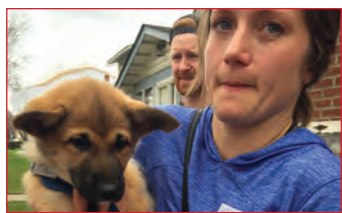




Progress after
2+ year struggle
with Park and Rec

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Reuse,
Recycle,
and...Rescue

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Local author
Eric Dregni
releases his 17th book

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Longfellow
Nokomis

Messenger



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Twenty years later South High still waits for better athletic facility

Parents, students point to unsafe conditions at Barnard Field and question why the district hasn't fixed the problems

By TESSA M. CHRISTENSEN

Minneapolis Public Schools Adult Basic Education (ABE) and Transition Plus (T+) are getting a new building along E. Lake St. while South High School students continue to wait for safe athletic facilities. And, some parents and students don't think that's right.

Parents United For South High (PUSH) and the school's site council are pressing the school district to make good on promises it made in 1995 to update Barnard Field.

"For 20 years and eight superintendents, MPS has known that the athletic fields and practice space are undersized, unsafe and inequitable compared to other schools in the area," stated site council co-chair Scott Schluter, who started the blog, mps-needsaplan.weebly.com, to keep people informed.

The 26-year Ericsson resident sends one daughter to South High and watched another graduate from there in 2015.

His daughter Emma Schluter is captain of the soccer team and races on the track and field team.

"We are not asking for a grand new stadium," said E. Schluter, who is one of 1,800 students at South High, the district's largest high school. "What we want are facilities that address the needs of our student population, current and incoming.



About 100 people stood in bone-chilling temperatures in January 2017 on South High's Barnard Field to rally for fixes to the deteriorating field. According to Emma Schluter, the field isn't safe for either soccer or track and field, the two sports she plays. (Photo submitted)

More importantly, facilities that meet regulations, are safe, and can compare to the other Minneapolis Public Schools. We, as students, want facilities that we are proud of; that we can proudly say: 'Yeah, I go to South!'"

Parents and students are frustrated that the district's plans

for a \$29 million, 87,000-square-foot educational building at E. Lake St. and 21st Ave. would block the ability of the South High to expand and to reposition its football field north/south. They say they were stunned in July 2016 when they discovered the district wasn't planning to

use the land it had acquired for South High.

The 1995 plans for the field turned it to a more playable north/south direction, and practice space was added on the west side of the field.

"Why the district has to put any building that permanently

blocks any improvement to the largest school population in Minneapolis and without input from the school's administration, staff, students and the South High community is disappointing and wrong," said Scott.

Unsafe playing fields

The main issue for players, according to E. Schluter, is safety.

"It does not seem right that it takes such a long time and such persistence for the district to do anything when the facilities are not safe," stated E. Schluter. "Safety should be something that the district provides and maintains without the need for lots of attention to be drawn to it before they do something. We want to be proud in our school, in our facilities, and be able to grow our sports and the sense of community it can build within both the school and the surrounding neighborhoods."

It is difficult to play on the field in its current condition, pointed out E. Schluter. The width of the field is the biggest issue for her. "It is not a wide field, which changes the style of soccer that can be played," she explained. "More significantly, the track, along with drains and concrete, sit directly off of the field—no more than a couple of feet from the lines. On the north

Continued on page 5

For 17-year-old skateboard shop owner, business comes first

By STEPHANIE FOX

Skateboarder Max Kuker learned his sport when he was just 6-years old, skating California parking garages, riding with his father on his dad's big board. Kuker was a natural and by the time he was 12, he had gotten interested in downhill boarding, where skateboarders speed down steep hills, dodging cars along the way.

There wasn't much of a downhill skateboarding scene in the Twin Cities, then. Downhill skateboarders couldn't find a lot of what they needed at the existing local shops, most of which catered to street skaters. And, Minnesota doesn't have a lot of serious downhill opportunities, with the closest good hills a few hours drive away. "But, it's the community that makes Minnesota a great place for all skateboarding,"



Kuker said.

Kuker's father began encouraging him to start a skate-

board enterprise. John Kuker had owned successful recording studios in California and Minnesota

Sponsored rider Nicolas Sofai (seated left), MXKskate Shop owner Max Kuker (standing) and Oliver Hersey, a shop employee. (Photo by Stephanie Fox)

and knew how to run a business. His grandparents ran an insurance company. John thought that young Max could operate a company, as well.

The younger Kuker began by running a small online skateboard business that stocked small items and a forum where skateboarders could exchange ideas, but the idea of opening a brick and mortar store seemed more than he could handle. After all, he was only 14-years old and in high school.

And then, his father—his mentor—died at only 40-years old.

For a while, Kuker kept running his online store, buying and selling, often while in class, something that didn't endear him with his teachers. But, he kept putting off expanding his business.

"And then something happened," he said. "I remember waking up on Mar. 3, 2016, and saying to myself, 'I have to do it.' I had a crappy online store, and the landlord next to my house had space to rent. I said, yes."

His father's memory became his inspiration.

Within three months, the new store, MXKskate Shop (MX for his first name and K, his last initial) opened, seed money provided by his grandparents. Now, at age 17, he's still too young to legally sign contracts, so Kuker's grandmother, Pam Deal, became

Continued on page 2

MXKskate

Continued from page 1

his business partner. "She's 20 percent, I'm 80 percent," he said.

Kuker had a unique vision for the store. He'd experienced a less than friendly reception at some stores and wanted to offer something different. He wanted to create a welcoming place for all skateboarders, even beginners, and to carry more product lines for downhill fans as well as street skateboarders.

"I want to get people into the sport. I want to offer someplace where the kids can come in and ask questions and a place where we can answer them," he said. It wasn't about making a lot of money, he insisted. It was about creating community.

Kuker dropped out of high school to concentrate on the business, planning to get a GED sometime in the future. He tried online high school classes, but they didn't work out.

"I really hated school," he said. "It wasn't valuable, and nothing I was learning helped me in what I wanted to do. Actual life taught me things that were of more value." And, he said, he had to focus on the business. He noted that none of his employees have college degrees.

When the store first opened, Kuker hired two of his high school friends to work in the store, part time. They were getting some business from nearby South High School, bringing walk-in customers and the curious. But the storefront wasn't adequate, and he started looking for another location.

Then, one of his employees noticed a space for rent on the corner of Lake St. and 36th Ave., the former home of East Lake Electronics. Kuker grabbed it. The place needed a lot of renovation, Kuker said, costly, but necessary. "We did a lot of interior work. We re-did the ceiling. All the walls needed a complete painting. It was pretty bad." The store's interior was painted in the theme colors of black and white, with the MXKskate Shop logo decorating the back wall, right behind the racks of boards for sale. The new shop opened in April 2016, just in time for the summer season.

"Compared to the other location, Lake Street is treating us right," he said.

Many of his customers are part of the 18 to 23 year old demographic but lately, he said, he's been seeing a lot more younger riders interested in downhill, especially 13 and 14-year olds. "The

kids are growing into it," he said.

Kuker is now spending most of his time at his store. "Owning a business means I don't have much time to skate," he said. Instead, he's focused on sponsoring riders—he has 20 from around the country—and making 'cool videos,' which he distributes and shows on the big screen television at MXKskate Shop and on their Facebook page.

He keeps up with market trends by talking to patrons, asking every customer he sees to tell him what they want and need.


So far, the shop is breaking even. He pays his four employees and his bills, he says, but not himself. "I don't want to take cash from the business." He makes a little money finding and flipping old skateboards, acquiring them at cheap prices online or at garage sales and reselling them.

His heroes are not skateboarders, they're family. "They're all good at what they do," he said. "My mother just opened a vintage store on W. 7th in St. Paul. They are my inspiration for running my business."

"And, the Midwest has an insane skateboarding community. The quality of the people is high. Everyone wants to help each other. They want to help teach the kids. And, it's a great place to find people to skate with." In places like California, with great hills, it's all about ego, he said. "Here, it's about having fun."



The store's interior, at 3543 E. Lake St., is painted in the theme colors of black and white, with the MXKskate Shop logo decorating the back wall, right behind the racks of boards for sale. (Photo by Stephanie Fox)




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Transition Longfellow is an all-volunteer group of neighbors who host several activities with the goal of engaging the community in a positive, local response to climate change. Their activities focus on reducing energy use, promoting more food growing, and creating a more socially connected and resilient community. Anyone can participate in Transition Longfellow activities. For more information about the activities each month, visit www.transitionlongfellow.org.

Climate change

Part 2 of the Series: When Climate Change Comes Home – “Here Comes the Rain,” Thur., May 18, 6:30pm, at Longfellow Park Building, 3435 36th Ave. S.

Climate change is already affecting Minnesota, and one of the changes we have seen is fewer spring showers and more mega-rain events (6" to 8" of rain covering more than a 1,000 square miles). These damaging rain events have increased sharply since 2010.

In May, the Climate Conversation series will explore actions individuals and communities can take to prepare for and minimize damage from heavy rain and flooding. Speakers include Kelly Moriarty, City of Minneapolis engineer, talking about steps the City is taking to improve storm sewers and flood control; Professor Pat Huelman, U of M, with new technologies to protect your home from water intrusion; and permaculturalist Rob Czernik and master water steward, Tara

Transition Longfellow

By LESLIE MACKENZIE

Spring heralds Chard Your Yard installations of 24 new beds



Chard Your Yard will be adding 24 additional garden beds to neighborhood yards this year. (Photo provided)

Hanlon-Nevins, with tips on water management strategies that can be used in city yards. The session ends with a community discussion.

More information about this series, which is cosponsored by the Longfellow Community Council Environment Committee, can be found on the group's website under "Preparing for a Changing Climate."

Chard Your Yard Garden Install – volunteers needed

A resilient community is one that can feed itself. While it may not be possible to meet 100% of a city's food needs locally, it's

easy to increase the amount of food grown here with the addition of home and community gardens. That's the goal of the Chard Your Yard garden installation program, which will be adding 24 additional garden beds to neighborhood yards this year. There are three opportunities to volunteer. Sign-up at transitionlongfellow.org.

- Sun., May 7, 6pm: Prebuild the garden boxes. No experience necessary, but a cordless drill is helpful.
- Sat., May 13: Join a garden bed installation team. Group breakfast at 8:30am, garden installations from 9:30am to 2:30pm, then a celebration meal.
- Sat., May 13: Volunteers are also needed to help prepare food. Food donations are welcome.

This event is co-sponsored

by the Longfellow Community Council Environment Committee.

Book group

Climate Preparedness Book/Discussion Group, Wed., May 3, 6:30pm at Moon Palace Books, 3260 Minnehaha Ave.; and Wed., May 17, 6:30pm at Lake Coffee House, 3223 E. Lake St. (new location).

The book group is reading "Making Home: Adapting Our Homes and Lives to Settle in Place" by Sharon Astyk. This month's topic is staying warm and keeping cool. The chapter will be read out loud on May 3 and discussed on May 17. Theresa Rooney facilitates the group.

Movie Night

Movie Night, Fri., May 19, 6:30pm potluck, 7:15pm movie, at Bethany Lutheran, 3901 36th Ave. S.

Movie night is a great way to learn about Transition Towns and gather with friends and neighbors. Share a meal and watch a movie, followed by dis-

ussion. Check the group's website for updated information about the movie.

Northern Spark

Every year, tens of thousands of people attend Northern Spark, the premiere overnight art event in the Twin Cities. This year it's taking place in locations along the Green Line, Sat., June 10 (9pm) and June 11 (to 5:30am). The theme is Climate Chaos / Climate Rising. Seventy artists and arts groups will be involved, including several members of Transition Longfellow.

Longfellow neighbors are invited to participate in creating the TransitionNOW! art project (details at the Transition Twin Cities website, transitiontwincities.org). Join Transition folks and community members at a fun and free Community Day event, May 20, 6-9pm, at the Minnesota Center for Book Arts (1011 Washington Ave. S.). Children and families are welcome.

- For those who can attend Northern Spark, pick up a free T-shirt and customize it with the help of volunteer screen printers.
- Work with acclaimed book artist, Regula Russelle, preparing tiny books for distribution at Northern Spark.
- Help make leaves that will be part of the Grove of Life tree installation in Lowertown, St. Paul.



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125 First Ave. NW, PO Box 168
Minneapolis MN 55369
651-645-7045

Publishers:

Calvin deRuyter, Tim Nelson

Managing Editor:

Calvin deRuyter, editorial@deruyternelson.com

Advertising:

Denis Wouffe (651-917-4183);
denis@deruyternelson.com

Production:

Tim Nelson

Contributing Writers:

Tesha M. Christensen, Jan Willms, Jill Boogren,
Matthew Davis, Margie O'Loughlin, Loren Green

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Letters to the Editor

MN House bill will double transit deficit

To the Editor:

The transportation proposal passed by the Minnesota House will have serious impacts to thousands of Minnesotans who depend on transit every day. The House Transportation Omnibus Bill contains cuts to Metro Transit that will balloon our budget deficit from \$74 million over the next two years to \$140 million. At a time when the state has a \$1.6 billion budget surplus, legislators are considering cuts that will force a 40 percent reduction in basic bus service.

This bill specifically harms multiple populations for which

transit is a daily necessity. There are many people in our region who are transit-dependent for whom taking a car to work, school or for errands is not an option. Half of local bus riders in Minneapolis and St. Paul don't have a driver's license, while 58% don't have access to a car. In addition to the steep service cuts, the House bill requires fare increases well above the increases already under consideration, effectively pricing those transit dependent riders out of the system.

Even for those with a choice, a cut in bus service of this size will put thousands more cars

on the road every day, adding to rush hour congestion everywhere. At rush hour, a bus can take 40 cars off the road, and a light rail train can take up to 600. Without transit, I-35W would require an additional 1.5 lanes of traffic flow to move the same number of users during rush hour. Regionally, our transit system provides 100 million trips a year; you can't build enough roads to efficiently move that many more cars in our already congested metro.

Eighty percent of all transit riders are either traveling to work or school, meaning that hundreds of families and businesses would be negatively impacted by this service reduction. It's difficult to understand why lawmakers who claim to value public transit would cut this essential service and leave so many transit-dependent residents on the curb.

Cara Letofsky
Metropolitan Council Member
District 8, representing St. Anthony, Northeast Minneapolis, Longfellow, and Nokomis

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With the new property tax statements out, residents have been asking questions about the change in taxes and values. Get your questions answered by a City of Minneapolis representative at this Night Out With NENA, hosted at the Lake Nokomis Community Center (2401 E. Minnehaha Pkwy.) on Tues., May 23, from 6:30-8pm.

The Curb Appeal Matching Grant Lottery winners will be chosen at the end of the evening. A hotdog cookout dinner will also be provided.

Night Out With NENA events are monthly opportunities for Nokomis East neighbors to connect and learn valuable information on a topic related to issues of interest to residents. Questions about this event can be directed to lauren.hazenson@nokomiseast.org.

Food Garden Build Day

Meet your neighbors, share some food, and help build Nokomis East's first community food garden on Sat., Apr. 29, 8am-4pm, at St. James on the Parkway Episcopal Church (3225 E. Minnehaha Pkwy.). This garden grows food for local food shelves.

This is the first big workday for the food garden, where volunteers will be building the new garden beds and adding height to

NENA (Nokomis East Neighborhood Association)

4313 54th St. E.

Monthly Night Out With NENA is scheduled for May 23

existing beds.

All volunteers 12+ are encouraged to join in. Bring work gloves and wear attire appropriate for the weather. If you are joining us for lunch, please bring a dish or snack to share. Please contact Program and Communication Manager Lauren Hazenson at lauren.hazenson@nokomiseast.org or 612-724-5652 if you plan to attend.

Build Day schedule:

- 8:30am—Coffee, donuts, and volunteer sign-in
- 9am—Garden building begins
- 12pm—Potluck lunch

We will work until the garden beds are built. Come and join us for all or part of the day.

MPRB Volunteer of the Year

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) recognized Nokomis Naturescape volunteer Marilyn Jones as a Volunteer of the Year at a ceremony held on Apr. 19. The Naturescape garden is an official Monarch Waysta-

tion and National Wildlife Federation Backyard Habitat site located on Lake Nokomis at 50th St. and Nokomis Pkwy. Jones has been volunteering as a Nokomis Naturescape gardener for over eight years.

Residents interested in volunteering at the Nokomis Naturescape can join in every Tuesday in the spring, summer, and fall. The next work day is May 2, 6-8pm.

Register for monarch workshop

Register for the 11th Annual Grow Monarch Habitat Workshop while you still can! This kid-friendly session on Sat., May 20, 10am-noon (doors open 9:30am) offers a wealth of information for both beginning and advanced gardeners. The workshop is held at the Lake Nokomis Community Center, 2401 E. Minnehaha Pkwy. Registration is required, workshop attendance is free, and participants may purchase Garden To-Go Kits from

NENA with 12 native pollinator plants for your yard. To register, fill out the form found at www.nokomiseast.org/grow-monarch-habitat-workshop.

Nokomis East Garage Sale

Garage-salers in the Nokomis East area are invited to register their sale on the NENA website, starting May 1. Last year over 100 sales took part in this all-day neighborhood event, which draws bargain hunters from all over the metro area. The garage sale itself will be Sat., June 17, 8am-4pm.

Curb Appeal Matching Grant Lottery

The deadline to enter the Curb Appeal Matching Grant Lottery is May 12. 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 before Memo-

rial Day Weekend to start your summer off right. Contact lauren.hazenson@nokomiseast.org for more information or go to www.nokomiseast.org to register.

Upcoming Events

- Sat., Apr. 29, 8:30am-4pm: Nokomis East Food Garden Building Day. Meet at St. James on the Parkway Episcopal Church, 3225 E. Minnehaha Pkwy.
- Tues., May 2, 6-8pm: Nokomis Naturescape Garden Work Night, at Nokomis Naturescape on Lake Nokomis, 50th St. and Nokomis Pkwy.
- Wed., May 3, 6:30-7:30pm, NENA Housing, Commercial, and Streetscape Committee, at the NENA Office, 4313 E. 54th St.
- Tues., May 9, 6-8pm: Nokomis Naturescape Garden Work Night, at Nokomis Naturescape on Lake Nokomis, 50th St. and Nokomis Pkwy.
- Wed., May 10, 6:30-8pm: Green Initiatives Committee Meeting, at the NENA Office, 4313 E. 54th St.
- Sat., May 20, 10am-12pm (doors open 9:30am): NENA Grow Monarch Habitat Workshop, at Lake Nokomis Community Center, 2401 E. Minnehaha Pkwy.
- Thur., May 25, 7-9pm: NENA Board of Directors Meeting, at the NENA Office, 4313 E. 54th St.

Bicycle Benefits connects cyclists with local businesses

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

Everyone knows the health benefits of riding a bicycle instead of driving a car, but did you know biking can save you money on coffee, beer, and even garden supplies? Bicycle Benefits is a national program that's gaining traction in the Twin Cities, thanks to the Minneapolis Bicycle Coalition (MBC).

Alex Tsatsoulis runs the Bicycle Benefits program, as well as being MBC's Director of Development and Communications. He wears a lot of hats or, more appropriately, helmets, promoting safe cycling and new ways to make connections around the sport.

Here's how it works. A cyclist buys a \$5 Bicycle Benefits sticker from a participating business. Attach the sticker to your helmet or, if you choose not wear a helmet, carry the sticker with you when you bike to a participating business. Each participating business offers a discount of their choice. For instance, Peace Coffee at 3262 Minnehaha Ave. S. offers \$.50 off a cup of coffee or tea, or \$.75 off if you bring your own mug. The sticker is a one-time purchase, good for the life of your helmet.

Some of the other area businesses participating at this time are the Repair Lair (3304 E. Lake St.), Dogwood Coffee (4023 E. Lake St.), Mother Earth Gardens (3738 42nd Ave. S.), Grande Ole Creamery (4737 Cedar Ave.), Blackbird's Music Store (3445 Cedar Ave. S.), Birchwood Cafe (3311 E. 25th St.), Cafe Racer (2929 E. 25th St.), and Skol Liquors (2500 27th Ave. S.). Of course, Bicycle Benefits hopes this list will continue to grow as more bikers and more businesses join in.

Some participating businesses have the stickers for sale,



Alex Tsatsoulis of the Minneapolis Bicycle Coalition with his Bicycle Benefits sticker. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

but supplies may be limited. To identify a participating business, look for a Bicycle Benefits decal in the storefront window, and/or a small stand-up sign near the cash register. A list of participating businesses can be found by visiting [\[benefits.org\]\(http://benefits.org\).](http://www.bicycle-</p>
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Interested business owners should consider that the program benefits are mutual. Joining up isn't going to be a huge moneymaker for business owners, nor is it going to save bikers a fortune, but it will strengthen the connection between business owners and the cyclists who choose to support their bike-friendly establishments.

MBC is sponsoring a series of "Joy Rides" this summer on the second Tuesday of each month. None of the rides is more than 10 miles long, all ability levels are welcome, and Tsatsoulis said, "The pace will be a slow roll." The ride will usually start in a Minneapolis park, and proceed by bike trail to a Bicycle Benefits participating businesses.

Scheduled Joy Rides are:

- May 9: Venture North Bike and Coffee Shop, 1830 Glenwood Ave. Finish at Anelace Coffee, 2402 Central Ave. NE.
- June 13: Fair Oaks Park, 200 E. 24th St. Finish at Barquette, 1600 W. Lake St.
- July 11: Matthews Park, 2318 29th Ave. Finish at Grand Ole Creamery, 4737 Cedar Ave. S.
- Aug. 8: Boom Island Park, 724 Sibley St. NE. Finish at Espresso Royale, 1229 Hennepin Ave.
- Sept. 10: Loring Park, 1382 Willow St. Finish at 612 Brew, 945 Broadway St. NE.

Bikers can meet up as early as 5:30pm at the starting location; the rides will roll out at 6pm.

May is Minneapolis Bike Month. With the support of MBC's classes and events, this a great opportunity to try biking for the first time, or to step up your commitment to being a biker:

- Sat., May 6: Women/Trans/Femme Day
- Wed., May 10: Bike to School Day

- Fri., May 19: Twin Cities Bike to Work Day
- Sat., May 27: Family Bike to Parks Day

And, during the month of May, MBC will offer a range of customizable courses from experienced instructors. You host and promote your event; they show up and teach the skills.

An example is a class called Transit and Biking. A transit expert from Metro Transit will explain how to use Metro Transit services, and how to incorporate bicycling into transit trips. Topics include planning a trip, fares and how to pay them,

reading maps and schedules, and more. Presentations can be tailored for any group; each group member gets a free Metro Transit coupon. There is no cost to participants for this class.

Check the website at www.mplsbike.org for a full list of available classes and ride support during Minneapolis Bike Month.

A Bicycle Benefits sticker is included in the \$25 annual MBC membership. Show your support for cycling by becoming a member, and deepen your engagement with the Minneapolis biking community.



Nokomis East Neighborhood Association



Curb Appeal Grant Lottery

NEW Curb Appeal Matching Grant Lottery

Nokomis East residents could get up to \$500
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NokomisEast

Upper Post Community sees wood pile diminish after 2+ year struggle

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

CommonBond Communities is the Midwest's largest non-profit provider of affordable housing and supportive services for individuals and families with special needs. Recognizing that homelessness among veterans was a significant problem in the Twin Cities, the organization transformed five historic structures at Fort Snelling into apartments—and called it the Upper Post Veterans Community.

Residents began moving into the complex in October of 2015. Eligibility requirements were specific: units were available only to war veterans who had experienced homelessness, and their families.

The Upper Post features 58 studio, one, two, and three bedroom apartments equipped with central air conditioning, vaulted ceilings, and walk-in closets, among other amenities. Unfortunately, since the first residents moved in 2-½ years ago, they have also been presented with a very difficult neighbor, one who had long ago promised to move.

That neighbor is the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB). The adjacent 2+ acre site they own served as one of the primary wood chipping facilities for the City of Minneapolis and was only yards away from the front door of the Upper Post Veterans Community. At issue was the grinding of large, diseased trees that began at 6am every morning, the piles of brush, logs, and chipped wood that reached almost to the second story windows of the Upper Post apartments, and the unwillingness of MPRB staff to commit to a permanent closure date for the wood chipping facility.

Despite very strong public



A collaboration of many public and private sector partners helped secure the \$17.2 million to build the Upper Post Veterans Community at 6210 Bloomington Rd. in Fort Snelling. The main building was barely visible in early March of this year, as viewed from Bloomington Ave. Much of the mulch created and stored at the chipping site has finally been removed, but the question repeated by residents was, "Why were we subjected to having to live like this for more than two years?" (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)



Justyn Hardwick, US Army veteran, said, "A lot of us have respiratory issues as a result of having seen combat. When the wind blows, we couldn't open our windows on the east side of the building because of all the blowing sawdust. That's the side that faces the chipping site. When our country called us, we answered that call, and we served. Don't we deserve to live in a place where the air is conducive to breathing?" (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

comments from Upper Post residents, CommonBond management, and concerned citizens for 2+ years—the facility only closed its gates on Mar. 7 of this year, and the condition of the site is still unacceptable to the residents.

James Hudson and Richard Greggerson are two concerned citizens who have lobbied on behalf of the residents from the beginning. They do not live at the Upper Post, but they're both war veterans. After playing golf at the public Fort Snelling Golf Club three years ago, they got to wondering about all the truck traffic, machinery noise and blowing sawdust across the street at the chipping site.

"I've been trying to work with the MPRB," Hudson said, "the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, and the Mayor's Office in an honest, open way. I've heard the same thing from everybody over and over again, 'It's not in my purview.' The only elected official that showed any willingness to help was Hennepin County Commis-

sioner Peter McLaughlin, through his aide Brian Shekleton."

Deidre Schmidt, CommonBond President and CEO agreed, saying, "Part of what has made this situation so complicated is that the Upper Post Road is a no-man's-land in terms of jurisdictional authority. It falls under the heading of undesignated, unincorporated land. Its official title is 'the Unorganized Territory of Fort Snelling.' There is no city council representation there, and the MPRB members have not been amenable to talking with us."

Hudson said, "I care about this situation because I could easily have been facing homelessness myself when I came back from Vietnam. That's why I've kept at it. The people living at the Upper Post, they served their country and ended up homeless. Now they've finally got a decent place to live, and they deserve to be treated better than they have been."

Ralph Sievert, Forestry Director for the MPRB, said, "The

processing of the trees is all finished. What's left is to tear down the berms, and spread the debris as evenly as we can. The remaining wood chunks and brush will be processed at our new site in North Minneapolis called the Upper Harbor. It's located in the Camden Industrial Neighborhood, and there are no residences bordering it. I never give a timeline for completing a project, and this one is no different. I can't say when we'll be done at the Upper Post."



James Hudson (left) and Richard Greggerson (right), war veterans, life-long friends and, now, citizen activists. Hudson said, "As activists, I feel we have been marginalized by the MPRB. My experience of trying to speak at one of their public meetings was met with extreme disrespect. In addition, I feel the park board has marginalized the residents of the Upper Post Veterans Community by not listening to them—and by making them sicker." (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)



A view from Colville Ave. in early March shows what the site looked like for years. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

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Reuse, Recycle and... Rescue!

Photo collage by JILL BOOGREN



For one day in April, Junket: Tossed & Found (4049 Minnehaha Ave.) extended its mission from reuse and recycle to include rescue, as it hosted Safe Hands Rescue's meet and greet. Two dozen dogs, most of them puppies, drew a crowd of humans many times that number—some taking steps to adopt their new furry family member, others coming by for a quick cuddle.



Foster Emily Shea holds Dharma (Doughie, written on Shea's name tag, is Dharma's brother, not pictured). Shea adopted her dog three years ago and has fostered for Safe Hands for two years.



Young Evie holds puppy Kayla in her lap while her Dad, Danny Schwartzman, looks on.

First spring pruning occurs at Adams Grove Community Orchard

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

A spring pruning day was held on Sun., Mar. 26 at Adams Grove Community Orchard. The orchard was planted by community members last year and is located in the Adams Triangle Park at 4101 Minnehaha Ave. S.

Neighborhood resident Trevor Russell lives just down the street from the new orchard. "I had walked and biked past the park hundreds of times thinking that this empty, grass-covered space was just a failure of imagination. I knew we could do better," he said.

Using funds from the City of Minneapolis' Urban Agriculture Activity Plan, Russell brought his

dream of a community orchard to fruition. Of the 34 trees planted there (including apple, plum, cherry, peach, apricot, pear, and serviceberry), Russell said, "In years one and two, our goal was to keep them alive."

With the help of a team of volunteers watering and mulching last summer, the trees have done more than just survive—they have prospered.

Pruning improves tree health and increases fruit yields while making the orchard easier to care for and to harvest. Jared Walhowe, of the University of Minnesota's Healthy Food Healthy Lives Institute, has been a partner in creating the orchard from the begin-

ning.

On pruning day he demonstrated pruning techniques for volunteers. "Early spring is the best time to prune," he said, "because you can see the architecture of the trees. Removing branches directs more of a tree's energy into producing fruit. We also prune for better air flow, which helps keep fungal diseases down. In an orchard like this, we want to keep the tree height fairly low and stocky, so there won't be a need for ladders at harvest time."

More than two dozen neighbors showed up to help with the pruning. Among them was Devin Hogan, a candidate for the Minneapolis Park Board. "There's po-

tential for many more projects like this," Hogan said. "We have several other public triangles, squares, and ovals that could be utilized for urban agriculture. That's a unique feature of our city."

Minnehaha Communion Lutheran Church across the street served coffee and treats for the volunteers, and provides water for the orchard throughout the growing season. Co-pastor Dan Ankerfelt was on hand to help with the pruning. "Our congregation really appreciates the orchard; it's what we see looking out from the front of our church," he said.

Contact Trevor Russell at 612-338-8856 with questions about becoming an Adams Apple, a volunteer at Adams Grove Community Orchard, this season.

The creators of the orchard envision a place where everyone is welcome to come and relax, enjoy the fruits, and picnic in peace.



Jared Walhowe (left) demonstrated how to prune a fruit tree. He explained, "About 1/3 of a tree's live wood should be pruned each year. We prune for the future, directing the branches so that they can support their fruit optimally." (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

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MPRB presents five scenarios for Hiawatha Golf Course

Only one of five would keep 18-hole golf course while rest are a mix of pumping and park-use options

By TESHAM. CHRISTENSEN

Of the five scenarios being evaluated for the Hiawatha Golf Course, only one would leave the golf course open. The other four would reduce the amount of pumping or not pump water off the land at all, and the site would be set aside for other park uses.

Currently, the golf course is open because 308 million gallons of water are being pumped into the lake and then seeped back onto the course in a repeating pattern.

No pumping would not only close the golf course but also potentially flood the basements of between 9-14 nearby homes. Reduced pumping options would affect up to 4 homes. (See sidebar for detailed information on scenarios.)

The Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board (MPRB) intends to select a preferred scenario to pursue by July.

At an Apr. 20 community meeting, residents viewed diagrams which illustrated the spaces created by the varying levels of groundwater pumping, and how these layouts may affect certain uses within the park in the future. The majority of this meeting focused on developing ideas for potential uses within the park. (Check the June *Messenger* for an article on the April meeting, which just missed our publication deadline.)

One scenario stops trash from 'choking lake'

Only one of the proposed scenarios would effectively stop trash from "choking the lake," according to Standish-Ericsson resident Sean Connaughty, who has removed 3,400 pounds of trash from Lake Hiawatha in the last year.

He pointed out that despite his efforts and those of other volunteers, trash remains in the lake and on its shores. "It comes from our streets," he said.

While 90 participants have adopted 170 drains in the Lake Hiawatha watershed, Connaughty is pushing the city and MPRB to change how the storm sewer drains discharge directly into Lake Hiawatha.

"The most effective way to stop the trash and pollutants from reaching the lake is to create a catchment pond or 'open channel' in the line of the big north storm sewer pipe," Connaughty said.

The big north pipe that currently runs into the lake would be diverted into an open water area outside the lake where trash and pollutants could be isolated and removed before they reach the lake. "I imagine the catchment pond or open channel would be surrounded by wetland that could help absorb and consume other pollutants before they reach the lake," explained Connaughty.

MPRB is also considering a 'gravity connection,' so rather than pumping stormwater it would be allowed to flow naturally with gravity to the lake through wetlands.

"In this time of disappearing protections for our waters, something great could happen right here that would mean dramat-

Five scenarios being studied for Hiawatha Golf Course

- Alternative 1 - Existing Conditions: 18 hole golf course, current pumping; affects one house
- Alternative 2 - No groundwater pumping, berm in-place; other park use, pumping to manage stormwater only; affects 9-14 houses
- Alternative 3 - Reduced pumping, berm in-place; other park use, reduced pumping to protect basements and manage stormwater; affects 0-4 houses
- Alternative 4 - Reduced pumping, gravity-connection; other park use, reduced pumping to protect basements, gravity connection to Lake Hiawatha (no stormwater pumping required); affects 0-4 houses
- Alternative 5 - Reduced pumping, gravity-connection, open channel and creek realignment; other park use, reduced pumping to protect basements, gravity connection to Lake Hiawatha (no stormwater pumping required), development of the open channel and realignment of Minnehaha Creek; affects 0-4 houses

ic improvement for water quality and habitat preservation. But they (Parks) need to know this is what we want," Connaughty said.

Moving forward

As the MPRB moves forward, it will factor in social, environmental and economic considerations to chart the future course of the site. Staff is working to identify ecological impacts, recreational impacts, economic impacts, and transportation/traffic impacts, as well as environmental regulations. Plus a review of cultural resources is being completed.

Next, Use Envision™ will be used to generate a sustainability score rating for each alternative considering, e.g., energy consumed and carbon dioxide produced, impacts on community health, and well-being

AutoCASE will help quantify costs and benefits of areas such as water quality, flood risks, recreational value, healthy and safety, and air quality.

As pumping alternatives are evaluated, the impacts to water quality and opportunities to reduce trash in stormwater are also being considered.

Resident opinions

Residents have a variety of opinions on the golf course property, and some wrote their thoughts down for the Park Board following the Mar. 20 community meeting.

One commenter pointed out that there are plenty of passive use and natural areas in South Minneapolis for residents to enjoy, including the Minnehaha Falls area. "Hiawatha Golf Course is the only one set in the heart of the city, and it is a gem," the commenter wrote, adding that "golf is communing with nature while being a fun activity."

Some residents continue to push for pesticide and chemical testing at the course arguing that the samples taken once in January of 2016 could not provide a full picture of what's happening there. Roxanne Stuhr of Friends of Lake Hiawatha asked that multiple sites be tested at multiple times of the year, not just when the ground is frozen.

"Identifying the chemicals and sharing them publicly will help to determine future uses," Stuhr said.

Another commenter asked that alternatives to chemical herbicides and pesticides be used at the site, and that buffer zones be created for the bodies of water there. "Please create an effective

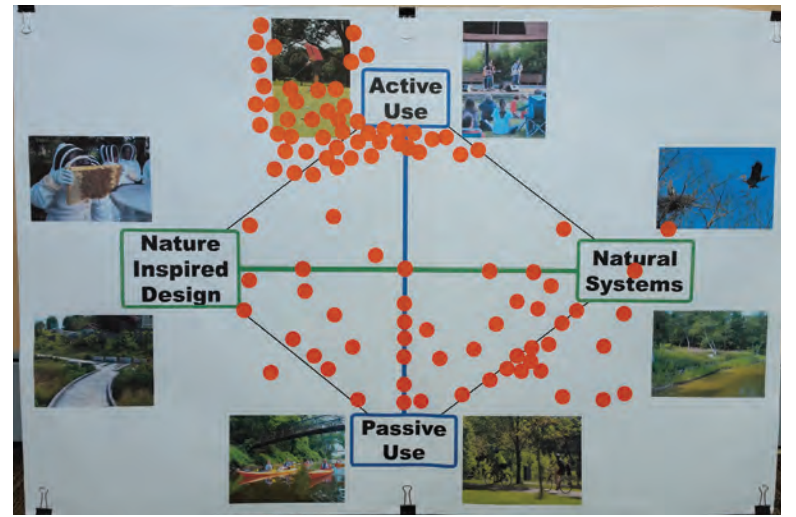
mitigation system to capture and divert trash and pollutants to keep them out of the lake," wrote the resident, who also pushed for a land use that would limit foot traffic and protect habitat and ecosystems.

"As a Minneapolis resident, I am interested in seeing progressive alternatives to maintaining park lands," said Anna Seewald. "If supporting a golf course is unsustainable in light of the current environmental conditions then I feel that it's time to move away from that and to use the land in a way that makes sense for the community while considering a sustainable way to maintain the land."

Seewald supports the idea of a food forest and light recreation on the property. "However, I do not support the current amount of pumping to maintain the golf course."

MPRB considers food forest

Earlier in March, the Minneap-



At a Mar. 20 community meeting, attendees were asked to share their opinion on how the golf course land should be used moving forward by placing stickers on a diamond configuration. The graphic measures how many people support active versus passive use at the golf course property and nature-inspired design versus natural systems. (Photo submitted by MPRB)

lis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) sent out a press release stressing that Food Forest concept is a proposed idea from an organized group of residents, and is separate from the approved Nokomis-Hiawatha Regional Park Master Plan.

"Urban agriculture was not identified as a priority during the recently completed year-and-a-half master planning process for the Nokomis-Hiawatha Regional Park, and the final, approved plan did not include any agricultural zones within the Hiawatha Park," pointed out MPRB representatives. "The prevailing sentiment among the Community Advisory Committee and public commentary was that the park should have more naturalization and habitat for wildlife."

"Hiawatha Park could be a place for a planned orchard and

urban agriculture zone, but it would be disrespectful to all the people who worked on the current master plan to move forward with an amendment without additional engagement. It would also be out of line with MPRB's dedication to broad and meaningful community engagement."

MPRB is currently considering two amendments to the Nokomis-Hiawatha Regional Park Master Plan:

- 1) Consideration on of a recommended design concept for the Nokomis Athletic field
- 2) The inclusion of a designated urban agriculture area along the east side of Lake Hiawatha

These items will be discussed during an open house on Thur., May 25. See the MPRB project page for more details as they are available.

Neighborhood Churches Welcome You!

Bethlehem Covenant Church
3141 43rd Ave. S. • 612-721-5768
www.bethlehemcov.org

Pastor Matt Kennedy
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Contemporary Worship - 8:45 am
Sunday School for all ages through May 14 - 10:00 am
Traditional Worship - 11:00 am
Español - 1:30pm
Confirmation Sunday May 21
Wednesday end of year celebration May 10 at 5:45 pm
Meal and activities for the family

Epworth United Methodist
3207 37th Ave. • 612-722-0232
www.epworthumcpls.org

Pastor Steven Reiser
(Childcare Provided)
(Wheelchair Accessible)
Upcoming:
Tree planting during outdoor worship: April 30

Living Table
United Church of Christ
3805 40th St. E. • 612-729-7556
www.livingtable.org

Pastor Rachael Keefe
Sunday Worship 10:30 am
Loving Our Neighbors Speaker Series on Faith, Culture, and Justice Speaker Mondays at 7PM
May 1 - Ms. Antonia Alvarez
May 8 - Rev. Jim Bear Jacobs
May 15 - Mr. Ker Yang
May 22 - Mr. Khalil Hour
June 5 - Imam Abdisalam Adam
Open and Affirming
Wheelchair accessible

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

Pastors Dan and Sally Ankerfelt
Sunday Worship - 9:45 am
Sunday School - 9:45 am
(Wheelchair Accessible)

Spirit Garage
3010 Minnehaha Ave. • 612-827-1074
bigdoor@spiritgarage.org

Worship: Sundays, 10:30am
The Hook & Ladder Theater & Lounge

St. Albert the Great Catholic
E. 29th St. at 32nd Ave. S. • 612-724-3643
www.saintalbertthegreat.org

Fr. Joe Gillespie, O.P.
Sunday Mass: 9:30 am (Childcare available)
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 (Handicapped accessible)

St. Peder's Evangelical Lutheran
4600 E. 42nd St. • 612-722-8000
www.stpeders.net

Julie A. Ebbesen, Pastor
Sundays: 9 am Worship (childcare available)
9 am Children/Youth Faith Formation
10 am Coffee & Fellowship
10:20 am Adult Faith Formation (Handicap acc., Braille)

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

Pastor Matt Oxendale
Sunday Worship 8:30 & 10:30 am
Summer Schedule (beg 5/28) 10 am
VBS at Morris Park June 19-23
AA Sun & Tues 7:00 pm

Projects of the Neighborhood Churches Include:

Minnehaha Food Shelf, Serving People Tuesday, 10:30 am - 3 pm
Call us at 612-721-6231 • Minnehaha United Methodist 3701 E. 50th St.

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.

Sonora Grill applies for expansion

Sonora Grill, 3300 E. Lake St., has applied for an expansion of their existing outdoor patio on private property. If approved, they intend to add 48 more seats to an outdoor area with their existing On Sale Liquor with Sunday Sales, Class D license. The public is invited to attend and express their opinion at a public hearing Tues., May 2, 1:30pm, at Minneapolis City Hall, 350 S. 5th St., Room 317. You may also submit comments in writing to mohamed.ismail@minneapolismn.gov.

Free Bible camp slated in June

Trinity of Minnehaha Falls is sponsoring an exciting week of Vacation Bible School at Morris Park, June 19-23, 9:30am-noon. The week will be filled with experiences that kids will see, hear, touch, and even taste! KidVid Cinema shares real stories of real kids who rely on God's power to face life's challenges! Plus team-building games, cool Bible songs, and tasty treats keep everyone on the move. For more details, contact the Trinity office at 612-724-3691 or visit <https://www.trinityfalls.org/vbs>.

Cinco de Mayo celebration May 7

On Sun. May 7, the community is invited to celebrate the Annual Cinco de Mayo Festival on E. Lake St. (between 27th and 29th avenues). This event is hosted by El Nuevo Rodeo, La Raza 95.7 FM & 1400 & 1470 AM, and Tele-mundo MN, Hispanic TV Network.

During this festival, the Mexican Community remembers and celebrates The Battle of Puebla that took place on May 5, 1862, near the city of Puebla during the French intervention in Mexico. The battle ended in a victory for the Mexican army over the occupying French soldiers. Now, this is the most famous Mexican holiday in the United States.

The Festival this year is from 12-8pm, but the party continues until the wee hours of the morning inside the installations of El Nuevo Rodeo. There are three stages; two on Lake St. and another one inside El Nuevo Rodeo, where there will be a full menu and live entertainment all day long.

Beer gardens, full of Corona and Micheladas, and food vendors will be in abundance to mark the beginning of outdoor events in Minnesota while honoring the Battle of Puebla.

There will be public traditional Mexican presentations of folkloric dance, Mariachi and Aztec dance, including Mexican

bands. There will also be tropical and Salsa bands, even Zumba, Karaoke and The Minnesota Twins with games and prizes for kids!

There will be food from various vendors and local restaurants. Not only Mexican food will be sold, but also American and international favorites from Town Talk Diner, Addis Ababa Restaurant, and Gandhi Mahal!

All members of the community are invited to this free event to celebrate culture, community, music, and cuisine.

For more information on vending at the festival, sponsorship or the festival itself, please call El Nuevo Rodeo at 612-728-0101 or contact maya@elnuevoroдео.com or gricel@elnuevoroдео.com.

Prayer service planned May 3

Faith Ev. Lutheran Church, 3430 E. 51st St., will host a Lutheran Women's Missionary League prayer service on Wed., May 3, 12-1pm. All are invited to the service with Pastor David Domanski. A light lunch will be served following the service.

Mother's Day brunch scheduled May 14

The annual Mother's Day Brunch will be held on Sun., May 14, 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 (pumpnickel) 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 needed—just come! For more information, call 612-724-7705.

Fundraiser Garage Sale scheduled

Classics Lost N Found Theater, a community theater based in south Minneapolis, is holding a fundraiser Garage Sale to raise money for future productions. The goal is to perform classic plays that are not frequently performed, but still are very relevant to today's audiences. The sale will be held Fri. and Sat., May 19-20, 9am-5pm, at 5321 43rd Ave. S., rain or shine.

Miss Lulu Bett takes stage in May

Classics Lost 'n' Found Theater Company will present "Miss Lulu Bett," by Zona Gale, at the Lake Nokomis Lutheran Church, 5011 S. 31st Ave. The production will play May 5-7 and May 13 and 14.

Adapted by Gale from her novel, the play is set in a small Wisconsin town. It's the story of a woman who "earns her keep" by taking care of her sister's house. Circumstances following Lulu's marriage to the capricious brother of her sister's husband and Lulu finds herself at a crossroads in her life. "Miss Lulu Bett" is the third play, and first by a woman, to win the Pulitzer Prize for Drama.

The production will be directed by Steven LaVigne, with Autumn L'heureau as Stage Manager. The cast is: Tony Gillen as Dwight Deacon; Coral Bastien as Ina Deacon; Greg Bastien as Ninian Deacon; Leah Eckardt as Diana Deacon; Hope Gillen as Monona Deacon; Kelly Rohde as Lulu Bett; Rowan Hoffman-Dachelet as Bobby Larking; David Norini as Neil Cornish and Linda Hayen as Mrs. Bett.

Performances will be May 5, 6, 13 and 14 at 7pm, with a matinee on May 7 at 2pm. Admission is \$12 for adults and \$10 for students/seniors. With donations to the Food Shelf, \$1 will be taken off the ticket price.

For more information, contact Steven LaVigne, lavignebiz1@gmail.com.

Faith Book Club meets May 6

The Faith Ev. Lutheran Book Club meets the first Saturday of every month from 10-11am at the church, 3430 E. 51st St. The book being discussed May 6 will be the novel "The Book Thief," by Australian author Markus Zusak.

New playground set to open in June

Construction on the new Lake Nokomis Community Center playground is scheduled to begin May 1 and wrap up by mid-June. These dates may change if there is inclement weather.

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board appreciates the community's patience as workers remove existing equipment and prepare the site for the new and rehabbed equipment. The overflow parking lot near the playground will be closed during construction hours to accommodate construction workers and equipment, but it will remain open evenings and weekends.

The "Evos" climbing structure will remain available for use throughout most of May. The Evos container will be closed for a short period to replace sand with Engineered Wood Fiber.

NA group meets every Friday

A Narcotics Anonymous group meets every Friday evening at 7pm at Faith Evangelical Lutheran,

3430 E. 51st St. All are welcome to attend.

Rummage Sale scheduled Apr. 29

The Epworth UMC spring rummage sale will be Sat., Apr. 29 from 9am-3pm. Coffee and bars will be available for purchase. Come on by and search for hidden treasures. You never know what you might find. Epworth UMC is located at 3207 37th Ave. S.

Memories Workshop planned for May 13

An Introduction to Healing of Memories Workshop will be held Sat., May 13, 9am-1pm (lunch included) at Minnehaha Communion Lutheran Church, 4101 37th Ave. S.

Everyone has a story to tell, and every story needs to be heard, acknowledged and respected. This is the first step to personal healing as well as healing of interpersonal relationships.

This free 3-hour experiential mini workshop provides a "taste" of the 3-day Healing of Memories workshop designed by Fr. Michael Lapsley, renowned South African anti-apartheid activist. The workshop provides a safe place for those who have experienced the emotional, psychological and spiritual wounds inflicted by war, human rights abuses or other trauma to share their stories and gain insight and empathy for themselves and others. During the workshop participants will participate in one exercise which will help them to tell their story in an atmosphere of confidentiality and respect and enable them to experience what this can mean in their healing journey.

To register for the workshop call Minnehaha Communion Lutheran Church at 612-722-9527. For more information about Healing of Memories contact mdf1765@comcast.net.

May Events at LS Healthy Seniors

Longfellow/Seward Healthy Seniors' monthly Senior Social/Health Talk will be held Tue., May 16 at 10:30am at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, 2730 E. 31st St. Dr. David Gedes with Health Partners Clinic will speak on "The Aging Ear." Everyone is welcome to attend. Learn about common changes to our ears and hearing as we age.

A new "Tai Chi Easy" exercise/movement class will be held on Monday mornings through June 26, from 10:30-11:30am. The classes will be held at Holy Trinity Lutheran and will cost

\$5/class (discounts available for lower income seniors).

The spring art class series, "Coloring: It's Not Just for Kids Anymore," continues on the third Thursdays from 1:30-3pm, on May 18 and June 15 at St. Peder's Evangelical Lutheran Church, 4600 E. 42nd St. The May class is on mandala design coloring, and the June class is "Your Choice: Mosaics, Geometrics, Animals, Florals or Old Masters." Participants will receive a complimentary mini stained glass coloring book, while supplies last. Each class costs \$4 and includes supplies. Preregistration is required by phone or email, and due one week before each class.

A monthly Diabetes Support Group for adults of all ages will be held Wed., May 10 from 6:30-8pm at Hiawatha School Park Recreation Center, 4305 E. 42nd St.

A Low Vision Support Group will be held Tues., May 9 at 1:30pm at Trinity Apartments, 2800 E. 31st St.

Additionally, Longfellow/Seward Healthy Seniors is looking for "Friendly Visitor" volunteers and volunteer drivers to help seniors live independently.

Call Longfellow/Seward Healthy Seniors at 612-729-5799 or email us at info@lshealthy-seniors.org for more information on activities, services or volunteer opportunities.

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.

Adoption support group meets May 2

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. Next meeting will be held on Thur., May 2 at 6:30pm.

Adoptive parents are provided with a confidential, non-judgmental 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).

Continued on page 10

In Our Community

Continued from page 9

Healthy Seniors plan May events

On Thur., May 11, 11:15am-1:30pm, gather for lunch and a movie, when Nokomis Healthy Seniors (NHS) will screen the movie classic "Hidden Figures," at Bethel Lutheran.

Lunch and Bingo are planned at NHS Bethel Lutheran on Thurs., May 25, 11:15am-1:30pm. Reserve your spot!

For more information on NHS go to their web site, www.nokomishealthyseniors.org, or email info@nokomishealthyseniors.org.

Plan your funeral in workshop May 5

Planning Your Funeral: Nuts and

bolts to help you through a stressful time, Wed., May 3, 5:30pm. In part one, a representative from the Cremation Society will be on hand to give an overview and answer questions. In part two, plan your own service (funeral, memorial) including readings, music, scripture, etc. A form will be available as a guide. A light supper will be offered at 5:30pm, followed by the program at 6:15pm. For more info contact Epworth UMC, 3207 32nd Ave. S., Mpls 55406; phone 612-722-0232 or email epworthumcplsmn@gmail.com.

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.

Living Table slates speaker series

Living Table United Church of Christ, 3805 E. 40th St., is hosting a series of talks about how different cultures and religions inform people about seeking justice for all, titled "Loving Our Neighbors: A Speaker Series on Faith, Culture, and Justice." The speaker series began in April and continues in May and June with the following Monday evening sessions; all are at 7pm.

May 1 - *Antonia Alvarez from Asamblea De Derechos Civiles*. La Asamblea is a faith-based organization that seeks to empower the Latino community by advocating for political change.

May 8 - *Rev. Jim Bear Jacobs from Church of All Nations*. Jacobs is a member of the Stockbridge-Munsee Mohican Nation, a Native American tribe located in central Wisconsin and, among other things, he is a cultural fa-

cilitator in the Twin Cities and works to raise the public's awareness of American Indian causes and injustices.

May 15 - *Ker Yang*. Yang has been a high school counselor for 16 years with the St. Paul Public Schools. His family came as refugees to the United States in 1981 when he was nine years old.

May 22 - *Khalil Houri from the Northwest Islamic Community Center in Plymouth*. The aim and purpose of NWICC is to serve the best interest of Muslims of Minnesota, particularly the Muslims living in the West and Northwest Metropolitan areas (Plymouth/Maple Grove and it's neighboring communities).

June 5 - *Imam Abdisalam Adam from the Islamic Civic Society of America*. Abdisalam came to the United States in 1991 and worked as Arabic-English-Somali Translator in Virginia before moving to the Twin Cities in 1996. He is very active in the community as an advocate and educator.

Blind Ministry Outreach May 13

The Blind Ministry Outreach meets at Faith Ev. Lutheran, 3430 E. 51st St., the second Saturday of the month. You are invited to join them on Sat., May 13, from noon-2pm for lunch, Bible study, and fellowship. Volunteers to assist are also welcome. Call 612-729-5463 for more information.

Addams Family takes the stage Apr. 27-29

Roosevelt High School Theater presents "The Addams Family: A New Musical Comedy" Apr. 27-29, at the school, 4029 28th Ave. S. On Thur., Apr. 27 performance times are 10am and 7pm; on Fri., Apr. 28 the performance is at 7pm; and Sat., Apr. 29 show times are 2pm and 7pm. \$3 suggested

Continued on page 11

Classifieds

Messenger

Want ads must be received by the Messenger by May 15 for the May 25 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 May 15 for the May 25 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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Minnehaha Academy stars Jalen Suggs and JaVonni Bickham have the highlight-reel plays, stats, and NCAA Division I offers to garner the boy's basketball spotlight in the state.

With all those accolades, they still needed three other players on the court and more off the bench in March to help them win Minnehaha Academy's third state championship since 2010. Basketball remains a team sport no matter how big and bright the stars get.

"We had a bunch of unsung heroes," Redhawks Coach Lance Johnson said.

Junior guard Lorenzo Smith provided a staple in the backcourt, especially when the injury bug bit the Redhawks. Smith, standing 5-10, led the team in minutes played and went on fire from three-point during the winter with an 18-22 stretch. He averaged 12.3 points per game.

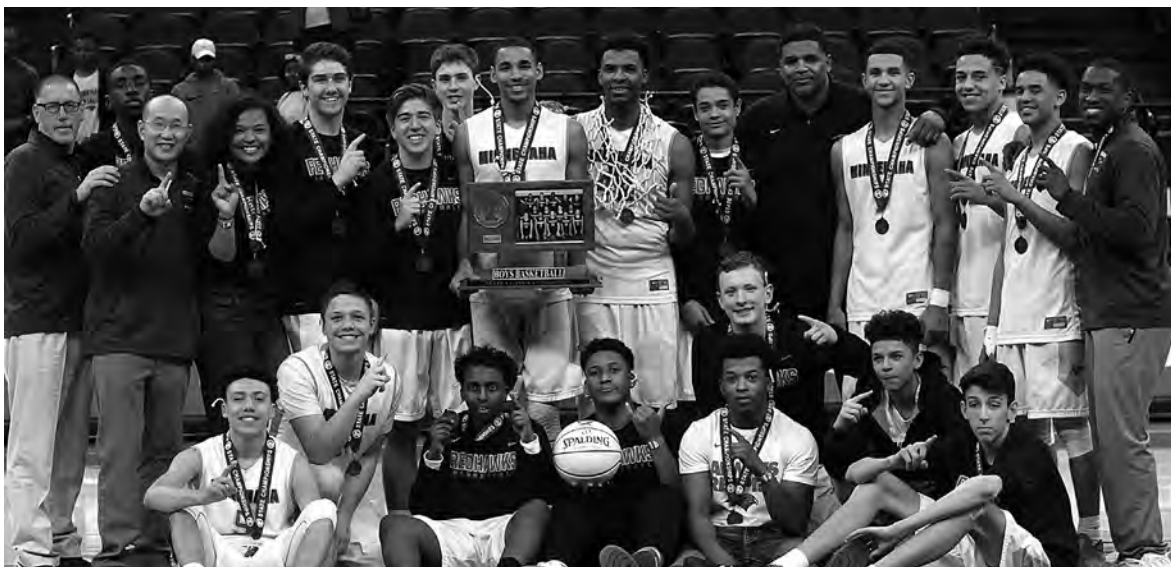
Johnson said he "shot the ball efficiently for us this year and was often asked to guard the top guard on the opposing team."

Freshman guard Terry Lockett bounced back from a January thumb injury in time for the postseason. He averaged 10.3 points per game in the state tournament and made the all-tournament team. Lockett also had a

In The Zone

By MATTHEW DAVIS

Basketball champion Minnehaha Academy more than Suggs and Bickham



Minnehaha Academy's boys basketball team took home the Class AA state championship Mar. 25 in a 47-36 win over Crosby-Ironton. (Photo by Carrie Johnson)

solid section tournament performance with 9.3 points per game. The 5-11 guard also had a strong season going before the injury with 12.2 points per game.

Success with freshmen didn't end with Lockett or Suggs. Forward Kaden Johnson, standing 6-4, started all but one contest this season. Johnson averaged 9.2

points per game. "He is super athletic and has the ability to shoot threes," Johnson said. Senior forward Jose William-

son got to end his high school career in style. The 6-5 big did a lot of the dirty work for the Redhawks.

"He rebounded, scored, defended and was a great team leader this year," Johnson said.

While Williamson will graduate this year along with fellow senior teammates Donovan Taylor and Nick Hernandez, the Redhawks anticipate having tons of young talent back. It spells big goals for next season, which the Redhawks also had this winter.

"It wasn't to get to state; it was to win it," Johnson said. "We dreamt big. With nearly our entire team back and youngsters in our program who will be able to step in and play at the varsity level, our goal is to repeat. We like our chances, but realize that it will be tough."

Bickham, a 6-6 forward who scored 14.8 points per game, has his senior season ahead. Suggs, a 6-3 guard who led the team with 21.6 points per contest, still has three years to go.

It doesn't hurt that they also have a formidable supporting cast around in the quest to repeat as Class AA champions.

Johnson said, "I have never seen so many young boys on one team that have their type of athleticism. They are unique."

In Our Community

Continued from page 10

donation, but pay as you are able.

Concert scheduled Apr. 30 at Mt. Olive

Mount Olive Music and Fine Arts presents Music for Flute and Harp, on Sun., Apr. 30, 4pm at Mount Olive Lutheran Church, 3045 Chicago Ave. S.

Linda Chatterton, flute, and Rachel Brandwein, harp, will include the Minneapolis premiere of a new work written for them by Hong Kong composer Wendy Lee, American works by Vincent

Persichetti, Chen Yi, Alan Hovhaness, Charles Rochester Young, and Eugene Bozza. Chatterton and Brandwein have been performing together since 2013. Individually, each has performed with numerous groups throughout the Twin Cities and given recitals throughout the U.S. and around the world. Their collaboration has included concert tours in the U.S. and Hong Kong, and a CD project.

A reception follows the concert in the church's Chapel Lounge. This event is free and open to the public; a free-will offering may be received to support the Music and Fine Arts program.

This is the sixth event in the 2016-2017 Mount Olive Music

and Fine Arts season. For further information on this event and on the Music and Fine Arts program, please contact Dr. Cherwien at the church office by phone at 612-827-5919, by email at cantor@mountolivechurch.org, or on-line at www.mountolivechurch.org.

Two Bettys receive 2017 SBA Award

Two Bettys Green Cleaning Service, 3258 Minnehaha Ave., has been awarded Women-Owned Small Business of the Year by The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) Minnesota District Office. Anna Tsantir is the owner/founder of Two Bettys. Held annually to highlight the impact of outstanding entrepreneurs, small business owners, and small business supporters across the nation, this year Small Business Week is celebrated from Apr. 30 to May 6. The winners of SBA awards were chosen for their success in starting or helping small business in Minnesota and for their efforts to give back to the community. Each business also received SBA assistance, directly or from SBA's resource partners, in the form of guaranteed loans, business training and consultation, and more.

Rules on having outdoor fires

With the warmer weather, some are spending more time outside and enjoying outdoor fires. Following these Minneapolis laws will help keep our neighborhoods safe and livable:

- Outdoor fires are permitted between 9am and 10pm.
- Keep the fire small—less than three feet in diameter and two feet high.
- Postpone a fire when Minneapolis is under an air pollution advisory. Fires release fine particles that contribute to air pollution and are implicated in some health problems including strokes, heart attacks, and asthma. Sign up for air quality alerts at <http://mn.enviroflash.info>.
- Burn only untreated, unpainted, dry wood. Never burn cardboard boxes, trash or debris, because the smoke can be toxic.
- The fire must be at least 25 feet away from a structure or combustible material and in a fire ring or pit with edges more than six inches high.
- Have a hose or fire extinguisher present.
- Postpone the fire when the wind exceeds 10 mph.

• The fire must constantly be attended by someone 18 years or older and completely out before being abandoned. Illegal open burning or recreational fires could result in fines that start at \$200.

These simple suggestions could help neighbors be considerate of each other when having a fire:

- Letting neighbors know when planning a fire.
- Postponing a fire when smoke will blow directly at a neighbor's house or when still weather conditions prevent smoke from moving away at all.

Dodson premieres 'The Ragman'

Longfellow resident Cy Dodson, director/editor, has premiered his new film "The Ragman - A Hobo's Story Untold" this month at both the Minneapolis/St. Paul Film Festival and the Newport Beach Film Festival. Michael Deering was the producer.

The 15-minute film captures the life of Michael Bork who lived his life straddling a fine line between the assumptions of societal norms and his unique approach to happiness and survival. He may be odd to some, yet has a charmingly rare disposition in this day and age. Self-anointed as "The Ragman," he makes an everlasting impression on most anyone who takes the time to truly get to know him.

This character-driven film tells the untold tale of The Ragman—the storyteller, the vagabond, but most importantly the songwriter willing to unearth an entire lyrical catalog of his documented past. A collaboration of professional musicians transpires to create an outstanding sonic array of interpretations of Ragman's original compositions. The sole goal: to bring Ragman's songs and life stories to the masses.

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Local author Eric Dregni releases his 17th book, this one a memoir

By JAN WILLMS

Eric Dregni teaches full-time as an associate professor at Concordia University, he is father to three active children, and he is dean of an Italian language camp every summer. Yet the Longfellow resident still finds the time to write, having just published his 17th book, "You're Sending Me Where? Dispatches from Summer Camp."

"I started writing about motor scooters," he said in a recent interview. "Then I got into travel, so I wrote about traveling around the Midwest. I wrote about my experiences over in Italy, and I was in Norway for a year, so I wrote about that."

Dregni grew up in Minnetonka and spent his senior year in high school as an exchange student in Italy. "I just sort of fell in love with the country, and after college I went back for six months, and then I spent three years working in Modena, Saint Paul's sister city in Italy. I was teaching and writing over there," he explained. "I thought 'What am I going to do when I come back?,' and I decided to get my master's at the U in Italian. And because of that, I got roped into doing the Italian language camp, because how many people around here do you know who speak Italian?"

There are 15 different languages that are taught at summer camps in Minnesota, according to Dregni. "The original one was the German camp," he said. "The first one that was built was Norwegian, and there are Spanish, French, Japanese...it's pretty remarkable."

Dregni said most of the camps are in the Bemidji area, but the Italian camp is near Hackensack.

"We rent a site with the French," he said. He described it as a beautiful classic camp that has been preserved in much the same style from the 1920s, with no electricity. He said he actually prefers the rustic camp setting in the woods. "I'm from Minnesota, and that's what we do," he joked.

Dregni had done camp counseling in France, near the border with Spain. It was an American camp for the kids to learn English.

He grew up attending YMCA camps and canoeing and spending



Eric Dregni talks about summer experiences in his latest book, "You're Sending Me Where? Dispatches from Summer Camp." (Photo by Jan Willms)

time in the wilderness. He interviewed young people from Italy to come over and work as counselors in the summer. He described how difficult it was to explain to them about the camps because the Italians don't have that kind of camp in their country. "The idea of sending your kids off for a couple of weeks with these college students is very American," Dregni said.

In his latest book, a memoir, he talks a little about his camping adventures as a child and then focuses on his experiences in finding Italian counselors for his language camps. The counselors come to life in his descriptions, and he has a gift for making some of the situations seem laugh-out-loud funny.

This will be Dregni's 11th year running the Italian language camp. "I came in as the dean," he noted. "Usually you start out as a camper and then a counselor and work your way up, but they needed someone who could speak Italian."

And his last name ends in

a vowel, like most Italian names, even though Dregni's heritage is a mixture of Norwegian, German, Dutch and other ethnicities.

Dregni said that writing is a challenge with his busy schedule. "I just take a lot of notes," he stated. "I have a little notebook and take notes all the time at camp. One of the fun things the counselors did on their own was that we had this big sheet up on the wall. Whenever they had something funny happen that they wanted to remember, they would write all these things up on the board. It helped out a lot."

Dregni admitted that writing is hard but rewarding. He said that especially in writing a mem-

oir, it is not always easy to keep the sense of things because they don't always happen in any order. "You have to try to piece them together," he noted. "Whereas with fiction, you can form it. With nonfiction, this is what it is. What do you highlight? What do you hold back on?"

He recalled writing a little bit of fiction in college. "You always want to write the great American novel, but then you realize there are just so many great stories already out there."

Dregni has a small office in his basement, where he tries to do a lot of his writing. "I write at work and wherever I can," he said. "So many people want to be writ-

ers, and they say they just need the right space and the perfect cup of coffee. A lot of that is never going to happen, especially if you have a deadline. You just have to do it."

When he was in college, Dregni wanted to write plays, and he wrote musicals. Then his brother, who worked for a publishing company, told him they wanted a book on Vespas. Since Dregni had lived in Italy and knew something about them, he was asked to write a book. He said at the time it was not something he really wanted to do, but the book provided him with money to travel, and that was pretty great.

When he spent time in Norway, he said it was surprisingly similar to Minnesota. The landscape was completely different, but the people interacted with each other in much the same way that Minnesotans do. New York is probably more similar to Italy, according to Dregni.

He said that the Norwegians at first seemed a cold people, but once he and his wife got to know them, they were very friendly and helpful. He got to know some relatives, and they told him "welcome home."

When he writes a book about an activity, such as fishing or roadside attractions, Dregni said he takes a lot of road trips and interviews people. When he writes a memoir, it is not so much about the research as about the writing. And he always has his notebook, taking notes just in case it might result in a book.

As well as writing the books, Dregni said he also really enjoys giving readings. "When you hear someone speak about a book, it brings it to life," he noted.

As to future projects, Dregni said he has lots of ideas and lots of notes and will have to see what comes of it.



Eric Dregni continues to find time to write despite his busy schedule. (Photo by Jan Willms)


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