



Old world charm meets up with old time baking

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Wood In The Hood makes great stuff from reclaimed trees

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Local experts give tips on how to feed our winter birds

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Residents learn about the factors affecting water quality, and discover poisons and chemicals from trash aren't being measured

By TESHAM. CHRISTENSEN

How healthy is Lake Hiawatha?

It depends on the year.

During a meeting at Lake Hiawatha Park Recreation Center on Dec. 9, residents learned about the factors the Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board (MPRB) measures and what's being done farther upstream to help Minnehaha Creek. The meeting was organized by the Standish-Ericsson Neighborhood Association.

While MPRB and the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD) are focused on pollutants such as phosphorus, residents concerned about all the trash in the lake are banding together to form the Friends of Lake Hiawatha.

A drop of water

Because it is connected to the creek, water in Lake Hiawatha

"The hard part with water quality is you can't snap your fingers and make it better."

—Lisa Cerney, Minneapolis Public Works



About 75 community members attended a meeting at Lake Hiawatha Recreation Center on Wed., Dec. 9, to learn about the health of the lake. Residents had many questions. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)

comes from the entire western Hennepin County area, draining 7.5 million acres where 340,000 people live.

While a drop of water in a lake such as the Chain of Lakes stays there for three years, in Lake Hiawatha it is only there one week. Because of that, the clarity of the water is better than one might expect from a shallow lake.

According to Lisa Cerney, director of surface water and sewers for the MPRB, there are six pipe outfalls that drain stormwater from an area south of Lake St. into Lake Hiawatha.

The city has completed several projects in the last few years to help hold water that drains

off streets during rainstorms and to help filter pollutants, such as oils. The Bancroft Meadows flood basin was built at Bloomington and 42nd in 1989, and the Sibley Field flood basin in 1990. Both of these were in response to major flooding from storms in 1987.

"The hard part with water quality is you can't snap your fingers and make it better," remarked Cerney.

MPRB monitors phosphorus

"We're living with a very different system than we had before," pointed out Rachel Crabb of the MPRB. Before 1850, the creek was highly meandered, twisting



Sean Connaughty has collected over 2,000 tons of trash from Lake Hiawatha this year. He is pushing the city to do something about the large storm sewer outfall that much of the trash comes in through. Right now, it is a large culvert that drains the area south of Lake St. directly into Lake Hiawatha. Connaughty is forming the Friends of Lake Hiawatha group with fellow resident Ryan Seibold. Email friendsoflakehiawatha@gmail.com, like on Facebook group or follow on Twitter. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)

and turning on its way between Gray's Bay on Lake Minnetonka and the Mississippi River. The area also had more empty space and fewer homes. In 1929, Lake Hiawatha was dredged, and the creek reshaped to fit the city's grid. The main change to the lake since then is a delta near the mouth of the creek due to erosion upstream, but it benefits the lake because it is a wildlife habi-



Lisa Cerney, director of surface water and sewers for the Minneapolis Public Works Department, told residents that the city is doing a variety of things to address cleaner water throughout the city. This includes constructing catch basins, sweeping streets and establishing an Adopt-A-Catch-Basin program in 2016. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)

tat, observed Crabb.

"Lake Hiawatha is the only lake in Minneapolis that is connected to Minnehaha Creek, and is significantly impacted by the creek," remarked Crabb.

MPRB regular monitors the lake level, phosphorus load, and clarity. It also pays attention to aquatic diversity and the number of zebra mussels, which were found in the lake in 2013.

The most significant source of phosphorus are fertilizers,

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Minnesota Math Teacher of the Year And the winner is...



Two South High School teachers are finalists for Minnesota Math Teacher of the Year. Left: Stephanie Woldum showed how to graph correlation coefficients. A studio arts major in college, she uses hands-on creative activities whenever possible to teach math principles. Right: Morgan Fierst has a strong and engaged teaching style. On a chalk board near her desk she wrote, "I commit to being a curious teacher with my eyes wide open."

Article and photos by MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

In an annual competition, outstanding educators are chosen from each state to receive the Presidential Award for Excellence in Math and Science Teaching. This is the nation's highest honor for teachers of math and science. The winners receive a certificate signed by the president, an all-expense-paid trip to Washington DC for recognition events, pro-

fessional development opportunities, and a check for \$10,000 to use as they wish.

Two Minnesota math teachers are state finalists this year and, defying statistical odds, they both teach math at South High School. Morgan Fierst and Stephanie Woldum are colleagues and friends who applied for the award together.

"That application was a hefty one," Woldum explained, "re-

quiring a 12-15 page lesson plan, detailed analysis of instructional methods and, worst of all, a teaching video."

The Minnesota winner has yet to be announced, and because the timing depends on the president's schedule, it could be some time before winners are announced. Despite that, the exemplary work of both Fierst and Woldum is drawing attention.

Fierst teaches advanced alge-

bra and advanced statistics. She's in her seventh year at South, and has, she said, "gotten really serious about teaching kids to use math in everyday life."

For example, her advanced algebra students learned to apply geometric sequencing to examine the sub-prime mortgage crisis a few years ago. In class, several groups were assigned different interest rates and terms on their fictional mortgages. They stud-

ied what the real cost of each mortgage was over time, and how major lenders used their strategies to prey on low-income customers.

"We're going to start a unit on college loans next," Fierst said, "comparing subsidized and unsubsidized loans, and public versus private lenders."

Lisa Ramirez, public relations

Continued on page 3

Upper Post Veterans Community facility is complete, but residents put up with noise and blowing sawdust

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

Standing in front of the newly constructed Upper Post Veterans Community, it can be hard to see or hear. Sawdust flies through the air from wood grinders on the other side of a cyclone fence only 125' away. The commercial grinders that turn whole trees into sawdust are owned by Precision Land-

scape and Tree Service, who lease this piece of land from the Minneapolis Parks Department (MPD). The trees they're grinding have either come down in storms or been killed by diseases such as Oak Wilt or Emerald Ash Borer.

The piles of sawdust stand 50-60' high on the chipping site before being hauled away. They're so numerous that when viewing the Upper Post Veterans Community from Bloomington Road, only its roof-line is visible—and the fluttering American flag.

Nokomis resident and concerned citizen James Hudson said, "I think it's a disgrace."

Hudson and his friend Richard Greggerson don't live in the veteran's community, but pass by it several times a week on outings to the Fort Snelling Public Golf Course. Hudson served two years stateside during the Vietnam War, and two years in Okinawa as an air force tech. Greggerson served a tour of active duty in Vietnam and earned a bronze star for heroism. They believe the MPD should have relocated the site years ago. "There was a promise made that this site would be mitigated. Why wasn't that done," asks Hudson.

Randy Sievert, Director of Forestry for the MPD, agrees. "We're trying to get it out of there," he said, "but it hasn't been easy. We thought we had secured a site in NE Minneapolis owned by Xcel Energy, but they recently pulled out of a potential lease agreement."

"Because we haven't been able to find one site to accommodate our needs," he added, "we're thinking of going to a different model—securing three smaller sites that would have less of an impact on their surroundings."

The Upper Post of Fort Snelling contains 26 historic buildings built in the late 1870's. The stately brick buildings have served many purposes over the decades. Some have been used for officer training, a hospital, a recruiting station, and housing for current and

past military personnel. After World War II, Fort Snelling was decommissioned and turned over to the Veteran's Administration. Most of the buildings sat empty for decades.

Five of the historic structures were developed by CommonBond Communities over the last few years. They were dedicated in early October as the Upper Post Veterans Community, a place that veterans who had experienced homelessness could call home. The renovation at 6210 Bloomington Rd. contains 58 units of studio, one, two and three bedroom apartments.

CommonBond Communities has been providing affordable housing for people living with disabilities and other barriers since 1971. In addition to quality housing, they also offer services to help residents live fuller, more productive lives.

Ann Ruff, Vice President of Resource Development for CommonBond Communities said, "Removing the chipping site has taken longer than anyone expected. Our organization has been persistent in asking for its removal, and we will continue to do so. For several reasons, this project has been one of the more difficult we've undertaken. The presence of the chipping site, the challenge of repurposing 135-year-old buildings into living quarters, and the historic preservation designation on the properties all combined to make this quite complicated."

When asked about a timeline for relocating the chipping site, Sievert said, "I'm nearly certain we can get this done by spring 2016. My confidence level is at about 80%. If we can't secure the space we need, our only other choice will be to transport the downed trees a much greater distance for chipping. At that point, our options will either be to haul them to the district site in St. Paul or all the way out to Koda Energy in Shakopee, where they'll be ground on site and sold to Excel Energy as biomass fuel."



The piles of wood and sawdust stand as high as 60 feet, just 125 feet from the new veterans community facility. (Photo by Margie O'Laughlin)

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Now it's easier than ever to keep in touch with the Messenger. Letters to the editor and news releases for publication can be sent via e-mail at editorial@deruyternelson.com. Be sure to send copy in the body of the e-mail, and please mark whether the copy is a letter, a news release for publication, or perhaps just your thoughts on the last issue. Don't forget to write!

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Hennepin County Medical Center hcmc.org/eastlake

There are lots of great events planned at the East Lake Library, 2727 E. Lake St., in the coming month.

The Adult Nonfiction Book Club will meet on Tue., Jan. 5, 6-7pm to discuss "The Empathy Exams" by Leslie Jamison. Lending copies may be picked up at the information desk before the meeting.

The Adult Biography Book Club will meet Wed., Jan 6, 10:30-11:30 am to discuss "The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks" by Rebecca Skloot. Lending cop-

Check It Out - News from East Lake Library

ies may be picked up at the information desk prior to the meeting.

Childcare Group Storytime meets the first Wednesday of the Month (Jan. 6) at 10:15 am. Talk, sing, read, write and play together in a format appropriate for the children in your care. Share books, stories, rhymes, music and movement.

The Adult Book Club meets Fri., Jan 8., 10:30-11:30am to

discuss "The Cooked Seed: A Memoir" by Anchee Min. Lending copies may be picked up at the information desk prior to the meeting.

The Quick Reads Adult Book Club meets Mon., Jan. 11, 6:30-7:30pm to discuss "Annihilation" by Jeff VanderMeer. Lending copies may be picked up at the information desk prior to the meeting.

Stay happy and healthy this winter. Learn nutritional strategies from a local holistic health expert at Winter Wellness: Nutrition and Self-Care Strategies, Tue., Jan. 12, 6:30-7:30pm.

Senior Surf Day is planned for Fri., Jan. 15, 9:30-11:30am. To register call 612-543-8425. This is an opportunity to learn computer basics, how to navigate

and search the Internet and how to access websites of interest to seniors. Get hands-on computer experience with help from representatives of the Senior LinkAge Line®.

Teen Geekery Club meets Thur., Jan. 17, 6pm. Are you an anime and manga fan? A cosplayer? A fan of Doctor Who, Sherlock, Homestuck or Supernatural? If yes to any of these, Teen Geekery Club is for you! Watch anime, share your artwork and discuss your favorite fandoms.

The Digital Learning Lab is planned for Tue., Jan. 19, 6:30-7:30pm. Do library eBooks have you stumped? Drop in for one-on-one help to learn how to download eBooks from the library. Bring your device and

they'll provide the experts.

Weekly programs at the library include:

—Conversation Circles, Sundays, Jan. 10, 17, 24, and 31. Non-native English speakers: practice your English and make new friends in an informal, volunteer-led setting, and learn about the library, too.

—Family Storytime, Fridays 10:15 am. For children of all ages and their parent or caregiver. Talk, sing, read, write and play together in a format appropriate for young children. Share books, stories, rhymes, music and movement.

—Baby Storytime, Fridays 11:15 am. For children from birth to 24 months and their parent or caregiver. Talk, sing, read, write and play together in a format designed especially for babies. Share books, stories, rhymes, music and movement.

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or contact your local park.

Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board
www.minneapolisparcs.org

Minnesota Math Teacher of the Year

Continued from page 1

coordinator for South, added, "Any student coming out of Morgan's class knows how to use math well beyond the classroom."

Fierst's clear message to her students is to be persistent in their practice of math. To demonstrate the value of persistence, she built a "Backwards Bike" for her classroom. When a rider turns the handlebars to the right, the bike

actually swings left and vice versa. To balance and ride the Backwards Bike successfully requires retraining the brain to expect the unexpected.

Fierst believes that "if you have a fixed mindset, you either think you are, or aren't, good at math. If you have a growth mindset, you believe that you can improve at anything, even riding a Backwards Bike, with patience and persistence."

Woldum, herself a graduate of South, is in her tenth year of teaching there. Her motivation for teaching is to help students build their confidence and to learn the process of being successful at school. "We work tirelessly to have 'aha!' moments here," Woldum said.

A studio arts major in college, Woldum had an "aha" moment herself when she realized she

would rather be a mathematician than a sculptor. She graduated with a studio arts degree but went back and took seven additional advanced math classes, earned her teaching certificate, and more recently, her masters degree in math education.

Woldum's creative side continues to shine in her classroom, which is filled with colored construction paper, scissors and many other "hands-on" materials to express numeric concepts. "I don't use a textbook for any of the intermediate algebra sections I teach," Woldum explained. "I know that I have to cover scatter plots and regression lines, everything the Minnesota State Standards require, but I can design my own methods for how to do that."

"I got off to a really bad start with math when I was young," Woldum said. "I failed algebra in middle school, and that sense of not 'getting it' strongly affected the way I relate to my students. Two years ago I wrote a proposal that was accepted by the school, to create a Math Center where students could come for extra help. A different math teacher staffs the center each hour of the school day, and there are student tutors too—like Chris Rounds, a soccer playing junior who earns service hours for the National Honor Society by volunteering in the Math Center. There have been thousands of student visits since the center opened."

Fierst and Woldum may have different teaching styles, but they share a common language around math and learning. Both encourage a spirit of inquiry in students, reinforcing a sense of growth and confidence in learning. Regardless of the eventual outcome of the Presidential Award for Excellence in Math and Science Teaching, it would appear that the state of Minnesota has two winners this year.

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Night Before New Year's Eve

The Night Before New Year's Eve, Dec. 30, is a family-oriented, free event, offering families a chance to celebrate the coming New Year a night early. The event includes food, carnival games, music, the famous Nokomis Fish Pond and a "midnight" (7:55pm) count-down complete with noisemakers and much more. Join us for this party chock-full of family-friendly activities. The event runs from 5-8:30pm at the Lake Nokomis Community Center. NENA and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board co-host this annual celebration.

Volunteers are needed! If you are looking for a good way to ring in the New Year, visit Volunteer Spot at <https://www.volunteerspot.com/login/entry/8962180700115> to sign up.

Vacant board seat

NENA is seeking applicants for the vacant board seat from the Morris Park neighborhood. The Morris Park neighborhood is bordered by 54th St. on the north, Highway 55 on the east, 34th on the west, and the southern boundary of the City of Minneapolis.

If you live, work or own property in the Morris Park neighborhood, you can nominate yourself. Visit www.nokomiseast.org to find more information and the Board Nomination Form. Completed nomination forms are due by Dec. 28.

Welcome Dave Colling to the NENA Team!

NENA is thrilled to announce the newest addition to our staff. Dave Colling joined us as the

NENA (Nokomis East Neighborhood Association)

3000 E. 50th St.

Night Before New Year's Eve celebration on Dec. 30 is family fun

Upcoming Meetings and Events:

- 12/30/15: Night Before New Year's Eve, Lake Nokomis Community Center, 5-8:30pm
- 01/06/16: NENA Housing, Commercial and Streetscape Committee, NENA Office, 6:30pm
- 01/14/16: NENA Executive Committee, NENA Office, 7pm
- 01/25/16: Free Tax Prep Info Session, Powderhorn Park Neighborhood Association, 6pm
- 01/28/16: NENA Board Meeting, Morris Park Recreation Center, 7pm

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new Program and Communication Manager on Dec. 8.

With over 20 years' experience working with government agencies, political and nonprofit organizations, and inside the marketing communications industry, Colling brings a community-focused approach to his work. Growing up in an economically challenged area of Detroit, MI, he learned first-hand the many benefits and challenges of building strong, inclusive communities.

Colling's passion for community building started early, and he took that passion into the world of politics, first as a volunteer and eventually as a highly

sought after political strategist. Success managing Congressman Keith Ellison's first campaign through the 2006 primary and general elections reinforced his belief that diversity is strength and the key to thriving neighborhoods and communities. Colling's work with grassroots organizations has continued through his consultancy work with nonprofits and membership on non-profit boards focusing on youth and education. He lives in NE Minneapolis with his wife Sarah, a small business owner, and their son George.

Colling's start coincides with the near completion of NENA's Three-Year Strategic Plan, which

will include new programs focusing on housing, commercial corridors, streetscape and green initiatives. Look for an expanded committee system, the return of neighborhood favorite NENA Town Halls (with a new look) and innovative collaborations with Nokomis East partners. Colling will also launch a new communication plan with traditional and online content, multi-lingual media and a freshened look for NENA. The heart of our work will remain connecting our neighborhood and building community.

Proposed changes to neighborhood parks

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board is working its way through a community engagement process to create a 20-year South Service Area Master Plan for 35 properties in the southeast section of Minneapolis. This includes Keeywadin and Morris Parks, as well as a proposed playground at the 54th and Shoreview triangle. Visit www.nokomiseast.org to learn more, get involved and share your comments and ideas.

Free tax preparation info

The Southside United Neighborhoods (SUN) Project is hosting an information session with Pre-

pare + Prosper for residents to learn more about available free tax preparation services. Join us on Mon., Jan. 25, from 6-7pm at the Powderhorn Park Neighborhood Association (821 E. 35th St.). Presentation and information in English and Spanish.

New guide to apartment repairs

The Minneapolis Renters Coalition has released a new guide to help renters with getting required repairs completed in their home. Visit www.nokomiseast.org to learn more and access the guide in English and Spanish.

NENA Home Improvement Loan Program

Whether by choice or necessity, start planning your next project now with the help of a home improvement loan from NENA. Owners of one to four unit residences can apply for up to \$15,000 to make improvements to their properties. Owner-occupants and investors may apply. The interest rate is either 2% or 3% depending on income. No income restriction applies.

For more information or to request an application for the NENA loan program, call our partner, the Greater Metropolitan Housing Corporation's Housing Resource Center at 612-722-7141, or visit www.gmhhousing.org. Loan applications are processed on a first-come, first served basis.

Sign up for NENA News

Your guide to news, events and resources! Get your neighborhood news delivered to your inbox every other Wednesday. Sign up today at www.nokomiseast.org.

BeeBots introduce young students to computer fundamentals

At Minnehaha Academy, computer literacy and preparation goes beyond keyboarding class. Starting in kindergarten, students spend an hour every week in the Park Innovation Lab learning skills that are becoming increasingly valuable in our technology-centric world. Five and six-year-olds begin by learning the basics of coding using BeeBots, little bee-shaped robots that are designed to engage students in a fun way, while instilling the fundamentals of computer science.

"We want our students at

Minnehaha Academy to be empowered to be creators of technology, not just passive consumers," said Julie Winn, instructional enrichment specialist. "Students learn the joys and challenges of coding on a team, just as they would in the working world."

While working directly with the BeeBots can teach important skills, there are other ways to learn coding and computer skills. "With our youngest learners we seek to teach core principles primarily through hands-on, offline experiences," added

Winn. "Problem solving through building, coding through push-button robotics, and digital citizenship through classroom games are all examples of how we grow our young learners to become technologically savvy, away from a screen."

In addition to the new Park

Continued on page 5

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Grand opening scheduled for Feb. 4

Better Futures Minnesota consolidates two sites and moves to Minnehaha Mile

Better Futures Minnesota, a non-profit organization that helps guide men—who have faced a variety of personal challenges—to a positive, productive path through its transformative program, is on the move. The organization's headquarters and popular reuse materials warehouse had been located at two different sites along Olson Memorial Highway. The relocation to 2620 Minnehaha Ave. S. will consolidate its administrative services, training, and retail center to one primary location, allowing the organization to expand its pro-

grams, services, and clientele.

"We are delighted to be part of the Minnehaha Mile," said Dr. Thomas Adams, Better Future Minnesota's President and CEO. "It's an ideal location for us. Our materials retail warehouse will be centrally located, easily accessible, and situated close to other like-minded businesses committed to environmental stewardship and creative use of recycled materials. Additionally, bringing our education, employment and support services, and administrative staff all under one roof will create greater synergy and efficiencies, and reinforces our comprehensive approach to helping men pursue a sounder course for their lives.

"The new location will undoubtedly enable us to better pursue our mission and expand

our outreach. We invite everyone to celebrate with us at the Grand Opening Open House in February." Adams said.

The Better Futures Minnesota Grand Opening Open House will be held on Thur., Feb. 4 from 4-6:30pm at 2620 Minnehaha Ave. S. The event will include tours of the new facility, examples of innovative materials reuse, refreshments, and an opportunity to learn more about the nonprofit's profound impact on individuals and the community.

For more information about Better Futures Minnesota, and event details visit www.BetterFuturesEnterprises.com.

Program with a unique focus

Better Futures Minnesota was established in 2007 by a team of

Minnesota's leading health care, housing, workforce, community corrections, and human services practitioners. Serving high-risk men who have faced a variety of challenges, the nonprofit's model is based on an understanding that for these men to walk a better path and stay on that path, they need to experience a strong, vibrant community and meaningful relationships. Better Futures Minnesota understands that each program participant has experienced a different life, and to succeed must be provided pathways to housing, independence, and full-time work.

These supports are the base of the organization's four-fundamentals model, all of which must be in place and work together to be effective: housing, jobs, health, and coaching.

Better Futures is designed to respond immediately to participants' most basic needs—safe, affordable housing, and a job. Over time, the focus on employment, housing, and seamless access to essential services breaks longstanding patterns of self-destructive behavior and violence.

This multi-disciplinary framework of supports is grounded in a community that serves as an alternative culture and new identity for the men. Better Futures' belief, affirmed by five years of experience, is that each man is valuable and lovable and, with support, has the potential to improve himself, be productive, and contribute to his family and community.

For more information visit BetterFuturesEnterprises.com.

BeeBots

Continued from page 4

Innovation Lab, Minnehaha recently renovated science space at the middle school, as well as adding a 3000 square foot Page Family STEM lab to the high school.

The Page Family STEM Lab has designated areas for independent student research, enhanced student collaboration, and updated functionality for science learning, as well as more convenient outdoor access for robotics and other projects that occur beyond the classroom. With the addition of new equipment like 3D printers and combination Apple TV/TV screens mounted to mobile carts, students will be solving problems in a technology-rich environment, preparing them for college and future careers.

To learn more about coding at Minnehaha Academy's Park Innovation Lab: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bVZgovt4DDY&feature=em-upload_owner.

Transition Longfellow Pancake Breakfast celebrates five years of community building

Transition Longfellow, the neighborhood sustainability group, will celebrate its fifth year of community building, food growing, and energy saving activities with a Pancake Breakfast and Silent Auction fundraiser on Jan. 9, 9-11am, at Bethany Lutheran Church, 3901 36th Ave. S. The meal is open to all; children are welcome. The church is handicapped-accessible.

For \$6, guests receive a hearty, healthy, all-organic breakfast that includes pancakes (regular, gluten-free, and vegan), and a variety of toppings, real maple syrup, an egg dish, coffee, and juice. Food is donated and prepared by community members.

In operation since January 2011, Transition Longfellow is one of the longest-lasting and most active Transition groups in the Twin Cities. In 2015, Transi-

tion Longfellow:

- Brought two Master Gardeners to the Riverview Wine Bar on the first Saturday of every month to talk veggies and herbs;
- Installed 27 raised bed gardens through its Chard Your Yard program, bringing the total number of gardens it's installed for Longfellow residents to 85! The group partners with Longfellow Community Council (LCC) to offer beds at half price for low income residents and seniors in Longfellow. The group also partnered with a nonprofit agency to build garden beds for a battered women's shelter;
- Organized berry picking and farm tour field trips;
- Offered a hiking group and free yoga at Longfellow Park on Saturday mornings throughout the summer, with support from Allina Health;

- Hosted potluck movie nights for groups ranging from a dozen to 75, providing social opportunities to gather over good food and conversation;
- Partnered with an experienced knitter to offer Learn-to-Knit classes on the first Tuesday of every month at Lake Coffee (6:30pm, continuing throughout 2016);
- Partnered with the LCC Environment and Transportation committee to staff the Longfellow Energy Fair and with Holy Trinity Church to inform residents about an opportunity to participate in a community solar garden;
- Engaged several families in a project to learn about water and its role in Longfellow to create a family geocache tour (website to be released spring 2016); and
- Hosted a Sustainable Finance group and a Zero Waste group for people interested in living more sustainably.

All Transition activities are organized and led by neighborhood volunteers and are offered free or at cost. The group operates with a budget of less than \$1,000 a year. The Pancake Breakfast and Silent Auction is

the only fundraising event the group does in a year.

At the pancake breakfast, Transition volunteers will roll out new programs for 2016 and invite community members to weigh in on programs they'd like to see and to offer their skills and knowledge for new activities. You can learn more about the group's activities by visiting their website: www.transitionlongfellow.org. You can also join their Facebook page (Longfellow Transition Group), an active forum for sharing information on food, energy, transit, permaculture, housing, bees, policy and more.

Transition Towns are a global movement that engages people in all walks of life in working together to build communities that are more resilient and sustainable. There are more than 475 Transition Towns in 35+ countries. Transition Longfellow is one of 130 "official" initiatives in the U.S.

If you would like to donate an item or service to the silent auction, please contact Annette Rondano, 612-221-0131. To volunteer to help with the breakfast, contact Leslie MacKenzie, 612-724-4265.

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By JAN WILLMS

The smells are enticing, the windows nice and big, and the space warm and cozy. Savory Bake House has opened in time for the holidays at 3008 36th Ave. S. in Minneapolis.

Max Okray and Sandra Sherva have partnered to follow their dreams and open their bakery in a neighborhood they love. "I used to live in Longfellow and moved out for two years," Sherva said, "and all I wanted to do was move back. Now that we're in the neighborhood living and working, I couldn't feel better."

The journey to this bakery started some time ago. Okray is from Stevens Point, WI, and moved to the Twin Cities when he was 17. "My parents are potato farmers, and I have been around food my whole life and been eating my whole life," he joked. "But it wasn't until I started cooking that I developed a serious passion for food."

He lived with his sister and her roommates and attended the Art Institute in downtown Minneapolis. "I got into the culinary program and fell in love with it," he noted. After culinary school, he started working at Birchwood in Minneapolis, where he met Sherva.

"Sandra had been a pastry chef there for 10 years when I arrived, so she was already a seasoned vet in the field," Okray explained. "I was just starting out, and something clicked. She laughed at all my stupid jokes, and we just became inseparable. I worked brunch in the morning, and she was the early morning pastry chef. She would ride the crazy wave with us during brunch times, and it was definitely intense."

"I was a line cook, but I kept trying to get in to work with Sandra because I heard how talented she was. Baking is not like cooking in any way; it is completely different," Okray said. "I wanted to come in and train with her, but Birchwood wanted me to stay on as a cook. The few days I did come in and work with her, she said I was great and efficient." The two worked well together.

Sherva moved on from Birchwood and Okray also left and worked in different restaurants throughout the area. Sherva did a little time at Babette and helped open a place in Eagan. She also started baking desserts for Merlin's, the pub that is just across the street from Savory Bake House's new location.

Sherva was working three jobs, working with foods that were French, Cajun and English Isles.

"People were telling Sandra she should open her own place. And one day when she was working at Merlin's, she went out to the parking lot to get some Advil from her car, and the people who owned



Max Okray and Sandra Sherva have opened Savory Bake House to bake the food your grandmother would have made. "That's what food is; it brings you back to childhood and can hit the part of the brain that makes you remember and smell the food before you even taste it," said Okray. (Photos by Jan Willms)

this place called her over and said 'Hey, look at this spot. I don't know if you've ever thought about opening up your own bakery, but we have a space here.'"

The space had been used as an art gallery for the property owner's mother, who had recently died.

"They loved the shop, but they needed to rent it out," Okray said. "The more we talked about it, the more it sounded like it could be a real thing, and so we put together plans and figured out finances and what we would need to get going. We've been working on it over a year. I formed the LLC on Sept. 9, 2014."

Okray said that for a long time, he and Sherva did not think it was going to happen. "We had designers come in and said the space was too small; we could never fit a kitchen in here. But then we had the perfect designer come in and say he loved it, and the shop would be beautiful."

I usually bake at restaurants, so I'm the one who gets pushed by cooks into the smallest spot," Sherva added. "So I'm used to it. I could come in here and say the space was huge."

She said she and Okray kept hearing that it was impossible and could never happen. "But then we got the crazy, eccentric designer in here and he said it was perfect," she said. "I felt like he was looking at it through my eyes and saw exactly what I saw."

"It's just what we need,"

chimed in Okray. "Anything more than this would be taking on too much. We can always grow."

The couple found a construction company that has been great to work with, according to Okray. "They have done such a good job with the space allowed. It's tight, but Sandra's been doing all the baking in here."

Sherva said she had been doing all her baking for Merlin's in that restaurant's kitchen until the past month, when she started working in her own space. She hesitated to tell Merlin's that she was opening up a bakery across the street, but she said the pub has been totally supportive.

"They have been enthusiastic about us starting our own place, guiding us through it. They know

the city, the neighborhood and the community. They have guided us through it, helping with tax questions and other things."

"Merlin's is just a good place to be connected with," Okray said. "Our first date was there, and we have been going there ever since and loving it."

Sherva said she has been careful with the selections the bakery will offer so that it does not overlap on anything Merlin's serves. "I want to bring more to the neighborhood, not the same," she said.

The name Savory Bake House gives a definition of what the couple plans to do—provide a savory avenue of baking as well as sweet. "I love pastries filled with something not sweet; that is always what I wanted to do," Sherva said. She

said there will be layered cakes and pies and muffins, but also biscuits and brioche filled with ham and cheese.

The bakery serves coffee to go along with the baked goods, but it is not offering a sit-down venue.

"To do that we would have to add a restroom. Right now we have a small bathroom in the basement for employee use only," Okray said. "We'll have coffee, cold press, chai, warm cider, hot chocolate, orange juice and milk. But we're not a full-fledged café."

He said he is happy that even with remodeling the space, they have managed to keep its old world charm. Rather than replacing the wooden door that was there with a steel one, he scraped off six or seven coats of paint and refinished it. "It's a beautiful door, and I would have felt bad if we had gotten a new one. The fact that I

Continued on page 7

CO-OP CREAMERY

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// Evening

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Article and photos
by MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

Eight years ago, Rick and Cindy Siewert watched as a mature ash tree was cut down and removed from their property. Cindy was already on a campaign with their family to use less and recycle more. It felt hypocritical to haul this tree away, especially since they owned Siewert Cabinets and Fixture Manufacturing, a long-established Seward cabinet shop that required a constant supply of wood.

Custom design manager Jon Buck said, "Wood from the Hood got its start right then. We spent a year experimenting with reclaimed trees, figuring out the best way to use them. We had all of the equipment available in the cabinet shop: a 35,000 square foot workshop

space. We were able to create 'a business within a business' though the two entities are separate."

By 2008, Wood from the Hood started getting logs from tree services and homeowners throughout the metro area. Reclaiming discarded trees from urban neighborhoods is a great way to support environmentally sensitive building and remodeling, but every tree isn't a contender, and it isn't cheap.

Buck explained, "Only about 25% of urban trees have potential as saw logs. Trees that are multi-stemmed, less than 18" in diameter or have a trunk shorter than 8' won't work. Every tree we accept has to be metal-detected with a hand held wand. That's slow going but there's no way around it. The majority of urban trees

have nails, screws, even an occasional drill bit or bullet embedded in them. That can really mess with our equipment."

The vision at Wood from the Hood is to let trees "live on" in the form of sustainable, handcrafted wood products.

Their first big commercial project was local through and through. They built a large conference table and did the millwork for the Franklin Avenue Seward Co-op. From there, they created wood paneling for the gallery space at Silverwood Park in NE Minneapolis. Other major commercial clients have included Pizza Luce, Caribou Coffee, Summit and Surly Brewing Companies.

Wood from the Hood's list of species is extensive: elm, ash, red

and white oak, walnut, maple, hackberry, cherry and butternut. These can be used to create custom designed furniture, flooring, molding, window and door frames. "Every one of our custom projects is a 'one-up,' personalized for that customer," explained Cindy.

Smaller products, like cutting boards, cribbage boards and growth charts are sold locally at Corazon, Mother Earth Gardens, Seward Co-op and Nokomis Shoes. Cindy manages the retail end of things and said, "We've done almost no marketing on our retail line because each product is stamped with our logo and creates its own brand recognition."

Custom projects are designed and built in-house, but customers can also have a tree repurposed into lumber and build a project themselves. Any of the hardwoods listed are available for purchase, and can be milled to specification with a clean or a natural edge.

In 2011, Wood from the Hood and the City of Minneapolis Park Board formalized a partnership to keep good trees from going to waste. Because the city removes more than 5,000 trees from boulevards and parks annually, they're happy to bring pre-selected trees to Wood from the Hood for reclaiming. The city is paid by the board foot for the trees they deliver to Wood from the Hood, and each is one less tree that has to be ground to sawdust and disposed of at the municipal site.

"Wood chipping is a lower form of recycling than what we're doing here," Buck said. "Every tree

Photo left: John Buck, custom design manager, said, "We understand how attached people get to trees on their property. When the loss of a tree is inevitable, our job is to reclaim it by creating sustainable, high-quality wood products."

Photo center: Wood is stacked, "stickered" and stored behind Wood from the Hood. The site is visible from the Greenway's Martin Sabo Pedestrian Bridge.

Photo right: Cindy Siewert had an "aha!" moment that led to the creation of Wood from the Hood years ago. She's shown here with a popular product, growth charts, which are for sale at local shops.

is a carbon storage unit; burning, chipping and decomposing wood all release carbon into the atmosphere. The city would be willing to give us every log they have if we could take them."

Wood from the Hood is conscientiously pursuing its goal of reducing the urban waste stream of downed or dying trees. In addition, they supply local farmers with sawdust for animal bedding and in a unique partnership, donate sawdust to Mississippi Mushrooms—a NE Minneapolis culinary mushroom grower.

Wood workers and hobbyists, take note. The famous red dumpster still regularly appears outside the Wood from the Hood offices at 2640 Minnehaha Ave., filled with high-quality wood scraps that people are welcome to take.

Savory Bake House

Continued from page 6

did it myself makes it more meaningful. And the fact that it's the owner's mother's door that we kept screams what this neighborhood is all about."

Savory Bake House will open with its regular venue Dec. 27. "We're really going to go to town then," Okray said. "We have a

freezer full of stuff that is ready to bake off."

Sherva added that the bakery is going to be very eco-friendly, using compostable and recyclable containers. The couple is also hoping to keep the prices reasonable so that everyone can partake of their food. And anything left over they hope to donate to those who are hungry, as policy and law will allow.

"This looks like an old-world

European bakery, and that's what it is," Okray said. "Sandra bakes things that my grandmother might have made 60 years ago. That's what food is; it brings you back to childhood and can hit the part of the brain that makes you remember and smell the food before you even taste it."

"The neighborhood has been so supportive," he said. "I think we've picked the right place to do this."

OPENING EYES, MINDS, DOORS



"I'm sending an experiment to space at **Minnehaha Academy.**"
-Elie, Grade 11



WINTER OPEN HOUSE

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LONGFELLOW

COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Join the LCC Shoveling Network

The season of snow is (likely!) going to be upon us soon. Do you need help shoveling snow this season? Your neighbors are here to help! Join this volunteer network that pairs Greater Longfellow neighbors in need with volunteer shovelers. This service is for those in need and prioritizes helping those with a disability. To sign up or volunteer, email libby@longfellow.org. If you need help and are over 60, call 952-746-4046.

LCC Winter Warming Party set for January 28th

Join the Longfellow Community Council for the Annual Winter Warming Party from 6-7:30pm Thursday, January 28th. Meet staff, board members, volunteers, and other community members at the LCC office for a night of art, music, and food! Mingle with your neighbors and get to know the people that help make Longfellow a great neighborhood! All are welcome! This is a free and family-friendly event. The LCC office is located in the Western Roofing Building, 2727 26th Ave S., Minneapolis MN 55406. To RSVP, go to www.facebook.com/

President's Message

Eric Day,
President of the Board

Happy New Year everyone! I hope you and your loved ones had a wonderful holiday season. I always look forward to the New Year, because it is a great opportunity to reflect on the successes and lessons learned over the past year and a chance to implement positive changes in year ahead. Personally, I have set resolutions for myself in the areas of family, health, and community.

Likewise, the Board and the staff of the Longfellow Community Council (LCC) have been reviewing the goals and mission of the organization and have been looking at where we've been and where we're going as we move into 2016. The LCC Board has conducted a survey and held a retreat, in addition to other planning sessions and discussions, in order to set the course of the organization so that it can better serve the residents of Greater Longfellow.



Eric Day

One of the results of this process has been the shift of the organization's communications online. This venue allows us to better connect and communicate with Longfellow residents in real time. Residents can now visit our website (longfellow.org) or our Facebook page ([facebook.com/LongfellowCommunityCouncil](https://www.facebook.com/LongfellowCommunityCouncil)) to get the most up to date information on community news, events and issues affecting residents. Residents can also subscribe to our weekly event calendar,

our monthly e-newsletter, take the ongoing community survey, order LCC merchandise, donate to the organization, contact LCC staff, learn about LCC committees, and add subscribe to LCC's Google calendar! With this shift online, we have decided to decrease our page size in this publication. Look for a smaller version of our news section next month, with more content available online!

Another change we've made recently that will affect the quality of services in 2016 is to LCC's staff. We are excited to have two new individuals as part of the LCC team: Bonnie Horgos as the Communications and Events Manager and Libby London as our Community Engagement Coordinator. Both are exceptionally qualified and are already actively engaging and communicating with our residents. As part of this change, we have combined two previous positions to create this new Communications position, so that more time will be spent on putting on meaningful events and getting folks in the neighborhood the vital information they need.

Finally, I'd like to let you know

about LCC's intensified focus on supporting Longfellow businesses. We believe that a strong business community is vital to a strong and sustainable neighborhood. We are working to provide an increased level of support to businesses in helping them resolve issues with the city, in connecting businesses with local residents, and in partnering to put on great community events and programs. We are lucky to have such an incredible group of locally owned businesses in this neighborhood and we know that working together we can accomplish great things.

So as you can see, LCC is committed to making 2016 an excellent year to live in Longfellow and is working in real, meaningful ways to make this happen. Of course, we will also need your support! When you're making resolutions for this year, I'd invite you to include one of the following: Volunteer with LCC, Attend a Committee Meeting or Event, or Donate to LCC.

Thanks again for your continued support and I'll see you around the neighborhood!

Interested in Tenant Advocacy?

Please join like-minded community members on Monday, January 25th from 6-7:30pm at Longfellow Park. There will be a presentation from Eric Hauge with HomeLine to discuss rental issues and trends in greater Longfellow. The presentation will be followed by a roundtable discussion with Community Residents, Members of the Minneapolis Renters Coalition, and City representatives from Ward 2 and 12. Contact Joe Sturm with interest or questions at 612.722.4529 or joe@longfellow.org.

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Calendar of Meetings and Events

JANUARY 2016

Meetings are free and open to the public, and are accessible. Check the calendar on our website www.longfellow.org

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS
Tuesday, Jan 12
6:30-8pm
Longfellow Park, 3435 36th Ave S
libby@longfellow.org

Hiawatha School Park,
4305 42nd St E
libby@longfellow.org

NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT
Tuesday, Jan 12
6:30-8pm
Lake Coffee House, 3223 E Lake St
joe@longfellow.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Thursday, Jan 21
6:30-8:30pm
Brackett Park, 2728 39th Ave S
melanie@longfellow.org

RIVER GORGE COMMITTEE
Wednesday, Jan 13
6:30-8pm

ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORTATION
Tuesday, Jan 26
6:30-8pm
Lake Coffee House, 3223 E Lake St
joe@longfellow.org

Give the Gift of LCC Merchandise this Holiday Season



The Longfellow Community Council has new merchandise just in time for the holidays. This year's design features the Brackett Rocket. Options include unisex sweatshirts for \$25, men's and women's shirts for \$15, and onesies and children's shirts for \$12. There are also copies of "Longfellow365" available. Go to www.longfellow.org for more information.



Longfellow Community Council

2727 26th Avenue S., Minneapolis, MN 55406

612.722.4529 • www.longfellow.org

Melanie Majors, Executive Director
Libby London, Community Engagement Coordinator
Joe Sturm, Housing & Environment Coordinator
Bonnie Horgos, Communications and Office Manager

melanie@longfellow.org
libby@longfellow.org
joe@longfellow.org
bonnie@longfellow.org

In Our Community

Messenger

Send us your news! When you submit your press release it will be considered for both the newspaper as well as the Messenger Facebook page (Facebook.com/LongfellowNokomisMessenger). You can also go to our website, LongfellowNokomisMessenger.com and enter the information in the online Event Calendar.

Pasta dinner for food shelf planned Jan. 13

The Minnehaha Food Shelf is having its annual pasta dinner on Wed., Jan. 13 from 5-7pm at Minnehaha United Methodist Church (3701 E. 50th St.). This neighborhood event supports the local food shelf. Delicious pasta is provided by Fat Lorenzo's. There will be a 14-piece accordion band, and there will also be a raffle for door prizes. The cost of the dinner is optional, but suggested prices are \$10 for adults, \$8 for ages 13-17, and free for those 12 and under.

Cabin Fever slated weekly at Epworth

Cabin Fever is a weekly play date for kids and their caregivers (required to stay) every Wednesday from 9:30-11:30am at Epworth United Methodist Church, 3207 37th Ave. S. Their Fellowship Hall is transformed with several stations: art, dress-up, climbing structure, manipulatives, sensory table and more! Enjoy a safe space for infants and toddlers to play and for caregivers to talk with other adults!

Garden Club slates next meeting Jan. 13

Longfellow Garden Club kicks off 2016 with a Jan. 13 meeting offering mid-winter topics to intrigue and delight—whether our yards have 6 inches of snow or 6 feet!

Garden shops, groceries, and home stores offer us racks and racks of tempting orchids, colors galore. Claire Kari will bring us her methods and tips for keeping your orchid's bloom-happy and fresh since many orchid bloom times are measured in months.

She'll show what signs to look for when choosing an orchid, and which to avoid. If you are interested in re-bloom, Claire has a passion for ways to achieve it.

Martha Duckert will give us a photo tour of her bike and barge trip through Holland this past Spring. Highlights include the living museum of the Hortus Bulborum garden, which shows the story of tulips as first introduced into Europe through the tulip mania of Rembrandt's era. She will show fields of tulips and other spring bulbs in the 80-acre Keukenhof Gardens, a showplace where commercial growers compete to display their most glorious varieties. And, she will take us through an amazing adventure of FloraHolland, the world's largest international flower market where millions of plants and blooms from throughout Europe are auctioned each day.

The meeting begins at 7pm, Wed., Jan. 13, at Epworth United Methodist Church, 3207 37th Ave. S. Meetings are free and open to everyone. More at www.facebook.com/LongfellowGardenClub and <https://sites.google.com/site/longfellowgardenclubminnesota>.

AA and NA meets

Every Monday night there is an AA meeting at 7pm at Minnehaha Communion Lutheran Church (4101 37th Ave. S.). Every Tuesday and Wednesday night there is an AA meeting at 7:30pm. On Thursday night, there is an NA meeting at 7:30pm. All are welcome to attend.

New Year's Eve planned at Tapestry

Tapestry Folkdance Center is hosting a fun, social dance evening for people of all ages in a friendly, alcohol-free environment on New Year's Eve. Contra dance

begins at 8:30pm, with music by local musicians Mary DuShane, Karen Mueller, Nick Jordan and Pat O'Loughlin, and caller Beau Farmer. An international dance starts at 9pm. Mark Kanazawa and Barb Hassing teach dances of the world, with lots of group, non-partner dances, and simple dances anyone can learn. The groups will gather just before midnight for a song, a waltz and a closing Swedish Langdans to end the event at 12:30am.

NA meeting open every Friday night

Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church, 3430 E. 51st St., hosts a Narcotics Anonymous (NA) meeting every Friday from 7-9pm. Everyone is welcome.

Healthy Seniors plan monthly events

"Honoring Choices: Advance Care Planning" will be the presentation at the Senior Social/Health Talk on Tue., Jan. 19, 10:30am at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, 2730 E. 31st St. Advance care forms and other resources will be available.

The Yoga for Seniors classes resume on Jan. 11, and are held on Mondays and Fridays at 10am at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church. Yoga classes are \$4/each.

A monthly Diabetes Support Group for adults of all ages meets on Jan. 13 from 6:30-8pm at Hiawatha School Park Recreation Center, 4305 E. 42nd St.

Healthy Seniors also sponsors a Low-Vision Support group (call for details). They have a number of volunteer opportunities, including being a "Friendly Visitor" to an isolated senior and providing rides for seniors to local medical appointments. Call Longfellow/Seward Healthy Seniors at 612-729-5799 for information on any of their events.

MLK Community Breakfasts planned

Plan now to start your celebration of the 2016 Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday by attending one of many community breakfasts scheduled for Mon., Jan. 18, 7-9:30pm. You can enjoy a tasty, hot breakfast and watch a big screen broadcast of the General Mills breakfast event in downtown Minneapolis as we celebrate the 26th anniversary of the annual MLK Holiday Breakfast. Visit www.interfaithaction.org/mlk to register at a breakfast location near you and to register. The closest location to the Messenger delivery area is at Macalester College Kagin Commons, 1600 Grand Ave., in St. Paul. There are six other Twin Cities locations.

Adoption support group meets monthly

The Adoption Support Network holds monthly support groups at Minnehaha Communion Lutheran Church (4101 37th Ave. S.) for parents and teens who have been adopted. Meetings are held the first Tuesday of every month at 6:30pm. Adoptive parents are provided with a confidential, nonjudgmental environment where they can support each other and share resources. Teens are invited to meet other teens who understand what it's like to be adopted. The teen group is not a drop-off group—parent(s) must attend the parent support group. For more info and to RSVP, contact Ginny Blade at 651-646-5082 or ginnyblade@nacac.org (parents); or Christina Romo at 651-644-3036, ext. 17, or christinaromo@nacac.org (teens).

Metro Blooms names 2015 award winners

Metro Blooms has awarded its 2015 Best Public Raingarden recognition to Nokomis Library, 5100 34th Ave. S., and its 2015 Best Congregation Raingarden award to Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, 2730 E. 31st St.

Hero Jones resigns from Cabaret

Amy Hero Jones has tendered her resignation as Executive Director of Patricks Cabaret, 3010 Minnehaha Ave. She held the position for nine years.

In a letter to supporters, Jones wrote, "Nine years is a long time to lead an organization, however, and I think it is time to find new adventures and take on new challenges. ... That is not to say that I will not be around—I will be working with the board and staff to fully transition the leadership role, and will continue working with Patrick's Cabaret in some capacity moving forward. I will still be around here somewhere!"

Faith-based tutoring help available

Each Tuesday, from 4-6pm, Faith Lutheran Church (3430 E. 51st St.) provides after-school tutoring and activities through a nationally-recognized tutoring and mentoring program called Rebecca's Garden of Hope. This is a free, volunteer-driven ministry of learning and support "anchored in Christ and reflecting the qualities of love, perseverance, discipline, and structure" to help the community's children grow. Tutoring and Homework Help is available in language arts and mathematics, grades 1-5. In addition to academic help, students

The 2016 Longfellow Business Directory has been delivered. If you did not receive a copy with your last Messenger delivery, please email denis@deruyternelson.com with your contact information and address, and we will get you a copy!

will receive healthy snacks, will enjoy games and other enrichment activities, and will learn about God's Word. Please contact Faith Lutheran Church, 612-729-5463, if you'd like to register your child or if you would like to volunteer as a tutor in the program.

Zorongo Dance starts new winter classes

Zorongo Flamenco Dance Theater and School will be starting its winter class session in January 2016 and will be offering new classes for beginners. Zorongo's new Intro to Flamenco classes and new Children's "Palomitas" classes will take place on Saturdays, beginning on Sat., Jan. 9, and running until Sat., Apr. 2. All classes will take place at the Zorongo studio at 3012 Minnehaha Ave. Intro classes cost \$16 per class and begin at 10am. The children's "Palomitas" class begins at 1pm and costs \$10 per class. For detailed class descriptions and more go to their website at www.zorongo.org/school.

Hiawatha Clubhouse open for winter

Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board has announced Hiawatha's winter hours and activities available throughout the season.

Hiawatha Clubhouse winter hours are Fri.-Sun., 10am-6pm. The Clubhouse is closed on Dec. 25 but open other winter holidays.

What Can You Do at Hiawatha During Winter? Golf season may be over, but there are still plenty of things for you to do at Hiawatha. You can purchase cross-country ski passes and take lessons (www.minneapolisparcs.org/xcski) or rent winter sports equipment (www.minneapolisparcs.org/winterrentals), including cross-country skis and snowshoes. Gift cards are also available, the perfect gift for outdoor enthusiasts (www.minneapolisparcs.org/giftcards).

CHRISTMAS EVE

Thursday, December 24

4:00 p.m. Family Service

11:00 p.m. Candlelight Service

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"There's a lot of heightened awareness of the lake and water quality issues," observed Standish-Ericsson Neighborhood Association (SENA) President Molly McCartney. She pointed out that SENA has been part of efforts to help clean up the lake for over 10 years. SENA has sponsored an Earth Day clean-up for the past few years, and it helped manage a storm drain stenciling project this summer. (Photo by Tessa M. Christensen)

Water quality issues

Continued from page 1

followed by organic materials such as leaves and mulch. The study being done now at the golf course will answer the question of how much phosphorus the Lake Hiawatha Golf Course contributes to the lake.

Lake levels can fluctuate up to five vertical feet from 810 to 816 feet elevation. This fluctuation directly affects what type of vegetation can grow near the shore. The lake is 30 feet at its deepest spot.

Data shows that in years when the lake water is the lowest, the water scores higher on the Trophic State Index (TSI), which indicate more algae, phosphorus,

and chlorophyll. The TSI typically fluctuates between 58 and 60, according to Crabb.

"Without the influence of the creek, the lake can turn green very early," observed Crabb.

The beach is monitored weekly from June to August and closed when *E. coli* bacteria exceeds the state standard. The health of the beach is typically worse when we have lots of rain washing bacteria from people, pet waste, wild animals, the creek and stormwater into Lake Hiawatha, said Crabb.

"If you are in a foot of water, and you can't see your feet, don't swim," advised Crabb.

MPRB pays close attention to the aquatic plant diversity in Lake Hiawatha, particularly which plants can be found, where and how many there are. Some years, there aren't many plants. In 2009, it was a banner year for diversity.

Fluctuations in the lake are due in part to the population of European carp, according to Crabb. The carp disrupt the aquatic plant beds. In summers after a winterkill, more plants grow.

More larger projects than smaller

In 1998, the Blue Water Commission determined that large-scale projects would do more to benefit Lake Hiawatha and Minnehaha Creek than smaller projects, Crabb pointed out.

Where the creek begins in Gray's Bay, the water quality is very good. But the water quality gets significantly worse at West 34th and Excelsior Blvd. in Hopkins and St. Louis Park.

"There is a lot of industrial use in that area and a lot of hard cover right up to the lake," explained Becky Christopher of the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD).

The Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL), the measure used to determine pollution, jumps from 2,500 pounds to 4,000 pounds. It cumulates at over 6,000 pounds at Lake Hiawatha.

MCWD has focused its efforts on improving water quality in that area, and has recently installed stormwater ponds and underground treatment facilities with the goal of reducing the TMDL by one-third. "We're making good progress, but we still have some ways to go," said Christopher.

What can the community do?

"There's a lot of heightened awareness of the lake and water quality issues," observed

Standish-Ericsson Neighborhood Association (SENA) President Molly McCartney. She pointed out that SENA has been part of efforts to help clean up the lake for over 10 years. SENA has sponsored an Earth Day clean-up for the past few years, and it helped manage a storm drain stenciling project this summer.

Residents can work to keep stormwater where it lands through rain gardens and

Continued on page 11

Research continues at golf course

The Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board continues to study water issues at the Hiawatha golf course.

Despite the wet weather conditions, most of the groundwater and surface water measurement equipment were installed at Hiawatha Golf Course by Nov. 23.

Meters were installed on the two six-inch pond outlet pipes discharging into Lake Hiawatha on Nov. 30. On Dec. 8, Barr Engineering received the first full set of data collected from the pumps, transducers in the ponds and monitoring wells.

On Dec. 8, the pumps were temporarily turned off, allowing water in the ponds to rise while measurements are made. The pumps will be turned on before water levels pose any risk to the golf course or surrounding properties. Data will again be collected once the pumps are turned back on.

The collected data will be used as the key inputs in a ground water model. A series of scenarios will be run

through models with results available by the end of December. The MPRB and a consultant engaged to assess the validity of the models will spend several weeks reviewing the results of the various scenarios. Following that review, MPRB staff and consultants will prepare materials to share with the MPRB Board of Commissioners and the public.

Staff expects decision-making tools based on data collected to be in draft form by mid-January and materials will be ready to share publicly by the end of January. Key data and modeled results will inform decision-making, including the definition of what happens when the pumps are turned off, particularly from the perspective of storm water flows, and an estimate of the annual volume of groundwater pumped in current and future conditions.

The work being conducted should not impact cross-country skiing, snowshoeing or other winter activities held on Hiawatha Golf Course property.



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NENA Hires New Program and Communications Director

PLEASE HELP US WELCOME DAVE COLLING TO THE NENA TEAM



With over 20 years' experience working with government agencies, political and nonprofit organizations and inside the marketing communications industry, Dave brings a community-focused approach to his work.

Dave's start coincides with the near completion of NENA's Three-Year Strategic Plan which will include new programs focusing on housing, commercial corridors, streetscape and green initiatives.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
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Neighborhood Churches Welcome You!

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www.bethanyon36th.com

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10:30 am Worship
Saturdays, Jan 2 & 16
5:00 pm Soul+Food Dinner Church
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Wednesdays at 5:45 pm
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3207 37th Ave. • 612-722-0232
www.epworthumcmpls.org

Rev. Pam Armstrong
Sunday Worship: 10:30 am
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(Wheelchair Accessible)

Minnehaha Communion Lutheran
4101 37th Ave. S. • 612-722-9527
www.minnehahacommunion.com

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Sunday School - 9:45 am
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St. Albert the Great Catholic
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www.saintalbertthegreat.org

Fr. Joe Gillespie, O.P.
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Saturday Mass: 5 pm
M,T,Th,F: Rosary at 8 am, Daily Mass 8:15 am
Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament,
First Fridays from 9 am to noon
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St. Peder's Evangelical Lutheran
4600 E. 42nd St. • 612-722-8000
www.stpeders.net

Julie A. Ebbesen, Pastor
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Coffee 10 am

Trinity Lutheran Church of Minnehaha Falls
5212 41st Ave. S. • 612-724-3691
www.trinityfalls.org

Pastors Derek Johnson & Matt Oxendale
Sunday Worship 8:30 & 10:30 am
AA Meetings Tuesdays/Sundays 7:00 pm

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Water quality issues

Continued from page 10

pervious surface pavers. Grant funds for projects are available, as are utility bill credits. Clean up leaves, grass clippings, and trash in streets and alleys, and consider becoming a water steward, Christopher recommended. The Annual Creek Clean-up is set for July 24, 2016.

This year, Minneapolis will unveil its new Adopt-A-Catch-Basin program, which encourages residents to keep catch basins clean and clear. Cerney pointed out that one of the biggest problems are boulevard gardens. When the mulch is mounded on top, the mulch slides off and collects in the catch basin, forming blockages. Cerney encouraged people to call 3-1-1 if they see that a drain is blocked. Residents are advised to sweep or rake debris from around catch



"Without the influence of the creek, the lake can turn green very early," observed Rachel Crabb of the Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)

basins and dispose of in the trash.

The city also sweeps the streets twice a year to help keep debris out of the stormwater sewer system.

Residents questioned what is being done to monitor how trash coming in via the stormwater sewer culvert affects

the lake quality. One woman mentioned that when she kayaks on the lake she sees trash sinking and another sees tiny pieces of plastic being eaten by wildlife.

Crabb responded that MPRB does not collect data on trash, chemical pollutants or poisons, and did not know of any studies done on small lakes. Because this is not a drinking water source, the lake is not held to those standards. Fish are tested by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

A resident suggested that given the size of Lake Hiawatha perhaps the community couldn't expect that it get off the impaired water list, and perhaps effort should be concentrated on the garbage issue.

"There is still no commitment to mitigate the storm sewer that's bringing in the garbage. I believe that these agencies want clean water but are heavily focused on non-point source solu-

tions," said neighborhood resident Sean Connaughty after the meeting. "They are not yet willing to commit to serious intervention at the outfall source."

Friends of Lake Hiawatha group forming

In part because of that, Connaughty and fellow neighborhood resident Ryan Seibold are forming the Friends of Lake Hiawatha. The first meeting of the Friends of Lake Hiawatha was held on Dec. 17. "We hope to employ the expertise of community members who can assist in implementing solutions through advocacy, volunteer work, scientific study, research, outreach and whatever other needs become apparent as things progress," said Connaughty.

Connaughty pointed out that goals for the group include getting mitigation of the major storm sewer outfall that brings

pollutants into the lake from South Minneapolis' streets. "Additionally, we will be working systemically to address myriad aspects that are contributing to the poor health of Lake Hiawatha," he said. "Raising awareness in all communities in Hiawatha's sub-watershed helping the community to realize that we are the source of the lake's degradation."

Connaughty added, "We will also be working for a healthy and symbiotic use of the land around the lake as it is redesigned in the coming years. We will advocate for increased habitat for wildlife and the elimination of the use of harmful chemicals on the land around Lake Hiawatha."

To learn about future meetings, email friendsoflakehiawatha@gmail.com, like on Facebook group or follow on Twitter.

Classifieds

Messenger

Want ads must be received by the Messenger by Jan. 18 for the Jan. 28 issue. Call 651-645-7045 for more information. Your classified ad will also be automatically placed on the Messenger's website at www.LongfellowNokomisMessenger.com

Messenger Want Ads are \$1 per word with a \$10 minimum. Send your remittance along with your ad to *Messenger Classifieds*, 125 1st Ave. NW, PO Box 168, Minneapolis, MN 55369. Want ads must be mailed to the *Messenger* before Jan. 18 for the Jan. 28 issue. Ad copy can be e-mailed to denis@deruyternelson.com. Call 651-917-4183 for more information. Your classified ad will also be automatically placed on the *Messenger's* website at www.LongfellowNokomisMessenger.com

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Sara Koch, 651.310.9448 or Sara.Koch@lssmn.org. 1-16

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By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

Lee Pfannmuller and Dave Zumeta have been neighbors, colleagues, friends and fellow bird-watchers for more than 30 years. Both live along the Mississippi River Gorge, a wilderness area in the heart of South Minneapolis.

Zumeta has kept a bird list for Friends of the Mississippi River since 1988 and has counted 173 different species in the River Gorge between 27th St. and the Ford Bridge Lock and Dam.

That's a lot of birds in a relatively small area. The reason for the high number is that the Mississippi River provides a major flyway for migrating birds. In addition to year-round residents like the cardinal, blue jay, and chickadee, there are also surprise sightings of birds as diverse as the saw-whet owl, ruffed grouse, and Louisiana Water Thrush.

"The River Gorge," Pfannmuller and Zumeta agreed, "is just a fantastic place to see birds."

One of the best ways to start recognizing birds is to establish a feeding station in your back yard. Pfannmuller, retired director of Ecological Resources for the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, said, "I've been off and on with my bird feeding over the years, but right now I'm on." She sets out suet for woodpeckers and thistle for seed eaters in winter, and offers up a smörgåsbord of peanuts and sunflower mix all year long.

Currently under contract with Minnesota Audubon and chairing the Bell Museum Advisory Council, Pfannmuller is always listening for birds. A classically trained musician, she explained that she birds by ear as much as she does by sight. She's been a member of the Lakes Consort, a Minneapolis Baroque ensemble, for 35+ years, making beautiful trilling sounds herself on the krumhorn and recorder.

The Winter Wren is Pfannmuller's favorite bird by sound. This tiny, inconspicuous bird is smaller than a warbler, but its call can be heard from half a mile away. A native of the northern boreal forest, the Winter Wren provides more music per pound than any other North American songbird.

Her advice to new birders is to unplug from electronic devices.

Feeding birds in winter —seeds of wisdom from local experts



"Take the ear buds out," she said, "put away the cell phones (unless you're cross-referencing bird songs) and train yourself to really listen."

Zumeta, retired executive director of the Minnesota Forest Resources Council, has been a dedicated birder since childhood. He became interested in birding simultaneously with his mother 57 years ago and has since birded in 46 states and 11 countries. "What other hobby can you do from age three to 100," he added, "anywhere, anytime and for free?"

Of the early training he received from his mother, Zumeta said, "Women taught me how to bird. I went on endless trips with my mother and her birding friends. Along the way, I learned birding etiquette and essential information about plants and trees that provide the habitat birds need. I went on to study and work in bird habitat ecology, specializing in how birds adapt to significant disturbances like wildfires, blow downs, insect and disease epidemics."

Zumeta explained, "Attracting birds to your back yard is partially about what you put in your feeder, but also about the surrounding habitat. My wife and I bought our house because of a huge, arch-

ing burr oak on the property, a city park one block away and the nearby river gorge. Between these places, I've counted 140 species of birds. What we live in here is Longfellow is a Riparian Zone, a biological term that defines forest land along a river or stream."

A self-described purist, Zumeta admitted he only likes certain kinds of feed. He prefers to buy slabs of suet (beef fat) at the grocery store, and said, "The woodpeckers love suet: Downy, Hairy, and even an occasional Pileated Woodpecker will seek it out. For my seed feeders, I prefer to shop at Wild Birds Unlimited in Highland Park. Their selection is great, and their staff are very knowledgeable."

Zumeta considers himself something of a recovered "lister," a person who compulsively lists birds and approaches birding as a competitive sport. With a U.S. Life List of 570 species (out of a possible 800), he's more interested in teaching people about birds these days than competing with other

birders to raise his numbers.

For new or experienced birders who want to learn more, consider joining a Minneapolis or St. Paul Audubon bird walk. They have many scheduled throughout the year, and walks are offered for various skill levels. The Longfellow Community Council's River Gorge Committee sponsored a spring and late summer bird walk in the river gorge this year, led by Pfannmuller and Zumeta. These walks will likely happen again in 2016.

The two will pair up to speak on "Birds of the River Corridor" at LCC's upcoming River Gorge Committee community presentation. This annual event will be held at 7pm on Mon., Jan. 25 at St. Peder's Evangelical Lutheran Church, 4600 E. 42nd St. It is free as a bird and open to the public.

Providing water for birds in winter

Like all animals, birds need to drink water every day. They also need water to freshen their feathers and

to remove parasites.

Most commercial bird baths are too deep and are really nothing more than a lawn ornament. Choose a shallow bird bath, and place it in a sunny location for the winter and a shady location for the summer.

An immersion-style water heater is needed to keep the water from freezing. These are available at almost any store that sells bird feed. The heater must be put on a ground fault interrupted circuit to prevent the risk of shock. An immersion-style water heater costs only pennies a day to operate.

Left: A White Breasted Nuthatch on a simple suet feeder. (Photo by Nina Koch)

Above: Lee Pfannmuller held out a handful of safflower seed, a perennial favorite with backyard birds. Unlike sunflower seeds, squirrels tend to leave this seed alone. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

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