



Violence Interrupter Muhammad Abdul-Ahad doesn't let the weather stop him from going out in South Minneapolis. (Photo by Terry Faust)

Interrupting violence

Patrols along E. Lake St., Chicago Ave. part of new initiative modeled after Illinois project

By JAN WILLMS

A young man on a South Minneapolis street was fighting against heavy odds. Seven other youths were attacking him. But someone intervened.

"We took 10 guys and encircled the young man and got him to safety," said Muhammad Abdul-Ahad, a leader for the group of Violence Interrupters that patrols the Longfellow neighborhood.

"I put the kid in an Uber and got him out of there," Abdul-Ahad stated. "We were able to get the story. The young man had lost his brother to gun violence a year earlier, and the group surrounding him had had something to do with his brother's death."

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WELCOME TO 612 M*A*S*H: Minneapolis All Shall Heal



Medic Kia Bible cofunded 612 MASH within days of George Floyd's murder, and hasn't slowed down since. The "med tent" has become the most accessible place in the neighborhood to get medical care. (Photo by Jill Boogren)

By JILL BOOGREN

When Kia Bible went to 38th St. and Chicago Ave. four days after George Floyd was killed by Minneapolis police, she had no idea she was about to be called into service. Moved by her 12-year-old daughter, who had asked how she's supposed to explain to her grandkids one day what was happening, Bible had spent the previous two days with her kids showing them – by going to protests and then volunteering in North Minneapolis to distrib-

ute supplies and helping with cleanup along E. Lake St.

Exhausted, Bible was ready for a break when the memorial site somehow caught her attention. Within moments they headed over, stopping first to see her Uncle Bob at 37th St. and Columbus Ave., where she had spent most of her adolescence. Her uncle told her to check out the white bus parked at the intersection – and his idea to create a medical bus. Intrigued, Bible said she'd try to find EMS personnel, but first she was

going to grab some chicken that another uncle was preparing for the community in what would come to be known as George Floyd Square.

Call it serendipity or call it divine, as Bible does, before she could even eat her meal, she spotted two women with red crosses on their shoulders (indicating they were medics) and shared the idea. They messaged an online forum, and the very next day volunteers began showing up.

612 MASH >> 3

Bridging the gaps

By JILL BOOGREN

612 MASH aims to bridge the gaps in health care, including addressing the racial disparities evident in the system.

According to Kimberly Wooster, BIPOC [Black, Indigenous, People of Color] patients they see are often treated with what they call "Treat 'n' Turf" – "treated for their immediate injury then... turfed out of the hospital with, like, 18 pages of instructions but no real help." 612 MASH will take care of what they can within their scope of practice then remind the patient or guardian to make an appointment to see a physician or specialist as needed – and help them do it. Even Wooster, who has been in medical research health care for 10 years and is well-practiced at navigating health care and insurance and hospitals, still learns on the fly.

"Okay, where do you expect this person to find this resource if it's hard for ME to find it, and I already know what I'm looking for?" asked Wooster.

In fact, 612 MASH is doing a case study based on the BIPOC patients they treat on the disparities in health care they've faced in hospital establishments. Wooster is looking at the actual discharge instructions, consulting with nurse practitioners and physicians to determine whether this is the standard of care and whether it's applied uniformly to BIPOC and white people, and engaging with allies in the medical community to see if they received quality of care and appropriate follow-up – beyond just being safely discharged.

Wooster speaks of the importance of closing cultural gaps, which can have dire consequences in health care and which are

BRIDGING >> 3



The Hiawatha Clinic is being closed as a cost-saving measure by M Health Fairview. It has been closed since the COVID pandemic hit. (Photo by Terry Faust)

Fairview to close Hiawatha Clinic

Closing ends neighborhood's 80-year history as medical destination

By IRIC NATHANSON

For more than 80 years, Minneapolis southsiders have come to the corner of 38th St. and 42nd Ave. to receive their medical care. But that corner's era as a medical destination is coming to an end now that M Health Fairview has decided to permanently close its Hiawatha clinic and pharmacy, starting in December.

The clinic's history extends back to 1935 when a young Min-

neapolis doctor named Meyer Belzer opened his medical office in a commercial building on the southeast corner of 38th and 42nd, across from the site of the future Riverside Theater.

Initially, Dr. Belzer shared the building with a dentist. Later, he would expand his office to include five partners, and establish the Belzer Clinic, one of the city's first group medical practices. While managing the clinic, Dr.

Belzer maintained a close working relationship with Fairview Hospital as a long-time member of the hospital's medical staff.

After Dr. Belzer left the practice in 1980, his medical group became known as the Family Medical Clinic. Then in the 1990s, the clinic was sold to Fairview Health Services, now known as M Health Fairview.

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The Violence Interrupters gathered in the former K-Mart parking lot before going on patrol along Lake Street on Wednesday, Oct. 21, 2020. (Photo by Terry Faust)

They're interrupting violence

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"The situation could have been deadly," Abdul-Ahad recalled. "There's not always time to plan, sometimes you just have to de-escalate. But this intervention was successful."

Breaking up fights or arguments before they become violent and police need to be called is the major goal of the Violence Interrupters, a group that was started in September through the Minneapolis initiative. The group members are hired by the Office of Violence Prevention (OVP).

'Doing what we should have a long time ago'

"We started in south Minneapolis, first walking the Lake Street Corridor from uptown to 35W," said Jamil Jackson, another Violence Interrupter. "There's a group that goes from Chicago to Hiawatha, and between 38th and Lake St. Two groups have also started on the north side."

Jackson, a consultant for OVP, said he put the proposal together, based on a similar Violence Interrupters group in Chicago called Cure Violence. He also founded Change Equals Opportunity, an organization that provides mentorship for Black youth.

"Our goal is to engage the community, primarily by being violence interrupters," Jackson continued. "We provide resources for kids and remove barriers causing some of the violence. We work with the community as a whole, but we primarily focus on youth."

He said there are now a total of 80 male and female Violence Interrupters on both the north and south sides of Minneapolis.

"After the violence, looting, rioting, defunding the police and large numbers of police officers leaving, there was a need for the community to pull itself up and start doing what we should have been doing a long time ago," Jackson said.

Focus on youth

Abdul-Ahad, who has been doing community outreach for the past 30 years since growing up in the Philips neighborhood, said the Minneapolis initiative was a couple years in the making.

The members of the Violence Interrupters had to go through training, including training in de-escalation.

"Some have also had past difficult experiences with the police," Abdul-Ahad said. "Being a part of the Violence Interrupters gives those persons an opportunity they didn't have in the past, a second chance of giving back to the community."

He said there is a lot of engagement, because violence can spread like a disease.

Abdul-Ahad also runs Teach-

ing Our Urban Communities Hope (TOUCH), an outreach group for kids affected by trauma and violence.

"The young are our future," he stated. "We need to give them opportunities early, the opportunities we didn't have." He said it is important to work with the younger generation, who can communicate effectively with their peers.

Even though the program has just begun, Jackson said the Violence Interrupters have already seen success. "The community is helping us identify some of the troubled youth. Young people are calling us and asking us for support. We are having youth participate in focus groups, and we are listening to them."

Jackson said the Violence Interrupters are developing relationships with the youth, but that takes time. "They have been lied to and taken advantage of, and we are the new kid on the block, so we need time. We are also building relationships with schools and parks."

"These are not bad kids," stated Abdul-Ahad. "They just have nothing to do and nothing to look forward to. They don't understand the consequences of their actions before it's too late."

Both men agreed that COVID-19 has not helped the situation. "COVID-19 is a burden," said Jackson. "We have had to go door-knocking. We need to reach the schools, but they are closed. We're looking for a warehouse space for youth to come to us."

"Getting community centers open is so important," Abdul-Ahad remarked. "The youth are getting so frustrated, which accounts for part of the uptick in violence. COVID-19 kills people, but our youth are dying faster by gun violence."

"These are not bad kids. They don't understand the consequences of their actions before it's too late."

~ Muhammad Abdul-Ahad

'It will take all of us'

The Violence Interrupters are out on the Minneapolis streets six nights a week. They use walkie-talkies to communicate with each other, as well as other groups walking other streets. And the group leaders have walkie-talkies that connect to dispatch.

The program has been hailed by most of the community, but there are some critics that claim walkie-talkies and experience won't match up against violence.

Jackson has a response to those critics. "We can't sit back and try nothing," he said. "Building relationships is the most important piece. If critics have other suggestions, we are willing to listen to them."

"It will take all of us," he noted. "The Violence interrupters, the community, businesses. Businesses need to offer employment, because the biggest contributor to violence is poverty. We need to help kids succeed in life."

And what of the young man who was being attacked and was delivered to safety by the Violence Interrupters?

"He called us and thanked us," Abdul-Ahad said. "He said we saved his life and also made him look at his life differently. And he is thinking of getting involved with Minneapolis."

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Bridging the gaps

>> from 1

often dismissed for Black Americans.

"It's like, 'Oh, if you're not born somewhere else you don't have a real culture that's different from ours.' So not extending that grace of cultural understanding, not extending that grace of 'We come from different places, but my job is to bridge that communication gap as your health care provider,'" she said. Once justice is served at George Floyd Square, Wooster wants to start working with health care providers to bridge that gap.

"We need to take a strong look in the mirror and really either internalize those lessons we were all taught in undergrad in medical school, or get out of the medical field," she said. "Cause all your patients are patients. I don't care if you don't like them, don't know them, don't understand them, you're gonna have to find a way to cross that bridge. 'Cause they cross the bridge by getting to you."

612 MASH is also working on developing community education, including basic first aid and training that can buy time in an emergency.

"It can be 10 minutes before an ambulance gets to you. If you have someone having a heart attack or experiencing an overdose, the training I can give you is not going to make you a medical professional, but it will buy you that time," said Wooster.

Part of the 612 MASH mission is to "accelerate the People's control for equality." Bridging the gaps is vital to moving forward. For more information, see www.612MASH.org or contact 612mash@gmail.com.



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Traction splint

WELCOME TO 612 M*A*S*H >> from 1

"Little did I know on May 29 I was going to become a full-time activist," said Bible, laughing.

Meantime, Kimberly Wooster had been working as a street medic at area demonstrations, first at the protest on Hennepin Ave., where the group of physicians and nurses she was with got hit with rubber bullets, tear gas and mace, and next at the Kmart on Nicollet Ave., where she encountered similar actions. She told her husband she needed to take a few days away from the protests "just 'cause my body was hurtin'" but stopped by the memorial to do some basic medic work. As she was leaving, she went to drop off a donated pop-up tent. There, she met Bible.

Wooster returned the next day, and neither she nor Bible have slowed down since.

Bringing care to the community

Donations began pouring in – canopy tents, medical supplies, inhalers, Benadryl. The bus became a space for storage as well as a place for volunteers to rest, and care moved into adjacent tents. With so many people visiting the memorial at the time, needs were high. Medics provided water and treated heat exhaustion and sunburn, as well as patients going into anaphylactic shock and other serious trauma cases. One such case, Bible described, was a person whose girlfriend tried to chop his arm off with a machete that had become heavily infected.

"If he didn't go into a doctor that day or the next day, it was quite possible that he would lose his arm," said Bible.

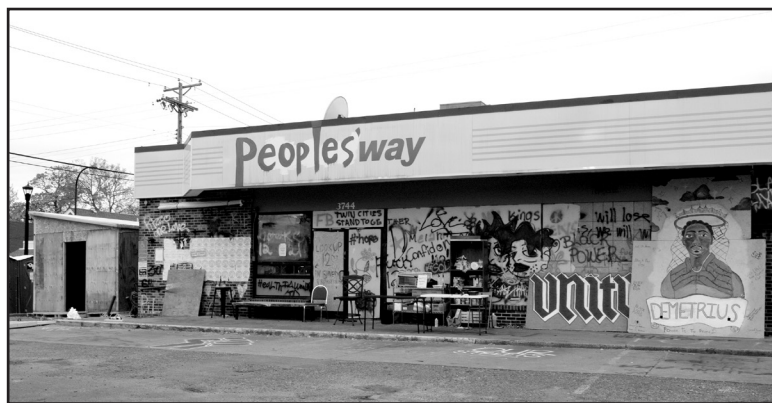
Word quickly spread of the med tent, which for many people was – and still is – the most accessible place to get care. In addition to providing services to residents and visitors to the Square, they began receiving calls from surrounding neighborhoods requesting help. If it was a trusted source, they would go outside the barricades to answer the call. People also found the med tent on their own. In one instance, a gentleman was literally pedaling for his life when he rode his bike into the Square with two gunshot wounds, calling for help.

"The second we got him off his bicycle, I think his body realized, like, 'Okay, I'm gonna let somebody else take over,' 'cause he just fell," said Wooster. He was bleeding from his carotid artery. The medics were able to plug up the wound, and as they did so they discovered a second wound. Their goal was to buy the patient some time until the paramedics arrived. But after calling 911, they were met first by what Bible estimated to be about 10-12 police officers and 5-7 National Guard officers, all heavily armed.

"It was terrifying, because they jumped out loaded for bear. Two of 'em had assault rifles. They were extremely hostile," said Wooster. "There was no kind of professional courtesy at all, and they were trying to interrogate people as they were treating." Wooster believes it wasn't until after the paramedics got there that the officers realized they were a medical unit, but Wooster said they "straight



Above, Left to right: Medics Skylar Fynboh and Kimberly Wooster, 612 MASH Chief Operating Officer Chantal Tousignant and Medic Splinter stand outside of the newly-built winterized "med tent" at George Floyd Square. It is located on the far end of the Peoples' Way (formerly the Speedway) at George Floyd Square. (Photos by Jill Boogren)



up interrogated us like we did it to him."

Meantime, the bus, which was parked from one side of Chicago Ave. across to the other, served as a barricade.

"We built a wall of people at the bus to keep people back. Tensions were high," said Bible. She defused a confrontation between a protector and an officer by putting a hand on his shoulder and telling him to "stand down." He was one of the 40 or so community protectors who were also operating under Bible's direction.

Bible recalled when Dr. Jackie Kawiecki, who had arrived a couple days after Bible began taking volunteers, told her she looked like she was swimming under water. Bible had replied, "I am. I'm kicking from the bottom of the ocean and shooting for a star, and I'll be damned if I don't get one."

What was meant to be about a five-hour volunteer shift for "Dr. K" became 50 straight days, and together Dr. Kawiecki and Bible cofounded 612 M*A*S*H.

"We used to joke, like, 'Oh, we're working out of a MASH unit out here,'" said Bible. They used 612 then changed the meaning of the acronym MASH, from Mobile Army Surgical Hospital to Minneapolis All Shall Heal. "We weren't a surgical unit. But we are in the center of Minneapolis, and we're hopeful that what we do provides a tangible way for all of us to be able to

heal."

Shifting needs

For the first couple of months, they operated nonstop, with about 30-60 people in their crew. Now, they've got a handful of core team members and about 10 on support staff. All are volunteers. The tempo has shifted, and so have the needs of the community. Pre-July 4th, as Wooster described, they were managing more emergent issues, which still happen, but further apart. And now people come for follow-up and primary care.

Bible mentioned a gentleman on dialysis who has sores on his legs that often seep, which could get easily infected. Though a nurse checks in on him weekly, he still checks in at the med tent just to make sure it's looking good.

"Anything we can do that obeys our scope of practice in your follow-up, we're happy to do for free," said Wooster. She later emphasized that 612 MASH is available to treat anyone who walks in. "Your circumstances as to how you got injured are unimportant to me – and should be unimportant to any medical professional."

Asked why people choose to come to the med tent rather than go elsewhere, Bible was quick to respond: "Because we're genuine. The people here are absolutely here to do the work. They wanna be here," she said. "To come out

here and give unconditionally everything you can possibly give, you can't explain that feeling that you get when you're around somebody that genuinely cares."

Leading by example

Fittingly, Bible has been nicknamed "Mama" by her crew. Between her godkids, stepkids and biological kids, she calls 17 young people her kids, in whose lives she plays an active role. Just as she walked with her daughter into the uprising and the fight for Black liberation, she's taught and mentored people in the Square. While developing the medical unit, she was also leading the community protection crew who helped keep eyes and ears on the site. Though there's new on-site security now, many of these original protectors still drop in to check on medical.

612 MASH was also the epicenter of the Square, where for a time everyone was coming to Bible for answers. She made the rounds getting to know as many people with boots on the ground as possible to make needed connections. All while juggling her personal and professional roles.

"It's kind of hard for myself to separate the two, from being just a Black woman and fighting for liberty in the community that I grew up in and being a co-founder of a nonprofit organization that is gonna provide medical to this space on a genuine level," she said. She's finding that balance.

Moving forward

On Oct. 7, a fire destroyed the med tent. As is the modus operandi within the George Floyd Square community, a call for help immediately brought people with shovels, brooms, bodies and hands to help tear it down and clean it up. It also bumped up the timeline to build their new winterized space, which was already being discussed. Mostly, though, "It lit a fire under our butts to remind ourselves that we do not have a choice other than just to simply do the work," said Bible. "That's what we're here to do, and we're gonna continue to do it. It's that simple."

Looking ahead, 612 MASH plans to serve as a mobile unit at encampments, rallies and in underserved communities. Their mission is to bridge the gaps in health care that disproportionately impact BIPOC communities while creating meaningful educational opportunities (see sidebar). Wooster said that once justice is served, they may stay until the gaps are closed and they feel the community is safe, then bring the operation to other neighborhoods in North and South Minneapolis.

To lend a hand

612 MASH needs volunteers. They're looking for nurses and anyone with EMT-B, EMT-A and/or paramedic certification. They also need physicians who can lend their insight and experiences by serving on the Board of Directors of 612 MASH, a 501c3 nonprofit organization.

Donations, including monetary, are greatly appreciated (Cashapp: \$612MASH, Venmo: @medicalbus).

Find 612 MASH on Facebook @MinneapolisAllShallHeal

Thanks for being an important part of our future

It was with great sadness that I read the announcement from the *Southwest Journal* this month that the longtime Minneapolis newspaper will be shutting down operations at the end of this year. Their last issue will be published right before Christmas.

The *Southwest Journal* has been without question a respected community newspaper that not only served its readers admirably during its tenure, but it also has been a great marketing vehicle for its advertisers. Known for well researched articles and well read by its readers, it also was an important part of the community fabric of southwest Minneapolis.

I wish owners Terry Gahan and Janis Hall the very best going forward, along with their talented staff of writers, designers, and salespeople. I had to smile when I read on their website about the early days of the *Journal* and how their original base of operations was the kitchen table of their Linden Hills home. It reminded me of my first internship in journalism back in 1976, when I worked for the editor of the former *North End News* in St. Paul, Lee Svitak Dean, who likewise pasted up

the layout for the paper on her own kitchen table. Something tells me that many community newspapers got their start in that very same manner.

This recent chapter with COVID-19 and all the unrest in South Minneapolis has underscored the need for community journalism now more than ever before. Residents and business owners need to know what's happening in their neighborhood and they need to have a mechanism to engage in their community – and a community newspaper like the *Messenger* provides that vital link.

Inside the pages of the *Messenger* each month you read about the important work that's being done to rebuild South Minneapolis. The stories of neighbors and other concerned citizens not only picking up brooms to clean up after the looting in Minneapolis, but diving in during the weeks following to figure out how to put South Minneapolis back together again, to rebuild those businesses and lives disrupted during the tumult.

We can't deny it's been a challenging time financially for

View from the Messenger

By DENIS WOULFE

Sales Manager

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the newspaper industry. In addition to the trends in national advertising over the last few years, we also are keenly familiar with the plight of local businesses in Longfellow and Nokomis who have had to shut their doors during COVID-19. Some have reopened and are back in business full strength. Others are dealing with capacity restrictions where they can only serve so many customers in their operation at one time. Others are still making plans to reopen their businesses at a later date.

I know the struggles these businesses face are real and they need the support of the good people of Longfellow and Nokomis. Of all the neighbor-

hoods I've covered as a journalist over the years, I have seen how Longfellow and Nokomis residents in particular have a strong symbiotic relationship with the business owners down the street from them. And I see that firsthand as a board member of the Longfellow Business Association. Residents realize that they need a strong business climate for a strong community overall. And business owners know that they need a strong residential community for their businesses to thrive and prosper.

The *Messenger*, likewise, needs the support of both residents and business owners, to continue to do the job that we're doing providing the news about what's happening in your community. We know our readers are devoted to the *Messenger*. That's why the *Messenger* continues to be one of the neighborhood newspapers that will be delivered door-to-door in your neighborhood so everyone has equal access to it. And we know that our advertisers are committed to reaching the *Messenger* audience with their promotions because they need that continued community support.

But just know this: The *Messenger* appreciates that all of you

are behind us to continue to do the important job we're doing in Longfellow and Nokomis. You need to know that all of you are a vital part of our operation. If you're a reader, by all means continue to share *Messenger* stories with others, either via print or digitally through Facebook, Instagram, on our website, or through word of mouth. And be sure to let our advertisers know that you appreciate their continued presence in the *Messenger*.

If you're an advertiser who's business has struggled during the pandemic and haven't been able to advertise as much as in the past, we get it: There's no question that many businesses are in the midst of trying to rebuild their client base. The *Messenger* will be there when you're ready to create that pathway for the future to rebuild your business.

But just know that we believe that for all these reasons, the *Messenger* is more important now than ever before as a community newspaper in South Minneapolis. And likewise, your support is more important than ever before as well. Thanks for being an important part of our past and thanks for playing an important part in our future.

WHAT DO YOU THINK? Email letters, guest commentaries, press releases and notes to Tesha@LongfellowNokomisMessenger.com

How might public safety be transformed if we work together?

A few weeks after the murder of George Floyd, I joined over 100 of my Seward neighbors at Matthews Park for an event sponsored by Boneshaker Books. We gathered to remember those killed by police and to envision what relying less on police might look like.

Elizabeth Wrigley-Field told the crowd, "We organized this event here because this neighborhood has a problem with calling the police." She read Facebook posts about neighbors calling the police or encouraging others to call for reasons that included someone "sitting on a porch of a house they don't live in" or "riding a bike suspiciously" or "walking suspiciously."

Being admonished for calling the police felt disconcerting. It's a sharp contrast to the culture I had become accustomed to in Minneapolis. I moved here almost 30 years ago, first living in the Bryant neighborhood and now in Seward. When it comes to responding to crime or creating safety, the message over those years had been consistent: Call the police. If you see something suspicious: Call the police. If you

feel unsure: Call the police.

Now, along with other attendees at Matthews Park, I have committed:

To keep myself, my family and every member of our community safe. Safe from harm done by others, within our own families, and safe from the police. When I feel fear, I pledge to breathe and think about the dangers my actions could cause for others. I pledge to do what I can to keep my neighbors safe from the MPD.*

Interestingly, the very night I took the pledge at Matthews Park, I was awakened at about 1 a.m. by someone outside talking loudly in a distressed voice. My first thought was that it was a test – a decoy sent to see if I or my neighbors would call the police. I'll be honest. If this had been a test years ago, I likely would have failed – it's late, I'm sleeping, I'm concerned, but just want someone else to deal with it. In the past, I would have called the police, following the advice I'd always gotten.

This time, I remembered the pledge I had taken: When I feel fear, I pledge to breathe and

Guest commentary

By MICHELE BRALEY

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think about the dangers my actions could cause for others. I pledge to do what I can to keep my neighbors safe from the MPD. I stopped and breathed. I only heard one voice outside. They were able to talk, and they weren't yelling for police or asking for help. The voice sounded like they might be under the influence. Then, I did some thinking: Would this person feel more safe or less safe if a police car rolled up right now? Would they feel less or more safe if an officer, probably male, approached them in the dark alley? What options would the officer actually have if the person needed some type of assistance? My questions did not lead me to think that calling

the police would make anyone more safe. I listened again and went back to sleep, assured that if they needed help, they had the voice to ask for it.

In the following days, I shared this experience with a few neighbors. I discovered I wasn't the only one awakened and concerned. A teenaged neighbor had immediately gone outside and saw that the person was alone, making their way to the end of the alley. Seeing no danger, he went back inside. Another neighbor went to her porch when she heard the person approaching. She saw them on a phone, appearing to be in an argument. She called out to ask if they needed help, but got no response. She called out again, saying that due to the yelling, she needed a clear response that no help was needed. The person said that they were okay, so she returned inside.

My block did it. We passed this first "test." We listened, we thought, we acted, and we showed care for someone in our community without calling the police.

To go from a culture of calling the police to picturing a com-

munity without police is a long way to travel, and the final destination is unimaginable, even downright frightening to some in our community.

Fortunately, there is a large space on the continuum between the current Minneapolis Police Department – with its budget of \$193 million and 800 sworn officers -- to a city with no police. It's a space that offers a lot of room for creativity and reimagining of how to keep ourselves and each member of our community safe.

How might public safety be transformed if we worked together on re-envisioning this vast middle ground? What might it look like to rely less on the police for safety and more on each other?

As a first step, maybe we can agree to "breathe and think" before calling the police.

*Thank you to pledge co-authors Rahmla Bile, Matt Plummer, Elizabeth Wrigley-Field and Emma Youndtsmith.

Michele Braley is the Executive Director of Seward Longfellow Restorative Justice, a resource neighbors can rely on to respond to harm and crime – before or after the police are called. Find out more at SLRJ.org and by contacting Michele at 612-202-0027 or Michele@SLRJ.org.

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Story ideas always welcome.

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

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

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Letters to the Editor

My beloved husband died of COVID-19, please take it seriously

To the Editor:

My beloved husband of 41 years passed away on Tuesday, Oct. 13. He had COVID-19. From the day of his first symptoms to his death was only NINE DAYS. He was generally very healthy, and rarely got sick. I brought him to the hospital on Oct. 6, and he was on a ventilator within two days. His organs started shutting down immediately, and he was gone. It was not something we saw coming, we never thought of it. We were careful. We wore masks even when we were just walking outside in our neighborhood.

We didn't go to the store unless we needed something, and we wore our masks, and sanitized our hands. We washed our hands immediately upon reentering our home. We did everything right. Being careful (obviously) isn't enough. If others are not participating in the precautions, they will spread the virus. You can have COVID-19 and be asymptomatic – you can be out spreading your germs to all the people whom you come into contact with, get too close physically, or even just your breathing. Maybe you don't have any person(s) you are worried about infecting. But please remember there are thousands of people out there who have loved ones who are vulnerable. Even if the healthy 22-year-old walking past you doesn't make you think about the virus and its deadliness, maybe you could imagine this person's elderly or unhealthy parents or grandparents? Maybe they're around a child who has comorbidities?

Please do not believe this is "just the flu." Or, "no big deal." Please take precautions! Please protect other people from your own germs. Please be considerate of others. If you don't want to wear a mask, PLEASE order your shopping for pick up or delivery.

And please stay more than six feet away.

This didn't have to happen! I am devastated, and I am now a widow in my 60s. I have to change my entire life around, and I no longer know what my future is going to look like. We were getting ready to retire in a year or two, and maybe travel. Now my life has changed for the worse forever. I am one of the blessed ones who at least have family and friends around me. Many are alone, without any other persons. I know this is a lot to read, but I really hope you read and absorb this statement. It comes from my heart.

Sincerely,
Terra Girard
Longfellow

Thanks for advocating for concerns of community

To the Editor:

I want you to know that I really appreciate you reporting and printing the article in the latest issue highlighting the lack of inclusion of neighborhood groups and voices in planning for the future for Longfellow and other neighborhoods and Lake St. It prompted me to send letters to my state, county and city representatives – because we must always make efforts to make our voices heard to them.

It is *essential* to include these groups. And – it is racist and elitist to not include them. People in power just want to hold on to that power and not hear what residents and everyday people think. And there needs to be a plan immediately – if there is not, it sure smells a lot like people are hoping to do more of the same-old, same-old which has not worked – and that everyday people's concerns will be ignored or the whole set of efforts will be brushed under the rug.

Please continue to use the *Messenger* to advocate for concerns of the local community and neighborhoods.

Christine Retkwa

Muses by Anita White



NENA responds to COVID-19 challenges

Neighbors connect over food, COVID-19 financial relief

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

On the second and fourth Wednesday afternoons of the month since July, folks have put on masks and gathered outside the Bossen Park Apartments in Nokomis East. The 50 apartment buildings of various sizes there house about 1,200 people, but anyone in the community is welcome to attend these food give-away and resource sharing events hosted by the Nokomis East Neighborhood Association (NENA).

NENA Executive Director Becky Timm said, "We usually have a very busy spring, summer, and fall filled with community activities, but COVID-19 threw a huge wrench into our plans. When we hosted that first event in July at Bossen, I almost cried. We hadn't been able to do any work outside in the community since the pandemic hit in March."

The Met Council has identified the Bossen area as a "racially concentrated area of poverty." NENA has been working alongside the residents there for more than 10 years. Timm said, "When COVID-19 hit, we knew there were going to be increased short and long-term needs for residents."

The number one need, then and now, is food. People are hungry, and money is in short supply.

Through a partnership with the Minnehaha Food Shelf and Second Harvest Heartland, NENA has been able to purchase food at reduced cost and distribute it for free at these outdoor events.

Previous gatherings have really run the gamut, according to Timm. She said, "We have hosted in 94 degree heat, freezing cold, rain, and wind."

There are three more events scheduled for this year, regardless of weather: on Nov. 11, Nov. 25, and Dec. 16 from 2:30-3:30 p.m. Gatherings take place at 5734 Sander Dr. Bowing to the inevitable forces of winter, there are no gatherings scheduled for January and February at this time.

Again, anyone may attend and there are no questions asked. One of the imperatives of the program is to provide service with dignity. NENA received a CARES ACT grant from Hennepin County, and funding support through the city of Minneapolis Health Department and the Headwaters Foundation to help with delivery of this program. NENA also raised over \$5,000 donations from the community this summer.

Neighbors Connecting to Neighbors

A recent Food Truck Rally hosted by NENA raised \$1,500 in funds for another new initiative called Neighbors Connecting to Neighbors. NENA staff are grateful to the Nokomis East community for once again stepping up to the challenge of caring for neighbors.

There will be on-going ef-



Nokomis Library staff members Lisa Stuart (left) and Jane Boss (right) discuss library resources and distribute free books to children at the bi-monthly events at Bossen Park Apartments. (Photo courtesy of NENA)

orts to build this solidarity fund that all Nokomis East residents can apply for. "There are many unmet needs that do not fall into the parameters of existing COVID-19 relief programs," according to Timm. Neighbors Connecting to Neighbors is an effort to help meet some of those needs with dignity and love.

Families, couples, and individuals will be eligible to apply for assistance through this first-come, first-served project. People seeking assistance will be paired with volunteer neighbor-connectors to learn about their specific needs, and how the solidarity fund can be used to meet them.

Timm said, "We hope that this program will foster relationships, in addition to passing out needed goods. What might some of those goods look like? A winter coat or boots, baby formula, gift cards to stores to access culturally specific needs."

"NENA staff members are very aware of the imbalance of resources in our neighborhood, and the racial injustice that is woven into that. We hope that these relationships will continue to grow beyond the scope of



NENA Community Organizer Karla Arredondo-Payan has been focusing her attention on providing culturally appropriate food items for people to choose from at Bossen Park Apartments events. (Photo courtesy of NENA)

the program; that it really can be about neighbors connecting to neighbors in a meaningful way."

Visit www.nokomiseast.org for more information about either the food distribution events or Neighbors Connecting to Neighbors.

Volunteer! Hennepin County 2021 Citizen Advisory Boards

Vacancies available on:

- Adult Mental Health Local Advisory Council
- Community Action Partnership
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- Mental Commitment Attorney Panel Advisory Board
- Three Rivers Park District
- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Board

Application deadline: Thursday, December 31, 2020

For more information and to apply online:
www.hennepin.us/advisoryboards



Amber Apartments offers wraparound support and 'truly affordable' housing at \$600/month

BUILDING NEW BEGINNINGS

By TESHA M. CHRISTENSEN

Imagine you are a 27-year old black woman.

You put yourself through school at Metro State while working full-time. You have been working since you were 19 years old, just like your mother did when she was young. You are a grocery store clerk, an essential worker, just a couple of blocks away from here. Despite working full time, you cannot afford your own apartment without government support – the rent is just a bit too far out of reach and the deposit is impossible – but things have been ok because you have been able to access the safety net of a Section 8 housing subsidy for the past three years. You've complied with all the rules and regulations of this Section 8 voucher, and you are grateful. Without this voucher you might be homeless.

Today is your lucky day. You walk into work and your boss pulls you aside and congratulates you. You've been promoted to shift supervisor! You are thrilled and you deserve it, you've worked hard. But that feeling only lasts moment.

You quickly realize you will make \$1.50 an hour more as a shift supervisor, which sounds good, but it won't move you out of poverty, and it will strip you of your Section 8 voucher. So, here you are, forced to make a choice: Do you take the promotion and begin earning just a bit too much money to afford your home and risk being homeless with winter around the corner? Or, do you stay at your low-wage, keep your Section 8 subsidy, and eliminate any possibility of ever moving out of poverty and away from government supported housing?

You're stuck. You're stuck in the housing gap. You're stuck in a broken system.

And...That's the end of the story. You've hit the cliff.

RS Eden President and CEO Caroline Hood paused after sharing that story during a groundbreaking ceremony on Wednesday, Oct. 21, 2020. She continued, "Here we are today, celebrating a small but important step in the writing of a new story for this woman and so many others like her, one that together with others begins to close the housing gap."

When the five-story, 52,178-square-foot building opens next year on the site of the former Bell Laboratory building just north of Walgreens along Hiawatha Ave., Amber Apartments will offer 80 efficiency units that range from 418 to 462 square feet.

With rents from \$600 a month, the units are for those low-wage earners who cannot afford market rate rents, which start at about \$1,000 locally. Attendees at the Oct. 21 event questioned the current definition of "affordable," which is housing costs that are 30% of a person's income. To afford rent payments of \$700-\$900 a person must make between \$2,100-\$2,800.

From dependence to independence

"For someone like me, Amber Apartments offers the leverage to help you move from dependence to independence,"

said former RS Eden client Cletus Robinson.

He moved to Minneapolis from Chicago at the age of 50 with only a single bag of clothes. It felt too late to start over. But with the support of RS Eden and others, he did. "RS Eden helped me see my potential," Robinson stated. Today he works as a bus operator at Metro Transit.

He's excited about RS Eden's latest project. "Amber Apartments will be very affordable. Thank you, RS EDEN, for giving others like me the hope to continue – against the odds, but within a community," said Robinson.

'This project is so needed'

"This is the exactly the kind of housing that we need right now," stated Hennepin County Commissioner Angela Conley. "We have so many people who are just trying to pay the rent. We have so many who if it weren't for an eviction moratorium right now, would be homeless, I passed by so many tents on my way here – covered in snow – because we don't have enough of this low-barrier, low-income housing."

"This is a bright day in Longfellow community," remarked Longfellow City Council Member Andrew Johnson. "This project is so needed. When we talk about the barriers keeping people down, housing is right at the top of the list because if you can get a job but you can't afford housing, you're stuck. This is absolutely the type of housing we need."

Between 2017 and 2018 the number of single adults experiencing homelessness in Hennepin County increased by 21% – from 1,375 to 1,658, according to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. Chronic homelessness among adults with a serious mental illness or substance use disorder increased 59% and 101%, respectively, and as these numbers rise, the availability of affordable housing for this vulnerable population continues to shrink. The imbalanced local rental market reflects a national trend: over the last 16 years, renters' average income has stayed flat while rental costs have risen by 10%.

RS Eden manages or owns nine buildings with 550 units in the Twin Cities that help people off the streets and get them into stable housing. The company began with just three staff members and now has 180 employees. In each building, there are services aimed at the problems that contributed to homelessness, including addiction, mental health issues, lack of education, and more.

"The pandemic has derailed so many people's jobs and livelihoods, while the process of homes and housing continue to increase," observed Hood. "This inverse relationship has been devastating. Additionally, the increased substance use we are seeing (again as a result of this pandemic), and loss of connection and community, have become a trauma that we are all trying to survive through. It's those

community members among us who were already teetering on the edge, that simply didn't have the income and supports to weather this pandemic that has continued so much longer than any of us could have imagined back in March."

Amber Apartments will offer "peer supports" to residents. "Peer supports are making sure



Folks break ground for the five-story, 52,178-square-foot Amber Apartments on Wednesday, Oct. 21, 2020. Left to right are RS Eden President and CEO Caroline Hood, former RS Eden client Cletus Robinson, building namesake Amber Cain, and former RS Eden President Dan Cain. The 80-unit building on the one-acre site just north of Walgreens along Hiawatha will replace the Bell Laboratory building. There will be a 25-space parking lot and inside storage for bicycles. One third of the property will be green space along what planner hope will soon be the Minn Hi Line linear park. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)



"For someone like me, Amber Apartments offers the leverage to help you move from dependence to independence," said former RS Eden client Cletus Robinson. "Thank you, RS EDEN, for giving others like me the hope to continue – against the odds, but within a community." (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)

individuals are connected to folks with lived experience," explained Hood. "If you have never been homeless, you might not realize that the silence of moving inside is scary, that you don't need to leave your apartment every morning at 6 a.m. like you did in the shelters, that you don't need to pack up all your belongings when you leave your apartment each day, and so on. Professionals can help, but people with lived experience are truly the experts."

Mayor Jacob Frey praised the wraparound support options RS Eden includes in its projects. "It's about the ability to transition," he said. "This is the type of housing we need. It's a big deal in our city and we're proud to partner with you. Let's make more of this happen."

Amber Apartments had initially been slated to open in 2019, but the project funding of \$18.6 million took longer to pull together. The last piece of the equation was \$3 million through a new federal funding source through the National Housing Trust Fund.

"This project is a prime example of how state investments can help create new supportive housing that sets Minnesotans up for success," said Minnesota Housing Commissioner Jenni-

fer Ho. "We need to see more of what we're doing today."

'It's going to take all of us'

With today's rental vacancy rate in the Twin Cities at historic lows, and the average monthly rent climbing, vulnerable renters are in a bind, and many are at high risk of returning to homelessness. Add job loss at an all-time peak due to COVID-19, and there a risk for people to back-

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BUILDING NEW BEGINNINGS

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slide. "You are stretched to your ends, and the risk of returning to homelessness or other behaviors you're trying to get away from are high," stated Hood.

"We're not giving people a hand out, but a hand up," explained former RS Eden CEO Dan Cain. "They have to do the work but we provide the opportunity."

He knows because he's been there himself. Jailed after a theft conviction, Cain became the first Minnesota state prison inmate directly paroled into a community drug-treatment program. He entered Eden House, a start-up treatment program in Minneapolis initially designed to treat heroin-addicted Vietnam War veterans returning home.

Cain moved on from there,

becoming a chemical dependency counselor at Eden House, program director and then CEO. As a single dad in those early years, he brought his daughter Amber to work with him.

"When I wasn't in school, I was in his office," recalled Amber Cain, who lives near Diamond Lake in South Minneapolis. The new project has been named after her.

"It's a honor to have this building in my name," she said. "It's a vision and a mission I believe in."

She has raised her children with the values she learned as a child. "RS Eden is based on building new beginnings," Amber remarked. "This could be an incredible new beginning for bringing back our community."

Amber works with UFCW



"This is the exactly the kind of housing that we need right now," stated Hennepin County Commissioner Angela Conley. "We have so many people who are just trying to pay the rent. We have so many who if it weren't for an eviction moratorium right now, would be homeless. I passed by so many tents on my way here - covered in snow - because we don't have enough of this low-barrier, low-income housing." (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)

Local 663 at Cub, and is excited about the potential for collaboration between the new housing and jobs one block away at the new Cub.



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MARKETPLACE

Want ads must be received by the Messenger by Nov. 16 for the Nov. 27 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*, 5139 34th Ave. S. #17097, Minneapolis, MN 55417; e-mail denis@longfellownokomismessenger.com; or call 651-917-4183.

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Becketwood Cooperative is a local Independent Living Senior Housing Cooperative. We are seeking experienced cleaners for Custodial and Housekeeping positions. Duties involve cleaning common areas and resident Member's apartments. Additional responsibilities include working collaboratively with other staff persons, residents and visitors in a friendly professional manner. A 32 - 40 hr/wk position offers benefits, including vacation, medical & dental, free onsite parking and a collegial working environment. PT employment is also available. The Becketwood kitchen is also looking to hire a PT Dishwasher and Wait staff. * Becketwood practices a mask mandate and other Covid preventative measures on-site. For more information and to submit a resume, contact Robin Lillesve at (612) 726-1006, roblillesve77@becketwood.com. Paper applications are available at Becketwood Cooperative, 4300 West River Parkway South, Minneapolis.

CRISIS HOTLINE

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

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STRENGTHENING THEIR IDENTITY

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

When Sean Sherman goes to work every day, he isn't just cooking for cooking's sake. The Oglala Lakota Sioux chef, cookbook author, and promoter of Indigenous cuisine is reclaiming and rebuilding the broken foodways of his ancestors, before they are lost forever.

Six years ago, Sherman started an Indigenous catering business called the Sioux Chef, which would eventually employ almost two dozen people. He traveled across the Twin Cities with his award-winning Tatanka Food Truck. On the menu were, among other things, Indigenous tacos made with cedar braised bison, smoked turkey with forest mushrooms, sumac seared wall-eye filet, and grilled squash with pumpkin seeds. According to Sherman, "Native American food is not only delicious and beautiful, it is literally medicine."

Once you take away the Colonial ingredients introduced to North America by European explorers, what's left is food that is beneficial for heart health, and helps prevent diabetes, obesity, inflammatory diseases like arthritis, and even tooth decay.

All this begs the question that Sherman began asking himself years ago, as a young chef starting out in the restaurant industry. "Why weren't there Native American restaurants all over the place?"

It was clearly time to open one.

Growing a vision

In 2016, Sherman and his business partner/spouse Dana Thompson submitted a proposal to the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board. Their enterprise,

The Sioux Chef, was chosen from a stack of applicants to develop a restaurant at the new Waterworks Park site near St. Anthony Falls. Their restaurant, called Owamni by the Sioux Chef, is still on track to open this spring despite the challenges of the pandemic. Owamni means "swirling water."

The process has not been quick, but it has been clarifying.

Thompson said, "To broaden our knowledge base of Indigenous foods, we traveled across the country and talked with members of many different Native American tribes. We cooked together, and ate together. Sean and I formed the greater vision of reclaiming Native American community health through nutrition."

"From then on, we saw the restaurant concept as a starting point rather than an end goal."

Sherman and Thompson spent the next two years developing a non-profit organization called Native American Traditional Indigenous Food Systems (NATIFS). Their mission is to promote Indigenous foodways, and to facilitate Indigenous food access.

Sherman said, "The path for us now is very clear. With Indigenous food ingredients, and training for Native American cooks to learn to prepare time-honored recipes, we can strengthen our culture -- and strengthen our identity. By sharing this knowledge, and this training model, with Native people across the country, we can collectively be the answer to our ancestor's prayers."

Indigenous Food Lab at Midtown Global Market

Sioux Chef starts with idea for restaurant that grows into Native American Traditional Food Systems and a test food lab



Dana Thompson (left) and Sean Sherman (aka the Sioux Chef) have spent the last few years developing a non-profit called Native American Traditional Food Systems, and their test food lab is at Midtown Global Market. (Photo submitted)

At the heart of NATIFS' mission, the Indigenous Food Lab was born.

Thompson explained, "Sean and I were two kids born into abject poverty, but we were determined to raise money to develop the Indigenous Food Lab. Suddenly we were talking to the Rockefellers, and other major philanthropic organizations. Between June 2019 and January 2020, we raised about 75% of the needed start-up funds. We

eventually found a location at the Midtown Global Market that fit our model, and that we could afford. Minneapolis commercial leases are not for the faint of heart."

The Indigenous Food Lab has been up and running since June of this year. It houses a professional Indigenous kitchen and training center covering all aspects of food service, including research and development, Indigenous food identification, gather-

ing, cultivation, and preparation, and all components of starting and running a successful culinary business based on Native traditions and Indigenous foods.

Food free through December

Sherman said, "In response to food insecurity made worse by the pandemic, as well as George Floyd's murder and its aftermath, we mobilized our team at the In-

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FOODWAYS LOST

Sean Sherman was born on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota. He said, "In the 1970s, Pine Ridge had one grocery store for an area the size of Connecticut. Our family was lucky to have access to fresh eggs and chickens from my grandparent's farm, but mostly we depended on government issued commodity foods like canned meats, fruits and vegetables, powdered milk, government cheese. Everything was over-processed, full of salt, sugar, bad fats and oils."

This was not the life lived by Sherman's Lakota ancestors three generations ago. Sherman's great-grandfather was raised on the plains with his traditional Lakota education fully intact, but things changed quickly as the settler population grew.

Following the 1862 Dakota-US War, Sherman's grandfather and his peers were forced into Native American boarding schools, their hair was cut short, their traditions and their language were taken from them. Foodways could not be passed down once the family lines were broken. Native Americans across the continent became dependent on the food that was given to them, and their health declined.



Sean Sherman at the Indigenous Food Lab, located in the Midtown Global Market. The Sioux Chef is dedicated to addressing the economic and health crises affecting Native communities by re-establishing Native American foodways. They are working to create a new North American food system that generates wealth, and improves health, in Native communities through food-related enterprises. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

SHORTENED LIVES

"Native American males have an average life expectancy of 48 years; Native Americans females on average live to 52. Our communities have disproportionately high rates of obesity, heart disease, and type II diabetes. The tie to poor nutrition, and forced reliance on government issued commodity food products, is undeniable." ~ Dana Thompson, NATIFS Co-Founder/Executive Director, is a descendent of the Wahpeton-Sisseton and Mde-wakanton Dakota tribes.

IDENTITY >> From 8

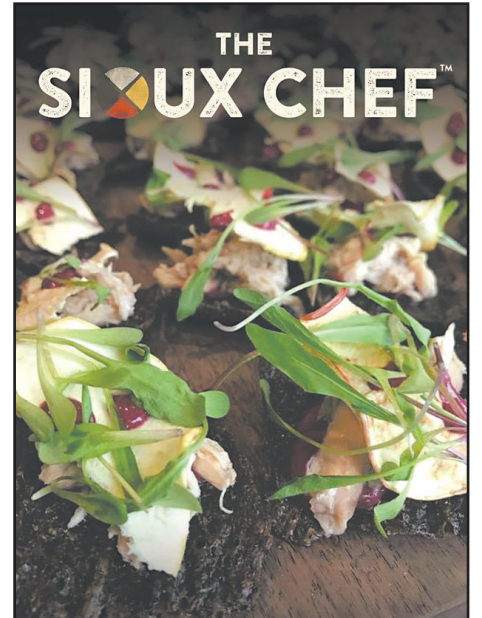
digenous Food Lab.

"The staff and volunteers there prepare 400+ free meals/day as part of a collaboration with Minnesota Central Kitchen, and that number will

soon double. We currently have support to feed homeless encampments, elder centers, people accessing food shelves, and other at-risk groups through December. We hope to raise funds to con-

tinue these efforts. Building strong community is at the core of what we do."

For more information on NATIFS, or to sign up for a volunteer shift in the kitchen, visit <https://www.natifs.org>.



ReStore celebrates 4th anniversary

Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity's Minneapolis ReStore, is celebrating its fourth anniversary in the Seward-Longfellow community after being closed because of COVID-19 and the protests over the killing of George Floyd.

Opened in 2016, the ReStore, 2700 Minnehaha Ave., is a discount home improvement outlet that is open to the public and sells new and like-new furniture, appliances and building materials. The inventory comes from

donations from individuals (free pickup) and companies. The materials are sold to the public at greatly discounted prices. Every dollar raised from sales goes into building homes and supporting local families to buy their first home. And the store's staff is assisted by hundreds of volunteers every year.

Adjacent to the Target and Cub complex now being rebuilt, the ReStore and several neighboring businesses, including Better Future Minnesota and Wood

From the Hood lumber store, provide a neighborhood center for rebuilding materials and Do It Yourself resources.

Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity President and CEO Chris Coleman said he hopes the Minneapolis store will be an affordable resource for the Lake Street corridor as the community rebuilds from the protests after the killing of George Floyd. The Minneapolis store was damaged during the protests.

ReStore director Pete O'Keefe said that the ReStore is "a social enterprise and a green-minded business, and one of the few

places where you can drop off donations."

In fact, the ReStore has received 16,543 donations during the past four years. The store has also had more than 91,000 transactions and logged 22,854 volunteer hours. In addition, the ReStore has taken four million tons out of the waste stream by accepting used goods and by recycling materials.

"We are proud to be a good neighbor in the community," O'Keefe said. "Most of our employees live in the neighborhood."

(There is a second ReStore

at 510 County Road D in New Brighton.)

Twin Cities Habitat is committed to building the quality of life, health, and economic prosperity of the region by producing, preserving, and advocating for affordable homeownership – because homes and families are the foundation of successful communities. Since 1985, 1,500 families have partnered with Twin Cities Habitat to achieve homeownership, building stability that multiplies for generations. www.tchabitat.org.

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NEW RESTAURANT OPENS DURING PANDEMIC

Okome House offers Japanese comfort food

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

When Chef Hide Tozawa was anticipating the grand opening of his Longfellow restaurant two months ago, he thought it might be slow going for a while. So much had happened this summer. He wasn't sure people would venture out with the double whammy of the pandemic and all of the neighborhood unrest. He was prepared to be patient.

The restaurant doors were scheduled to open at 5 p.m. on Sunday, Aug. 2. By 4:30 p.m., the patio and parking lot were already buzzing with customers eager to try the neighborhood's newest restaurant. To Tozawa's delight, he said, "We got slammed!"

Okome House serves what Tozawa calls Japanese comfort food. His goal is to prepare traditional dishes with excellent ingredients at prices people can afford. He said, "We're not 100% organic, but we're pretty close."

He hopes every diner can find something to enjoy on the menu. There are all kinds of options including vegan, vegetarian, gluten free, seafood, chicken, lamb, and pork. The two main menu sections are divided into Donburi and Onigiri.

Donburi is a rice bowl served

with vegetables. The Tori Don Donburi uses chicken from the Larry Schultz Organic Farm in Owatonna, tomato, cucumber, cabbage, broccolini, green onion, and nitamago in a buttery soy sauce. Nitamago is a boiled egg marinated in soy sauce. This dish is gluten free.

Each of the six rice bowls on the menu is as colorful and flavorful as this one, with prices ranging from \$11-\$16.

Onigiri is a rice ball served with a choice of filling. Tozawa said, "For me, this is a food that has never grown old. It's more portable than a sandwich. The rice holds together so well, you could even tuck an onigiri in your pocket. The fillings range from simple (smoked tuna) to complex (pickled plum). Again, there is a flavor for everyone."

Okome means husked grains of rice in Japanese, and rice is what Tozawa's menu is built around. Okome House literally means the rice house. He uses a short grained variety of Japanese rice grown in California, and an industrial rice cooker that is always humming in the kitchen. Tozawa estimates he goes through 25-30 quarts of rice each day.

It's the same type of rice he grew up with in his home town of Akita, on the sea coast

in northern Japan. Tozawa came to the Twin Cities 26 years ago, as a student at the University of Minnesota. He worked at Origami Restaurant in Uptown to help pay for his education. One term shy of graduating, he decided he had found his true vocation: cooking, and he never looked back.

Tozawa went on to cook at a few restaurants around town, including becoming a chef and part owner at Kyatchi – a venerable sushi restaurant in South Minneapolis and Lowertown St. Paul. Okome House is his first venture as a solo entrepreneur.

The restaurant has been open for dine-in since late September. Half a dozen tables are spaced apart in the dining area. The patio will remain open indefinitely, until the weather turns. Masks are required to enter. A liquor license has just been approved, and the restaurant will begin offering a selection of sake, wine, and beer shortly.

Okome House is located in the original Parkway Pizza building at 4457 42nd Ave. South. Hours are Tuesday-Sunday from 4:30-7:45 p.m. Email info@okome.house, call 612-354-2423, or go to www.okome.house.



Chef Hide Tozawa of Okome House holds an old-fashioned ceramic rice cooker. Dishes feature Japanese flavors alongside seasonal, locally sourced ingredients for dine-in or take-out. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

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Community Bulletin Board

Supporting the neighborhood by supporting our local businesses



adxlabs.com
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Rebuilding and Reopening

Welcome to the fourth edition of the ADX-Longfellow Business Association's Community Bulletin Board! With the financial support of Minneapolis-based tech and entertainment company ADX Labs, and the merchant community leadership of the Longfellow Business Association (LBA), the monthly Community Bulletin Board in the *Longfellow Nokomis Messenger* serves as a guide to local business and highlights the rebuilding and reopening efforts of our community.

Rebuild Longfellow:

A grassroots community guide to our neighborhood

REBUILD LONGFELLOW

Rebuild Longfellow is a grassroots team of Longfellow residents who partner with the Longfellow Business Association, Longfellow Community Council, and Seward Redesign to inform on practical ways to support local businesses.

Need assistance? Businesses can reach out to rebuildlongfellow@gmail.com to update their need requests.

What to help? Have a skill or a service to offer? Find a business to help at rebuildlongfellow.org.

Community Stories

1 The Dripping Root



The Dripping Root is a female Black-owned business soon to open on Minnehaha, specializing in cold-pressed natural juices, smoothie bowls, chia seed pudding and kombucha. Delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic, The Dripping Root, hopes to open its doors soon.

The ADX team met with The Dripping Root owner, Catiesha Pierson, to learn more about The Dripping Root and about her experience trying to launch a business during the pandemic.

ADX: Tell us your story. How did you get started in the cold-pressed juice business?

The Dripping Root: I started juicing in 2013 as a healthy way to consume nutrients. Two years ago, I began posting the juice I made on social media. People took a huge liking to what I was doing, and I started selling juice out of 16 oz. plastic cups all around town. Word spread and demand only got bigger.

ADX: What is your vision for The Dripping Root?

The Dripping Root: I've always had an interest in health and wellness, and I saw a need within the community for more nutritious options in the Twin Cities. My vision for The Dripping Root is to break the lines between health and wellness and culture—to create a space of positive energy, healing and togetherness. The Dripping Root will be the only Black-owned juice bar in MN and I hope many others follow soon after.

ADX: How did the pandemic affect your opening?

The Dripping Root: The pandemic and the killing of George Floyd was a blessing and a curse. The pandemic hit just after I signed my lease which then put some huge delays in the mix. After the killing of George Floyd there were so many emotions, not just for me but for everyone: sadness, anger, fear. But it also brought change. Some of these events happened not too far away from the juice bar's location. I just kept thinking to myself that The Dripping Root was the rose in the garden that was left to bloom. It remained there for a reason and that reason was to grow.



The Dripping Root storefront at 4002 Minnehaha Ave, Minneapolis

ADX: Do you feel supported by the community?

The Dripping Root: The community really has been the center of making everything possible. Without the community, I wouldn't be where I am today. My mother has also been my backbone during the process. She started a GoFundMe that helped raise funds for The Dripping Root. I ask myself, "Why me? How did I get so lucky?" My why is because the vision was no longer about me; it became bigger than me.

Please follow The Dripping Root for the latest on their opening:
<https://www.thedrippingroot.com>

To support The Dripping Root's GoFundMe campaign, visit: <https://gf.me/u/yjq7yy/>



Catiesha Pierson, owner, The Dripping Root

Portraits from 6ft

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

See all the latest **Portraits from 6ft** at the Longfellow Business Association's website, www.longfellowbusinessassociation.org

2 Eat for Equity



Eat for Equity is a food based non-profit with inclusion, equity, sustainability and generosity at its core. They moved into the space adjacent to Du Nord Craft Spirits (2610 E 32nd St) in the early days of the pandemic to operate Eat for Equity Catering and partner with Du Nord Craft Spirits to provide food in their tap room. Before the pandemic, 100% of revenue for the catering company came from events and the organization had to creatively pivot to continue their goal to serve and feed this community. Eat for Equity receives distribution support from Second Harvest Heartland, a local food security non-profit grantee of the ADX Foundation.

Eat for Equity transitioned quickly to provide a weekly meal box pickup so that customers could pick up a week's worth of prepared meals for their households. Meal kits and grocery boxes are offered at affordable prices, including a limited amount of pay-what-you-can boxes so that everyone in the community is able to be nourished.

Executive Director, Emily Torgrimson sums it up: "We are glad to be in this neighborhood, at the heart of the uprising in Minneapolis. We are trying to be of service to our community, be safe, and stay in business. So much of what we imagined for this space is on hold or may no longer be possible. And also much more than what we imagined for this space is now a possibility. We are asking questions about what our community needs, trying to use our space and resources to meet those needs, and trying to hold onto connections and awakenings that have been made possible by all this change."

You can support Eat for Equity by purchasing meal kits and greengrocer shares. You can also join Emily and the diverse, creative and hardworking staff at Eat for Equity by volunteering in the kitchen. They prepare 1000 meals for distribution by Second Harvest each week, and welcome volunteer help to pack meals and clean up (visit <https://eat-for-equity-catering.square.site/>).



To learn more about volunteer opportunities go to
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Visit Eat for Equity on the web at:
<https://eatforequity.org/>

About ADX LABS

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

About the Longfellow Business Association

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

Tell Us About Your Local Business

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

adx

Despite pandemic and civil unrest, taprooms opening for customers

By STEPHANIE FOX

In 1919, as a great flu pandemic was winding down, Minnesota's representative in congress Andrew Volstead, helped pass a Constitutional Amendment, HR 6810, also known as prohibition. After Jan. 17, 2020 the sale of alcohol was prohibited in the United States. The Amendment wasn't repealed by the 21st Amendment until December of 1933.

In Minnesota, the laws remained strict (3.2 beer became the norm) and it wasn't until 2011 that breweries were legally allowed to sell pints of beer onsite. Since then, a number of small micro-breweries have opened taprooms and welcomed grateful beer drinkers. (Micro-distilleries couldn't open cocktail rooms until 2014.)

Then, in 2020, another kind of prohibition caused by another worldwide flu epidemic, required that bars, restaurants and taprooms be closed around Minnesota. And in Minneapolis, civil unrest during the summer riots along Lake St. destroyed and damaged many beer halls. But now, a few are starting to open, with precautions such as requiring masks and social distancing.



Aaron Herman and Garth Bloomberg at Arbeiter.
(Photo by Stephanie Fox)

Arbeiter Brewing Co.
3036 Minnehaha Ave.
612-438-2437
Taproom opening soon

When three friends working at Northern Brewery, a home brewer supply company, first started talking about opening their own brewery and taproom, they could have never anticipated what was to come.

It was 2015, and Josh Voeltz, a man with years of experience in beer sales and marketing first dis-

cussed the idea with his friends. It was now or never, he said, to open a brewery. He joined up with Juno Choi, then (and now) the marketing manager for Northern Brewery and Garth Bloomberg, a graphic designer with experience in craft brewing. Aaron Herman, from Town Hall Brew Pub, who also works at Northern Brewery, soon joined as Arbeiter's head brewer.

They started with a business plan and an idea of how to create a space that made and served

easy drinking German festival style beers, mostly lagers and pilsners, without having to have any specific brand behind the bar. "It allows us creativity and freedom because we are not beholden to have a specific brand on the shelf," said Voeltz.

The mostly traditional brewery is located a half-block off of Lake Street not far from the 3rd Precinct police station. It seemed to be an advantage to be in the center of a thriving neighborhood of business of all types and

the plan to open a taproom in the summer of 2020 was on target.

A light kolsch style beer, a crisp and drinkable hybrid of lager and ales popular with those who enjoy lighter tasting beers is in production as are a couple of IPAs. "India pale ales are very popular and the Hay IPAs are trending now, too," where hops are added late in the boil and again early during fermentation.

Then came the pandemic. But, they adjusted, planning to open a few weeks later, following COVID safe guidelines.

"The benefit for opening now, we had time to figure out the many regulations, city and state. We will have a 50 percent occupation with tables six feet apart. There will be masks and hand sanitizer everywhere."

And then, came the riots. The unrest on Lake St. changed everything. After the three nights of disturbances following demonstrations, the three men looked across the street to see the building that once housed their neighbor's businesses, burned to the ground. They had been lucky. There was some damage to Arbeiter Brewing Co., but they had survived with only some broken windows and a burglary.

"I guess the people doing the destruction didn't bother to cross the street," said Voeltz.

Right now, the taproom is on hold until mid-fall. But several beers are fermenting, including a much-anticipated limited edition Oktoberfest. "It's a little late in the season to brew an Oktoberfest beer. It's usually brewed

TAPROOMS >> 13



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in August," said Voeltz, "but due to when we are opening, we decided to brew one anyway."

And, they made a decision.

Lawless Distilling Company

2619 28th Ave. S.
612-276-1000

When Nathan Karnitz was attending graduate school at Carlson School of Management, he submitted a business plan to start a distillery in Minneapolis. Once graduated, he got together with his wife Kristen and friend Chris, finding a small space in the Seward neighborhood to start a liquor distilling company in October 2014.

They named their new distillery 'Lawless', a nod to the neighborhood's history. During Prohibition, the area had a number of 'tippling houses,' small illegal bars, some in private homes.

Small distilleries such as Lawless couldn't have tasting rooms as until 2014, but when the law changed to allow onsite cocktail rooms, Lawless fortunes

They wanted to help their neighbors and neighborhood. The work 'Arbetier' means 'worker' and they knew that their work would include rebuilding their community.

began to change. Their cocktail room, opened in the summer of 2016, was a hit, bringing in in fans of fancy cocktails using Lawless specialty liqueurs.

Lawless makes vodka, gin, rum and whiskey, but it's their special flavored alcohols and their liqueurs that set them apart. "Our best seller is our juniper gin. My favorite is fernet, one of our liqueurs," said Karnitz. (Fernet is an Italian bitter/sweet, an 80 proof digestive made at Lawless with 23 individual botanicals.)

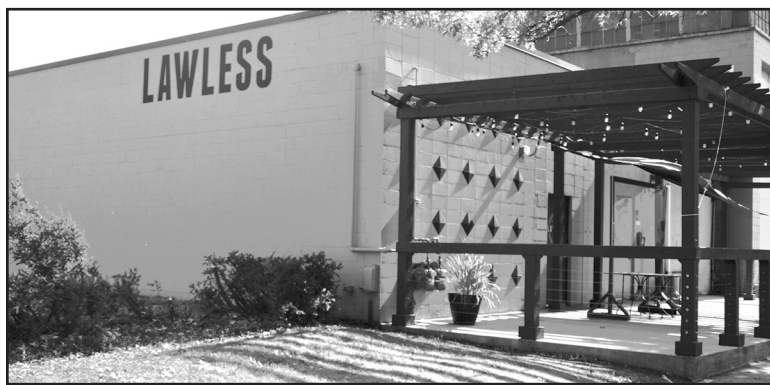
The idea of a cocktail room, for Karnitz, was that people could experience their products socializing with others. "The cocktails come off tap and we can mix and match the taps."

The small cocktail room was the real moneymaker for the distillery. But, the pandemic forced the company to streamline their

"Now," he said, "we have a responsibility to Longfellow to be a place for the community to gather, a place for people rebuilding the neighborhood to come eat. We want to be available to

our neighbor. As a new business, post protest, we have a responsibility to the greater Twin Cities and businesses in general and doing right for all communities."

The brewery is creating a



cocktail bar. Their small tasting room had to move outside. until it got cold in October. "The crowds are down. Before the pandemic we had a staff of 18 to 20 people, but it's pretty grim for the service industry right now," said Karnitz.

"We can sell through liquor stores, but the cocktail bars are the way we make our money. Craft producers need them," he

said.

"Right now the economic downturn means people are buying cheaper produces and the craft products get overlooked. It's a challenging time for small producers."

While COVID has been difficult for Lawless, they were not hurt by the riots, although the Ivy Arts building next door caught fire.

'Black is Beautiful' stout, a way for the brewery to help the fight for equality. They are making 10 barrels, roughly 2,480 pints where profits will go into Black and Brown communities.

"I got a phone call in the middle of the night. We had to work with the fire department to let them know that there were flammable liquids in the building. We spend all the next day moving the alcohol out of the building until things settled down. We got back in and started operating after a week or two."

While the weather is good, the cocktail patio will stay open, but now and into the winter, Lawless plans to stay afloat by selling cocktail kits, ready for home consumption, as well as bottles of their specialty creations.

In addition to bottles of liquor and cocktail kits, at the beginning of the pandemic, the company started producing Lawless Hand Sanitizer. Karnitz donates to first responders and persons in need and includes a bottle with every cocktail kit.

Urban Forage Winery and Cider House

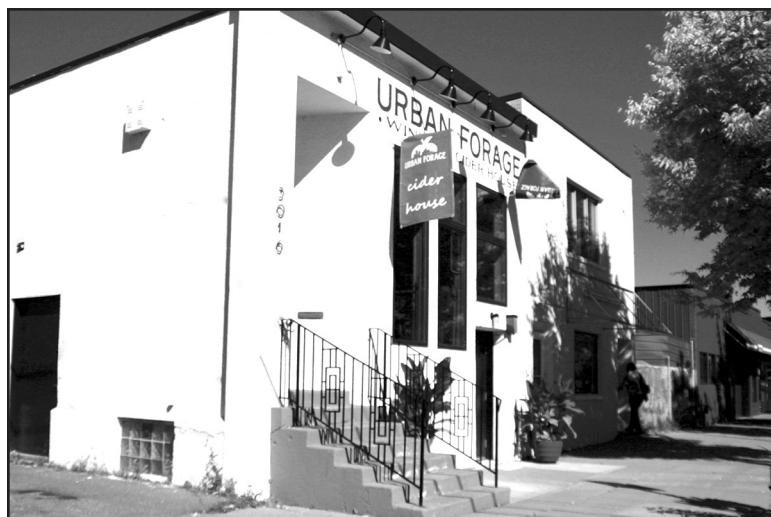
3016 East Lake Street
612-584-4398

Tasting room just opened

Urban Forage Winery and Cider House creates wines and hard ciders made from local ingredients.

The idea for Urban forage Winery began when Jeff Zeitler was laid off his job as a landscape architect. But, instead of succumbing to gloom, Jeff and his wife Giga Rijal saw the situation as an opportunity. It was a chance, Zeitler said, to fulfill a long held dream of opening a winery. They knew of a vacant property on E. Lake St. and rented part of the building in 2012. But before they could make products, they had to jump through the confusing hoops of Minnesota state regulations.

Zeitler wanted to get a license to open as commercial winery, but the people he talked to at the state offices said there was no such thing and he needed to have a farm. Wineries in cities, they told him, couldn't get licenses. He knew differently. "No



one there knew about the other class of licenses," he said.

He hired a lawyer who intervened, pointing out to state regulators that there was actually something called a commercial winery license. In 2015, Zeitler opened Urban Forage Winery and Cider House.

Their first product was a dry cider made with local apples, a refreshing drink for any season. They soon added a lightly sweetened fruitier version.

"Sales were OK, but we

quickly realized that we needed a taproom. Most people want to see how the wine is produced. Once we did, we started to get busy. People were finding us. By 2019 we were doing very well. We were packed on Thursday trivia nights, Sunday's tastings and Saturdays. That year was a good year for us. We planned to open five days a week in 2020 and expand our food options," Zeitler said.

But, then came the pandemic. "The week of St. Patrick's Day we had to close. It was devastat-

ing. We didn't know how long it would last and thought by Memorial Day, it would be fine. We kept making cider."

But, unlike beer, wine and cider maker like Urban Forage are dependent on local ingredients for their cider and have to plan their products a year ahead.

"When dandelions, cherries, rhubarb or apples are in season, we have to harvest. Our tanks were full. We had a reality check because things weren't selling at the pace we expected because the taproom was closed."

Then came the riots. "We were looted. Fortunately in the three days of rioting all they took was some money and some cider. It wasn't as bad as it could have been.

"The looters were just looking for alcohol and money. Every lock was broken but the taproom was spared," he said. For weeks, the windows were boarded up but finally opened the taproom doors to customers on Sept. 24, for on and off-sales Thursdays through Sundays with patio seating when the weather allows.

They still have a number of ciders and wines to choose from,

but are currently sold out of the dandelion wine (a customer favorite), Louise, a white Midwestern wine, Blueberry mead melomel, their higher-alcohol dessert style plum wine.

But, there are still plenty of choices. "We add honey for gin botanical cider with gin spices," said Zeitler. "We make black current cider, our best seller. We even make a carrot wine, (which gives the impression of a light-bodied white wine with a hint of carrot flavor) and a banana/pineapple wine."

Coming soon, red velvet melomel, a mead with blueberry, currant and aronia (chokeberries).

In addition the taproom offers gluten-free pizza and cheese plates to go along with the wines, meads and ciders.

"We are excited to have people back here," said Zeitler. "I miss having a busy taproom. I will be glad when this pandemic is over. It's fun when the place is full. I'm looking forward to having a lively crowd." And, if you can't attend the taproom, bottles are available to take home.

Venn Brewing

3550 E 46th St, Minneapolis
info@vennbrewing.com
Taproom open

Venn Brewing has already opened the doors of their taproom. Connie Sisco, one of Venn's owners and the brewery's director of marketing said that they were cautious when first allowed to open. "We wanted to do everything to keep our staff employed," she said. "And, we have a close-knit community of customers. We wanted to do everything to limit interaction but would do everything we could to ensure that the taproom would feel pre-pandemic."

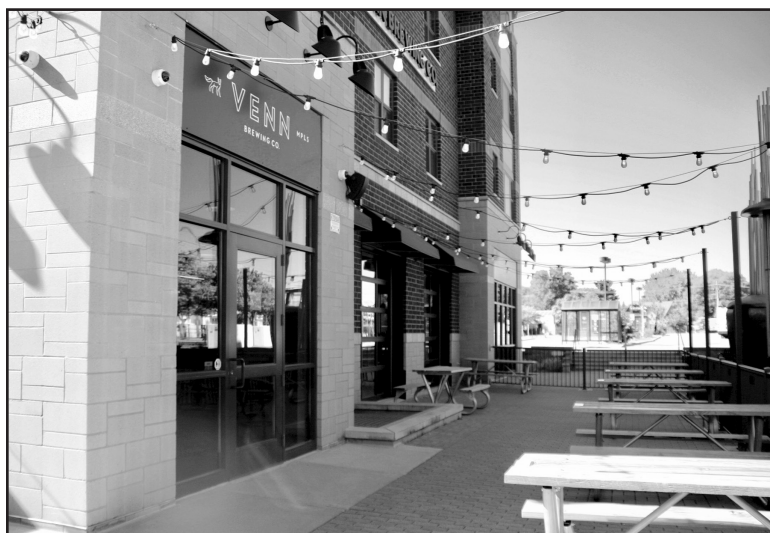
The taproom is open, as is the large patio (bring your dog) with food trucks parked every night and food deliveries from nearby restaurants welcome. Reservations are required, but walk up reservations, usually with only a short wait after customers arrive, are available for groups of four or fewer on a first come, first served basis.

When Venn Brewery opened in 2017, Sisco said that their focus would be on serving people who live close by. "We want the Venn Tap Room to feel like it's their space. Venn has a Scandinavian vibe, with simple natural elements but not a distinct personality because we want this to be a community space."

Venn is Norwegian for 'friend', which is what the founders want to see in their taproom; a place where you can enjoy the company of friends and family. 'No matter where you're from, when you're here, you are one of us,' is their mantra.

Sisco and her husband Kyle had been home brewing for about 10 years, trying out experimental styles of brew and Kyle was motivated to make the best beer he could.

The satisfaction Kyle got from brewing a quality beer along with Connie's background in marketing and Kyle's years in the financial world, "Got us both thinking it would be viable to make a business out of it," Con-



nie said. They partnered with Jedd Taylor who became Venn's head brewer.

The brewery is smaller than many in the Twin Cities with a seven-barrel system instead of the usual 10-barrel many brewers use. "We do thing in smaller batches, but we have 16 taps and at any point you can come to the taproom and we'll have a beer for

any taste. If people want a happy beer, or a fruited or citrus beer or a beer with a little kick, we'll have it. We also have traditional German and British styles," said Connie.

Their beers are gluten-reduced thanks to an enzyme added to fermentations that breaks down natural gluten into simpler proteins and negating

the gluten. "Because our beer is made with barley, wheat, oats and rye, we can't legally call them 'gluten-free'," she said.

They also serve experimental beers for those with a taste for adventure. They partnered with a small and yet-to-be-opened Wooden Ship Brewery to create Good Buddy Beer, flavored with hibiscus, orange blossom tea and butterfly pea flower which, Sisco said, gives it its purple color.

"Folks are tired of staying safe," she said. "We have a sense of community during this weird season of corona virus."

In addition to the taproom service, Venn Brewery also offers 750 ml (about 1.5 pint) crowlers and larger growlers to go. Venn beers are also for sale in many local liquor stores, part of the business they hope to expand. And they offer sticker, glassware and Venn logo hoodies, online.

Venn is located on the ground level of a large apartment building near the corner of 46th St. and is only steps from bus and light rail stations.



Selma Petterson in the FastFest show. (Photo submitted)

Lost 'n' Found Theater goes digital

It's no secret that Covid-19 has kept local theaters and audiences away from one another with no return in sight. Two weeks into the pandemic, Classics Lost 'n' Found Theater Company cancelled their 2020 season. As rehearsals for their Spring production of Shakespeare's "Twelfth Night" began, Governor Walz closed down the state.

Nokomis resident Greg Bastien, the director of "Twelfth Night," recalls the moment: "At that time, we were hoping to still perform in the summer, possibly outdoors. Unfortunately, we had to cancel that, too!"

Noreen K. Brandt, the costumer for the show and also a Nokomis resident stated, "That left us with a lot of antsy actors still eager to perform. Greg and

I, who are both playwrights, literally looked at one another and said, 'Let's go digital!'" A decision was made to work on several short plays, including scenes from "Twelfth Night," and a week later Minnesota Association of Community Theaters (MACT) announced that their short play festival, FastFest, would be digital for the first time. "This was a great opportunity for us, and gave us a deadline to rehearse and film," said Brandt. The finalized program included two scenes of the Shakespeare play and two original scripts: "In a Time of Masks" by Bastien and "Bad Mystery Suspense/Science Fiction Theater" by Brandt.

Based in south Nokomis, Classics' performance space is at Lake Nokomis Lutheran Church,

located on 46th St., two blocks off Bloomington Ave. However, the church is unavailable for rehearsals.

Even so, "We're not done yet!" said Daniel L. Dyke, who's scheduled to direct a new version of the Sherlock Holmes thriller, "The Hound of the Baskervilles," now postponed until October 2021. "We made a decision to continue rehearsing and filming this fall, both a preview of a scene from 'Hound,' as well as other short scripts."

Steven LaVigne, who wrote the Holmes script and is a co-founder of the theater company is working on developing a website. (He's also written a short play about John Barrymore for future production). "We'll post links to YouTube from our Facebook page, and our webpage once it's set up. We're also hoping to either have our own mini-festival or rent a local venue for a fundraiser either next spring or summer."

The roster of actors for upcoming productions include Nokomis or Longfellow residents Coral and Greg Bastien, Brandt, Tony Gillen, Stephen Greenhaigh, Katie Holmes and Selma Petterson as well as Corey Alfred, Connor Burrell, Helen Collings, Candy Dyke, Don Larssen and Daniel L. Dyke.

Bastien would also like to acknowledge that all camera work is being done by Katie Holmes. "She did a great job with our shows this summer, and our goal is to complete four or five short scenes by Thanksgiving, followed by more in 2021. At this point we're still hoping to do Twelfth Night with the original cast next May. It is possible we may end up filming that as well."

Stay tuned!



Stephen Greenhalgh in the FastFest Show. (Photo submitted)



Corey Allred as Sherlock Holmes. (Photo submitted)

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www.fatihlutheranmpls.org
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Take action with League of Women Voters

Nonpartisan group informs and engages citizens for a healthy democracy

By TESSA M. CHRISTENSEN

The League of Women Voters St. Paul works to make voting less intimidating for people.

It is part of the larger national organization, the League of Women Voters, a civic organization in the United States that was formed in 1920 to help women take a larger role in public affairs after they won the right to vote.

The League of Women Voters has been a part of Katie Heit Gardner's story for as long as she can remember. Her mother has been an active member of the Minneapolis Chapter for over 30 years. "I grew up understanding the importance of democracy and defending our right to vote, and would sometimes volunteer alongside my mother at election returns events," said the seven-year Northrop resident.

She became more involved in the League in 2013 by volunteering her graphic design skills for various needs, such as designing an annual report, newsletter, business cards, flyers, and more. In 2019, she joined the LWV Minneapolis Board as the communications chair. This past fall she helped promote the League's 100th Anniversary party and fundraiser by creating materials to get out the word, and celebrate all the league's accomplishments.

For more on the League, read the Q & A below.

What is the value of LWV?

We seek to strengthen and defend democracy through an informed non-partisan lens. We help bring awareness of major policy issues and influence public policy through education and advocacy. We strive to make sure all voices are counted and heard.

Who is LWVMpls for?

Holiday boutique

Epworth United Methodist Church (3207 37th Ave.) will be holding its Holiday Shopping Boutique on Friday, Nov. 20 noon to 4 p.m. and Saturday, Nov. 21 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Expect the usual baked goods, crafts, and Grandma's Attic. Chili and cornbread will be on sale for take-out both days and cinnamon rolls available Saturday for take-out. Masks will be required and attendees will be practicing social distancing. Enter at the 37th Ave. entrance (handicapped entrance is on 32nd St.).

Free Thanksgiving meals

Registration is open until Nov. 14 for the Thanksgiving groceries distributed at the Union Gospel Mission Twin Cities' Men's Campus. The groceries will provide food for a family of five. Individuals need to register by phone or email.

Families can register online at ugmtc.org/tgbags or by calling 651-222-4949. Pickup times will be given with each registration. Individuals need to show a photo ID when the groceries are picked up.



Katie Heit Gardner appreciates how the League of Women Voters works to strengthen and defend democracy through an informed non-partisan lens. Learn more about getting involved at www.lwvmpls.org. (Photo submitted)

Anyone that cares about a just democracy and the equitable rights of all people to vote. We want to help the public gain access to voting and help them become informed voters.

How does LWV further democracy?

Our current Minneapolis Chapter motto is "Educate, Advocate, Empower. Repeat." I think this sums it up nicely. We educate the public through speaker/lecture series (CIVIC BUZZ) that address current issues affecting our community. We work to keep the public informed about elections and elections process. We host candidate forums so the public can hear first from elected officials about issues pertaining to them. We research and discuss issues and draw up positioning statements on these issues. We then advocate on policy issues at

the local level. We volunteer in election returns to provide safe and non-partisan support. We register the public to vote, empowering them to use their voice by voting.

How can people be involved in politics during this pandemic?

Social media is helping people stay current on what is going on; check there for potential ways to take action or volunteer. Check out our Facebook, Twitter and Instagram pages (LWVMpls). You can subscribe to the LWV Minnesota Action Alert email https://www.lwvmn.org/ to help in advocacy efforts. We have many committees that you could get involved in that are all meeting via Zoom. At the committee meetings you can learn about specific volunteer needs.

TAKE ACTION >> 17

In Brief

To follow COVID-19 guidelines, individuals need to stay in their cars and groceries will be delivered to each vehicle.

The meal includes vegetables, cranberry sauce, rice, five pounds of potatoes, gravy mix, a box of stuffing mix, dessert mix and a frozen turkey. One bag of groceries is available per household and pre-registration is required. The food is scheduled for pick up at the Union Gospel Mission's Men's Campus on the weekend before Thanksgiving.

Volunteers who want to pack Thanksgiving groceries or help with the drive-up distribution can contact Josh Windham at jwindham@ugmtc.org or 612-275-0544.

Free meal boxes for kids

Every week, families with children under the age of 18 can pick up a free meal box for each child at 29 pick-up locations throughout the city at Minneapolis Public Schools. Children do not need to be enrolled with MPS. Most sites are open 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Mondays to Fridays, and a handful of sites have

extended hours of 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. All youth, 18 and under, are invited to participate in this program and do not need to be enrolled in MPS or even live in Minneapolis. Youth, parents, or siblings can pick up one box for each child in their family, per week. For pick-up locations and all the details about free meal boxes for youth, visit cws.mpls.k12.mn.us/2020-21_school_year

'Policing: Reform, Dismantle, Defund?' videos

"Policing Issues: Reform, Dismantle, Defund?" is the topic of a four-part series on the Minneapolis League of Women Voters' public policy show, "We the People." The interviews for the series were conducted following the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis. Topics include: Overview of Minnesota police reform legislation passed July 2020; Community activist voices on policing: reform vs. defund; Next steps in police reform; and Working to reform policing culture. Learn more at lwvmpls.org.

This fall we organized a series of online voter registration trainings, and are driving the public to visit MNVotes.org (and our website!) for all information on voting (how to register, where your polling place is, how to vote absentee).

Civic Buzz is a monthly open-to-the-public speaker series that highlights a different issue each month (policing, housing rights, dignity in dying, immigration, domestic violence, Minneapolis 2040 plan, etc.) that is relevant to Minneapolis. Often a

panel of experts in their field, the speakers discuss the topic and then we have a discussion on ways to take action. We host and produce We the People, an video program where we interview community leaders on local issues. This summer/fall produced a four-part series on policing so we can learn more about all sides of the issue. We also have a parks committee that serves as government observers and attend the park board's meetings.

You can read more about who we are and what we do at lwvmpls.org.

100 YEARS

1920 - The League was officially founded in Chicago in 1920, just six months before the 19th amendment was ratified and women won the vote. Formed by the suffragists of the National American Woman Suffrage Association, the League began as a "mighty political experiment" designed to help 20 million women carry out their new responsibilities as voters.

1944-45 - After World War II, the League carried out a nationwide public support campaign, at the request of President Franklin Roosevelt, to establish the United Nations and to ensure U.S. participation. One of the first organizations officially recognized by the UN as a non-governmental organization (NGO), the League still maintains official observer status today.

1972 - Shortly after congressional passage of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), LWV voted officially to support "equal rights for all regardless of sex." The League followed this vote with a nationwide pressure campaign that continued through the 1970s. That national campaign ended in 1982, but LWV continues to push for ERA ratification today.

1980s - The League sponsored televised general election Presidential debates in 1980 and 1984, as well as presidential primary forums in 1980, 1984, and 1988. The debates focused on nonpartisan issues with a main goal of informing voters. As candidates demanded increasingly partisan conditions, however, the League withdrew its sponsorship of general election debates in 1988.

2002 - When the 2000 election exposed the many problems facing the election system, the League began to work on election reform. Working closely with a civil rights coalition, LWV helped draft and pass the Help America Vote Act (HAVA), which established provisional balloting, requirements for updating voting systems, and the Election Assistance Commission.

2006 - The League provided a dedicated website for voter information as early as the 1990s. In 2006, the League launched the next generation of online voter education with VOTE411.org, a "one-stop-shop" for election-related information. Today, VOTE411 provides both general and state-specific nonpartisan resources to the voting public, including a nationwide polling place locator, a ballot look-up tool, candidate positions on issues, and more.

2019 - In June 2019, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that partisan gerrymandering cannot be solved by the federal courts. In response, the League initiated People Powered Fair Maps, a coordinated effort across all 50 states and D.C. to create fair and transparent, people-powered redistricting processes to eliminate partisan and racial gerrymandering nationwide.

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Five tips about Paycheck Protection Program loan forgiveness

As the U.S. Small Business Administration continues working with lenders nationwide on the Paycheck Protection Program and processing PPP loan forgiveness, the SBA Minnesota District shares five PPP loan forgiveness tips small business owners should know:

PPP loan forgiveness is applied for through a lender, not the SBA.

Borrowers can download PPP loan forgiveness applications from SBA's website at www.sba.gov/paycheckprotection and then submit it with required information to the lender that provided them with a forgivable PPP loan.

Lenders have up to 60 days to review a PPP loan forgiveness application and the SBA has up to 90 days to review the forgiveness application once received from the lender.

The SBA remits the amount forgiven to the lender, who must process the forgiveness payment before notifying the PPP borrower of the amount.

Approximately 69% of Minnesota's PPP borrowers are eligible for a simplified PPP loan forgiveness application that can take as little as 15 minutes to complete.

Earlier in October, the SBA and Treasury released a simpler

forgiveness application for PPP loans of \$50,000 or less and streamlined the PPP loan forgiveness process for a majority of the borrowers. The simplified application has only seven items for a PPP borrower to verify and significantly reduces the time and paperwork needed, providing financial and administrative relief to America's smallest businesses while ensuring sound stewardship of taxpayer dollars.

Businesses still need to document PPP loan money was spent on eligible expenses.

Since a key part of forgiveness for PPP loans is using the money for eligible expenses,

borrowers need to provide documentation, including verification of payroll and non-payroll expenses, with the forgiveness application as required by the CARES Act.

The SBA has already started remittance to lenders. The SBA began approving PPP loan forgiveness applications and remitting forgiveness payments to lenders for PPP borrowers Oct. 2.

Help is available for the forgiveness process and recovery plans. To ease small businesses through the forgiveness process and empower them to confidently move their business forward, the SBA has set up a recovery hub at www.sba.gov/recovery with essential details, resiliency tips and connections to local assistance.

SBA's Resource Partner Network – which includes Minnesota Small Business Development Centers, SCORE Mentors, Women's Business Centers and the Veterans Business Outreach Center – also provides one-on-one business advising and technical assistance to small businesses at no- or low-cost.

"The Paycheck Protection Program was an overwhelming success for America's small business sector, which is the engine of our economy," SBA Great Lakes Regional Administrator Rob Scott said. "We remain dedicated to our mission to ensure small businesses can recover and continue to start, grow and expand as we safely reopen our economy."

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'Nokomis Treasures' community scavenger and medallion hunt

The Nokomis East Business Association (NEBA) is excited to announce our first ever Nokomis East Scavenger Hunt! This community event will run from Nov.28 through Dec.12 to kick-off the holiday season. Help us celebrate our vibrant neighborhood, local businesses, and seasonal initiatives safely in the midst of the pandemic.

The "Scavenger Hunt" will include:

- A hidden medallion
- Clues to 14 popular Nokomis East landmarks, and
- A new hashtag to promote your favorite area businesses and initiatives (#ShopNokomis)

NEBA will sponsor \$500 worth of prizes from member businesses to be split between five winners. Winners will be announced on Dec. 19, 2020.

There are THREE Ways to Win!

1. GRAND PRIZE: Find the medallion

Our NEBA medallion will be hidden at one of the clue locations. If you find it, you win the grand prize! The medallion will be hidden in a safe and visible location – no digging necessary. (One winner)

Nokomis East Business Association

By HEIDI
VAN HEEL,
Co-chair
nokomiseastba@gmail.com



2. Correctly identify all 14 locations in the scavenger hunt

Follow our scavenger hunt clues each day and submit your answers by 12/13/2020 to be included in the drawing! Watch Facebook, Instagram, and our website for details. (One winner)

3. Use #shopNokomis

Share photos of your favorite NEBA business on Instagram – hopefully while making a purchase or supporting a community initiative like "Toys for Tatts" at Nokomis Tattoo! Include the hashtag #ShopNokomis to be entered into our drawing. The more photos you share, the more chances to win! Check our new Nokomis East flyer to find a member business near you! (Three winners)

Are you a business or service organization?

The Nokomis East Business Association (NEBA) is a volunteer-driven, fully independent organization. Our membership is open to local businesses – both storefront and home-based – as well as service organizations located in the Nokomis East neighborhood of Minneapolis.

NEBA works to promote our members, area businesses, and initiatives that enrich our community through our website, Facebook and Instagram accounts, newsletter, and through networking meetings and gatherings.

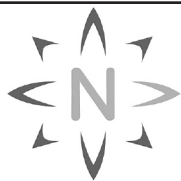
You can participate in this initiative by:

- Becoming a NEBA member
- Helping to spread the word via social media
- Contacting us to include a prize from your business (must be a NEBA member)
- Telling us about your community initiative

To partner with us on the Scavenger/Medallion Hunt, contact us via email at nokomiseastba@gmail.com.

By working together, we can build a stronger, richer, and more vibrant community.

For more information on "Nokomis Treasures" or NEBA, contact nokomiseastba@gmail.com.



Nokomis East
Neighborhood Association

NENA Community Resources during COVID-19

nokomiseast.org

@NokomisEast
Facebook

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- Business Grants
- Home Loans
- Renter's Rights
- Security Rebates
- Staying In Place Grants

Daily postings
on local resources
and developments

(612) 293-9375
nena@nokomiseast.org

Food distribution

Please join NENA on the second and fourth Wednesday of November and on Dec. 16 for our free food and supply distribution. We offer a wide selection of fresh produce, dairy, meat, staples, clean supplies, and personal care items. The site is located at 5734 Sander Drive from 2:30 - 3:30 p.m. All are welcome!

The Minnehaha Food Shelf is an additional resource open on Tuesdays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., located at 3701 E. 50th St. More info at www.minnehaha.org/foodshelf

Housing resources

Housing concerns are also on the rise as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact our community. NENA works with government agencies and non-profits to keep you informed of available resources:

- Hennepin County Community Resources – Food, rental assistance, business assistance, health, and mental health resources. and more at 612-348-5139 or www.hennepin.us/residents/emergencies/community-resources

- Foreclosure Prevention Nonprofit Organization – Mn Homeownership Center at www.hocmn.org
- Renters Rights Nonprofit

Nokomis East Neighborhood Association

By BECKY TIMM,
Executive Director
becky.timm@nokomiseast.org



Organizations – Tenant Resource Center at www.trc2020.com. HomeLine Legal Hotline at 612-728-5767

- NENA Programs – Low-interest home improvement loans; Staying In Place Grants for seniors, veterans, residents living with disabilities, and low-income households; home security rebates; and renter's rights support at www.nokomiseast.org. under "Projects."

Home security rebates back by popular demand

Home security rebates are available for homeowners, renters, and residential property owners in the four Nokomis East neighborhoods of Keewaydin, Minnehaha, Morris Park, and Wenonah. This is a first-come, first-served program.

Eligible participants can apply for up to \$500 in match-

ing grant funds. This is a one-to-one matching grant and a rebate project. Examples of eligible improvements may include but are not limited to doors, motion lights for your home, garage, and alley, alarm and camera systems. Ineligible expenses include window bars, ongoing maintenance and cost of security systems, and landscaping. Visit NENA's website at nokomiseast.org/homesecurity/ for more program information and to apply.

Upcoming meetings and events:

11/4/20: NENA Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Committee at 5 p.m., Via Zoom

11/11/20: NENA Pop-Up Food Distribution at 2:30 to 3:30 p.m.

11/18/20: NENA Board Meeting, at 6:30 p.m, Via Zoom

11/19/20: NENA Green Initiatives Committee, at 6:30 p.m., Via Zoom

11/25/20: NENA Pop-Up Food Distribution 2:30 to 3:30 pm

Sign up for NENA News, your guide to news, events, and resources! Get your neighborhood news delivered to your inbox on most Thursdays. Sign up today at www.nokomiseast.org.



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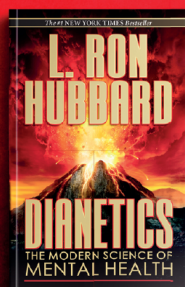


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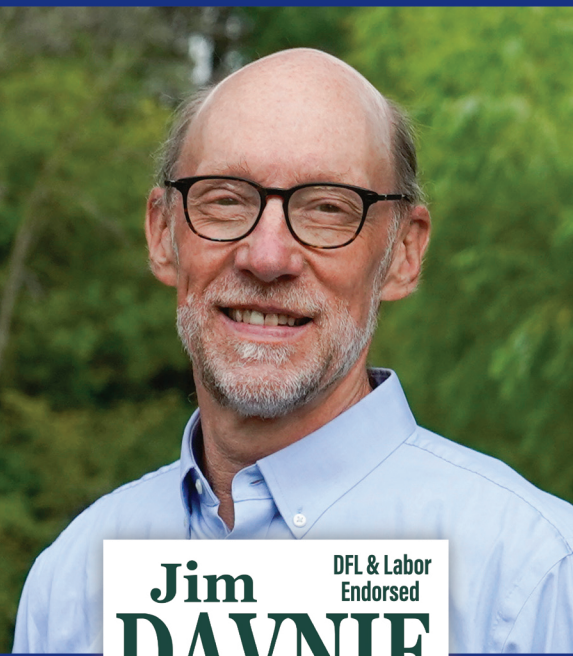
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Fairview to close Hiawatha Clinic

>> from 1

People protest 'ugly' building plans in 1997

In 1997, Fairview unveiled plan to replace the aging clinic with a new two-story building on the same site. The plan raised a storm of protests from neighborhood residents, who objected to the fortress-like appearance of the new building, which turned its back on the 38th and 42nd intersection. At a community meeting in December, one area resident, Rachel Hest, said she was pleased that Fairview was investing in the neighborhood but asked with a note of sarcasm whether "they could have made it any uglier."

Tom West, another neighborhood resident, said that clinic's importance to the neighborhood didn't mean that it had to look inhospitable. "When they talk about all they're doing for the community, we all applaud that, but they seem to think that excuses them from neglecting the other needs of the community— aesthetic and social. (The plan) takes a corner that is in the process of reviving itself and kills 25% of it."

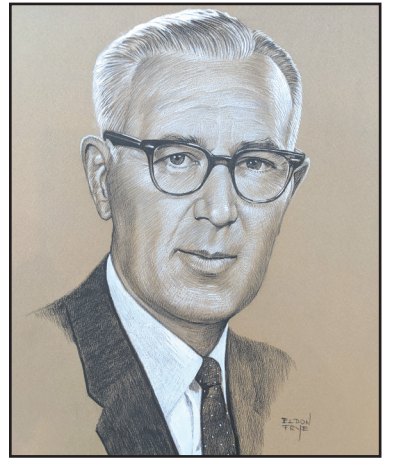
Following the December 1997 community protests, Fairview did agree to revise its plan to make the new clinic building more acceptable to area residents. At a neighborhood meeting in May 1998, Fairview presented a new plan which addressed some of the area residents' concerns. The new plan increased the size windows facing 38th St. and 42nd Ave., added decorative elements to the building's exterior and provided additional landscaping along the parking lot behind the clinic.

While the Hiawatha Clinic's appearance may not win any architectural awards, the clinic has been a widely used and highly prized community resource during the 20 years that it has served the Longfellow/Nokomis neighborhoods.

Shift to Highland Park Clinic

During the current pandemic, the clinic has not been open for walk-in traffic but its staff has been available for phone conferences. Fairview's decision to close its Hiawatha location means that the southeast corner of 38th St. and 42nd Ave. will remain dark – at least for the foreseeable future.

Aimee Jordan, a Fairview spokesperson, said the decision to close the Hiawatha facility along with 15 other clinics and four other pharmacies represents a cost-savings move intended to improve the overall efficiency of the Fairview system. Jordan said that Fairview used a variety of criteria in determining which facilities to close, including revenue considerations, geography and proximity to other



Dr. Meyer Belzer established one of the city's first medical practices at the site of the current Fairview Hiawatha Clinic.



clinics. "Some of our clinics are underutilized and outdated. In some cases, we are operating below capacity at clinics only a mile or two away from each other," she said.

Jordan stated that Hiawatha patients should be able to keep receiving services from their Fairview health care provider at the nearby Highland Park Clinic in St. Paul. Hiawatha patients can expect to receive a letter from Fairview in November outlining their new options at the Highland clinic, she said.

'Blow to the neighborhood'

While long-time Hiawatha patients may be able to stay in the Fairview system, many of them will miss the familiar feel of the 38th and 42nd clinic and its pharmacy, where they had been on a first-name basis with many of the staff.

"My wife and I have used this clinic for at least 20 years," says Longfellow resident David McKay. "The staff, including the front desk folks have always been very friendly, welcoming and helpful. Even when very busy they seem to go out of their way to answer questions and deal with concerns."

"The clinic has been a neighborhood hub that brings people and traffic to the intersection and supports the businesses at the other three corners. Those businesses will suffer now that the clinic and the pharmacy are closing. It's a real blow to the neighborhood," McKay said.

ENOUGH is ENOUGH!

★ ★ ★

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