis city charter.

I agree that handing out repair vouchers instead of fines is one easy way to help keep streets safer for everybody. But are armed police officers the best fit for the job when other alternatives are possible? Programs like Lights On might be an improvement but they are not enough when routine traffic stops for Black and Brown motorists too often turn deadly at the hands of police. In Minneapolis, we now have a chance to amend the city charter and remove the

roadblocks that keep us from collaboratively and creatively re-imagining community safety. Let us vote and we can maybe finally turn tragedy into something positive and long-lasting.

Craig F. Simenson  
Longfellow

### Thanks for informative, courageous issues

Dear Editor:

Just read the *Messenger* which was delivered to my door.

Thanks for your article on LBS and the details of what we have been through. Having worked closely with Kim Jakus to draw various businesses the destruction hit

close to home along with the way LoLa was supported by these businesses for so many years.

I remember sitting in LV's Barbershop and drawing Lamber to as he worked. I later gave him the drawing. How innocent those times seem now.

Thanks for this informative courageous issue of the *Messenger* for these times

Anita White  
Longfellow

Dear Editor:

Thank you so much for keeping the paper going. We loved the warbler article last month. I've lived in Longfellow three years and had never heard of 7 Oaks Oval until reading that article. Since then my

family has visited three or four times and told several other friends about it. What a great find within walking distance of us. And we enjoyed the article this month about the game designer in Standish. It's so nice to have local news and discover all these neat things going on right here in the neighborhood. And the Lights On article (about police giving out vouchers rather than tickets) was encouraging to read this week, in the midst of all the pain and sorrow surrounding George Floyd's death.

Thank you for providing this newspaper to our neighborhood each month.

Take care,  
Hannah Sheu  
Longfellow

**Messenger**

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News for you!

The Longfellow Nokomis *Messenger* is a monthly community publication in the Longfellow and Nokomis areas of Minneapolis, owned and operated by TMC Publications, CO. Visit our website for our calendar and publication dates.

### Story ideas always welcome.

Keep in touch with the *Messenger*. Letters to the editor under 200 words and news releases for publication can be sent via e-mail to [news@longfellownokomisessenger.com](mailto:news@longfellownokomisessenger.com). Unsigned letters will not run.

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The *Messenger* is for profit and for a purpose — and we don't sacrifice one for the other. We consider ourselves a zebra company, one that

is both black and white. As a media company, we work to highlight issues, solve real, meaningful problems, and repair existing social systems. We are working with our readers and advertisers to create a more just and responsible society that hears, helps and heals the customers and communities we serve.

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# What is 'a police-free future?'

Submitted by MPD150

We (and so many others in this movement) don't want to just rebrand cops, or privatize cops, or make cops "nicer." The goal is a city without police, and defunding police is one tool we have to reach that goal. But what does that mean in practice? Here are 10 points to keep in mind:

1. Invest in prevention, not punishment.

Whether you agree with abolition or not, it isn't hard to see that police are a massive draw on the wealth and resources of our communities. As council member Jeremiah Ellison said, "Our police have been bankrupting our city for years. Consistently and absolutely gutting taxpayers of money." There are smarter ways to structure our budgets.

2. What does "investing in prevention" look like in practice?

Some of this is big picture, like making significant, long-term changes to how our city budget addresses affordable housing, youth programs, mental health services, addiction treatment options, jobs programs, education, etc. But there are also some really concrete, specific examples of what that "prevention, not punishment" approach can look like:

- Minneapolis' Group Violence Intervention initiative has "helped de-escalate tension between groups on the north side without involving Minneapolis police."

- Minnesota activists have called for comprehensive sex ed in schools that includes curricula on consent, bodily autonomy, and healthy relationships as a way to prevent gender-based violence.

- Minneapolis youth have organized to shift SRO (school resource officer) budgets into things like restorative justice trainings, school counselors, and more.

3. Many people already live in a world without police (pt. 1).

If you grew up in a well-off, predominantly white suburb, how often did you interact with cops? Communities with lots of good jobs, strong schools, economies, and social safety nets are already, in some ways, living in a world without police (of course, there's so much more to

say here about gentrification, redlining, white flight, and how one function of policing is to keep Black, Indigenous, and people of color out of these communities, but check out the readings on our website).

4. Many people already live in a world without police (pt. 2).

We want to make sure everyone has someone to call on for help. It's critical to note, though, that for many of us, especially those of us living in under-resourced, Black, Indigenous, and people of color communities, the police have never been helpful. In fact, they've been a major source of harm and violence. Millions of us already live in a world where we don't even think about calling on the police for help; it isn't some kind of far-future fantasy.

5. Public safety is bigger than policing.

Abolitionists want everyone to be safe. We're just acknowledging that there are other ways to think about "safety" than armed paramilitary forces with a proven track record of racism, brutality, and a focus on responding to harm after it's happened rather than de-escalating or preventing it in the first place. We need to explore those "other ways," lift up current practices for building safe communities without police, and innovate some new ones too.

6. We're abolishing the police, not abolishing "help."

Even before 2020, there was work happening in Minneapolis to rethink how 911 works, and who gets routed where as "first responders." We want to continue that work. A world without police will still have 911. It will still have firefighters and EMTs. And across the U.S., there are hundreds of programs and initiatives that "help" people without police being the first point of contact. Check out programs like COPE in Minneapolis, CAHOOTS in Eugene, and our own (ongoing) list of places to call when you're in crisis.

7. Abolition is a process, not a "Thanos snap" where all the cops just instantly disappear.

Yes, different activists will have different perspectives on this point, and we challenge people to understand why some-

one might call for a particular police department's instant, total dissolution. But whether a community's specific demand is to defund a department all at once, or gradually over time, the idea of abolition being a process remains the same. It will take time and effort to build the institutions and services we need, to continue to make connections between policing, prisons, immigration policy, and beyond, and to make sure we're not replicating the logic of prisons and punishment in our own solutions.

8. "But what about violent crimes? Who will we call?"

Prevention efforts will reduce the number of violent crimes. They won't stop them all, though. A bigger takeaway here is that however you respond to the "what about violent crimes?" question, it doesn't make sense to structure our entire, multi-billion dollar social safety apparatus around that relatively rare class of behaviors.

9. This new world won't be perfect. But we have to see how imperfect the current world is.

Will a focus on prevention magically stop all harm? Of course not. But we have to ask: how much harm is our current system stopping? How many murders, or sexual assaults, do police currently "solve," much less prevent? Here in Minnesota, we had a whole multi-part series in our local paper on "how Minnesota's criminal justice system has failed victims of sexual assault," and lots of people have already seen the graphic depicting how, when it comes to sexual violence, "the vast majority of perpetrators will not go to jail or prison." Redirecting resources into prevention efforts won't solve all of our problems, but it's a common sense step we can and should take that will have a real impact on people's lives.

10. "Abolition is about presence, not absence. It's about building life-affirming institutions." -Ruth Wilson Gilmore

That's a quote we return to often, especially when we're feeling uncertain. A police-free future isn't something that just happens to us; it's something we build, together.

# Attaining a just and safe Minneapolis

by Kathleen O'Brien, resident of Hiawatha neighborhood in the Longfellow community

Policing in our nation and city must be drastically transformed. The unjust murder of George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis police officers put a spotlight on this urgent reality for people in our neighborhood, across the nation and around the world. Our goal is a JUST and SAFE city.

Structural racism permeates our society and its institutions and is at the foundation of our need to reform policing. I believe the people of Minneapolis agree with this judgment. I believe in action that is immediate, legitimate and enduring to transform public safety in our community. I do not agree with the city council's proposed Charter Amendment to eliminate the police department because this will not address structural racism and it will not advance essential police reforms. In fact, the amendment is a distraction from the necessary work to address structural racism.

Public safety is a basic city service. The city council's proposed charter amendment would fundamentally change Minneapolis city government. The city council sent this proposed charter change to the Charter Commission without a public hearing or any inclusive participation. It seems that the council is proposing this dramatic action to give the appearance that they are doing something. If the city council was genuine in their effort to transform policing they would support Chief Medaria Arradondo and his reform agenda. The council could achieve substantial police reform by pursuing the necessary changes in state and federal law, expanding the partnership with Hennepin County on vital public health programs and giving the chief the funding and tools he needs to do his job.

Hennepin County provides social welfare and public health services. It has the experience, expertise and existing programs that should be expanded to work with the Minne-

apolis Police Department. The city should not hire social workers and duplicate Hennepin County programs.

There are many urgent needs in our city. Structural racism must be addressed. The unemployed need jobs. People need job training and placement assistance. Businesses (many that were damaged and are owned by immigrants and people of color) need advice and financial support to rebuild and reopen. People with mental health needs require the treatment and expert staff assistance. The city needs to work with partners to provide housing that is truly affordable. The homeless need safe and healthy shelter. Let's ask our city council to work on these urgent needs. Their charter change is not urgent and not necessary to address structural racism or transform our police department.

I oppose the council's proposed Police Charter Amendment for several reasons:

1. It is premature. The amendment eliminates the police department without a plan. Before the citizenry is asked to vote on the elimination of the police department, the council should have developed their proposal for providing law enforcement, how they intend to implement their plan and a guarantee there will be a smooth transition without a break in public safety protection. Potential changes to our municipal government could be the focus of next year's municipal election. The citizens would have an entire election season to discuss and debate municipal structure including the Minneapolis Charter.

2. It diminishes accountability. The amendment eliminates the responsibility and authority of the mayor and places oversight in a Director of Community Safety and Violence Prevention who would report to the council and mayor. The amendment states: If there is a Division of Law Enforcement Services, "The Director of Community and Violence Prevention shall appoint the director of the division of law en-

forcement services, subject to confirmation by official act of the city council and mayor." This puts in place 15 bosses for a "potential" director of the division of law enforcement. This diminishes accountability to the citizenry, adds bureaucracy and makes policing decisions more distant from the citizens.

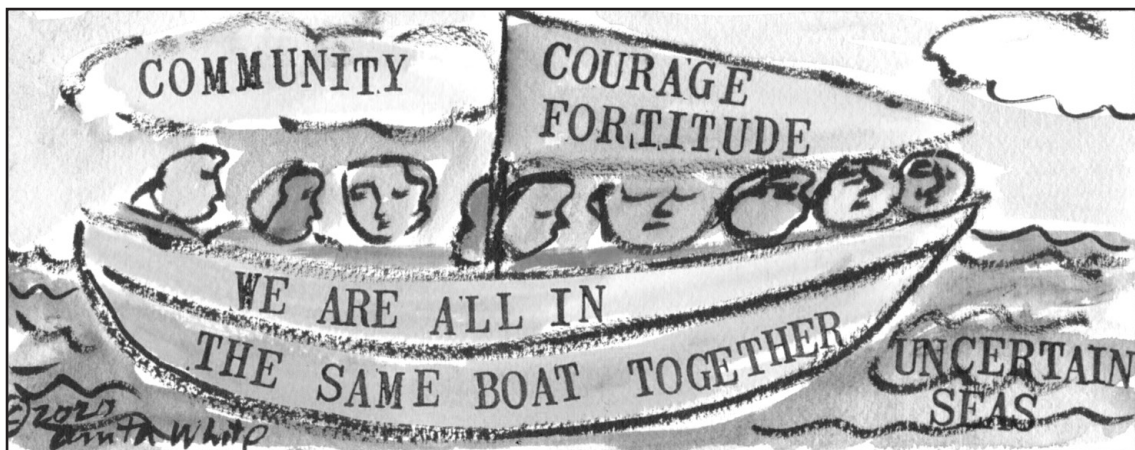
3. It makes no commitment to have a police department. The proposed charter change removes the current charter language: that the city council must establish, organize and otherwise provide for these departments ...a police department. And replaces current language with: "The council may maintain a division of law enforcement services, composed of licensed peace officers, subject to the supervision of the department of community safety and violence prevention." Under the new charter language there is no guarantee that there would be licensed police officers serving our city.

Finally, the council action states: "This ordinance shall take effect on May 1, 2021." It is unbelievable that the city council could implement this structural change and advance police reform in about six to seven months. The council has promised that it would engage in a full year of consultation and deliberation with the people of Minneapolis. Has the city council backed away from that commitment? Wouldn't it be better to have the city council listen to the people of Minneapolis before a charter change? Before changing our city government?

Recently a group of hundreds of concerned and engaged citizens - called Friends of Minneapolis - have come together to encourage a healthy and productive dialogue among community members and city leaders to ensure the steps we take towards police reform guide us to a safe and just Minneapolis for all. We encourage all our neighbors to meaningfully engage and participate in this discussion and decision-making, as it will shape the vitality and safety of our city for years to come.

WHAT DO YOU THINK? Email letter to [Tesha@LongfellowNokomisMessenger.com](mailto:Tesha@LongfellowNokomisMessenger.com)

## Muses by Anita White





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# Why is city excluding neighborhood residents?

>> from 1

corporation will be accessible to the community, how money will be distributed, and who will get funds.

Torres Ray repeatedly stressed that community leaders need to come together to create a plan that reflects their needs and desires for the Lake St. area. Current efforts are primarily grassroots and are being done by many organizations. (See sidebar)

"I am very happy to work with you on a plan to bring your voices to the Legislature," said Torres Ray. "You're asking for a new day. That requires a new process."

Majors pointed out that the Third Precinct police station is a big unknown at present. The most recent estimate to rebuild is between \$10-12 million. Given its location at the E. Lake St./Minnehaha Ave. intersection, it will impact how the area is redeveloped.

Seward Redesign Executive Director Chris Romano pointed out that community members are still dealing with emotional stress and strain, which makes planning difficult. "I don't think we've given them enough time to figure that out," said Romano. He suggested that planning be done in a series rather than all at once.

Hillary Oppmann of the Seward Commerce and Civic Organization (SCCA) noted that they are still trying to support businesses as they cope with COVID-19, manage evictions,

and make future plans. Plus there is the issue of homelessness and local encampments. This is on top of the issues related to rebuilding after the civil unrest following George Floyd's murder. "All of us are working on so many different fronts," said Oppmann. "Keep all that in mind."

"I think people are worn out," agreed Corcoran Neighborhood Organization Executive Director Alicia Smith. "I think we are moving very fast. White folks are moving too fast and not allowing people to grieve." She thinks that developers want to be on the right side of history and will wait to move when people are ready.

Torres Ray stated that she is a woman of color who deals with trauma every day. "I don't have the luxury of taking time to deal with trauma," she stated. "I can't afford to wait to figure it out. I have to do something today."

She pointed out that the banks and developers aren't waiting. "I need that plan now. I need to know what you need," said Torres Ray, who apologized for being blunt.

The group agreed to create a steering committee with representatives from the neighborhood.

Lake Street Council Executive Director Allison Sharkey is



Local leaders brainstorm during a recent meeting with Senator Patricia Torres Ray (bottom middle).

a member of the mayor's task force, the Minneapolis Forward: Community Now Coalition. She reported that the group is primarily focused on fundraising and lobbying at the state level. There are no neighborhood organizations represented within the group, but it is instead made up of corporate stakeholders and larger business organizations such as the Minneapolis Regional Chamber, Minneapolis Foundation and Metropolitan Consortium of Community Developers.

Majors thinks that should be changed.

"One of the things I hear from residents the most is they don't want things happening to them without them," Majors said.

"We know that the greatest conflicts lie with money. There won't be a collaborative community response if there isn't at least a voice at the table."

"How do we get neighborhood representation?"

## What are local groups doing?

**Corcoran Neighborhood Association:** Talking to businesses about their needs and obstacles to getting grants. Focus: Corcoran

**Lake Street Council:** Raised about \$10 million, and is distributing \$5 million in a round of grants that are being finalized. Businesses owned by Somali, Latinx and Black communities are among those receiving grants to rebuild and temporarily relocate. LSC received 500 applicants and grants will be up to \$25,000. LSC is also coordinating pro bono donations of supplies of labor. Staff are leveraging additional funding to aid in site control of damaged buildings. To be better organized, LSC is adding staff for office administration and marketing. Focus: E. Lake St. from Mississippi to Bde Maka Ska

**Longfellow Business Association:** Distributed \$1-\$5,000 mini-grants to 22 businesses from a GoFundMe fundraiser in late July. Provides information and connects businesses with resources. Focus: Longfellow

**Longfellow Community Council:** Though a partnership with Rebuild Longfellow, LCC is matching volunteers with business needs, which range from general labor to IT to legal support to marketing. Comcast is donating \$25,000 to help reach out to local businesses. Staff are engaging with residents to assist in rebuilding Downtown Longfellow, working on a longterm stabilization

plan, and focusing on a rebuilding plan. They are also pulling resources together to connect with state, city and local leaders. Focus: Greater Longfellow

**Longfellow Nokomis Messenger:** Reaches residents and businesses with news and information, and provides an avenue for businesses to build their customer base. The free What's Open web page connects businesses and customers. Focus: Longfellow and Nokomis

**Seward Commerce and Civic Association:** Offers \$500 grants to help any business impacted from a total of \$32,000 raised through GoFundMe. SCCA is coordinating with Augsburg University. Focus: Seward

**Seward Redesign:** Offers technical assistance to businesses in Seward and Longfellow, and are helping displaced businesses move. Staff are leveraging additional funding to aid in site control of damaged buildings and are considering how to revision and create a new plan for Minnehaha/Lake/27th. Focus: Seward and Longfellow

**Standish-Ericsson Neighborhood Association:** Connects with residents and businesses encouraging shop local mindset and providing support/services to small businesses to ensure a vibrant local economy. Focus: Standish-Ericsson, West of Rails businesses

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### CRISIS HOTLINE

Call the Minnesota Day One Crisis Hotline at 1-866-223-1111 if you or someone you know is seeking shelter due to a dangerous relationship or needs to create a safety plan. B-20

### EMPLOYMENT

Longfellow/Seward Healthy Seniors has two positions open working with seniors. Community Nurse, R.N., 6-10 hours/week. Somali Elders Coordinator, 8-12 hours/week (must be bilingual). Send resume and cover letter to: [maryalbrecht@LShealthyseniors.org](mailto:maryalbrecht@LShealthyseniors.org). No phone calls please.

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# Community Bulletin Board



Supporting the neighborhood by supporting our local businesses

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## Welcome!

Welcome to the first edition of the ADX-Longfellow Business Association's Community Bulletin Board! This resource seeks to be a useful guide to help our neighbors during this difficult period of reconstruction. With the financial support of Minneapolis-based tech and entertainment company ADX,

and the merchant community leadership of the Longfellow Business Association, look to Community Bulletin Board each month in the Longfellow Nokomis Messenger for a guide to our businesses.

## Rebuild Longfellow: a grassroots community guide to our neighborhood

### REBUILD LONGFELLOW

Rebuild Longfellow is a grass-roots team of Longfellow residents who partner with the Longfellow Business Association, Longfellow Community Council, and Seward Redesign. Their focus is to provide the Longfellow neighborhood with practical ways to support local businesses. This is made possible by partnering with block club leaders in Longfellow to gather the needs of businesses, categorized by type of support required and timing. Businesses can reach out to [rebuildlongfellow@gmail.com](mailto:rebuildlongfellow@gmail.com) to update their need requests. Volunteers can find a business to help at [rebuildlongfellow.org](http://rebuildlongfellow.org).

The following are a few businesses featured on the site that could use your support:

#### 1 Post Plus Inc

Current needs include general labor assistance as well as Technical (Software, websites, web applications), Marketing (PR, social media, content writing, fundraising), and Finance & Accounting support.

#### 2 Nobility Home Health Care, Inc.

Needs assistance re-locating, as well as technical support (Software, websites, web applications, IT setup, internet access, computers)

#### 3 Midori's Floating World Café

Needs assistance with general cleaning and labor, as well as Technical (Software, websites, web applications), Insurance, Legal, and Finance & Accounting Support

#### 4 JAWAAHIR DANCE COMPANY & the Cassandra School

Needs assistance with Cleaning, General Labor, Technical (IT setup, internet access, computers)

### Show Your Support with Longfellow Strong Yard Signs

The Longfellow Community Council and Imagine! Express have teamed up for a fundraiser acknowledging Greater Longfellow's resiliency and our renewed sense of community. All profits fund food security, neighborhood safety, and business stability plan as we work to rebuild Longfellow. Yard Signs are \$10 each, and are available for purchase every Monday from 11am-1pm at the LCC Office (2727 26th Ave S.) or at Fireroast Cafe & Wine Bar (3800 37th Ave S.), & East Lake Liquor Store (3916 E Lake St)

Cash or Venmo ONLY, Venmo username: LCC-Strong.

Signs are also available for purchase online from the LCC square shop for pickup during Monday office hours <https://longfellow-community-council.square.site/>



## Portraits from 6ft

Portraits from 6ft is a project of photographer Carina Lofgren that captures Minnesotans' everyday lives amid the COVID-19 crisis. During this time of uncertainty and social distance, this project brings people together by sharing unique stories from our community. The LBA and our partner organization Redesign are working with Carina this Spring to document Longfellow businesses impacted by the virus. Thanks to Redesign and the City of Minneapolis for funding this project through the Great Streets Neighborhood Business District Program.

See all the latest Portraits from 6ft at the Longfellow Business Association's website, [www.longfellowbusinessassociation.org](http://www.longfellowbusinessassociation.org)



Photography by Carina Lofgren

## About ADX LABS

ADX Labs, Inc. (ADX) is a Minneapolis-headquartered global technology company focused on providing innovative products and services for individuals, home-based businesses, and the small to medium enterprise market. It is the core company in a global group of technology, entertainment and services brands and businesses. ADX independently funds the ADX Foundation, a registered non-profit philanthropic organization which has invested in children, communities, and social justice since 2013.

## About the Longfellow Business Association

The Longfellow Business Association (LBA) exists to ensure a vibrant business climate for the area by monitoring issues that impact our area businesses, facilitating communication between area businesses, providing business development resources, and supporting the greater Longfellow Community, which includes the Longfellow, Cooper, Howe, and Hiawatha neighborhoods. We are home to more than 22,000 residents and over 500 businesses, all of whom we strive to support and promote.

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Please contact LBA executive director Kim Jakus with your news, promotions, deals, operating hours or stories of recovery. We are seeking YOUR story for next month's Community Bulletin Board. Email [kim@longfellowbusinessassociation.org](mailto:kim@longfellowbusinessassociation.org)

**adx**



# Rebuild Repair Recycle

## REMEMBER TO CARE FOR THE TREES

### Minneapolis asks homeowners to water boulevard trees

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

This spring, 9,400 boulevard trees were planted in the city of Minneapolis.

According to Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Forestry Director Ralph Sievert, "The new plantings include river birch, Kentucky coffee tree, buckeye, tree lilac, alder, ornamental pear, honey locust, linden, hackberry, ginkgo, larch, and more. These are trees that do well here, but haven't been planted in large numbers before. This year we went for a big mix."

The trees got in the ground in record time. In response to the pandemic, the park board had to come up with a new tree-planting strategy. Instead of sending several staff out together, crew members worked individually from small utility vehicles. One person dug holes, the next person planted trees, and the last person mulched and watered them. Sievert said, "It worked so well, we might stick with this method in the future. We got the whole job done by Memorial Day, which was weeks ahead of schedule."

The park board has five large capacity trucks for watering, but they focus on trees that homeowners can't get to: those planted on medians, in parks, and in front of apartment buildings. If your home or business has received a new tree, it is up to you to keep it watered – and the first year that a tree is in the ground is critical.

Every new tree comes with a slow release water bag zipped around its trunk. The bag should be filled by hose or bucket once a week. Its contents will release slowly over several hours, allowing for better water absorption into the roots.

Sievert has been in the forestry department long enough to see several dramatic tree events hit Minneapolis since the invasion of Dutch elm disease in the 1970s.

American elm had been the dominant species across the city, and the loss of the nearly 100-year-old shade canopy was devastating. Realizing that monoculture plantings had failed, the city changed gears and planted dominant species block by block

instead.

When the Emerald Ash Borer arrived a little more than 10 years ago, Minneapolis began to suffer another huge loss of its boulevard and park trees. Sievert said, "We're in year seven of our eight-year plan to remove all of the ash trees from Minneapolis boulevards and parks. By the end of next year, about 40,000 ash trees will have been removed and replaced. The only ash trees left on city boulevards will be the ones residents are paying to treat themselves for Emerald Ash Borer."

"In light of all that, we've revamped the way we look at boulevard trees once again. The latest rule is that if a block has more than 10% of any one kind of tree already established, we won't plant any more of that species. The key is to diversify."

It is unusual for a municipality to provide boulevard trees at no cost to homeowners. The park board also removes sick or dying trees and grinds their stumps free of charge.

WATER TREES >> 9



Lend a hand and water boulevard trees. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)



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Rusty Patched Bumblebee (Photo by Becky Wolter)

## Rusty Patched Bumblebee ID contest

The Greater Longfellow area is a Community Wildlife Habitat, and this year it was chosen as a Lawns to Legumes Demonstration Neighborhood by the state of Minnesota's Board of Water and Soil Resources to plant native plants and save threatened pollinators - especially the state bee, the federally endangered Rusty Patched Bumblebee.

Submit a verified Rusty Patched Bumblebee sighting to the [www.bumblebeewatch.org](http://www.bumblebeewatch.org) website or app to win a contest for the Greater Longfellow area.

- Adult - \$50 1st Prize
- Under 18 - \$50 Kid Prize.

The website doesn't indicate if the observer is under 18 years old, so if you're a parent or guardian of a young citizen scientist, please email Daniel at [dschultz6@comcast.net](mailto:dschultz6@comcast.net) to inform him.

- \$50 Grand Prize: Whoever gets the most number of confirmed Rusty Patched Bumblebee sightings in 2020 will win this prize.

Begin by creating an account at [www.bumblebeewatch.org](http://www.bumblebeewatch.org), then upload one to three good photos of your sighting, and it will be vetted by highly qualified bee experts. After they review it, they will identify it (if they can), and mark it as a "verified" sighting. Once confirmed, please email Daniel to let him know.

## WATER TREES

>> from 8

The tree canopy in Minneapolis is currently about 29%. The higher the percentage of tree canopy, the better off city residents are. Trees increase energy savings by providing shade; they decrease storm water run-off by mitigating rainfall; they increase property value with their beauty.

Sievert said, "The pandemic has hit us hard this spring and summer, just like it did everybody else. In a normal year, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board would receive significant revenue from events held in parks like weddings, concerts, fun-runs, and the like. This year, that hasn't happened. We've kept our public spaces open, but we aren't hosting events to discourage people from gathering."

That has created a predicted budget deficit next year of approximately \$6,000,000.

Sievert said, "The 2021 planting season is going to be tricky. Maybe there won't be money for trees in the spring? Let's take care of the trees we already have, by remembering to keep them watered, and by being careful with lawn mowers and weed whippers when working around the base of trees. Any damage to their bark is an invitation for pests and disease enter."

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# Back to School

## Athena award winners honored in shortened school year

By MATTHEW DAVIS

High school sports evaporated with the spring thaw due to COVID-19 but recognizing top student athletes didn't.

Three area seniors received Athena award honors, capping

their high school careers in May. Named by the Minneapolis Athena Awards Committee, the annual honor goes to a female senior student athlete at each participating high school. The committee considers athletic achievement,

volunteering in the community and other school extracurricular participation in addition to academic success.

Awards went to Emily Mulhern of South, Marie Peterson of Roosevelt and Kate Pryor of

Minnehaha Academy.

### Emily Mulhern

Emily Mulhern had a duffel bag of supplies handy for teammates in addition to being a strong competitor for the Tigers.

"Each athlete plays a different role on the team, and I was known as the 'team mother,'" Mulhern said. "I was the one who had the extra pair of gloves, the bottle of sunscreen and a huge bag of trailmix to share. If someone was having an off day, I could be counted on for moral support."

Mulhern led Nordic skiers as team captain her junior year and made a splash as rookie of the year for Tigers cross country in the eighth grade. She also helped the ultimate frisbee club team reach nationals.

"For me, the (Athena) award itself acknowledges the important role participation in athletics can play in girls' lives," Mulhern said. "I am also very grateful to my coaches and teammates who helped form supportive communities for all of the athletes."

Outside of athletics, Mulhern volunteered at Minneapolis Children's Hospital and environmental service projects in Central America. She also performed with Project Opera and played flute in wind ensemble.

Her academic achievements included being the valedictorian, an AP Scholar with Distinction and National Honor Society treasurer. She also earned a certificate of recognition for the Academics, Arts and Athletics Award.

Mulhern will attend St. Olaf College to study psychology and play for the Ollies ultimate frisbee team.

### Marie Peterson

Marie Peterson excelled at sports with Roosevelt, but her biggest success came in club wrestling.

She won a state club title in 2017 and took runner-up in 2018. She also competed on a national level.

"To win state was one of the proudest moments of my high school athletics career," Peterson said. "Competing nationally was definitely eye-opening because I was introduced to so many amazing wrestlers."

Peterson also succeeded in

tennis and track and field for the Teddies as she won Minneapolis City Conference all-conference awards in both sports. She helped the Teddies rugby club team take runner-up in state.

"I have been dreaming about the Athena award for my whole time at Roosevelt, and so it means everything to me as an athlete," Peterson said.

Her volunteer involvement included serving as president of the Asian Club at Roosevelt, math team captain and as a student ambassador. She also volunteered with the National Honor Society.

Peterson also received the Smith Book award, academic all-state, academic achievement award and made the honor roll. She hopes to major in biology for college and play rugby but hasn't decided on a major yet.

### Kate Pryor

Kate Pryor went from losing a baby tooth in her year of high school softball as a seventh-grader to holding school records in home runs, RBIs and hits.

"I don't even remember the play I made at third," Pryor said about the game. "But apparently people were impressed by it and one of my teammates yelled from the dugout, 'she just lost her last baby tooth today' and everyone started laughing."

Her softball prowess will lead her to Boston University next where she will also study health science, but she leaves Minnehaha Academy as being much more than a softball star. She helped the Redhawks girls basketball team win a state title as a junior and won Independent Metro Athletic Conference all-conference honors twice. In volleyball, she also earned all-conference honors and all-section honors once.

"I feel really honored to be selected as the Athena Award winner because there are a lot of really talented female athletes at Minnehaha," Pryor said.

Outside of sports, she volunteered as a retreat leader for Minnehaha's middle school. She also served as a camp counselor for Covenant Pines Bible Camp.

Academically, she earned AP Scholar and Academic Letter honors. She also participated in the National Honor Society.

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# Being the bridge: South High Foundation helps students in financial crisis

By CHLOE PETER

The South High Foundation, 3131 19th Ave. South, was started in 1983 with only \$75.

Their goal was to provide financial assistance to students and school programs in order to enhance the students' ability to learn. It's come a long way since then. In the 2017 school year, the South High Foundation funded more than \$62,000 in grants for athletics, academics, fine arts and extracurricular activities.

When asked how many students were impacted by grant money, foundation president Judy Ayers said, "I would tell you that every student at South High is."

Normally, students and teachers would be able to meet with Ayers or another member of the foundation's board in order to request a grant. But now, COVID-19 has changed the way they are able to meet people's needs. Staff are only allowed in the school once a month to get their mail, all meetings are done remotely, and challenges of the pandemic brought on more families with financial needs. They had to think of a way to continue giving money to South High

families in crisis.

The South High Emergency Relief Fund was created. This fund is for families who have gone through financial crisis or homelessness during the pandemic and Uprising. Sheri Harris, a social worker who has collaborated with the South High Foundation for 20 years, works with a team made up of other social workers in order to run the fund.

"We problem solve to take care of whatever the need might be," Harris said.

## How this helps

A family that particularly stuck out to Harris was one whose members all contracted COVID-19 at the same time. They were too ill to get up and cook. They were unable to see anyone outside the family or have someone they knew come help as they needed to remain quarantined. But, they reached out to Harris and she gave them an e-gift card. This way, they were able to order in food until they were strong enough to cook for themselves once again.

"What everyone knows is the full impact but seeing it on an individual level – the challenges

of COVID-19 – made the difference," Harris said.

The South High Emergency Relief Fund serves many families like this. Donations can be made through PayPal or GiveMN on the South High Foundation's website, southhighfoundation.org; specify relief fund. Families can reach out if they are in need by contacting Harris at Sheri.Harris@mpls.k12.mn.us. After families reach out, the foundation transfers money to gift cards or e-cards for rent, insurance or groceries. Harris and the social work team then work with families to see if there's anything they can do in the long term to help them through the crisis.

"Being able to help with this [rent] just one time means that they aren't looking at eviction. They're looking at another month when unemployment could kick in or when the stimulus could come through," Harris said.

## A united community

Even during the challenges the pandemic and the Uprising have brought on, both Harris and Ayers mentioned that the community has still been incred-

ibly helpful and banded together for a greater cause. Normal fundraisers for the South High Foundation like the pancake breakfast or the golf tournament were cancelled, but donations have still been coming in. Teachers at South High held a food drive and graduates, even those who now live in other states, have continued to donate to both the Emergency Relief Fund and the Foundation itself. But, they still hope to grow even more.

"With all of the cuts that schools seem to face every year, there's more and more need. I see the Foundation being able to fill those needs," Ayers said.

## Moving forward

Looking toward the future, the foundation wants to be able to fill more of the gaps between families or students in financial need and how to help them get an education. They want to get to the root of what causes struggles for families. Ayers is aiming to get more donations from outside companies to pay for bigger programs students may need. Ayers works as a volunteer and does not gain any money from donations, but believes that if people



Social worker Sheri Harris (left) and South High Foundation President Judy Ayers are working together to meet needs of students. (Photos submitted)

are able, then they should be helping.

"My goal is to continue doing this until I can't anymore," Ayers said.

The foundation also aims to create more relationships with students, teachers, staff, and families. They want to directly ask the community what it needs and will do whatever they can to meet those needs in order to give students access to a better education. They don't want to let the gaps of a financial crisis impact how far a student can go.

"The needs are there and the needs have always been there; the goal is to be the bridge and support in order to help students be the best student that they can be," Harris said.

# History's push and nature's shove

## Two Sanford students win the National History Day contest

By CHLOE PETER

Jackson Nguyen's screen lagged a bit. He nervously awaited to hear the news of how his, and his partner, Jack Randolph's, website had done in the National History Day competition (NHD). Due, to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the awards were broadcast online. What had started out as an assigned project for all seventh graders at Sanford Middle School, 3524 42 Ave. S., had become a long road to the NHD competition. In the past couple of weeks, there had been a Google Hangout each day with Jack and teachers in order to revise their project. But, it wasn't long until he heard his family's cheers come from downstairs and he knew he had won.

More than half a million students around the world participate in National History Day each year by submitting a project with research done on a history topic of the students' choice. Of these half a million, more than 27,000 are students at the Minnesota local levels. Minnesota's local levels are hosted by

the Minnesota Historical Society and the University of Minnesota – College of Liberal Arts.

If a project is in the top two at the local levels, they move on to the national levels hosted by the University of Maryland. While the competition is usually held in Washington, D.C., the 2020 National History Day contest moved online, due to COVID-19, with the award ceremony shared live on June 22, 2020 via a live stream from the National History Day website. Nguyen and Randolph's project won first in their category for the NHD contest; the prize was \$1,000.

Randolph and Nguyen's website, "The Four Pests Campaign: The Consequences of Breaking Ecological Barriers" found at <https://site.nhd.org/48608894>, is 1,200 words focused on what happens when humans try and get rid of animals seen as pests. They did this through the lens of The Four Pests Campaign. This was a campaign started in China in the 1950s; the thought process being that if some pests were extermi-

nated for good, it would boost public health. In reality, it led to the Great Chinese Famine and changed the way the ecosystem worked.

"I was interested in the idea of countries going to war with animals," Nguyen said.

The idea of breaking ecological barriers came to him when he saw a YouTube video about The Great Emu War. This was when Australia tried to get rid of the large birds called emus in order to control their population as they were considered a nuisance to the public at the time. This "war" on the emus lasted from Nov. 2 to Dec. 10, 1932.

However, Australia's attempts to eradicate the birds did not prevail. With a topic picked out, Nguyen and Randolph were ready to begin their website. Part of the assignment was done before schools switched to online delivery. The two were able to do research at the libraries, go to helpful informational lectures held at the middle school, and interview ecologists. But after the Stay-At-Home order began, meeting and research became more



Jackson Nguyen and Jack Randolph won first place and \$1,000 in the History Day contest. (Photos submitted)

difficult.

"Once COVID-19 started, it was mostly on our own time, and in the last week, we had Google Meets every day along with some interviews. It was a lot," Randolph said.

As the History Day competition went on and their website moved up through levels of the competition, Randolph and Nguyen revised their research at least six times. This was done with the help of teachers and judges' feedback. Before the Stay-At-Home order was instated, they would go to the Media Center at the middle school, but later in the competition, all of the revising was done online. The Google Website Designer, a program made to guide users through steps of building a web-

site, was so finicky that it would only save one person's work at a time. The two would screen share over Google Hangouts and talk over ideas while one typed in the information and the other watched from the opposite side. After each level and revision, they were excited, but became more and more nervous. They never thought that their website would go as far as it did.

"We started off aiming for state, but as the competition went on, it became more nerve wracking," Randolph said. "Our thought process became: We've made it this far, but now it's time to bring it the final mile."

Neither Nguyen nor Randolph know if they'll do the competition next year because it's no longer required by Sanford Middle School and will be entirely on their own time. However, they say that they've learned a lot from this experience. They've learned things not only about ecology, but also in general. They feel more comfortable with interviewing people and have gained knowledge for projects in the future.

When asked what advice they'd give to others, Nguyen said, "Always look for feedback. Ask everyone around you for open advice."

## Back 2 School

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# TIPS TO PREVENT ACTIVIST BURNOUT

*Burnout affecting many South Minneapolis residents affected by COVID-19 and racism, says Paul Johnson of Workflow Strengths*

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

Longfellow resident Paul Johnson quit his steady, reliable job at the end of February. He had dreamed of starting his own business for years, and the time seemed right.

When he first heard about COVID-19 shortly after he resigned, he remembers thinking, "Huh, I wonder what that's about?"

Johnson was certified a couple years ago to administer a tool called the Strengths Finder Assessment. The assessment helps people recognize their dominant strengths, and learn to how to apply them to their work life and their life in general.

Johnson said, "Based on my assessment results, it was clear that I have entrepreneurial strengths. I'm a good problem solver. I have the ability to visualize a better future. I want to be part of building a more responsible, inclusive future."

Despite his enthusiasm, the limitations of starting a new business during a pandemic set in quickly. Then George Floyd was lynched on May 25. Johnson set aside all goals related to launching his new business, and worked overtime on racial justice and neighborhood issues for the next two weeks. He raised donations for small businesses that had been destroyed in the uprising, did clean-up on Lake St., was vigilant as a security presence with his block club, posted to social media 24/7 about everything that was happening in the neighborhood, and pressed for communication with lawmakers at the city and state level.

He did everything he could, except take care of himself.

Johnson said, "That time was

totally exhausting, but it also solidified my passion for social justice. I had to learn how to stay in the game without burning out, getting sick, or damaging my primary relationship. If my occupational goal was to help other people find balance in their lives, I had to get some balance back in mine."

According to Johnson, burnout as a workplace phenomenon is an outgrowth of unmanaged stress. He said, "Your mind and body are under unrelenting pressure. The symptoms are similar to depression: fatigue, loss of motivation, high levels of cynicism, irritability, and an overarching sense that you just can't get it right. Over time, chronic stress can manifest into insomnia, memory loss, immune system decline, heart failure, and more. It's not something to take lightly."

One of the many challenges people are facing right now, is that burnout isn't just happening to community activists. Anyone who lives in the neighborhood is susceptible, just by virtue of living here.

## Suggestions for work, home, neighborhood

Johnson has some suggestions that can help. He said, "One of the things I do in trainings is to have people think about their triggers. What is something that pushes your buttons every time it happens? Start with something small. For me, an example is getting cut off in traffic when I'm driving or biking. If I know that it makes me angry, I can practice thinking through a reaction that's more effective than honking, yelling, or 'gesturing'. With training, a person can learn new ways of responding to

small and large stressors – but it takes practice."

"With enough practice, habitual neuro pathways in the brain start to re-wire and that changes everything."

The bulk of the work Johnson does is aimed at mid-career professionals who identify as activists or change-makers. The following suggestions are aimed at the workplace, but have application on the home front, and in neighborhoods, as well.

- To be effective, it is essential to build in times for rest, self-care, and exercise throughout the day.

- Consider blocking those times off on your calendar. They matter.

- If you work from home, mark the beginning and end of your work day and adhere to that schedule.

- The typical person is distracted in the workplace every three minutes. For someone who works from home and has young children, it's probably more often. Try to minimize distractions. Let calls go and return them when you're able.

- Everybody has tasks involved with their work that they find more or less meaningful. Identify how you relate to the different parts of your job using an energy inventory: which of those parts are energy giving, energy neutral, or energy draining? Try to spread the good stuff out to help balance your work day, or whatever other strategy works for you.

- Are there tasks you can eliminate, delegate, or automate?

These are tough, tough times and there is no shortage of issues that need addressing. Johnson is not advocating for diminished passion and commitment.



Paul Johnson encourages people to build in times for rest, self-care and exercise throughout the day. Consider blocking those times off on your calendar. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

He said, "Burnout is a common thing in social justice work, because many of us are working toward solutions we may never see – and right now every problem seems inextricably linked to every other problem."

"How can you say 'no' to housing the homeless, when your core issue is fighting against systemic racism? Sometimes, in order to avoid burnout, you

have to develop the ability to set limits. You have to narrow your focus to be effective in the work you have taken up. Knowing your dominant strengths can not only keep you from getting burned out, it can help you to stay healthy and optimally effective."

For more information or to sign up for a Strengths Finder Assessment, email Paul Johnson at paul@workflow-strengths.com.

## Homeless encamp in city parks, MPRB policies shift and adapt

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

For more than a century, the Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board (MPRB) has not allowed camping or other overnight activity in the parks between the hours of midnight and 6 a.m. This changed on March 27, 2020, when Governor Tim Walz issued Executive Order 20-20.

The original Shelter-in-Place order restricted local units of government and law enforcement officers from removing people from public spaces because of COVID-19 risk.

The order stated that encampments should not be subject to sweeps or disbandment by local officials, as such actions increase the potential risk and spread of COVID-19.

MPRB Communications and Marketing Director Dawn Somers said, "The Executive Order greatly changed the dynamic in our park system, though the full effect wouldn't be felt for months."

On May 17, Executive Order 20-55 was issued, stating that there could be exceptions to people being allowed to shelter in city parks. It said, "If a local government entity is providing sufficient shelter, or if an encampment has become a threat

to the health, safety, or security of residents, state or local government may restrict, limit or close encampment spaces."

Prior to June 12, there were scattered tents throughout the park system. On that day, 100+ people experiencing homelessness were evicted from temporary shelter at the Midtown Sheraton Hotel. They moved themselves to Powderhorn Park and other locations throughout the city.

On that morning, there were approximately 25 tents set up in Powderhorn Park, and MPRB Superintendent Al Bangoura said they had to go. Based on Executive Order 20-55, he felt the encampment was too large. Bangoura was contacted by the state with concerns that he had violated the executive order, and by dozens of Minneapolis residents demanding that he let the people stay.

Five days later, MPRB commissioners approved a resolution that the parks be declared refuge space – because that was already being done with the support of the state and residents of the Powderhorn neighborhood.

Jeremy Barrick is the Assistant Superintendent of Environmental Stewardship for the MPRB. He said, "In hindsight, we see that housing peo-

ple experiencing homelessness in city parks is not a solution. The MPRB charter does not include housing people. We have a \$126,000,000 budget this year. We have the smallest budget of any department in the city of Minneapolis. Most of our budget is designated for human resources and salaries.

"To give an example of an unexpected expense, and this is just one line-item of many, we've spent \$38,000 on hand washing stations and portable toilets since the park homeless encampments began. That's the equivalent of paying 12 seasonal part-time park employees for the summer. We can't both manage our parks for the homeless and staff our parks adequately."

Barrick continued, "The park board just wrapped up our master redevelopment plan, in which we set forth a vision to guide long-term development and improvements for all of the city parks. Our months of planning engaged individuals, groups, other community partners, and government entities.

"None of the planning and visioning included having homeless encampments in the parks. The core function of the MPRB is to separate the park land use from city politics."

### Encampment permits required

At the last bi-weekly MPRB board meeting on July 15, park board commissioners unanimously approved a resolution that will reduce the number of parks with temporary encampments for people experiencing homelessness to 20. At its highest point, there were encampments of various sizes in 39 Minneapolis parks. The resolution will limit the number of tents per encampment to 25, and establish a new encampment permit requirement for each encampment.

The resolution provides direction for the design and facilitation of temporary encampments in parks that supports the health and safety of individuals experiencing homelessness. Any given encampment may occupy no more than 10% of available parkland, with reasonable access to recreational features of each park for visitors.

MPRB acknowledged that it will take time to de-concentrate tents across the park system. It will likely be a fluid situation while outreach continues, encampment permit applications are processed, and park spaces are delineated. The priority for the MPRB will be first addressing sites with a documented threat to

the health, safety, or security of residents. Toward that end, the encampment on the east side of Powderhorn Park was removed on July 21.

The locations of the 20 refuge sites for encampments is yet to be determined. MPRB is not pre-selecting the sites, but rather is allowing those who apply for a temporary encampment permit to request the park they want to stay in.

Like other MPRB permit applications, the temporary encampment application will be reviewed by staff and the site will be approved or rejected based on staff's analysis of the park's capacity to support an encampment and other guidelines outlined in the resolution. If approved, the MPRB will provide restrooms or portable toilets, hand washing stations (as vendor supplies allow), and trash/recycling containers to a permitted encampment within 48 hours of issuing a permit.

To view the video from the July 15 board meeting, start at 1:51 (one hour and 51 minutes into the meeting) to hear Commissioner Londel French state concerns for MPRB taking on encampments in the parks; see video on City of Minneapolis YouTube channel. For more information, including regular updates, visit [www.minneapolis-parks.org/encampments/](http://www.minneapolis-parks.org/encampments/).



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## #CHANGETHECHARTER

### THE CHARTER LOCKS IN MPD'S ROLE IN MINNEAPOLIS.

The city charter requires MPD to exist as a city department with a set number of officers. If we remove MPD from the charter and add a Department of Community Safety, we can make sure violence prevention and crisis response get the resources they need.

### AMENDING THE CHARTER REPRESENTS THE BEGINNING OF A LONG TERM PROCESS.

The day after the Charter amendment passes, we will still have MPD. The transition will take time, but we need a new Charter now to create possibilities for a transformed future.

### OUR CITY, OUR VISION.

Everyone in Minneapolis will help design the new Department of Community Safety, starting now and continuing long past November. It will be the first time the community—not the police union—gets to vision & build the infrastructure our city needs to make us feel safe.

### THE CHARTER COMMISSION HAS TO MOVE NOW.

The uprising was a massive referendum on MPD, even if it didn't take place inside City Hall. Thousands of us took to the streets; now the Charter Commission needs to do their job and let the community decide. We can't wait another year, #letusvote.

## #LETUSVOTE

RECLAIM  
THE BLOCK



June 18, 2020

## Statement in Support of Police Reform and Chief Arradondo

The death of George Floyd was a chapter in a story that is as old as our nation and is, sadly, still being written in communities across the country. Philando Castile, Breonna Taylor, Rayshard Brooks... These names serve stark notice that policing across the United States needs transformational reform.

The problems with policing are deeply rooted in the structural racism that permeates our society and its institutions. The current rallying cries around "defunding," "dismantling," or "abolishing" the police are grounded in a basic truth that sweeping and visionary reforms are needed.

The answer is not to simply defund or dismantle the police. We need to address societal racism and rebuild our infrastructure so that we can reduce our reliance on policing. Minneapolis receives more than 400,000 calls for police services every year. Housing, education, health care, mental health and the environment are key fronts for enhancing safety.

**Without a doubt, the Minneapolis Police Department needs transformational reform but we oppose the current proposal to amend the Minneapolis City Charter to remove the police department. This Charter amendment will not advance the transformational reform that is needed. In fact, it is a distraction from the necessary work at hand.**

We believe we have a leader in place who can bring about the much needed change in the police department if he has adequate support. Chief Medaria Arradondo is an ethical, professional and compassionate leader. He knows our city and loves its people. He has a reform agenda, but has experienced opposition from the Police Union and has lacked support from the City Council. We call on our citizens to support Chief Arradondo in his effort to transform our police department.

We have an opportunity brought about by tragedy but it is an opportunity we can't waste. Minneapolis can become a model for the nation by rethinking the mission of policing. Only then can Minneapolis fulfill this moment and develop a new, bold model for a safe, inclusive community.

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# RESTORATIVE JUSTICE: Just what is it?

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Restorative justice is in comparison to the retributive system, the basis for our legal system. The retributive approach asks, "What law was broken?", "Who did it?" and "What punishment do they deserve?". Restorative justice asks, "What harm was caused?" and "What needs to happen to repair the harm or make things better?". Restorative justice includes the community, not just the person harmed and the person who did the harm, in exploring how harm was caused and in solutions to make it better.

The murder of George Floyd has increased the urgency to go beyond restorative justice which responds to individual harms and look to transformative justice which emphasizes transforming the systems that contributed to the harm. An idea for transformative justice that is resonating with me as I think about the mission of SLRJ is for Hennepin County to decriminalize youthful behavior. We know from brain development research that making bad decisions is part of the normal journey from childhood to adulthood. Currently, children as young as 10 years old can be cited for breaking laws including shoplifting, trespassing, and property damage. What if we treated the behavior as a learning opportunity instead of a crime? Another example comes from New Zealand where youth who break the law are referred to restorative justice first, and then a small number of youth are transferred to the legal system. In

Hennepin County the process is reversed – youth are entered into the legal system first, and then a few youth are determined to be a better fit for restorative justice.

## How do you help bring about restorative justice?

We primarily work with youth referred by the Minneapolis Police Department and the Hennepin County Attorney's office. The youth are given the opportunity to participate in a restorative justice process instead of having their citation referred to the juvenile justice system. We also work to build a more restorative culture through training and consultation for organizations that are re-thinking their policies around discipline.

We have worked with hundreds of youth cited for incidents ranging from small thefts to property damage in the tens of thousands of dollars. While the process is tailored to each situation there are standard elements. We meet individually with both the person who did the harm and the person who was harmed. Then, we bring everyone together, including supporters, community members and our trained facilitators, for the restorative conference. The conversation focuses on what happened, how did it cause harm, and the creation of a plan to "make things right." Since making things right also means not doing it again, plans to repair the harm might include activities such as enrolling in summer school, doing a job search, and doing career or col-

lege preparations.

Unfortunately, restorative justice has limits in making things right in a legal system that does not treat people equitably. In Hennepin County we have huge racial disparities in the juvenile legal system. While youth of all backgrounds break the law at similar rates, black and brown youth are disproportionately given a citation. While it's preferred for youth to get involved in restorative justice instead of the legal system, as a community we need to commit to anti-racism and transformative justice to ensure that all people are treated equitably when they break the law.

## Is this something done along with police or in place of police and the judicial system?

While most of our referrals have come through police citations – it's important for the community to know that we do not need a citation to do a restorative process. Over the years we have received direct requests to help neighbors resolve incidents including graffiti, theft, property damage and assault. The person harmed did not believe a police citation would lead to a positive outcome for them or anyone involved. What they wanted was to speak directly to the person that harmed them.

## How are you adjusting things in response to COVID-19, George Floyd's murder and the loss of your building?



SLRJ volunteers and staff: (left to right) Lisa Dejoras, Deb Reiersen, Michele Braley, Rebecca Miller, Aaron Powell, Marisa Helms, and Juan Sosa.

In mid-March we shifted to working from home. We are doing restorative justice processes through video technology and are continuing to respond to requests for virtual training and consultation about restorative justice. Like everyone, SLRJ is trying to make the best of a tough situation by continuing to serve youth and the community as best we can.

After 14 years of sharing an office with Seward Neighborhood Group, just over one year ago SLRJ moved into its own office and became an independent non-profit. Our new office was in the Coliseum building at Lake and 27th Avenue, which experienced substantial damage during the unrest.

We salvaged almost all of our furniture and program supplies, which are in storage as we work from home for the foreseeable future. Of course it was devastating to lose our first independent office – which was a reflection of the hard work and vision of everyone who helped

grow SLRJ into a non-profit. On the other hand, the loss of our office forces us to reflect, with the rest of Minneapolis, on the ways our program and approach have not done enough to move our city towards equity for everyone.

When I went to my office to empty it out, I spent time reading the graffiti on the sides of the building. One image stays with me, "You didn't like silence. Are we loud enough?" While we could dwell on the loss of our office and debate about who did the damage, I think it's more productive to move forward with a commitment to deep listening and to deeper examination of how RJ and SLRJ can be part of moving our city towards greater equity.

## How can people get involved?

Unfortunately, we are not currently offering any volunteer training. I anticipate there will be future opportunities for the community to engage with our pro-

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE >> 15

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## T-shirts donated to Lake St. business owners and clean-up volunteers

# 'Southside Strong'

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

Bob St. Mane is the second generation owner of St. Mane Sporting Goods (4159 28th Ave. S.), a store that generally does a brisk business outfitting youth sports teams throughout the year. When Covid 19 wiped out organized youth sports at least until this fall, St. Mane knew he was in trouble. It was time to start thinking outside the box.

St. Mane first came up with the idea of making and selling unity T-shirts during the pandemic. The T-shirts said simply, "Minnesota Strong, Pandemic 2020." He donated \$5 from every sale to other struggling businesses; ones that, like him, hadn't been able to get federally funded assistance because the government ran out of money.

Not only did St. Mane generate income for his own small business during the shutdown, he was able to make a significant donation to four others.

And now, he is doing it all over again.

In partnership with his next door business neighbor, Aric Hay of Print and Stitch, St. Mane is making and selling T-shirts in support of businesses lost or damaged during the recent unrest on Lake St.

On June 9, St. Mane and Hay brought eight boxes of T-shirts to the parking lot at Roosevelt



Aric Hay (left) and Bob St. Mane (middle) are partners in an entrepreneurial effort. They recently donated 500 "Southside Strong" T-shirts to business owners whose properties were damaged or destroyed by unrest along Lake Street. The T-shirts are now for sale online through St. Mane Sporting Goods.

High School. They met up with dozens of community volunteers at 10 a.m., who divided into six walking teams. Each team was instructed to take a stretch of Lake Street. They went off in search of owners of damaged or looted businesses, and were tasked with giving each one a T-shirt that said "Southside Strong."

There was to be no money collected on Lake Street that day – the 500 printed T-shirts were donated by Bob St. Mane and Aric Hay. It was just a day to show support for business owners and volunteers. Moving forward, community members can purchase T-shirts directly from St. Manes' website at [www.stmanes.com](http://www.stmanes.com). The cost is \$20, and \$5 of

that will be donated to the Lake Street Council's general fund to help small businesses rebuild.

When St. Mane spoke to the crowd of volunteers at Roosevelt High School, he said, "First and foremost, we're here to support the devastated businesses on Lake St. We don't want any of the stores to close permanently. We're a small business struggling with our own problems this year, and we want to stay in business too. We get it."

At 58 years old, St. Manes is the longest running sporting goods store in Minnesota. For more information about ordering T-shirts, call Bob St. Mane at 612-722-1447.



## RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

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gram and vision. In the meantime, people can tell the City Council that they want restorative justice and Seward Longfellow Restorative Justice to be part

of the solution to relying less on police. You can follow us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/SLRJP> or drop me an email (Michele@SLRJ.org) so I can add you to the list of people who receive program announcements. Individual donations are a large

part of our budget. Currently we need to rely even more on individual donations as activities that normally generate income for us, such as trainings and presentations, are postponed.

SLRJ was created by this community and the future of

the program will be shaped by this community's desires and needs. Eighteen years ago SLRJ was a radical program. Now, restorative justice and the idea of helping youth in a community process instead of in court have become almost universally ac-

cepted. It's time for the community to make SLRJ radical again. Maybe it's time for Seward Longfellow Transformative Justice and a commitment from our community to change the legal system into one that actually brings justice for all.

**The Messenger is a great way to connect with our neighbors!**

**"The In Our Community section helps to inform and invite the community to activities, many for families and children. Our holiday ads in the Messenger let people know about concerts and special services, and the monthly listing offers a resource for people exploring church options."**

**Overall the Messenger helps to build a sense of strong community in the Longfellow and Nokomis neighborhoods."**

~ Suzanne Caquelin, Trinity Lutheran Church of Minnehaha Falls

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ART BY LINNEA



# Through Their Eyes

## 'It feels like everybody is on edge'

> Troy Houle <

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

Troy Houle is a lifelong Longfellow resident. His parents still live in the house he grew up in. He lives just a few blocks from them, as does his sister.

Troy has been a Minneapolis Park Board employee for more than 25 years. He said, "They call me a 'senior man in the system' now." He has worked a second job at East Lake Liquors for more than 20 years, and knows this neighborhood like the back of his hand.

Troy said, "My family and friends are all from right here. A lot of the buildings that burned down, they're what our neighborhood is about. They were part of our history. It feels like we're starting over."

Adjusting the brim of his fishing hat, Troy continued, "I've always been a strong minded person. Normally, I'm really confident about being out in the neighborhood but little things

scare me now. We're coming up on the Fourth of July and the firecrackers are really hard to listen to. I keep wondering if my block is safe, my daughter, my neighborhood, my neighbors?"

Liquor stores were hit hard in the unrest following George Floyd's murder. Troy said, "With Minnehaha Liquors and Chi-Lake Liquors closed down, we have a lot of new customers at East Lake Liquor. I used to know most of the people who came in to the store. People are coming from outside the neighborhood now, and it feels like everybody is on edge."

Troy credits the owners of Star Auto (and their friends and neighbors) with saving several businesses on E. Lake St. from looting and arson. He said, "There were 30-40 people every night of the curfew protecting Star Auto, ACE Hardware, the Longfellow Market, and East Lake Liquors. We have a lot to thank them for."

Echoing what many people

in the neighborhood are feeling, Troy said, "The experience has made me more vigilant, more aware of my surroundings. I check in on my parents 3-4 times a week now. Our neighbors have gotten a lot closer. It's like that saying, 'If you see something, say something.' Everybody's talking more, because we know how quickly things can change."



"I keep wondering if my block is safe," said lifelong Longfellow resident Troy Houle. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

## 'Reverend, you can lean on me'

> Father Joe Gillespie <

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

Father Joe Gillespie's first pastoral ministry was at Cook County Hospital in 1968. He moved from Minneapolis to Chicago, and started his new job with energy and enthusiasm. Then Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert Kennedy were assassinated, followed by violent anti-Vietnam War protests at the Chicago Democratic Convention. Chicago suddenly turned into a war zone.

When Lake Street burned in the aftermath of George Floyd's murder, Father Joe said, "Those memories of Chicago came pouring back." He felt a sense of post-traumatic stress and abandonment, saying, "We had no police, fire department, or mail service; even the paper boy couldn't come here."

But Father Joe knew he had to stick around. Despite invitations from nephews in Plymouth and church administrators in St. Paul to take shelter with them, Father Joe didn't go looking for a way out. The Church of St. Albert the Great in Longfellow is his home.

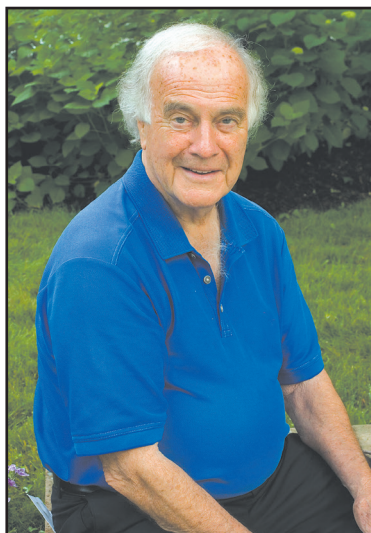
Instead, he gathered with neighbors and parishioners on the church grounds each night. Together they watched the Walgreen's drugstore at the end of

the block go up in pentecostal flames. Three dozen residents from Volunteers of America slept on the basement floor of the church during the curfew, fearing that their Lake St. residence would burn to the ground.

Father Joe walked up and down Lake St. every day during the week of unrest. Usually he walked alone, remembering places his family had frequented when he was a kid growing up in the neighborhood. His eyes welled with tears outside the ruins of the Town Talk Diner, where he had gone many times with his father. He could almost see himself and his three siblings sitting high up on stools, dangling their legs and sharing a single pancake.

Father Joe attended the Ecumenical Clergy March on June 2 with hundreds of other faith leaders, and walked the neighborhood streets once more. When the march ended at the George Floyd Memorial site, everyone was asked to kneel in silence. Father Joe dropped to one knee, but found he couldn't stand up again unassisted. An African American woman nearby said, "Reverend, you can lean on me," and helped him to his feet. That's the way he sees it now. This is a time to lean in, lean on, and help each other stand strong.

The Church of St. Albert the



When Lake St. burned, Father Joe Gillespie gathered each night with others at the Church of St. Albert the Great in Longfellow. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

Great recently reopened for services on Pentecost (the seventh Sunday after Easter) at half capacity. Father Joe explained, "Historically the early Christians had to celebrate in secret, just a few at a time. They celebrated in the catacombs so they wouldn't be seen. They celebrated during the plagues. They just kept going. I guess you could say that we're right on target."



With three college degrees, Bunni ended up broke and homeless last December. She hopes to get permanent housing in September. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

## 'We just want our lives back'

> Bunni <

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

Bunni (last name withheld on request) has lived in Minneapolis since 2007. She moved here for college, and ended up with three degrees in art, business, and law enforcement.

Last December, she also ended up broke and homeless. There was nowhere for her to live, so she parked her van across from Powderhorn Park with her dog and called it home. From December to March, it was cold but quiet.

In the aftermath of the uprising, Powderhorn Park began to fill up fast. Eventually a group of Native American women decided to leave the park for safety reasons. They moved to a new encampment in the Longfellow neighborhood just for women, and she went with them. Bunni was formerly married to a Native American man. Of his community she said, "Once you're welcomed in, you're part of the family. We stick together in the native community. We share our last. We give until it hurts."

There have been major problems in the start-up phase of the Longfellow encampment.

Four ill-intentioned men, who self-identified as protectors of the women, were evicted by a coalition of encampment residents and Native American leaders on July 13. Almost 100 people descended on the encampment that night and literally shouted the four men out.

In the eight days since the encampment began, the residents find themselves starting over again – supposedly with a coalition of women leaders this time.

One of the greatest indignities about being homeless is the sheer visibility of it. Anyone passing by can see who lives there, and many stop to take pictures. Bunni said, "Not all homeless people are bad people, probably most of us aren't. We just want our lives back. We've all had jobs, and lost them. We've all had homes, and lost them. Many of us have had children, and lost them."

On the day of this interview, Bunni had just secured affordable, permanent housing which, unfortunately, wouldn't become available until September. She said, "In addition to a roof over my head, I'm hoping for safety, recovery, and healing. I could really use your prayers."

Writer's note: These stories were collected at the epicenter of the unrest that rocked the Longfellow neighborhood. The stories neither reflect nor contradict the editorial position of the Longfellow Nokomis Messenger. They are the opinions of the storytellers and speak to the truth that, while we may or may not belong to a movement, each of us is having our own experience during this most distilling of times.

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