



Midtown Farmers Market opens 2019 season in new location

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Commissioner Angela Conley changing "business as usual"

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East Nokomis actress co-directs her first film at age 10

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Longfellow
Nokomis

Messenger



Your community newspaper since 1982

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21,000 Circulation

Messenger, Monitor papers transition to new ownership May 1

Current owners Calvin deRuyter and Tim Nelson sell newspapers to writer Tesha M. Christensen

The Longfellow Nokomis Messenger, and its sister publication, the Midway Como Monitor, will be under new ownership beginning May 1, 2019.

Calvin deRuyter and Tim Nelson of deRuyter-Nelson Publications have sold their two well-established neighborhood newspapers to south Minneapolis resident Tesha M. Christensen, who has written for the two newspapers for almost eight years.

Christensen always knew she wanted to be a writer and was drawn to journalism at a young age when she wrote a letter to the editor that was published in the Cambridge Star newspaper.

"From that point on I was hooked. I had gotten my first glimpse into the power of the printed word," recalled Christensen. "I wanted more. I saw how newspapers could be used to generate change in their communities, and how they could



New owner Tesha M. Christensen of TMC Publications CO and her two children, Axel (age 6) and Joselyn (age 10) are excited to become more involved in these two neighborhood newspapers. The kids, of course, are pushing for a new section for kids. Got ideas on what that should include? Email Tesha.christensen@gmail.com. (Photo courtesy of Tesha M. Christensen)

inform and engage people."

Lifelong learner

She earned a degree in English and writing in 1998 from Bethel College, where she wrote for the Clarion, and then entered the community newspaper industry.

Her first job was with the same newspaper that printed her letter to the editor, then renamed The Star newspaper. Christensen worked as the assistant editor and special sections editor of her hometown newspaper for ten

years, serving two counties and a circulation of 21,000 with a twice-weekly newspaper.

Over the years, Christensen covered a range of topics in Isanti and Chisago counties, from school board levies to new county parks to crime news. "I wrote about what new businesses were coming to town, local musicians, and rodeo shows, and a story about one resident who saved the life of another," Christensen recalled.

"I love the ever-changing nature of this business, and how I learn something new with each story I write."

She left the full-time workforce in March 2009 when her first baby was born, but continued writing on a part-time basis for Northstar Media, the Isanti County News, ECM Publishers/Adams Publishing Group, Twin Cities Daily Planet, RedCurrent, and The Alley

Continued on page 4

East Lake Savers is closed, catching everyone by surprise

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

According to several employees, the closing of the East Lake Savers in the Hi-Lake Shopping Center took everyone by surprise.

Cashier Julie Johnson said, "This closing was very sudden. Someone from the corporate office walked in here on Wed., Apr. 3, and said, 'We're closing the store in nine days.' Savers has been in this location for 27 years, and there were a few people hired the day before. We're sorry for the loss to the community."

Savers LLC is the biggest for-profit thrift store chain in the U.S. According to their website, the company runs more than 300 stores with 22,000 employees under the names Savers and Valu Village in the U.S., Canada, and Australia; or at least they did before the recent spate of closings. It's hard to know how many stores there still are. The Valu Village store at Sun Ray Shopping Center in St. Paul also closed Apr. 13.

This isn't the first time the thrift store chain has been in the news. In 2015, Minnesota Attorney General Lori Swanson sued Savers for misleading the public about their donations to charities. Contrary to what they advertised, Savers gave as little as 1% of clothing sales to charitable nonprofits—and none of its profits from furniture and other home goods. The com-



Powderhorn resident Sherrie Beal tried on a suede jacket with 6" fringe and said, "Where else can you find something like this for \$4? I've been thrifting for as long as I can remember, and this place is a neighborhood institution. I don't believe in buying clothes new when you can get great stuff without adding to the waste stream." (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

pany later entered into a settlement agreement with the attorney general's office. They agreed to disclose to donors their status as a for-profit company and to have transparency on their website about actual charitable donations.

The Hi-Lake Shopping Center is managed by Wellington Management. Executive vice-president David Wellington said, "We were disappointed when we learned that

Savers would go dark at the end of the month; they have been an excellent tenant there since 1992. We're actively seeking a replacement tenant, including a thrift store or other use that would be a good mix in this important neighborhood shopping center."

According to Wellington property manager Vicky Carr, "The lease for Savers was locked in for several years to come. A rent increase had

nothing to do with their decision to close."

According to Bloomberg LP (a global provider of financial news and information), the most likely reason for the closing seems to be a restructuring deal last month that cuts Savers' debt load by 40% and handed over the reins to a new management and investment group. The lighter debt load and new financing will put Savers in a



Cashier Julie Johnson said, "The employees are sorry for the loss of this store to the community." (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

better position, as will reducing the number of stores they operate.

East Lake Savers manager Chantelle Caldwell said, "I started as a cashier here four years ago, and worked my way up. We've been told we could transfer to other stores, but for me, it's not worth it. I'd have to start over again at entry-level. I was told they don't have any management openings at the other Twin Cities stores. We have about 100 employees at this store alone. Some are really sad, but I'm excited. It's time for me to do something new."

Paddle Bridge brings kayak tours to the Mississippi River Gorge

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

Kayak enthusiast and Minneapolis native Theo Byrnes didn't paddle the Mississippi River until he was almost 20 years old. Along with his family, Byrnes had explored the city lakes and the St. Croix River as a kid but, like many people, they had stayed clear of the Mississippi.

Now the owner of a two-year-old business called Paddle Bridge Guide Collective, Byrnes is enthusiastically getting paddlers of all ages and abilities out on the mighty river. The driving force behind Paddle Bridge is to promote urban adventure, paddle safety, and the history and ecology of the Mississippi River Gorge.

As a kid, Byrnes came up through the ranks of the YMCA's Camp Menogyn. He paddled all the way to the Arctic Circle with their advanced explorer's program in 2007 and got hooked. He found a job guiding for "Above the Falls" in 2009, an operation that brought kayakers out on the river above St. Anthony Falls. When the owner retired in 2017, Byrnes and his co-workers wanted to keep guiding together, and the Paddle Bridge Guide Collective was born. More than just a local outfitter, they are working to create an active and sustainable river community.

All of the Paddle Bridge guides are extensively trained in First Aid and Water Rescue techniques to guarantee a safe paddle experience. "For new paddlers," Byrnes said, "we start with basic instruction on the shore, and cover everything a person needs to know to feel comfortable on the water. The stretch of the river between Minneapolis and St. Paul is the only naturally occurring gorge on the entire Mississippi. Water speeds are faster here because it's a narrow stretch. We hope to have our full schedule online by mid-May, if the weather cooperates. Water levels will still be up, but safe for paddling."

Lessons for experienced paddlers who want to hone their skills are also available by request; kayak terminology, techniques, hazard awareness, and self-rescue are covered. To inquire about lessons, email paddlebridge@gmail.com.

Paddle Bridge has a fleet of 12 red hot kayaks made by Current Designs in Winona, including four tandems which accommodate two paddlers at-a-time. There are life jackets for all ages and sizes, though



Theo Byrnes is the owner of Paddle Bridge Guide Collective, a new service that brings people out on the Mississippi River Gorge in kayaks. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

Tours are by reservation only. Check the website for availability at www.paddlebridge.com. When making a reservation, specify if you have a particular area of interest in the river.

12 years old is the minimum recommended age. Younger children can be included on private tours. Two-hour River Gorge tours are \$65/person, four-hour River Gorge tours are \$95/person, and 1.5-hour sunset tours of Boom Island are \$45/person (30% discount for all tours for kids under 16).

"All of our guides have their own interests including geology and biology," Byrnes said. "Across the board, I'd say our strongest suit is history. Our goals are to get people out on the water; we guarantee them a memorable experience and a good night's rest."

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Although discriminatory racial practices in Minneapolis housing have been illegal for many years, the racial covenant language still exists in many Nokomis area deeds.

Join Nokomis East Neighborhood Association and Hale Page Diamond Lake Association for an evening with Mapping Prejudice, University of Minnesota based project focused on visualizing racial covenants in the Twin Cities. Learn from Mapping Prejudice about their work, racial covenant history in the Nokomis area, and how you can remove any remaining covenant language from your deed.

The event will be hosted on May 21 from 6:30-8pm at Lake Nokomis Lutheran Church, 5011 S. 31st Ave.

Rain Garden Grant Lottery

Nokomis East residents, enter to receive a custom rain garden from Metro Blooms for less than half the price through the NENA Rain Garden Grant Lottery! Rain Gardens are not only a beautiful landscaping feature, but they can also reduce stand-

NENA (Nokomis East Neighborhood Association)

4313 E. 54th St.

Mapping Prejudice: A History of Racial Covenants in the Nokomis area

Upcoming meetings and events:

- 5/1/19, 6:30pm: NENA Housing, Commercial, and Streetscape Committee, NENA Office, 4313 E. 54th St.
- 5/7/19, 6:30pm: NEBA Annual Meeting, McDonald's Liquor Event Space, 5010 34th Ave. S.
- 5/8/19, 6:30pm: NENA Green Initiatives Committee, NENA Office
- 5/21/19, 6:30pm: Mapping Prejudice: A History of Racial Covenants in the Nokomis Area, Lake Nokomis Lutheran Church, 5011 S. 31st Ave.

Web: www.nokomiseast.org • Facebook: www.facebook.com/Nokomiseast
Twitter: twitter.com/NokomisEast • Email: nenan@nokomiseast.org • Phone: 612-724-5652

ing water in your yard, reduce mosquito breeding, filter out pollutants, and protect local lakes and streams. Fifteen garden grants are available for residents in the Nokomis East neighborhoods, and five are available for residents with homes within the Lake Nokomis watershed. A randomized selection of recipients for each category will be drawn on the day after registrations are due on June 14. Contact Program and Communication Manager Lauren Hazenson at 612-724-5652 for further information or to register.

Nokomis East Garage Sale

Garage-salers in the Nokomis East area are invited to register their sale on the Nokomis East website, starting May 1. Last year over 100 sales took part in at the

all-day event, which draws bargain hunters from all over the metro area. The garage sale itself will be June 15 from 8am-4pm.

Curb Appeal Matching Grant Lottery

The deadline to enter The Curb Appeal Matching Grant Lottery is May 15. Nokomis East residents are encouraged to sign up and get their upcoming exterior home project entered to win a matching grant up to \$500. Winners will be announced right be-

fore Memorial Day Weekend to start your summer off right. Visit www.nokomiseast.org for more information and to register.

Loan programs

NENA offers two home improvement loan programs for homes in the Keewaydin, Minnehaha, Morris Park and Wenonah neighborhoods. Loan applications are processed on a first come, first served basis.

Home Improvement Loans

Did you know that the NENA

Home Improvement Loans also cover large energy efficiency home improvements like solar panels? These loans also cover most permanent home improvements. Call the Center for Energy and Environment at 612-335-5884 for more details on project eligibility. 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 also apply. The interest rate is either 3.5% or 4.5% depending on income. No income restrictions apply.

Emergency Repair Loans

A limited amount of funds are available for emergency repairs. Only owner-occupied households are eligible. Income restrictions apply. The maximum loan amount is \$7,500. The loan is 0% interest, and there are no monthly payments. The loan is due in total upon the sale of the property or transfer of title.

How to apply

For more information or to request an application, call the Center for Energy and Environment at 612-335-5884, or visit www.mncee.org/find-financing-incentives/home-improvement-loan-program.



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the *Messenger*. Letters to the editor and news releases for publication can be sent via e-mail at news@longfellownokomismessenger.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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Now, communicate with the Longfellow Nokomis *Messenger* electronically!
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Letters to the Editor

Your graphs were missing data

To the Editor,

I commend the excellent articles by Tessa Christensen on the Hiawatha golf course area. One shortcoming was that the financial graphs omitted financial data for 2011. That was unfortunate because it detracted from the article's usefulness, and made me question whether the 2011 data had been omitted from totals. I hope you provide the missing information in corrections.

Although outside your service area, I find the *Messenger* a vital source of information and neighborhood connection. Please keep up the good work.

Tom Overton
806 E Minnehaha Pkwy

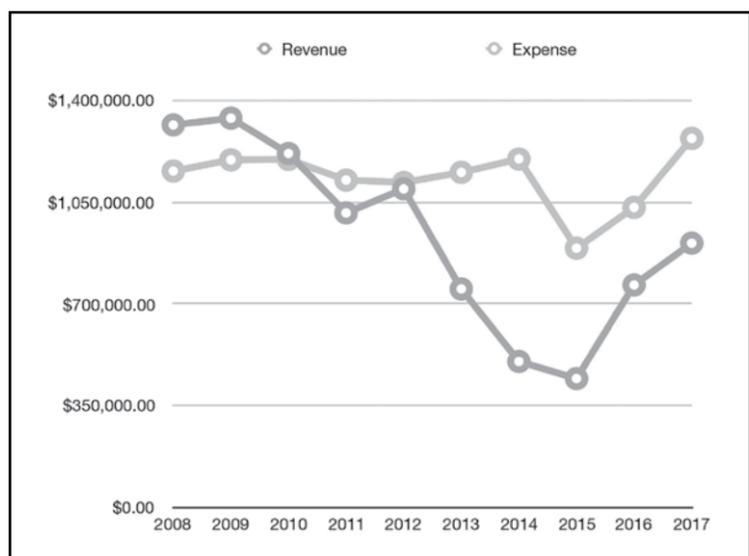
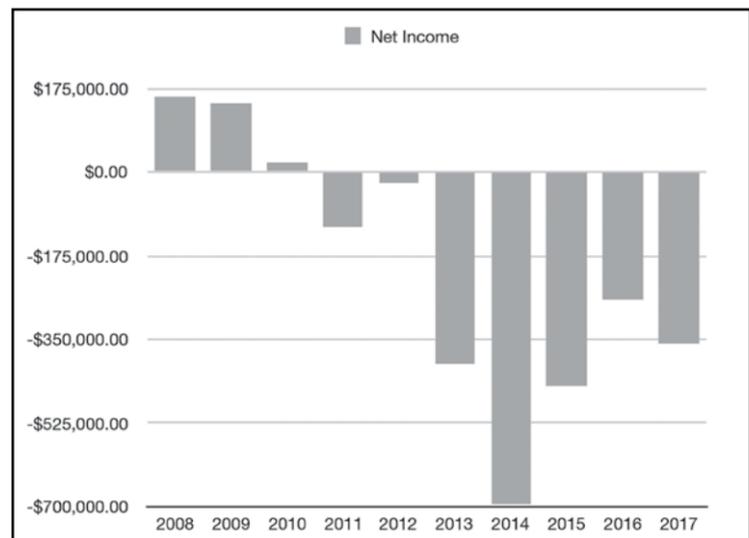
Editor's Note: The error was ours in creating the graphs from figures provided. Somehow the figures for that year were not included. We have reprinted the corrected graphs (see right). We appreciate your careful review and are glad you brought this to our attention.

Thanks for the coverage

To the Editor,

So great to see the Earth Day clean up and Write to the River in the [last Messenger and the] Messenger online today! Thank you, Calvin and Margie! And all the FMR volunteers who contributed your time and talents.

I especially love the Earth Day quote from Bea, and Jim's



poem "almost" makes me miss winter. And Margie, I just love how much you emphasized the approachability of both the proj-

ect and the river gorge.
With heaps of gratitude,
Sue Rich
Friends of the Mississippi River

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New ownership for Messenger

Continued from page 1

newspaper in the Phillips neighborhood of south Minneapolis.

From 2006 to 2012, she worked as an adjunct journalism instructor at Anoka-Ramsey Community College where she taught a variety of journalism classes and was an adviser for the Cambridge Campus newspaper, the *Ink Spot*. She also taught for one year at Planet Homeschool, a homeschool co-op in St. Anthony, and helped launch a school newspaper written by the middle and high school students.

"I love journalism, and I am passionate about sharing journalism with kids and young adults," stated Christensen. "They are the future, and it's so exciting to hear their ideas."

Christensen has served on a variety of committees and boards over the years and is a co-founder of Team Yarn - Head Huggers (teamyarn.blogspot.com), a small non-profit dedicated to making and donating hats, shawls, and lapghans to those battling cancer and other serious illnesses.



The team of writers and sales staff will continue working under new owner Tesha M. Christensen. Left to right: (writers and photographers) Jan Willms, Jill Boogren, Stephanie Fox, Margie Oloughlin, (sales) Lynn Santacaterina and Denis Woulfe. Not pictured writer Jane McClure and sports columnist Matthew Davis. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)

Forum for community discussion

Christensen and longtime staff member Denis Woulfe, along with the writers and photographers who contribute to the paper, are looking forward to what the future holds for the *Messenger* and *Monitor* newspapers.

"I think what excites me

about this next chapter is working to re-engage the newspapers with the communities that we serve," observed Woulfe, who started as an intern at the *Monitor* while he attended Hamline University 40 years ago.

"The world has changed since each of the newspapers was founded, but the basic needs of our readers are largely the same. I think they

value the work and the role of the *Messenger* and the *Monitor*, and our challenge now is to find out how to heighten that engagement and fulfill that special contract between our readers and the newspapers that enhances and enriches the communities that we serve."

Over the years, Woulfe has served in many different roles at the neighborhood newspapers, including the editor, typesetter, managing editor, advertising manager, and more. For the past few years, he's been busy selling ads. and is currently a board member at ALLY People Solutions in the Midway which just merged with Community Involvement Programs (CIP) of Minneapolis. He is also a member of the Alumni Annual Fund Board for Hamline University.

"We dealt with many challenges over the years, but one, in particular, was the discussion over the role of a neighborhood newspaper and the balance between reporting what some readers saw as 'good' news and what others saw as 'bad' news," said Woulfe. There also was a constant dialogue about what role the neighborhood newspaper had, and how it differed from the daily newspapers.

"Despite the different neighborhoods we serve with

the two newspapers, the value of bringing community stakeholders together and providing a forum for community discussion has remained the constant over the years," stated Woulfe. "It remains as important now more than ever!"

Think print is dead?

Christensen agrees that it is more important now than ever, and will be recruiting various people from each neighborhood to serve on an advisory board that will share story ideas and ties each story closer into the fabric of the neighborhood.

"At the *Messenger* and *Monitor*, we are here to tell the stories of our neighborhoods," she stated. "We want to be reader-centric and make our content—both ads and articles—engaging and applicable. Print is evolving, and we're looking ahead in innovative and creative ways. More people are reading than ever before in the history of humankind, and we want to ensure that local residents are reading their community newspaper because it is 'News for You.'"

"Think print is dead? Think again."

Longtime news hounds reflect on 44 years of neighborhood press

Newspapers have helped shape and form community identity within the two neighborhoods they serve

By TESHA M. CHRISTENSEN

When 22-year-old Calvin deRuyter bought the *Monitor* in 1975 for \$1 from a man who thought it had no future, he had no idea what he was getting himself into.

Forty-four years later he's perfected the art of dealing with challenges in the job he's loved.

"You face it, yell and scream at yourself and the world, then buck up and try to come up with a solution or solutions that will address the challenge," stated deRuyter. "Isn't that how we all face the challenges in life?"

Paper shares community identity

deRuyter had been the editor of his student newspaper, the *Oracle*, at Hamline University, and started working for the *Highland Villager* while he took a year off between his undergraduate and graduate work in art. He volunteered to edit the first issue of the "Midway?"—which was given the name *Midway Monitor* following a neighborhood naming contest.

Some local business owners and leaders co-signed deRuyter's first loan to get the paper started, and the *Monitor* joined the other community newspapers being

birthed along with the neighborhood councils. Residents were seeking new ways to develop their community identity in the Cities.

"People were excited about being involved in their neighborhood and finally having, they believed, a way to have a voice in the shaping of city policy that was so prevalent in their lives," recalled deRuyter. "The whole citizen participation movement was what

shaped the paper for years.

Nelson joins paper

Calvin deRuyter was one of the first people that Tim Nelson met when he enrolled at Hamline University. deRuyter was a junior and working as arts editor at *The Oracle*. They lived in the same dorm, and then worked together at the student newspaper. Nelson had been the

editor of his high school newspaper, and set his sights on a career in politics and government. He had been accepted as a graduate student at Willamette University in Oregon when deRuyter asked if Nelson was interested in working for him.

"I was intrigued, but torn as to what to do," stated Nelson. "I called my advisor at Willamette

Continued on page 5

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Every Wednesday through August 7 - Weed & Water Wednesday for kids 9:30 a.m.

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Saturday May 4th and 18th, 2:00-4:00
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Monday, May 6th at 7 pm Pub Theology at Parkway Pizza:

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New season of Midtown Farmers Market opens in a new location

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

The Midtown Farmers Market will open their season in a brand new location on Sat., May 4. Moon Palace Books will host the market for 2019-2020, in an open lot adjacent to their store at 3032 Minnehaha Ave. Market manager Jenna Yeakle said, "We could not be happier with this site. Moon Palace Books co-owners Jamie and Angela Schwesnedl were once Midtown Farmers Market vendors themselves. Their entrepreneurial spirit and community leadership will ensure that the market remains strong during our two year transition period."

The Tuesday night market will open June 4

The original market site at E. Lake St. and Hiawatha Ave. is under construction. Hennepin County is about to begin Phase II of the Hiawatha/Lake Development, which includes a public plaza that will be the permanent home of the Midtown Farmers Market. By the time it's completed, it will be almost ten years ago that the Corcoran Neighborhood Association began working toward this vision.

In case you're worried, the market is not in a holding pattern in the meantime. This year it's welcoming several new vendors including R & R Cultivation (local mushrooms), Jajja Well-



Midtown Farmers Market manager Jenna Yeakle said, "We're excited about our two-year interim location at Moon Palace Books. This is an opportunity for us to continue building relationships with our neighbors." (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

ness (fresh juices), Northern Coffee works (craft coffee), Centro Tyrone Guzman (youth-made salsa), and Bull Thistle Gardens (organic urban produce.)

"Many of our returning vendors are trying exciting new things too," Yeakle said. "Asa's Bakery will be adding sandwiches made from their naturally leavened sourdough breads

and bagels, home-made cream cheese, spreads, and the market's amazing seasonal produce."

As in years' past, there will be live entertainment every Saturday from 9am-1pm. The Brass Messengers will play on opening day, with a full season of other musicians, poets, puppeteers, and storytellers to follow.

Want to perform? Contact

Jenna Yeakle at manager@midtownfarmersmarket.org with questions.

Tuesday night special attractions will include free Zumba classes in partnership with the Midtown YWCA (June 4-Aug. 27 at 5:30pm), with Moon Palace continuing to host trivia, movie showings, and book clubs in their store.

On-street parking will be available on Minnehaha and Snelling avenues, as well as in the Arbeiter Brewing parking lot on market days. A bicycle rewards program is in the works with the Hub Bicycle Co-op: fill a six-punch card and enter a monthly drawing to receive \$25 of merchandise from the Hub.

Yeakle said, "At our peak in 2015-2016, the market served about 50,000 people per season. Last year, our attendance dropped in response to disruption from construction. We think our new, temporary location will be great—with excellent visibility on Minnehaha Ave."

The Midtown Farmers Market started 17 years ago and has been a pioneer in the neighborhood farmers' market movement ever since. "We made the mold for what has become standard practice across the state," Yeakle explained. "Those wooden tokens called Market Bucks? We

invented them. Come to the information table at the market and swipe your credit card in \$5 increments. You'll receive tokens that don't expire, in case you forgot to bring cash. Our market was also the first in the state to accept EBT and SNAP payments. Innovation and access to healthy food have been core components of the market since the beginning."

In the spirit of innovation, this year's market hopes to host 10 new-to-the-market vendors through its Try It! Program. A Try It! Program workshop will be held on May 18 for those interested. Yeakle said, "We're prioritizing applicants who have historically been marginalized and kept out of entrepreneurial opportunities. The goal of this program is to help emerging entrepreneurs explore whether or not becoming a farmers market vendor is a good fit for them. Becoming a Farmers Market vendor is hard work—requiring permits, licensing, insurance, specialized equipment, and marketing know-how. The Try It! Program helps prospective new vendors navigate all that. We waive application and stall fees for two market days for Try It! Program participants, and provide resources and mentoring as well. Call 612-724-7457 to register."

Reflecting on 44 years

Continued from page 4

and asked for his thoughts. His response surprised me. He said, "Tim, Willamette has been around since 1842, and I don't think it is going anywhere. The chance to go into business for yourself may only come around once in a lifetime. Try the business, and if it doesn't work out, you are welcome here. I look forward to hearing what you learn."

"I have never decided whether that was the best advice I ever got or the worst," Nelson commented. "It varied day to day for the last 44 years."

Nelson began as 50 percent partner in July 1977, and deRuyter-Nelson Publications was

born. The expansion into the Como neighborhood occurred in 1979.

The business was growing rapidly, and it was an exciting time.

"We started the typesetting business at that point, and it was an extremely fast-paced and technology-driven industry in those years," stated Nelson. The newspaper did the typesetting for several college newspapers, including the *Hamline Oracle* and *Bethel Clarion*, as well as the *Park Bugle*, *Equal Time*, *West 7th Community Reporter*, *Longfellow Messenger*, and *Grand Gazette*.

People excited about paper

"The community was very excited about the paper in those days, and we had a constant flow of involved citizens coming to the office to share things of interest or suggest

story ideas," said Nelson. "Along with those people who believed in the paper, we also had groups we were less than popular with."

A few bricks were thrown through the office windows at 600 N. Fairview (St. Paul) in response to endorsements of political candidates. During that same time, Nelson remembers when a columnist wrote an opinion piece that was critical of the organized church. "We had a religious group that went to our advertisers and told them that if they ran an ad, they would not support their business. We had many heated meetings with this group and it was not a pleasant time," he said.

Ironically, it is those same events that were not pleasant, such as vandalism and threats to their income base, that have also been the highlights.

"Any time a community is pas-

sionate about a topic, it's an exciting time," said Nelson. "Our goal is not to be loved by everyone. I have always considered the greatest compliment to be when we get complaints from both sides of a controversial issue saying that we are biased against them. That means we are providing a balanced story."

Reach across the river

In 1986, deRuyter Nelson expanded its reach across the river into Minneapolis and purchased the *Longfellow Messenger*. Soon after the purchase, they expanded into the Nokomis East neighborhood.

The *Messenger* was formed in March 1983 by community activists Maureen and Bill Milbrath as a project for their retirement years. deRuyter-Nelson Publications had performed the typesetting for years, and they were the logical ones to purchase the paper. Plus, there was

a family connection that they were not initially aware of. Bill had been a college fraternity mate of Nelson's dad and was the soloist at his parents' wedding.

Today, the *Longfellow Nokomis Messenger* has a circulation of 21,000 in the Longfellow and Nokomis areas of Minneapolis. It offers comprehensive home delivery to 17,000 homes and an additional circulation of 4,000 at high-traffic business, church, and school drop-off points. The *Messenger* has an estimated reach of over 50,000 readers.

The *Monitor* also has an estimated reach of over 50,000 residents in St. Paul's Midway, Como, and Merriam Park neighborhoods. With a circulation of 21,000, the *Monitor* offers comprehensive delivery to 16,000 homes and businesses and an additional circulation of 5,000 at high-traffic business, church, and school drop-off points.

Over the years, deRuyter-Nelson also operated a successful graphic design business, providing design and production services to large and small corporations and government agencies. Out of personal tragedy, they created A Place to Remember, a business that published and distributed resources worldwide for families experiencing a difficult pregnancy, premature birth, or death of an infant. A Place to Remember is closing after 25 years as deRuyter and Nelson retire.

The *Monitor* and *Messenger* gave up the longtime Iris Park Place office in St. Paul four years ago, and have operated with a virtual office since then. Other shifts at the time involved Nelson handling the newspaper production and deRuyter the editor responsibilities once again, while longtime editor and sales representative Denis Woulfe began focusing only on sales.

Evolving industry

The industry is changing, but

Continued on page 10

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Mayor Jacob Frey touts his first-year-in-office accomplishments

By JAN WILLMS

It has been a little over a year since Jacob Frey took over the reins as mayor of Minneapolis. But in that year, Frey has made some incremental changes.

Making affordable housing one of his priorities, he has worked on a new initiative, "Stable Homes, Stable Schools," built on a collaboration with private and public partners and designed to provide stable housing for Minneapolis public school students and families facing homelessness.

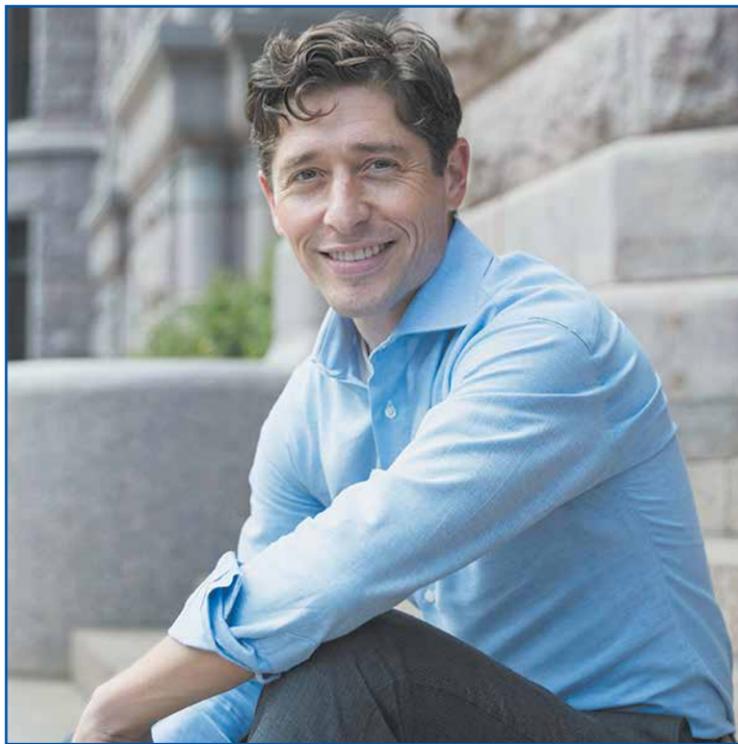
Longfellow schools Sullivan and Anishinaabe Academy are among the 15 schools participating in the program, which is a team effort with partners from the City, Minneapolis Public Schools, the Minneapolis Public Housing Authority and Hennepin County.

The program focuses on schools with the highest rates of homelessness.

"I included \$3.3 million in my first budget as mayor to support the program," Frey said. "In its first three years, we hope that the program can house up to 320 families and as many as 648 kids."

Frey said he hopes that this program will not just provide stable housing to families and kids that need it, but will also help stabilize Minneapolis public schools. "We can't expect our students to learn and succeed in the classroom if they don't have a room to rest their head at night," he said. "And our kids are worth the cost."

Another major issue the mayor has focused on is sexual assault. "Reporting sexual assault is an act of courage," he stated. "Survivors experience unspeakable trauma, and honoring their bravery requires we



Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey. (Photo provided)

make every effort to ensure investigations are handled with compassion and ultimately guided by the goal of delivering justice."

Frey and Police Chief Medaria Arradondo have set out to pursue a new policy to improve how sexual assault is handled in the city. "The policy is built on the pillars of compassion for victims, responsiveness to survivors and accountability," Frey explained.

Some of its specifics include victim-centered training for sexual assault investigations, trauma-informed interview techniques and implementing best practices for investigators to follow during a sexual assault case. Also, an in-house victim advocate who

works alongside investigators and assists survivors through investigation and legal process will be a part of the new policy.

"Our sexual assault policy holds our investigators to high standards," Frey noted, "but elected officials also need to be held accountable for giving Arradondo and our police department the resources they need to meet those high standards. Our police department receives more than 700 reports of rape alone per year. We only have eight investigators to handle all of these cases on top of the other crimes they're assigned."

Frey is hoping that adding more police officers to the department will help improve the relationship between residents and police, which has suffered

in the past.

"Adding more officers will help make Minneapolis safer, through a likely reduction in crime and a lower rate of incarceration," he said. He cited increased funding by President Barack Obama in 2009 for the Community Oriented Police Services (COPS). "Data has shown that jurisdictions which used the money to add officers saw a concurrent drop in crime without an increase in arrests."

"We also need to improve the response times for 911 calls in Minneapolis," Frey said, noting that it can sometimes take as long as 30 minutes for an officer to show up when some residents call 911.

"Hiring more officers will reduce the use of force," Frey continued. "Research has shown that over-scheduled, overworked and fatigued officers are more likely to use force in tense situations." He said studies have also shown that the number of complaints against a police department drops when cops are less tired. "The best cure for over-scheduling responsible for those problems is more staff."

"Chief Arradondo has repeatedly requested more officers," Frey said. "I trust Arradondo to shift the culture of the MPD and advance our goals around community policing. We should give him the resources he needs to do that."

In his first year, Frey also has stressed immigration issues. "Our immigrant communities have driven so many of the successes that have made Minneapolis an amazing city," he stated. "Whether it's our small businesses, our arts scene or our nonprofits, immigrants have made Minneapolis a place where people want to live, in-

vest and start businesses. As mayor, I have an obligation to do everything I can to make sure their talents and contributions stay in Minneapolis."

He said one of the accomplishments he is most proud of is outfitting every MPD squad car with 'Know-Your-ICE-Rights' placards that outline a person's rights as they pertain to ICE. "We will not let a lack of compassion at the highest levels of our government go unanswered in Minneapolis."

Frey added that this is also a key step in continuing to build trust between the police department and the community. "We are focused on keeping everyone in our city safe, not on immigration enforcement."

Celebrating the city is also on the mayor's mind. Doors Open Minneapolis is a celebration of the city and the spaces that make it unique. "On the weekend of May 18-19, venues and sites across our city will open their doors to the public for free, behind-the-scenes access," he said. More information can be found at doorsopenminneapolis.org.

Reflecting on his first year in office, Mayor Frey said he found his most challenging and complex issue to be the Hiawatha homeless encampment. "It forced us to confront the scope of both our housing crisis and the opioid epidemic," he said.

"From the start, our entire coalition—city leadership, tribes, Red Lake Nation, Metropolitan Urban Indian Directors—was committed to centering our actions on compassion and a response for human dignity. Our hope is that what we have done will have a lasting impact for the people we serve," Frey stated.

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Longfellow resident wins prestigious 2019 Bush Fellowship grant

By JAN WILLMS

Longfellow resident Heather Cusick engaged with the soil at a very early age. And today, as she has been named a 2019 Bush Fellow, she reflects on those early beginnings and how they have played a part in her life ever since.

"I grew up on a farm in Kansas," she said. "I had access to the natural sites and seasons, and all of that brought sustenance as well as a lot of the values I have. It set in motion my love of the natural world, my protection of the natural world and my concern for the natural world."

Cusick said that food and soil have been a part of her life in its entirety, and for the past ten years she has had an urban farm in South Minneapolis.

Cusick learned in March that she was one of 24 Bush Fellows, selected from a group of 684 individuals from Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota and the 23 native nations located within those states.

According to the Bush Foundation policy, Fellows receive up to \$100,000 to use from 12 to 24 months in pursuit of a learning experience that will help them develop leadership skills in their chosen field.

Cusick will start her grant in June, and it will continue for two years.

Reflecting on her upbringing, Cusick said food and growing food has a remarkable way of being a lovely language be-



During her two-year 2019 Bush Fellowship grant Longfellow resident Heather Cusick will focus on agriculture and climate advocacy. (Photo by Jan Willms)

served most recently as Beyond Coal Campaign Regional Campaign Director for the Central/Eastern Regions. Cusick said her work for the past ten years on a national climate campaign offered her the opportunity to work with teams in almost all of the states at one time or another.

"I worked with remarkable people all over the country who are focused to make a huge difference."

Cusick left the Sierra Club in 2018 and now works as a consultant for Climate Bridge Strategies.

Individuals apply to become a Bush Fellow. "You discuss a little bit of your leadership, your accomplishments, your dreams, and your visions," Cusick explained. "And then you refine the information through multiple steps. At the end of the process, there is a selection committee that selects the Fellows after a half-day of interviews. "For me, the process and the selection was a real honor and unique opportunity."

Cusick said that for years she has been working on issues, mentoring, training, and managing staff and volunteers. "This offers me a time to really pause and ask the question about what are some of the

areas I would like to develop as I move into this next phase of my interests. The fellowship will allow me the opportunity to transition into a climate and agriculture focus. This is really a wonderful opportunity to respectfully and intentionally enter this community."

During her career, Cusick has had a lifelong commitment to environmental protection and to communities that are most deeply impacted by climate-disrupting pollution.

With the Fellowship, she said she wants to focus on agriculture and climate advocacy. To accomplish this, she plans to study agricultural models around the world, deepen her equity and racial justice competency and seek coaching to build a stronger public voice.

"I can go to other locations and look at places that were early leaders in climate commitments, and places that produced food with low greenhouse gas emissions," Cusick said. "It will take me out of the country and expand my perspective. I also am rooting myself in the science, and as much technical urban and rural farming information, as possible..."

"The program is very flexible," Cusick continued. "I am doing a self-designed program." She said she will learn from local as well as international communities. "I am interested in expanding my exposure. I have so much to learn."

"The Bush Fellowship pro-

gram really benefits our region, and we are really fortunate," Cusick stated. "They do this every year, where they award an opportunity for someone to develop their leadership through these fellowships."

Individuals in a wide variety of fields have been selected to be a Bush Fellow. Cusick said the other Fellowship winners are an incredible group of people. "We will have a retreat together, which I am looking forward to," she explained, "and some additional opportunities to meet after that."

As the two years move forward, Cusick said she will document her progress and will file reflections throughout the project.

According to Cusick, being a Bush Fellow provides one with an opportunity that is unique and positive.

"Climate Science says we have to change a lot about how we transport ourselves, grow our food, and heat our homes, among other things. The great part is that there are a lot of people out there tracking a lot of healthy environmental practices. They are innovating every day."

"Our job," she continued, "is to make sure that they can do this work at scale and be supported and have obstacles removed. Our generation knows what our impact is. We have the opportunity and the responsibility to reduce this impact for future generations, and that is very, very important."

tween people. "The chance to be engaged with the soil and gardening and farming has been very much what has inspired me to focus on the protection of the environment," she said.

Cusick worked for 17 years for the Sierra Club, where she

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Morel Fundraiser scheduled May 10

The 3rd Annual Morel Feast Fundraiser to benefit the Firehouse Performing Arts Center is scheduled for Fri., May 10, 6pm, at The Hook & Ladder Theater, 3010 Minnehaha Ave. The all-inclusive dinner reservation is \$80.

Morel Feast guests will enjoy six fresh morel mushroom chef-prepared dishes, a feast of extras, live music by Parisota Hot Club within 'Electric Forest,' and an art installation by Rebel Minx. Complimentary craft beer pairings will be available from Fulton Brewing, and Brassfield Estate Winery will provide cider and a specially curated wine selection. Mike Kempenich will provide wild, foraged food, and Forest to Fork will present fresh morel mushrooms.

Tickets are now on sale via Eventbrite.

2019 Plant Swap scheduled May 18

The Longfellow Garden Club invites you to their 2019 Plant Swap to be held rain or shine on Sat., May 18. Look for signs on the west side of the Sanford Middle School parking lot, on 41st Ave. S. between 35th and 36th streets.

You can bring plants beginning at 11am. Swapping plants starts at noon. (Note: plants are mostly gone by 12:30pm.) All traces of the Swap will disappear by 1pm.

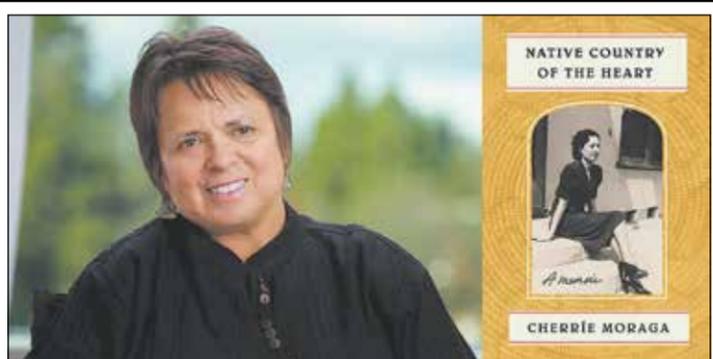
Swap rules: label what you bring, offer a small donation if you take plants but didn't bring any. Take home any of your plants that are left.

Two NA meetings a week at Faith

Narcotics Anonymous meetings are held at Faith Ev. Lutheran Church, 3430 E. 51st St., on Wednesdays at 7:30pm and Fridays at 7pm.

Lost N Found plans performance in May

Classics Lost N Found Theater, will perform the Oscar Wilde comedy "A Woman of No Importance" on May 10, 11, 17, and 18, at 7pm. Performances will be held at Lake Nokomis Presbyterian Church, 1620 E. 46th St. S. The play is directed by Greg Bastien, a Nokomis resident, and also features performances by several Nokomis-east and south Minneapolis residents. Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$8 for students and seniors.



New memoir presented at the Hook

Cherríe Moraga will present her new memoir "Native Country of the Heart" at the Mission Room at the Hook and Ladder Theater, 3010 Minnehaha Ave., on Thur., May 2, 7pm. The presentation is free and open to the public. The book is Moraga's coming-of-age memoir.

"Native Country of the Heart" is, at its core, a mother-daughter story. The mother, Elvira, was hired out as a child by her father to pick cotton in California's Imperial Valley. The daughter, Cherríe, is a brilliant, pioneering, queer Latina feminist. The story of these two women, and their people, is woven together in an intimate memoir of critical reflection and deep personal revelation.

As Moraga charts her mother's journey—from an impressionable young girl to battle-tested matriarch to old woman—she traces her self-discovery of her gender-queer body and lesbian identity, as well as her passion for activism. As her mother's memory fails, Moraga is driven to unearth forgotten remnants of a U.S. Mexican diaspora, its indigenous origins, and an American story of cultural loss. Poetically wrought and filled with insight into intergenerational trauma, "Native Country of the Heart" is a reckoning with white American history and a piercing love letter from a fearless daughter to the mother she will never lose.

At this special Twin Cities event, Moraga will be in conversation with local author Alexis Pauline Gumbs. Self-described as a "queer black troublemaker," Gumbs is a writer, scholar, and activist who currently teaches at the University of Minnesota.

Mother's Day Brunch planned May 12

The annual Mother's Day Brunch will be held on Sun., May 12, from 9:30am-12:30pm at the Danish American Center, 3030 W. River Pkwy. The breakfast includes an egg dish, æbleskiver (pancake balls), fruit, Danish pastries, rugbrød (pumpernickel) with cheese and salami, juice and coffee.

The cost for adults is \$11, children ages 5-11 are \$6, and under 5 are free. No reservations are needed—just come! For more information, call 612-724-7705.

NA group meets twice weekly

A Narcotics Anonymous group meets every Wednesday at 7:30pm, and every Friday evening at 7pm at Faith Evangelical Lutheran, 3430 E. 51st St. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Beer & Bible with Epworth set May 10

Whether you're new to the Bible, new to beer, or well-versed in both, you're invited to join the Beer & Bible group once a month at Merlin's Rest, 2601 E. Lake St. The group meets next on Wed., May 10, 6:30-8pm. All walks of life and faith welcome. Come and enjoy great discussion and

fellowship—beer is optional.

Can't make it on Wednesdays? Join the Bagel & Bible group, following the same curriculum, on the fourth Sunday of each month (May 28) at 9:15am at Epworth United Methodist Church, 3207 37th Ave. S.

Upcoming events at LS Healthy Seniors

Join Longfellow/Seward Healthy Seniors and Minneapolis Community Education for a monthly Senior Social/Health Talk on Tues., May 21 at 10:30am (doors open at 10am) at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, 2730 E. 31st St. The presentation is "Where Will You Live as You Age?" Where and how are you going to live as you get older? Bonnie Clark of the Senior Housing Guide will describe the different living options you can consider as you age, including reverse mortgages.

The last spring Alcohol Ink Painting class is planned for Wed., May 1, 1:30-3:30pm at Trinity Apartments, 2800 E. 31st St. We'll use brightly colored, fast-drying alcohol inks and different effects to create wonderful free-form designs on tiles or synthetic paper. There is a \$5 fee per class, which includes all materials. Class size is limited, so register by calling 612-729-5799.

A "Coloring Jam" (open coloring session) will be held Wed., May 22 from 1:30-3:30pm at Trinity Apartments. Come spend

Academy students take part in Final Four



Students Luke Von Arx (left) and Jacob McCabe from Minnehaha Academy were chosen to participate in intensive sports writing workshop during the NCAA Final Four weekend. (Photo provided)



Minnehaha Academy students Abigail Hobrough (left) and Annika Johnson two of only 12 to participate in the NCAA Final Four Sports Photography Workshop. (Photo provided)

The first week in April Minnehaha Academy journalism students Jacob McCabe, Luke Von Arx, Annika Johnson, and Abigail Hobrough were selected to participate in "Full Court Press," an intensive sports writing and photography seminar that covered the NCAA Final Four before the semifinal games on Apr. 5 at US Bank Stadium.

McCabe and Von Arx attended a panel discussion in the football press box with such journalism pros as Rachel Blount, reporter for the *Minneapolis StarTribune*; Pat Borzi, contributing writer for *MinnPost*, *The New York Times*, and ESPN; W. Glen Crevier, former *StarTribune* sports editor and past president of Associated Press Sports Editors; and Dana O'Neil, senior writer for *The Athletic* and past USBWA president. "The discussion included topics such as the influence of social media, the state of the job market, navigational skills in a 24/7 digital era, and survival tactics to deal with increasingly challenging deadlines. McCabe and Von Arx then attended team practices, press conferences, and the Reese's College All-Star Game.

Johnson and Hobrough were two of twelve total students that were selected to participate in the NCAA Final Four Sports Photography Workshop. They attended discussions on topics such as how to start your career, how to best cover the NCAA Men's Final Four and more. Then, they received photography critiques from sports journalism photography pros. They were outfitted with camera gear and given access to the Men's Final Four Practice Day and Reese's College All-Star game. They received guidance from Director of NCAA Photos Jamie Schwabero throughout the day as they photographed those events.

time coloring and relaxing! Healthy Seniors will provide a variety of coloring books, markers, crayons, and colored pencils. A class fee of \$4 covers all supplies. Registration is required by calling 612-729-5799.

Tai Chi Easy exercise classes

are held on Mondays from 10:30-11:30am at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church. Classes cost \$5/each, and discounts may be available for lower-income seniors. Tai Chi is a low-impact, slow-motion

Continued on page 9

In Our Community

Continued from page 8

exercise that's adaptable to individual abilities. Movements vary between sitting and standing and help improve breathing, coordination, flexibility, and strength. Registration is not required, just drop in and try it!

A free monthly Diabetes Support Group for adults will be held on Wed., May 8 from 1-2:30pm at Trinity Apartments. Anyone with Type 1 or Type 2 diabetes is invited to attend.

Additionally, we're looking for "Friendly Visitor" volunteers and volunteer drivers to help seniors live independently. Call Longfellow/Seward Healthy Seniors at 612-729-5799 or email info@LShealthyseniors.org for more information on activities, services or volunteer opportunities.

Faith Book Club meets May 4

Faith Lutheran's Book Club meets the first Saturday of every month at 10am at 3430 E. 51st St. "A Gentleman in Moscow" by Amor Towles is the planned title for May 4. Everyone is welcome.

Blind Fellowship meets May 11

Lutheran Blind Ministry meets the second Saturday of each month from 12-2 pm at Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church, 3430 E. 51st St. The next gathering is May 11 and will include lunch, devotions, and fellowship. For information or if you are interested in attending, call 612-729-5463.

Tapestry Folkdance Center names new Executive Director

Tapestry Folkdance Center welcomes Ann Mosey as the new Executive Director. Stepping into leadership at Tapestry, Ann says, "I am honored to join this amazing dance organization. I look forward to working together to build upon its strong foundation as we (literally) move into the future."

Ann comes to Tapestry Folkdance Center with extensive credentials in dance and arts administration. In addition to graduate and doctoral studies at Ohio State University, Arizona State University, and other schools, she was awarded dance scholarships with Merce Cunningham's company, and with the Alvin Ailey Dance Theater. Her professional development credits include the Shannon Leadership Institute and the Art of Leadership MAP. During her time in the Minnesota arts community, she has spent twelve years in non-profit arts administration, and founded two arts organizations. She served as the Executive Director of the Northfield Arts Guild for seven years and organized non-profit training for the Minnesota Council of Non-Profits in eleven counties in southeast Minnesota. Ann is also a certified Kripalu Yoga Instructor.

Tapestry Folkdance Center offers several weekly dance programs and annual dance events, and also rents studio space to

several groups. In selecting a new ED, the "primary criteria was to hire an experienced Executive Director with excellent communication and people skills. Ann exhibits these skills and much more. She's calm under pressure, highly organized, efficient, and knowledgeable about non-profit organizations," says Carole Wilson, Tapestry's President of the Board of Directors. "She has a lifetime of experience that will benefit Tapestry enormously, and she's a delight to work with. We're fortunate to have her as our new ED."

Tapestry Folkdance Center was started in 1983 by a group of dedicated folk dancers determined to provide opportunities for everyone to participate in the joy of dancing and music from around the world. A building on Minnehaha Avenue in Minneapolis was bought and remodeled in 1999 to provide a permanent place for the dances. Tapestry Folkdance Center has two dance studios with spring wood dance floors and holds weekly, biweekly and monthly dances for International Folkdance, Contra Dance, English Country Dance, and Ballroom Social Dances. Several weekend-long events are also offered during the year.

Dances feature live music, as well as DJ-chosen, recorded music. All dances are open to the public and offer instruction during the first portion of the dance. Tapestry Folkdance Center also rental space for several dance groups, including the Minnesota Tradition Morris Dancers, The Minnesota Chapter of the Royal Scottish Dance Society, and the Somali Museum Dancers.

GLBTAIP support group meets

A peer support group for GLBTAIP adults living with mental illness meets weekly on Saturdays, 1-2:30pm, at Living Table United Church of Christ, 3805 E. 40th St. This free support group is sponsored by NAMI Minnesota (National Alliance on Mental Illness) and led by trained facilitators who are also in recovery. For information call David at 612-920-3925 or call 651-645-2948.

AA and NA meets

Every Monday night there is an AA meeting at 7pm at Minnehaha Communion Lutheran Church (4101 37th Ave. S.), and 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.

Gamblers Anonymous meets Wednesdays

Gamblers Anonymous meets Wednesdays from 6-7pm in the Hope Room at Living Table Church, 3805 E. 40th St. Anyone with a desire to stop gambling is welcome.

Growing tomatoes, peppers, potatoes

The Longfellow Garden Club will hold its monthly meeting and its silent auction on Wed., May 8, 7pm, at Epworth Unit-

ed Methodist Church, 3207 37th Ave. S. The April program was rescheduled to May because of the snow storm.

Tomatoes, peppers, and potatoes are all related! Despite their differences, they still share some growing requirements and pests. In this presentation by Annie Klodd, you will learn some of the most delicious, interesting, and easy-to-grow varieties for Minnesota, gain tips on growing them successfully, and learn how to overcome common problems. You will leave feeling well-equipped to grow lots of delicious vegetables this year. Klodd is a UMN Regional Extension Educator for fruit and vegetable production.

May will also the Garden Club's Silent Auction, its major fundraiser of the year! On this night, members and attendees bring in garden-related objects for the auction and everyone bids in typical silent auction fashion. The auction funds are used to replenish the speaker budget. Everyone who enjoys the garden club, member or not, is encouraged to donate an item or two. All are welcome to join in the bidding fun to make the auction a success! Drop off auction items by 6:50pm.

Nokomis Healthy Seniors plan events

Nokomis Healthy Seniors will host a Health and Enrichment program on "Health Benefits of Essential Oils" on Thur., May 2 at 11am. It will be held at Nokomis Healthy Seniors inside Bethel Lutheran Church, 4120-17th Ave. S. Free; all are welcome, and no reservation is required.

A Health and Enrichment program, "The Aging Bladder: An Owner's Manual," will be presented by Paula Fedunok, PA-C, Department of Urology, U of M on Wed., May 8 at 1:30pm. It will be held at Nokomis Square Co-op, 5015-35th Ave. S. Free; all are welcome, and no reservation is required.

Join Nokomis Healthy Seniors for "Lunch and a Movie" on Thur., May 9. Share a meal at 11:15am, then watch the movie "A Man Called Ove," in their own theatre at Bethel Lutheran Church. All are welcome, but reservations are required (612-729-5499); the \$5 fee must be prepaid.

Nokomis Healthy Seniors will celebrate its 25th Anniversary at an Open House on May 16 from 11am-1pm inside Bethel Lutheran Church. The celebration is free, but RSVPs are requested by calling 612-729-5499. The event will include volunteer recognition, volunteer and client testimonials, a special anniversary video, a light lunch, ad 25th-anniversary cakes, and entertainment. Participants will be able to reminisce, share memories, and look at old photos and newsletters, as well as meet with current staff, volunteers, board members, as well as friends from years past. Learn something new about the NHS and how they support seniors in staying independent in their own homes.

Join Nokomis Healthy Seniors for "Lunch and Bingo" on Thurs., May 30. Share a meal at 11:15am, followed by a spirited game of Bingo. All are welcome, but reservations required by calling 612-729-5499.



Millworks Lofts is one of the more than 100 Minneapolis sites on display during Doors Open Minneapolis on May 18-19. The interior of Millworks Lofts showcases the timber posts and beams from the old factory along with high ceilings and polished concrete floors. Loft features include private patio/balconies, washers and dryers in every unit, large walk-in closets, kitchen bars/islands, stainless steel appliances and quartz countertops. The southern shed where Lake Street Sash and Door used to store its windows and doors now houses a spacious community room, fitness room, yoga studio, leasing office, 20 indoor parking spaces, a bike storage area, individual storage lockers, and two apartments. (Photo submitted)

Doors Open Mpls scheduled May 18-19

Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey will join architectural, civic, business, and non-profit leaders from across the city to launch Doors Open Minneapolis (Doors Open). The weekend-long civic celebration, Sat.-Sun., May 18-19, will provide visitors a behind-the-scenes look at 110+ unique venues across Minneapolis. The event is free and open to the public.

The diverse venues range from historical buildings presenting stories about the past to the newest buildings showcasing how they are leading the city into the future. Visitors will be able to tailor their Doors Open experiences by visiting sites organized around nine different themes: Arts & Cultural, Business & Commerce, Civic, Education, Historic, Infrastructure & Sustainability, Innovation, Made in Minneapolis, and Sacred Spaces.

The closest Messenger sites include:

- **Minneapolis Rowing Club, 2968 W. River Pkwy.** - Visit the Minneapolis Rowing Club and tour the architectural award-winning boathouse, discover the club's history dating back to 1877 and learn about the rowing programs at the club today. Adventurous visitors can experience rowing in the club's training barge on the scenic Mississippi River.
- **Millworks Lofts, 4041 Hiawatha Ave. S.** - Millworks is an affordable housing community providing 78 amazing homes to a variety of residents. Tour to see an inspirational example of historic renovation, learn what stories landmark buildings can tell, and witness how providing clean, safe, well-maintained homes can make a difference for everyone.
- **Pioneers and Soldiers Memorial Cemetery, 2945 Cedar Ave.** - Visit the city's oldest existing cemetery! Tour the caretaker's cottage (built in 1871), go on a smartphone history hunt and chat with volunteers. On Sun., May 19, at 1pm, 2pm, and 3pm, see "Hirath: Walking the Long Field at Layman's," a short three-part play written by award-winning playwright Cynthia Veal Holm.
- **Upper Post Flats, 6210 Bloomington Rd., St Paul** - View these historic 1870s buildings before they get rehabilitated into affordable housing! Learn more about site's history as part of historic Fort Snelling, and the process of saving and redeveloping historic properties.

The American Institute of Architects (AIA) helped coordinate the venues and is one of several sponsors for the event. "The rich history of design and architecture of Minneapolis connects people to the city's past while positioning it for the future," said Michael Kisch, AIA, AIA Minneapolis president. "We look forward to sharing the stories embedded in Minneapolis' buildings, by making them accessible at Doors Open," Kisch added.

Almost 1000 volunteer greeters will be needed at participating venues of the event to ensure a great experience.

To learn more about Doors Open, view the list of participating venues, and for volunteer sign up visit: www.doorsopenminneapolis.org.

A Health and Enrichment program on "Chiropractic Care" is planned for Thur., June 6 at 11am. It will be held at Nokomis Healthy Seniors inside Bethel Lutheran Church. The program is free, and all are welcome. No reservations are required.

Ancia to give free concert May 12

The Ancia Saxophone Quartet will present a free concert at the Weisman Art Museum, 333 E. River Pkwy. on the campus

of the University of Minnesota, on Sun., May 12, at 4pm. Two members of the quartet live in East Nokomis.

NENA given Health Heroes award

The Minneapolis Health Department recognized the Nokomis East Neighborhood Association (NENA) as Local Public Health Heroes for exemplifying the Health Department goal of Healthy Weight

Continued on page 10

In Our Community

Continued from page 9

and Smoke-Free Living.

The organization was nominated by Kristen Klingler who emphasized that NENA works hard to engage and empower under-represented residents, including low-income households, renters, and people of color. You have promoted smoke-free housing policies and resources to landlords,

launched a mobile grocery stop, hosted culturally specific cooking classes, promoted healthy beverage options, and much more.

The Local Public Health Heroes Award ceremony was held Apr. 17 in the Minneapolis City Hall Rotunda. Gretchen Musicant, Commissioner of Health, emceed the ceremony. Mayor Jacob Frey made a few opening remarks and certificates were presented.

Better Futures is a grant recipient

Better Futures Minnesota, 2620 Minnehaha Ave., was announced as a recipient of Greater Twin Cities United Way grant to advance its mission of building pathways toward prosperity and equity for all. Operating grants, available July 1, 2019, will fund holistic solutions and innovative ideas from 95 local nonprofit

organizations to disrupt inequity in the areas of educational success, household stability and economic opportunity for people experiencing poverty in the Twin Cities region.

Grants to the 95 organizations will be renewed annually for two additional years (three years total) based on the availability of unrestricted funds and each organization's performance against key goals.

Submit your news

If you are an organization located in the Longfellow Nokomis Messenger delivery area, you can submit your event, special program, or noteworthy news to us for consideration. Submit your item by email to news@longfellownokomisessenger.com. The deadline for the next issue is Mon., May 20 for the May 30 issue.

Reflecting on 44 years

Continued from page 5

deRuyter and Nelson still believe newspapers are part of the fabric of neighborhoods.

"I think community newspapers are vital to the neighborhoods," observed deRuyter. "We have watched so many community newspapers die so that the community journalism movement in the Cities is just a tiny fraction of what it used to be. I don't think there is a single community that is better off because their community newspaper could not survive."

"But I also think that the residents and the businesses don't truly

grasp the importance of the cohesiveness that the neighborhood press provides," deRuyter added. "If it is used properly, the community newspaper can be the place where things 'come together' in one place; where you can get an overview of the things going on; where you can learn about the unique businesses that are housed there; where you can learn about the neighbor who has faced a challenge, or who has overcome one."

deRuyter asked, "Where is that place if your community newspaper dies?"

Nelson has also mulled over the changing face of journalism over the past four decades that he's

been involved in it.

"I think that over the years, the papers lost some of the fire that made them more interesting in the early days. The stories became more routine, and there is no way the timeliness of a monthly publication can compete with the immediacy of news spreading on social media chat groups or blogs. The need for a community newspaper in a neighborhood was diluted."

But, Nelson quickly added, "That is not to say that I don't think that there is a need for a community newspaper or that the concept is dead. As a matter of fact, it may be more important now than ever given the fact that

the daily papers are struggling to find their niche and are cutting budgets to compete in the electronic age. Social media does not even attempt to be objective, and although the media is constantly being accused of bias, I assure you we always attempt to bring the community both sides of an issue."

What's next?

Nelson and deRuyter will officially retire on May 1, 2019, when they pass ownership of the *Messenger* and *Monitor* to Tesha M. Christensen. (See article on page 1)

What's next for these longtime news hounds?

After balancing his newspa-

per business with the artwork that he picked back up 18 years ago, deRuyter plans to focus on his art business (www.calsportfolio.net). In addition to painting, he offers various classes and workshops. He's not leaving the *Monitor* or *Messenger* completely, either, as he'll be providing bookkeeping services to the new owner.

Nelson will continue selling a support book he wrote for fathers who have experienced the death of an infant through miscarriage, stillbirth, or early infant death. The book, "A Guide For Fathers-When A Baby Dies," is in its seventh printing.

Classifieds

Messenger

Want ads must be received by the Messenger by May 20 for the May 30 issue. Call 651-917-4183 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, PO Box 168, Osseo, MN 55369. Want ads must be mailed to the *Messenger* before **May 20 for the May 30 issue**. Ad copy can be e-mailed to denis@longfellownokomisessenger.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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Dowling Community Garden annual plant sale, Saturday, May 11, 2019, 10:00a.m.-1:00p.m., 3901 46th Avenue S., Minneapolis. Healthy plants at great prices! 5-19

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Changing 'business as usual'

Hennepin County's first African American commissioner Angela Conley is a lifelong Southside resident with innovative ideas on how to bring more diverse voices into government

Editor's note: This is the first in a two-part series.

By TESHA M. CHRISTENSEN

Angela Conley has yearned to be a Hennepin County Commissioner for 20 years so that she had the power to make changes to the system she worked within.

On Jan. 7, 2019, that dream came true.

The lifelong Southside resident was sworn in as a county commissioner for District 4 and became the county's first Black commissioner in 166 years.

"Being in this level of leadership now has opened my eyes to seeing how the system is set up in a way that perpetuates disparities, that limits people's abilities to really live their best lives," said Conley.

She's working to shift the narrative and move into a holistic approach for county business. Conley now chairs the health and human services committee, drawing from her years of experience working in that field.

"I feel this obligation to change systems to work better for people," remarked Conley.

That could be anything from real estate services to tax forfeiture to housing and homelessness.

In addition to being the first African American commissioner, Conley is the first Black female commissioner and is one of two new diverse voices on the previously all-white Hennepin County board. Joining her this year is another woman of color, Irene Fernando, a Filipino-American in District 2. With their election, five of the seven-member board are women.

Race, equity, work

Bringing more diverse voices into the county is a priority for Conley, who campaigned to create a Race Equity Advisory Council.

"Before I was elected, the county would come up with ideas on their own on how to reduce disparities. Well, unless you have people of color and those directly affected by those disparities guiding the discussion you're not going to get anywhere. You're not going to make any progress," said Conley.

She envisions that a coun-

cil would have a place at the table to inform the board on how disparities can be reduced on issues such as lowering the number of people of color being arrested to the overwhelming number of people of color who are part of the child protection system.

Inspired by how she saw the Hennepin County Community Advisory Council on Adult Mental Health operate while she served on it, Conley believes that the needle can be moved on an issue when you have many people with a range of lived experiences giving input on a topic about missing pieces and gaps.

Thus far, Conley has met with the county's new Disparity Reduction Director to learn what's being done there, and what form the Race Equity Advisory Council could take.

"Disparity reduction has to start internally first," she observed. She's glad to see that the new composition of the county board finally reflects the composition of the communities being served and direct-line county staff. Part of what drove her to run for office is that those at the top didn't look like her.

"I think we sent a very strong message to the status quo Nov. 6 that folks want to see diversity in leadership," said Conley. "County leadership can function differently now. We've got new voices with various backgrounds and experiences."

She believes that having those voices on the board can inform how policy changes going forward.

"It's changed the conversation," Conley said. "It's changed the narrative. It's changed 'business as usual.'"

Going directly to the source

For Conley, the first quarter of her first term in office has been spent meeting people, being out in the community, touring homeless shelters and the jail, and talking to people directly impacted by issues she's concerned about. "That's how you'll see my leadership continue," she promised, "going directly to the source."

"We're pushing back against outdated ideas and really trying



Angela Conley (center) is Hennepin County's first African American commissioner, and she's staffed her office with other women of color who are working on racial equity issues. On the left is Policy Director Cacje Henderson and on the right is District Outreach and Scheduler Cheniqua Johnson. (Photo courtesy of Chris Juhn)

Southside resident Angela Conley campaigned as a Black woman, and even her logo identified her as someone who would bring a diverse voice to the Hennepin County Board.

She continues to focus on diversity and racial equity in a variety of ways—not the least which is staffing her office with other African American women.

Cacje Henderson, Policy Director

Cacje Henderson was born and raised in South Minneapolis and is the oldest of seven children. She completed her undergraduate studies at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities and is an alumna of the Women's Campaign School at Yale University. She began her

political career in the grassroots movement as an economic justice organizer and has gone on to work for a variety of elected officials including U.S. Senator Amy Klobuchar (DFL-MN), Gubernatorial Candidate Erin Murphy (DFL-MN) and most recently as the Senior Policy Aide to Minneapolis City Council-member Jeremiah Ellison (DFL-MN). She commits to building power in low-income communities and communities of color through local policy, and is looking forward to continuing this work as Policy Director.

Cheniqua Johnson, District Outreach and Scheduler

Cheniqua Johnson was born and raised in Worthington, MN. She is a first-generation, TRIO college graduate. She received a

bachelor's degree in family social science from the University of Minnesota - Twin Cities College of Education and Human Development. She comes to the 4th District of Hennepin County from the Office of Congressman Keith Ellison, where she served as his Legislative Correspondent. In addition, she has spent the last five years in public service having previously served for the Office of Senator Al Franken (DFL-MN), Governor Mark Dayton (DFL-MN), Senator Richard Durbin (D-IL), University of Minnesota's Roy Wilkins Center for Human Relations and Social Justice, and the City of Saint Paul. Now, she is ready to amplify voices and serve the most diverse district in the county as the District Outreach Coordinator & Scheduler.

to get innovative in how we approach issues."

Bail reform is one place where Conley thinks changes could be made for lower-level, low-risk offenses. "What would it look like to have a system that didn't hold you if you couldn't afford to get out?" asked Conley.

She intends to be mindful of what the ripple effects are of decisions the county makes and recognizes that a 1% increase in property taxes might push a resi-

dent out of a home.

Equity through transit

As someone who didn't have a car until she was 23, Conley is a fan of transit and heard from constituents on both sides of light rail during her campaign. She's advocating for the Rapid Bus Transit D Line along the Route 5 corridor in the fourth district on Chicago and Emerson/Fremont avenues.

She pointed out that the D Line is a modern mode of bus transport that uses technology to keep lights green so the buses

can move people from place to place quicker.

"That will bring transit equity to an area that typically doesn't have it," stated Conley. "The 5 is the highest ridership route in the state. It's always crowded. There are safety concerns. And it runs through four of the seven commissioner districts. It runs through two of the poorest neighborhoods in Minneapolis, too. Bringing Bus Rapid Transit or the D Line would bring access to 200,000 jobs."

(Read part two in the June edition of the Messenger.)

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East Nokomis actress co-directs her first film at age 10

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

Jocelyn Sanchez attended her first acting class less than a year ago. Since then, she's signed with five talent agencies and been cast in 16 short films, commercials, and TV pilots.

Her original script, called "Lost and Found" was recently accepted by the 50 Fifty Reel Challenge, an international short film competition and festival for kids. To jump-start the filming process, Jocelyn ran a successful GoFundMe Campaign and reached her goal of \$1,000. She posted her casting notice on TC Cinematics, and 50+ actors submitted their headshots and resumes. She eventually had a cast and crew of more than 60 people who volunteered their time and talent to be part of her film. Jocelyn oversaw a four-day shoot at four different locations. She made shot lists for 21 scenes, assisted with editing, co-directed and starred in the film. She came up with her production company name and designed her logo.

Jocelyn Sanchez is 10 years old. Talking about her whirlwind year, Sanchez said, "When I told my mom I wanted to give acting a try, she took me seriously. I started as an 'extra,' when you're on film but you don't have any



Actress Jocelyn Sanchez said, "I've fallen in love with acting. I love being in front of the camera, and the adrenaline that comes with it. I'm naturally good at memorization. I memorize the lines I'm given, and then I talk to my mom about how I think the character is feeling." (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

lines. I didn't feel very confident in the beginning, to be honest."

Sanchez has grown in both experience and confidence in a very short time. "I think that my background in karate has helped me," she said. "I've earned a brown belt at Kitsune Karate, which is also in the East Nokomis neighborhood. Karate has taught me a lot of self-discipline—when to use my strength, and when to back off. I've been trained to listen carefully to my sensei (teacher) and now, in the same way, I listen to my directors."

Sanchez has been writing stories since she was old enough to write, and the chance to enter the film festival was a dream come true for her. "You have to choose a genre to enter the film competition," Sanchez said. "The film I made is in the genre of sadness/friendship. It's about two sisters who lose their parents in a car crash. They're sent to live with a relative who decides to separate them, raising one herself and sending the other into foster care." Sanchez plays the part of the older sister, and her real-life sister Maya plays the part of the younger one. The film will be shown on the big screen at the New Hope Cinema Grill Aug. 8, 2019.

The Sanchez family has lived

in East Nokomis since 2006. Jocelyn attends the International Spanish Language Academy, a charter elementary school located in Hopkins, where she is in 5th grade.

"Sometimes I wonder how my life will look in five years if I stay with acting," Sanchez said. "What will I be like? How will I

change? Will I end up living in Los Angeles, or in Atlanta—now the second largest market in the US for commercials, television, and film. I wouldn't have been able to do any of this without the support of my family, my directors, and my friends. Everyone has been so supportive. I've been very lucky."

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We wish to thank the community for allowing us to build upon the legacy founded by Bill and Maureen Milbrath nearly 37 years ago. We hope you will continue to show the same level of support to Tesha M. Christensen as she takes over the newspaper and makes her own imprint in the years ahead. With gratitude - Calvin deRuyter and Tim Nelson, Messenger Publishers



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