



Not sure how to talk to kids about race?

*Diane Haulcy shares tips
on how to raise race
conscious children*

By TESHAM. CHRISTENSEN

Minnesotans don't know how to talk about race. But Dianne Haulcy is working to change that.



Dianne Haulcy

Haulcy, who was born and raised in Minnesota and spent her formative years in Eagan, has a podcast through Minnesota Public Radio and Little Moments Count called, "Early Risers: Waking up to Racial Equity in Early Childhood."

"It never fails. I can be in a room taking to elected officials, and the moment I say anything about race, all of a sudden no one has anything to say. It shuts down a room," observed Haulcy during a recent workshop on Raising Race Conscious Youth.

She was speaking to a virtual group assembled by the Bethel Frogtown-Summit-University Partnership on Dec. 16, but the information is part of a regular workshop she offers.

"We're developing people into adults that don't know how to have this conversation," remarked Haulcy. She is focused on starting with children to help both adults and kids become race conscious.

HOW TO TALK TO KIDS ABOUT RACE >> 8

Build virtual ice castle in Minecraft

By TESHAM. CHRISTENSEN

Build a virtual ice castle in Minecraft during the 2022 Saint Paul Winter Carnival.

The online event on Sunday, Jan. 30 from 2-5 p.m. is being hosted by Victoria Theater Arts Center (VTAC) in its Minecraft realm.

"Contestants can enter our special winter build area in Minecraft and construct the most fantastic Ice Palace they can within the three-hour time limit," said Chava Curland, communications manager at VTAC.

BUILD VIRTUAL ICE CASTLE >> 13

HMONG CULTURAL CENTER MUSEUM EXPANDS



"This museum is not just for the Hmong people, but for everyone to come and learn more about Hmong history, art and culture," said Txongpao Lee, executive director. It is located at 375 University Ave. (Photo submitted)

*Museum aims to be a good
starting point for learning
about Hmong language,
history and music*

By JAN WILLMS

The Hmong Cultural Center Museum at 375 University Ave. in St. Paul is not try-

ing to be the Hmong Smithsonian, according to Mark Pfeifer, director of programs at the Cultural Center.

Instead, he said the goals of the museum are to teach the basics of culture and history to people who don't really know much about the Hmong people and culture. Located in the Hmong Cultural Center which opened in 1992, the museum is celebrating an expansion of space and exhibits.

The re-opening of the larger museum

space was delayed by a vandalism attack in September, but everything is now ready for the public to enjoy.

"This museum is not just for the Hmong people, but for everyone to come and learn more about Hmong history, art and culture," said Txongpao Lee, executive director.

Board chair Shuly Her said the Hmong Cultural Center is the longest running nonprofit that specifically sup-

HMONG CULTURAL CENTER >> 8

Urban Indigenous Legacy Initiative unveiled

*16 nonprofits working
together to transform
Indigenous landscape*

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

Many buildings that serve Native Americans across the Twin Cities are outdated and dilapidated, making it even tougher to help those in need, according to Dr. Joe Hobot, president and CEO of the American Indian Opportunities Industrialization Center (AIOIC) in Minneapolis.

"Our aging facilities are being held together by baling wire, duct tape, spit and grip," he told the attendees at the recent #NativeRISE event in downtown St. Paul.

Hobot was speaking on behalf of a newly formed collaborative called the

Urban Indigenous Legacy Initiative, a plan to transform the Indigenous landscape of the Twin Cities. The collaborative represents 16 nonprofit organizations working on behalf of Native Americans metro-wide; the buildings that house these organizations are in need of repair and/or replacement.

These organizations have provided services and resources in the Twin Cities for more than four decades. The proposed culturally affirming buildings would allow the organizations to expand the services they offer, creating a safe, supportive, and empowering experience for Native Americans recipients.

At this moment, with historic levels of funding available for improving infrastructure and reducing racial disparities, the Urban Indigenous Legacy Initiative is looking forward.

URBAN INDIGENOUS LEGACY >> 20



Kevin Smoky Day, Ojibwe language instructor at Takoda Prep High School, led the evening prayer. He said, "When students ask me how to say a prayer in Ojibwe, I tell them it's simple. You only need these words, 'Thank you, Creator.'" (Photo by Margie and Pat O'Loughlin)



Take a local outdoor
public art tour
to enhance well-being

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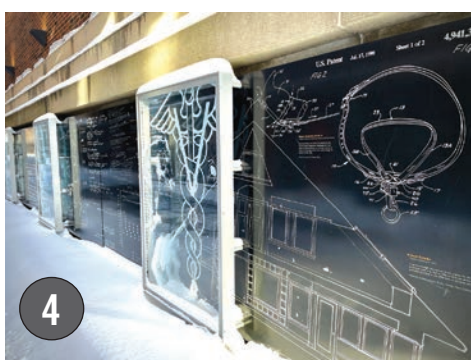
EDUCATION
Cohort-learning, mentoring
key to student success

PAGES 10-11



Churches push for
changes to religious use
ordinance, city revises it

PAGE 14



Take a public art walking tour along the University of Minnesota's East and West Bank campuses. (Photos by Susan Schaefer)

AN EDUCATED TWIST TO WINTER FITNESS:

Take a local outdoor public art tour to enhance well-being

By SUSAN SCHAEFER

Much has been written about the benefits of exercise and being outdoors to beat the blues. According to a recent report from the American Psychological Association, "There is mounting evidence, from dozens and dozens of researchers, that nature has benefits for both physical and psychological human well-being."

The good news is that urban nature is a totally acceptable stand in. Twin Citians needn't feel compelled to own a cabin or make excursions to Minnesota's vast northern wilderness to enjoy the benefits of the great outdoors.

But what happens when the Polar Vortex is at our door?

Those who live here in the "True North" know that the expression, "Winter is Coming," didn't originate with the epic Game of Thrones television series. In fact, Minnesotans surely wrote many chapters in the book on wintering.

Urban denizens take on December through March in style, often embracing winter sports bedecked in Lycra, layers, long johns, fleece, down and wool, on skis, skates, sleds, snowshoes, and sneaks, defying the elements to log miles on abundant city trails and parks.

But sometimes, icy paths, below zero

temps, and Arctic blasts find many desiring ways to get steps in without the al fresco Olympic heroics.

Here's a way to multiply your winter fun: It is well-documented that enjoying cultural activity also contributes greatly to our personal and collective well-being. So, combining outdoor exercise with an artistic twist provides a wellness big bang!

Let me introduce you to one of my favorite metro area outdoor adventures: trekking the University of Minnesota's East and West Bank campuses. Throughout the seasons, I wander the many pathways of this urban treasure, not only charting my 10,000 steps, but experiencing museum quality art, as well.

Best of all, this exploration is free and open to the public. And it's perfect to do with family or friends. The campuses are easy to get to from anywhere in the metro area and boast multiple public parking and transportation options with the Green Line offering convenient stops on both campuses.

I'm fortunate to live in a high-rise condo building adjacent to the West Bank, and have made a three-to-four-mile walking loop a regular part of my exercise program. From my back door, which adjoins Bluff Street Park, I cross the convenient Dinkytown Greenway Pedestrian/

Cycling Bridge to explore the East Bank, completing my route by crossing back over the iconic, covered Washington Avenue Bridge. Both bridges offer amazing views of the Mississippi River high above the limestone bluffs.

JOIN ME FOR A LITTLE TOUR.

Beginning at Bluff Street Park, cross the Dinkytown bridge, turning right at the steep hill by the back of by the Education Sciences Building. Here you encounter the "Garden of Iron Mirrors" installation by Andrea Stanislav. This arty rock outcropping consists of giant native taconite geodes, sliced in two, some highly polished, others sporting shiny stainless-steel plates. The work creates an "intersection between art, science, and history" and nature. These behemoth rocks "reflect" the surrounding building, the wooded riparian steep bank, the beholder, and the very core of Minnesota's geology – taconite. It's a fun place to pose for selfies in the cleverly polished rock mirrors – when they're not snow-covered! [Photo 1]

At the top of the hill, cross East River Road to take the bucolic pathway between Burton, Elliot, Scott, and Wulling Halls. These buildings are architecturally inter-

WINTER FITNESS >> 3

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WINTER FITNESS >> from 2

esting, and coupled with the stunning ancient oak trees, comprise a magical part of this tour. [Photo 2]

Emerging from this nestled path near the side of Northrop Auditorium, cross Pleasant St. SE, then scoot between Johnson Hall and Walter Library (a marvel of art lies inside). With the front of Northrop on the left, turn right past the photogenic buildings of the quad. Great photo ops here!

At Scholar's Walk, turn left, strolling a short block. Outside the Mechanical Engineering Building rises the "Platonic figure" by local favorite, Andrew Leicester. This installation is a soaring homage to the great Renaissance artist-engineer Leonardo da Vinci's drawing "Vitruvian Man." [Photo 3]

Continuing east is the enchanting, semi-covered arcade of Scholar's Walk, a corridor with depictions, drawings, diagrams and descriptions of famous University intellectuals and their works, etched and sandwiched behind lit glass. [Photo 4]

Continuing along Scholar's Walk, cross Church Street (the Graduate Hotel sits on the opposite side). A little way on, outside the Physics and Nanotechnology Building, are the mesmerizing sculptures, constructed of stainless steel and granite entitled "Spannungfeld," by German artist, Julian Voss-Andreae. Spannungfeld means, "tension field," which implies "a dynamic tension, often between polar opposites."

This exciting work consists of two 10-foot-tall figures in a basic kneeling pose, a male and a female, facing each



"The Crucible" by Stuart Nielsen sits outside Amundson Hall. This piece was inspired by the 40-foot diameter geodesic globe of the world installed in May 1993 on Northrop Plaza with the help of 11,535 elementary students. (Photo by Susan Schaefer)

other. "The two figures represent nature's omnipresent pairs of opposites. These dualities are a fundamental facet of nature and are found in Western science as well as in Eastern traditions. They are critical to the emergence of new levels of meaning in science, and, in the case of the two human genders, critical to the emergence of life. Like the positive and negative electric charge in physics or the yin-yang in Chinese philosophy, neither woman nor man can exist without the other."

Standing to the side of each figure, you perceive a solid mass, but move directly in front of each, and the artworks seem to disappear as you behold the buildings and landscaping behind each, a masterful optical illusion. The effect is marvelous. [Photo 5]

Heading south towards Washington Ave., make a right, where outside of Amundson Hall sits Stuart Nielsen's, "The Crucible," of cast bronze and stainless steel. Celebrating the beauty and

strength of natural materials. This piece "was inspired by a 40-foot diameter geodesic globe of the world that was erected on Northrop Plaza in May 1993 with the help of 184 schools, 11,535 elementary students, and over 250 Institute of Technology alumni mentors – a technical, organizational, and inspirational triumph. [Photo 6]

These are but a few of the marvels along this route of world class architecture and sculptures. Not only can you get brisk exercise, but the many coffee shops and cafes that dot Washington Ave. provide respite. Heading towards the Washington Avenue Bridge, the colonial style Coffman Union building, next to the Weisman Art Museum (WAM), is open to the public with a lower level featuring food kiosks and the fantastic bookstore with a wonderful gift selection.

Speaking of gifts, when WAM reopens, its gift shop rivals that of any major museum.

Did you know that through WAM, you can book a guided tour of the public art on the campus?

Since its establishment in 1988, the Public Art on Campus Program has become an integral part of the campus environment. As I've partly described here, each piece of art has its own history and ties to campus life and academics. Public Art on Campus Tours last one hour and cover about 1.5-2 miles can be scheduled for groups of 3-15. Check the website for more information.

From Frogtown, to Longfellow, to Southwest – all roads easily lead to this urban excursion where art and exercise exist in splendid harmony. Maybe I'll see on the trail!

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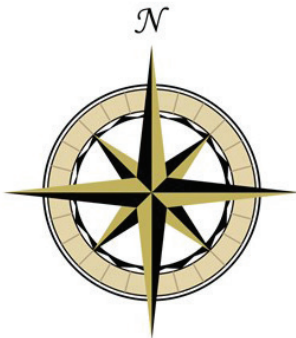


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CONNECTING WITH NEIGHBORS

BUILDING A STRONGER MIDWAY



BY CHAD KULAS,
Midway Chamber of
Commerce Executive Director
chad@midwaychamber.com

Home tests. N95 masks. The fight against COVID-19 has entered '22 and we have once again seen a major uptick in COVID cases in Minnesota. Call it a surge, call it the latest variant, but it is here and many of our neighbors are getting infected.

Remember the beginning of the pan-

demical? We had very few cases but knew of the dangers so shut down much of our life outside our home – where many started working and remain. Neighbors started getting curbside pickup for groceries and takeout orders and continue either out of caution or convenience.

The mindset and the rules are different this time. The vaccine has given many people a sense of invincibility (or at least more confidence), and they are ok with going out more and expanding their bubble. But restrictions have increased over the past few months as the cases go up. Many taprooms, bars, restaurants, and larger events like weddings, plays, and concerts require proof of vaccination or a negative test.

What can you do to be safe but also

see people and support your community?

Get vaccinated and stock up on effective masks and home kits. Thankfully you can do all of these at Lloyd's Pharmacy – though home testing kits have been hard to get everywhere.

Continue to order takeout food from restaurants. January is a slower month for the hospitality industry, so even if you are concerned about public places, you can do curbside takeout or get to-go orders and never have to take off your mask in the brief time you're inside.

If you're concerned about being in a crowd, you may feel comfort in going to venues and businesses which require proof of vaccination or a negative COVID-19 test. This trend has become more popular, and more establishments are requiring this upon entry.

Another thing to consider before heading out the door is the type of mask you're wearing. At the beginning of the

pandemic, it was known N95 masks were the best but also hard to find. They are now more prevalent and more evidence has come out that they are the best mask to wear in defense from the Omicron variant.

As we have seen during the pandemic, many at first tried hard to socially distance and have a very tight personal inner circle. But over time it became harder to do for many reasons, including the need and desire to be in direct contact with friends and family. While many are choosing to revert back to keeping a safer distance, we should all strive to find ways to keep ourselves mentally happy and support our community. The pandemic has shown us our resilience and creativity in finding ways to connect with others and shop.

Resolve this January to support our businesses and promote health.

LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE: BE A DRUM MAJOR FOR JUSTICE

PLANTING SEEDS



BY DR. ARTIKA TYNER,
dr.artikatyner@gmail.com

On Jan. 17, 2022, we will celebrate the life of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Not just this one day but every day, it is important to spend time in reflection on the leadership lessons that we can learn from Dr. King's example. He can be characterized as the Moses of the civil rights movement who cried out for freedom and justice. Like Moses, he led the Black community from the wilderness of racial oppression during the Jim Crow era to the pathway to the promised land of liberation. This journey is still a daily battle in the United States as evidenced by the challenges experienced in the African American community today like the ever-widening wealth gap, impact of mass incarceration, healthcare disparities, and educational inequities.

Dr. King's prophetic vision of becoming a drum major for justice is a call to action through the exercise of leadership. On Feb. 4, 1968, just two months before he was assassinated, Dr. King shared reflections on leadership in his prolific speech: "The Drum Major Instinct." This speech challenges us to define leadership through a commitment to service and an open demonstration of love for others. These three leadership lessons can serve as a guide:

1. TO BE GREAT, YOU MUST BECOME A SERVANT

Leaders must overcome some of the tendencies of human nature, like the focus on achieving a sense of importance and obtaining prominence, in order to truly reach the height of one's leadership poten-

DID YOU KNOW?

Planting People Growing Justice™ Leadership Institute (PPGJLI) announced that it partnered with D.E.L.O.R.E.S. Works and the Links, Inc., Minneapolis/Saint Paul Chapter, for a Leaders are Readers program to promote literacy and diversity in books. The non-profit organization donated 414 books and 380 Build-A-Bear® toys to children in Saint Paul Public Schools.

"Reading is the building block to success. We would like to express our gratitude and thank our supporters, Vela Education Fund, Full Circle Publishing, Build-a-Bear Foundation, and Sheletta Brundidge, for joining us in working to end Minnesota's reading crisis by investing in the lives of our children," said Dr. Artika Tyner, founder of Planting People Growing Justice.

During the event, PPGJLI visited Maxfield Magnet Elementary School, Jackson



Elementary, and Hazel Park Preparatory Academy in the St. Paul Public School District. An assortment of books was distributed that included the highly-acclaimed "Justice Makes a Difference" and "Kofi Loves Music" written by Dr. Artika Tyner and published by Planting People Growing Justice Press and Bookstore.

tial. Dr. King characterized these aspirations as the drum major instinct:

"And there is deep down within all of us an instinct. It's a kind of drum major instinct – a desire to be out front, a desire to lead the parade, a desire to be first. And it is something that runs the whole gamut of life."

Being a drum major is intuitive. However, Dr. King challenged us to explore how we will maximize our leadership influence. Will you use your leadership position to simply gain more power without taking into consideration your impact? Alternatively, Dr. King offers leaders the opportunity to harness this power for the common good by empowering others to lead, modeling the qualities of a servant, and advancing racial justice.

2. BE FIRST IN MODELING EXCELLENCE

Leaders not only show the way, but

they lead the way. Dr. King challenged leaders to model excellence in service and acts of love. By modeling the way, your life will become a source of inspiration to others. This is the type of leadership that sparked the Civil Rights Movement as people from all walks of life discovered their ability to lead social change in their communities and the nation following Dr. King's example. This is a focus on putting first things first:

"But I want you to be first in love. I want you to be first in moral excellence. I want you to be first in generosity. That is what I want you to do."

3. EMPOWER OTHERS TO LEAD

Everyone has a role to play. Each person has a unique composition of leadership strengths that when leveraged strategically can have a tremendous effect. The

1955 Montgomery Bus Boycott is a profound example of the power of collective engagement. Once the community took a stand against segregation, nothing could stand in their way. For 381 days, they exercised leadership as they challenged injustice through their words and deeds. According to Dr. King, everyone has a key role to play in creating change:

"And this morning, the thing that I like about it: by giving that definition of greatness, it means that everybody can be great, because everybody can serve."

The essence of the drum major instinct transforms the traditional notion of leadership and offers a glimpse of an alternative paradigm. Traditionally, leadership has been defined by a position, title, or exercise of power; however, this new definition offers a challenge for each of us to focus on serving the needs of others and making a difference. We are left with a call to action – will you follow Dr. King's example and take heed to your call to serve?

Now is the time to be a drum major for justice, be a drum major for peace, and be a drum major for righteousness.

Join me at the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Community Celebration at St. Cloud State University where I will share about the importance of becoming a drum major for justice. This is a multi-day, multi-generational, and hybrid event that will explore the theme "Trust & Healing in the Beloved Community." All activities take place Jan. 15-17, 2022.

Registration is available online: <https://www.stcloudstate.edu/care/mlk-communitycelebration>.

Encourage youth in grades K-5 to participate in the 2022 MLK Youth Writing Competition sponsored by the MN Twins and Planting People Growing Justice Leadership Institute. Learn more: www.ppgjli.org.

Through her organization, Planting People Growing Justice Leadership Institute, Dr. Artika Tyner seeks to plant seeds of social change through education, training, and community outreach.

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Design & Layout:

Tesha M. Christensen

Printing by: ECM/Adams Publishing Group

This issue is printed on recycled paper using soy-based ink. Approximately 95-97% of material that enters the print facility is recycled.



Delivery provided by: Fresh Heir and IDS

If you have a problem with delivery, call 612-345-9998 or email the editor. Mail subscriptions are available at \$40 a year.

Contributing Writers & Photographers:

Jane McClure, Jan Willms, Jill Boogren, Margie O'Loughlin, Susan Schaefer, Terry Faust, Chad Kulas, Amy Pass and Abha Karnick

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Members of Minnesota Newspaper Association and Midway Chamber Area of Commerce. Sister publications: *Longfellow Nokomis Messenger* and *Southwest Connector*.



I'm leaving the House, but focusing on priorities before I go

FROM THE LEGISLATURE

BY ALICE HAUSMAN
District 66 Representative



Every 10 years, after the census, legislative district lines are redrawn. For me, that was the appropriate time to announce I would not seek re-election. I will serve one more year – and one more session - to continue to deliver on my priorities: transportation and housing.

Transportation is the sector contributing most to climate change, with impacts primarily from cars and planes, leading me to continue my long effort to build a robust public transit system. It has also motivated me to work harder with advocacy groups on building a network of inter-city passenger rail.

As chair the House Housing Finance and Policy committee, I will spend most of my time on the effort to create and maintain affordable, available housing for all Minnesotans. I was grateful to be able to be part of a major effort from 2012 to 2014 to turn around the state funding effort for housing. Before 2012, we would allocate perhaps \$2 million in general obligation bonding for public housing, which did not nearly meet the statewide needs. I encouraged housing advocates to work together. They built massive statewide support to form the Homes for All Coalition and now meet in the interim to discuss a strategy for creating and accomplishing a joint agenda.



One other change occurred. General obligation (GO) bonding can only be used for public infrastructure. I met with a representative from Minnesota Housing, who requested to use their agency bonding authority for housing infrastructure bonds (HIB). Using appropriation bonds, they could work with non-profits and leverage private dollars. This very valuable tool has allowed the state to partner with non-profits like Lutheran Social Services, Catholic Charities, Common Bond, Beacon, and Aeon. Creative and valuable projects have been funded through the HIB bonds, leveraging considerable private funding.

2014 was the turnaround year. The legislature funded \$80 million in HIB

bonds and \$20 million in GO bonding for public housing. Though we continued to invest strongly in HIB bonds, regrettably, we went backward in public housing funding. In 2014 we appropriated \$20 million but in 2020 only \$16 million. One of my goals in 2022 will be to make a significant change in the funding level.

A supplemental budget bill in the 2022 session could help correct a persistent housing funding shortage. The housing crisis is nothing new - and we have made progress - but we must be much more aggressive to make a dent in this emergency. Nothing else in life goes well without a safe place to sleep at night, and we can't continue to just temporarily shelter people. Shelters save lives. Housing ends homelessness. Permanent supportive

housing is our goal.

Our divided legislature has stunted our tenant protection efforts. Forty-eight states have a requirement for a notice of eviction. Minnesota is one of only two who do not. A notice of eviction allows the tenant to look for funding or new housing. No notice may mean homelessness. During the eviction moratorium this year, we negotiated a temporary notice of eviction, but this respite expired in October. My goal is to accomplish a permanent 'notice to evict' during the 2022 session.

Finally, the federal government passed a bipartisan infrastructure bill, requiring a state/local match. To assure the projected surplus is available to accomplish the other good things Minnesotans want, we must assure a match for every dollar of federal funding. The MnDOT portion alone will require \$185 million per year for five years. When we know the amount and timeline and whether it requires legislative authorization, we should pass as a separate bill immediately and not save it for a last-minute deal linking everything together - risking passage.

We must also be clear Minnesota has a PROJECTED surplus. Many factors weigh into final budget numbers, so we cannot spend money that isn't in the bank.

My time in the legislature has been filled with challenges, success, and opportunity. We cannot accomplish anything alone but can achieve great things working together. I appreciate the support and confidence shown by my constituents. I look forward to next session and to the future and am assured our state will remain in capable hands when my tenure ends.

DON'T ADD 'NEW CONSTRUCTION' EXEMPTION TO RENTAL ORDINANCE

My name is Stuart Orlowski, and I'm a resident of St. Paul and a homeowner since last year. For the previous several years, I rented an apartment near Macalester College. While rent control (or "rent stabilization") is no longer relevant to my living situation, I believe it would have been a great help when I was renting. While I had a landlord who was rather "old school" and didn't raise rent too much while I was there, there was always the question at the end of the year for me: will my rent go up? Will I have to find a new place to live? This rent control ordinance would remove that lingering fear for a renter. Every year, you would know the maximum your rent could go up. Stability is the key to any healthy community, and I think rent control provides that for renters.

I hope all readers consider reaching out to Mayor Carter and the city council members, and urge them not to add "new construction" exceptions to the rent stabilization ordinance. If new construction exceptions were added, you would be incentivizing the demolition of older, more

Letters

affordable housing in favor of expensive, market rate housing.

I think this would be a bad outcome for the city and its renters, and I think St. Paul would lose a lot of its charm if this happened.

Stuart Orlowski
Hamline Midway

DOES OUR ACTION AMOUNT TO 'BLAH, BLAH, BLAH' ON CLIMATE?

Recently, when asked about the current state of world leadership on the climate crisis, Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg mocked world leaders by saying that the last 30 years of climate action amounted to "blah, blah, blah."

Unfortunately, Ms. Thunberg's assessment of adult action as blah, blah, blah is very accurate. Particularly, since there is no dispute in what we know.

We know, with our current level of action temperatures will rise beyond levels needed for a livable planet.

We know, with the current level we are polluting the planet, those most at risk for climate-related health problems are our kids, particularly our children of color.

We know that climate change is leading to more extreme weather, again which puts our most marginalized communities at the highest risk.

We know that every day we CHOOSE to wait, we are stealing our children's future away for our convenience.

A local positive in this struggle is that Saint Paul Public Schools can be a force for climate action NOW! Starting in January, SPPS can and should apply for funding through the State Solar on Schools program and develop a solar array on one of the schools SPPS has identified "ready for solar." SPPS Facilities has identified Eastern Heights Elementary, Four Seasons Elementary, Galtier Elementary and Nokomis South Elementary as being ready to host this type of array.

In addition, SPPS can follow the lead of districts like Minneapolis Public Schools and develop community-based

solar gardens, which directly impact our families pocketbooks along with creating clean energy. When looking at what SPPS schools are "solar ready" AND large enough to host a community garden, we have two prime options in Como Senior High and Washington Technology Magnet.

We need to act now. No more talking is needed. Without action our kids see what we are. We are adults just saying we are concerned about their future, adults looking worried, but really adults who are not caring enough to act. So let's show our kids we care. Let's show them we can do more than just talk a good game. We need all reading this letter to contact Superintendent Joe Gothard and the SPPS School Board to express support for action on this issue. In taking actions like this we can take steps toward a healthy future and community for this generation and those beyond.

Thank you,

Tom Lucy
Como Park Resident
SPPS Employee, Saint Paul Federation of Educators member

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Peb muaj kev pab txiav txoj kev siv luam yeeb.

Prior Avenue to be rebuilt

Reduced parking spots, wider bike lanes, and bumpouts part of project

By JANE McCLURE

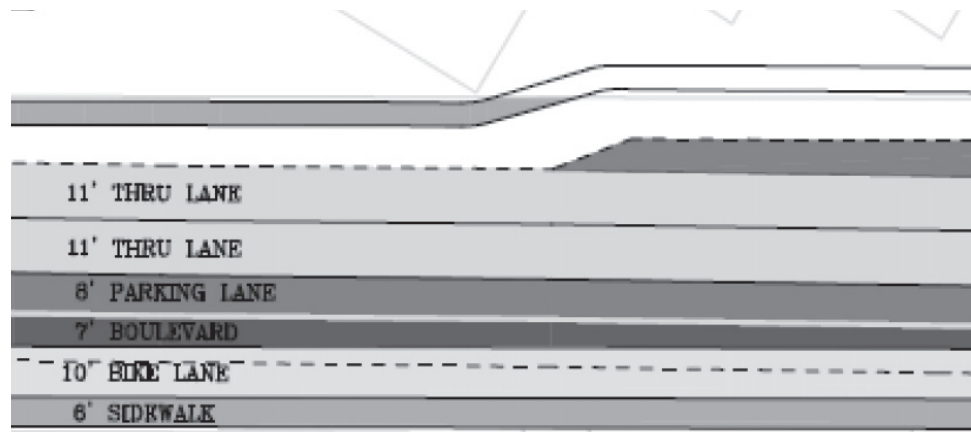
Prior Avenue provides an important bike and pedestrian connection between neighborhoods north and south of Interstate 94, as well as a motor vehicle route to many Midway destinations. However, the street can be a bumpy ride.

Prior between Gilbert and University avenues is to be rebuilt in 2022. Reconstruction will take place from June to November, so travelers and those who work or live in the area can plan on four to five months of disruption.

The St. Paul Department of Public Works unveiled street plans during a virtual meeting in December. City staff has worked with affected neighbors since summer 2021. The plans got a vote of support earlier in the fall from the St. Paul Planning Commission Transportation Committee.

The .28-mile street reconstruction work begins at Gilbert, which is just north of the Prior bridge over Interstate 94, and ends at University. "It's a very short project," said Jary Lee, St. Paul Public Works Project Engineer.

The street carries about 4,637 vehicles per day, in a largely commercial and industrial area. Properties along the west



The project will include a boulevard separating the bike lane and sidewalk from the parking and driving lanes.

side of Prior are zoned for industrial; the east side was rezoned several years for traditional neighborhoods use, to spur future mixed-use development.

But while it's a short project, it's also one that is very much needed. Prior was rebuilt in 1986 as one of the earliest sewer separation and street reconstruction projects. It has carried a lot of traffic, including heavy trucks, since then.

Prior had parking bays added on its west side in 2012, to prepare for bike lanes installed the following year.

St. Paul ranks all streets with a pavement condition index, with zero as the lowest score and 100 as the highest. Prior between St. Anthony and Oakley avenues has a score of 17. Other parts of the street rank higher, especially near University where work was done about a decade ago to prepare for Green Line light rail.

In a recent survey, retaining trees and green space emerged as priorities, while preserving on-street parking ranked much lower. The east side of prior will lose about seven of 30 on-street spaces during

the reconstruction.

The street will be redesigned. Prior has one 11-foot vehicular traffic lane in each direction, and a five-foot bike lane on either side of the street. The east side has a seven-foot parking lane. Each side has a five-foot sidewalk and eight-foot boulevard.

Work is limited on the west side of prior because of utilities, said Lee. Expanding each bike lane to six feet in width meant reconfiguring the street and taking away two feet from the east side boulevard.

The vehicular lanes won't change in size.

Lee said other changes will be made. The Gilbert-Prior intersection will be reconfigured to slow down trucks as they make turns. Bumpouts will be added on the east side of the street, at Feronia and Oakley, to improve pedestrian safety. About 380 feet of sidewalk will be added on the street's west side, south of University.

Some city fees increasing 1.5%, others more

By JANE McCLURE

Is Rover running away? Are the neighbors not keeping up their property? Is a new coffee shop opening around the corner? Many city business and enforcement costs will increase in 2022, following St. Paul City Council adoption Dec. 22, 2021. Dozens of fees and charges will increase, most by just 1.5 percent.

Some fees will have steeper hikes. Those include certificate of occupancy inspections, vacant building registration and fees for various types of elevator inspections.

The City Council and Department of Safety and Inspections (DSI) Director Ricardo Cervantes reviewed the various 2022 fees during budget presentations last fall. The increases didn't generate public comment before the city council during December public hearings.

For many years DSI has funded its operations largely through fees, which typically are raised every few years, to cover the costs of needed inspections and issuance of various licenses and permits.

In spring 2020, when Gov. Tim Walz temporarily closed restaurants, fitness centers and other business due to the COVID-10 pandemic, Mayor Melvin Carter ordered that affected businesses get one-time breaks on fees. The businesses got a one-time 25 percent reduction in their next license fee payments and a one-time 90-day extension of the due date for payment of license fees for all business license holders whose renewal date was before

Aug. 1, 2020.

In his 2022 budget presentations, Cervantes outlined the growing demands on his department. Several areas of DSI's work have increased despite the pandemic. For example, building permits have increased steadily in recent years, with the 2021 volume up an estimated 19 percent from 2020. Permits increased 10 percent between 2019 and 2020. Requests for construction plans review have increased 13 percent from 2019-2020 levels.

The 2021 DSI budget included \$20 million in various business, permit and other review changes; the 2022 budget is estimated at \$20.7 million.

One area with a higher fee increase is for building inspections. The fire certificate of occupancy fee increases 10 percent. The city issues the certificates after inspecting building for health and life safety issues. The city issues about 4,500 certificate annually. The fees have remained flat since 2014, and less than 50 percent of costs were being recovered, according to Cervantes.

Fees are set by number of dwelling units in residential buildings. The fee for a single-family non-owner occupied home goes from \$206 in 2021 to \$227 in 2022. The fee for a fourplex increases from \$264 to \$290.

The fee for an apartment complex with 100 or more units increases from \$913 to \$1,004. Commercial building fees are set by square footage. For a 118,000 square foot building, the fee increases from \$870 to \$957.

Vacant building registration fees also increase, from \$2,127 to \$2,459, a \$300-plus increase. This would recover costs of monitoring the approximately 600 registered vacant buildings in St. Paul. Monitoring is needed to deter illegal entrance and "squatters" and to make sure vacant buildings don't fall into disrepair.

In comparison, the city of Minneapolis registered vacant building fee is \$7,087.

Elevator inspections were another area where fees had greatly fallen behind the actual costs of providing service, Cervantes said. The inspections are state-mandated. The expense of inspecting elevators and similar conveyances is estimated at about \$420,000 per year; the fees as of last year only recovered about \$185,000 in city expenses. The fee increases are meant to improve cost recovery from 44 percent to 85 percent.

Cervantes said the increase would allow for more timely routine inspections and reduce backlogs. It would also allow for faster response to emergencies and complaints. There have been several instances in recent years where DSI staff have responded in a timely manner, after hours, at high-rise locations when elevator service was disrupted.

The fees for elevators are set by number of building stories. The fee for a building of up to five stories in height increases from \$93 to \$149. For a building of 21 or more stories, the fee increases from \$133 to \$213. Fees also increase for moving stairways or escalators, from \$78 to \$149. Other fees increase for freight elevators, manlifts, dock lifts and dumbwaiters.

Monitor in a MINUTE

By JANE McCLURE

NEW USE EYED FOR LONGTIME SCHOOL

The St. Paul City School is preparing to move its operations out of historic Frogtown Catholic schools and into a new building at University Avenue and Marion Street. A new use for the City School middle school is already being eyed.

The Black Youth healing Arts collective, under the Minneapolis-based Irreducible Grace Foundation, is seeking a conditional use permit to repurpose the building. The primary occupancy would fall under congregate care with 16 beds, with kitchen and dining facilities, a therapy room, training and teaching areas. The secondary use would be for business offices and administrative support.

SCHOOL IN LINE FOR SAFETY FUNDING

A Summit-University neighborhood school could be next in line for Safe Routes to Schools improvements if an application for funding is successful. The St. Paul City Council Dec. 15 approved an application for \$500,000 for pedestrian and bike safety improvements around the school at 380 N. Victoria St.

Safe Routes to Schools is a program that has been implemented successfully at other schools, including Cretin-Derham Hall, Expo and Holy Spirit in Highland. St. Paul has used the program for about five years.

Program funding is offered by the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT). MnDOT will fund projects up to \$500,000.

In order to get the MnDOT funding, the city has to provide a match. City staff has identified a recommended scope of work with a project capital cost of \$637,000, and engineering and inspection costs of \$163,000, for a total project cost of \$800,000.

The city's 2019 pedestrian plan has identified the area surrounding Maxfield Elementary as a high priority area for walking investments.

In fall 2022 Maxfield could be welcoming Frogtown neighborhood students after Jackson Elementary is closed.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING FUNDS HAILED

St. Paul and Ramsey County will combine \$74.5 million in federal American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act dollars to build housing for households at 30 percent area median income. County and city officials, along with members of Minnesota's Congressional delegation, made the announcement Dec. 13.

The city will put \$37.5 million into the 30% Area Median Income (AMI) Housing Fund initiative fund, said Mayor Melvin Carter. The city funds will be added to another \$37.5 million in ARP dollars the county already set aside for deeply affordable housing.

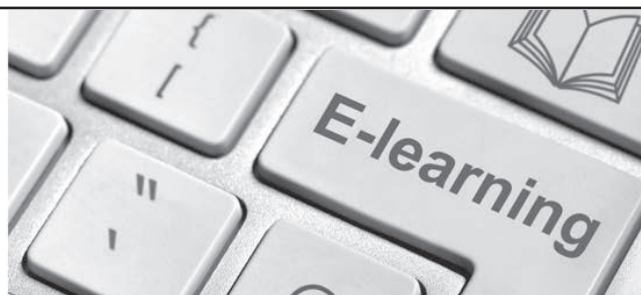
The \$74.5 million investment is targeted to expand affordable housing by as many as 1,000 permanent housing units. The county allocation will be split between city and suburban projects, with the city funds remaining in St. Paul. County officials are looking at the creation of about 300 deeply affordable housing units.

The city-county fund is believed to be one of the largest uses of ARP dollars for affordable housing in the United States. Details of the initiatives are in the works, and will be announced in early 2022.

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Not sure how to talk to kids about race?

>> from 1

WHEN SHOULD PARENTS AND EDUCATORS TALK TO KIDS ABOUT RACE?

No child is too young to talk about race, according to Haulcy, who specializes in early childhood. "As soon as children know their colors, they can categorize people into different colors," she said. "If a child asks you about race, it is time to talk to them about it."

Children begin to recognize cultural and ethnic differences by the time they are two. Children of color being to suffer from racialized treatment at about seven years old.

Implicit bias begins at between three to five years of age, said Haulcy, and children as young as six months old can recognize a race different from their caregiver.

"Eighty percent of brain development happens by the time a child is about five years old. During that time, a child is absorbing everything in their environment, including the implicit biases of their parents and caregivers," she said.

What is implicit bias? The assumptions, attitudes and stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions and decisions in an unconscious manner, according to the Ohio State University - Kirwan Insti-

tute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity.

These develop over the course of a lifetime through direct and indirect messages, which means that developing children's cultural identity in early childhood is important, said Haulcy.

"White privilege affects all children - including White children," she said. While people don't usually say that White bodies are more important than those of color, children are like sponges and are absorbing what they see others act out. "They don't have the language to articulate that," remarked Haulcy, but the knowledge about White body supremacy has profound effects on verbal and non-verbal language.

“

Look at this as a journey. It's ok to make mistakes as long as you continue to have the conversations.”

Dianne Haulcy

question related to race, "children learn that it is not okay to talk about race." But children continue to get messages about race from television, social media, friends and family members, pointed out Haulcy.

Say, for example that a White person goes to the grocery store and has the implicit belief that a Black body is something to fear. When the White person stands next to the Black person, they tense up. A

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE DON'T TALK ABOUT RACE?

When people don't talk about race, children are left to learn only through non-verbal implicit bias lodged in body language.

When children are shushed when they ask

when they ask a question related to race, "children learn that it is not okay to talk about race." But children continue to get messages about race from television, social media, friends and family members, pointed out Haulcy.

Say, for example that a White person goes to the grocery store and has the implicit belief that a Black body is something to fear. When the White person stands next to the Black person, they tense up. A

child won't miss that.

But, if a White person regularly interacts with a Black person and is at ease in their interactions, the child will pick up on that.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE DO TALK ABOUT RACE?

In contrast, when we do talk about race, children learn to form language to talk about it with their peers. They learn they can ask questions. They are able to combat racist images and conversation with the language they have developed.

"Some say, 'children don't see color,'" said Haulcy. "Children learn to see color and categorize their world. We need to help give them language for it."

Haulcy pointed out that children are likely to point out a person's color or race when they're telling a story or asking about someone in a room. "There's nothing wrong with saying that," she said. "Adults do everything else but that."

She recommends engaging in conversations about differences so they know it is okay to talk about it. "It is good to emphasize that differences in the way people look is a good thing. That includes skin color, hair texture, shape of our eyes, lips, etc.," she said.

Tell children that people are different but everyone is equal.

Haulcy appreciates the Native American perspective on race from the medicine wheel. Split into four colors, the wheel illustrates Mitákuye Oyás 'in, which is Lakota for "we are all related." The yellow section illustrates Asian relatives, Black is for African relatives, White for European relatives and Red for Native and Mexican relatives.

She recommends the book, "What If

All The Kids Are White?" by Louise Derman-Sparks and Patricia Ramsey as a good resource. "All children develop a cultural awareness. White children need to be taught an equity framework," she stressed.

It is also important to note that all language is not for all people. Some words are okay when said by an African American to another African American, but not okay if said by a White person as it means something completely different - even if that person is a family member. "Have conversations with your children about the language they are learning - and what they're seeing on social media. They are seeing and hearing a lot of derogatory language on social media," said Haulcy.

Hearing a word in a rap song may present a teachable moment. It may not necessarily be a comfortable moment. "Being able to have a conversation about this is important," stated Haulcy.

WHAT ABOUT 'WRONG ANSWERS'?

Adults may be worried about giving the "wrong" answers. "Do not worry about that," advised Haulcy. "What's important is you open up the conversation. It is perfectly ok to say, 'I don't know.' Maybe get curious about it. I don't know, but we can find out. Then the child knows they have entered into a conversation with you that is ongoing."

Haulcy hopes people have a "journey mentality," one that is coming to terms with White supremacy, becoming anti-racist, and raising children in a racist environment.

"It is not a destination, but a long-term journey," she said. "Continue to be curious about your journey."

HMONG CULTURAL CENTER MUSEUM EXPANDS

>> from 1

ports the preservation of Hmong culture in the Twin Cities. "Having the center in the Twin Cities is very important, because it supports our political and social culture, as well," she said. "For myself, growing up traditionally as a Hmong woman and also being exposed to Western culture, it was hard for me to navigate both. Having a center like this is important for our youth because we are losing a lot of what being Hmong means to us."

Her said having the museum is also important to the elders, so that they can see the preservation of what is left of Hmongness. "This is a good starting point for those who have grown away from being Hmong to come back home," she added.

Maiyia Kasouaher, the board secretary, said she finds the Hmong Cultural Center Museum to be the first place people can come to find out about the Hmong culture. "It is operated by folks who identify as Hmong, as well," she stated. Kasouaher explained that although people can Google for information, it is more of an experience for people to come in and view exhibits in person.

Sieng Lee is a consultant who did the museum layout and design. The artist and designer said he worked with the Hmong Cultural Center on the best way to utilize the museum space. He also designed We Are Hmong Minnesota for the History Center.

"The museum is unique in its small scale and grassroots approach for people who want to have the museum experience in a place more comfortable, and they can then go on to other museum experiences," he said.

Pfeifer said the original museum

space of three rooms was just not large enough to serve the groups coming in to view the exhibits, and this led to the expansion. He said that the very fortunate approval of some large grants in the past year led to the much-needed enlarged museum space.

"The museum has different focus areas," he continued. Those areas include history, the structure of the Hmong language, the clans, the Secret War, folk art, Hmong history in Minnesota, Hmong embroidery and Hmong musical instruments.

Describing some of the exhibits at the museum, Pfeifer talked about the large embroidery presentations donated over the years. "Some show the Hmong folk tales, the Hmong traditional way of life, others show leaving Laos," he said. "All are related to Hmong history. The Hmong were in China in 2500 BC. They fought with the CIA in 1968. There is a lot of information about their involvement with the war."

“

Having the center in the Twin Cities is very important, because it supports our political and social culture.”

Shuly Her

ments. "You can watch a video to hear what the instrument sounds like," he noted. He said that years ago, the Hmong Cultural Center Museum received an award for its interactive exhibit of musical instruments.

The expanded museum features doc-



The opening of the expanded museum at 375 University Ave. was delayed due to vandalism in September. (Photo submitted)

umentaries for visitors to watch. One film is "Disappearing World (1972)" which is described as follows: "A rarely seen documentary from the early 1970s in which anthropologist Jacques Lemoine looks at the situation of the Hmong in Laos. The film visits Hmong villages and shows the heavy losses Hmong have endured in the Laotian Civil War. The documentary also shows the Hmong in American-backed refugee camps and includes segments on the traditional lifestyle the Hmong are trying to preserve."

Another documentary available at the museum is "Becoming American." This film follows a family of preliterate tribal farmers as they flee Laos, await resettlement in a refugee camp in Thailand, and travel to and resettle in the United States.

There are archives of Hmong newspapers going back to the 1990s. These include the *Hmong Times*, *Hmong Today* and the *Hmong Pages*.

Numerous panels are on display,

showing many aspects of the Hmong involvement in the Secret War. There are also panels showing symbols used for embroidery and panels showing the Hmong wedding and funeral music. New panels have been added with the museum's expansion. "It is quite a process to make one panel, and we have worked with scholars over the years on the content, and Museology has helped make the panels," Pfeifer said. "The panels cost about \$3,000 each, and we started with 10 and are now up to 30." He said the panels have been added in cycles, as funding has permitted.

Other exhibits at the museum include showing where Hmong people live around the world, dialects spoken in the United States, the traditional Hmong religion and Shamanism, the 18 clans and the Hmong writing system developed in the 1950s. There are panels displaying the first story in the *Minneapolis Star* about the Hmong in January 1979, a 1982 photo at Liberty Plaza of Hmong children building igloos in the snow, and a 1998 story about Hmong social activism. "This story was about the Hmong protest against the KQRS deejay for making racist comments," Pfeifer said.

And there is so much more: The first Hmong politician, the history of Hmong businesses along University Avenue, statistics for the average age and family size of the Hmong people in Minnesota.

Pfeifer said the Hmong Cultural Center Museum has benefited from many funders, but he especially wanted to thank Google, Arts West and the Luce Foundation for their help.

The Hmong Cultural Center Museum is open 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday and weekends by appointment. Admission is \$5 per person. Pre-arranged group tours are available at a negotiated fee. Call (651) 917-9937 for further information.

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Students encourage others to get involved with Youth Vote program

Every month the League of Women Voters St. Paul (LWVSP) hosts a program in the series "Our St. Paul: Learn with the League." The Nov. 30, 2021 Zoom/Facebook Live program featured Como Park High School Senior Pa Nra Lee on a panel showcasing the student leader projects from autumn 2021.

Additional panelists included former LWVSP Youth Vote Chair Dan Krivit, and LWVSP Youth Vote Co-chair and Macalvester College student Lia Pak. The hour-long program hosted by LWVSP Co-President Heidi Kloempken was recorded on YouTube and broadcast by SPNN (St. Paul Neighborhood Network) and SCC (Suburban Community Channel).

Dan Krivit outlined the League's Youth Vote Program, which partners with the Minnesota Secretary of State and the Ramsey County Student Election Judge Program. The high school student leaders interact with their peers and a teacher liaison. The program receives grant dollars, as well as direct support from LWVSP members, which allows student leaders to earn a \$100 stipend for the semester's work. Engaged in eleven St. Paul high schools, the Youth Vote Team has made over 200 presentations, made roughly 4,000 student contacts, totaling 48 student leaders since the inception of the program.

The current group, smaller in this sea-



Pa Nra Lee (Photo submitted)

son of local-only elections, includes seven highly engaged students in three schools (Washington Tech, Como and St. Paul Central). The League expects numbers to swell with mid-term elections coming in 2022. Any interested high school student can contact youthvote.lwvsp@gmail.com for the spring 2022.

Student leaders come up with their own projects, including posters, videos, presentations to history classes, and events to register eligible voters in their school. Data suggests that asking a student directly

about voting and political engagement is effective in increasing voting in that young cohort.

Krivit highlighted a poster and morning school announcement on political advocacy and voter registration by CPHS student Chitra Xiong. Student Anas Mohamed from Washington Tech made videos in two languages explaining the census, ranked choice, and the rent stabilization issue. Nora Fairbanks and Iris Steiner-Manning from St. Paul Central researched and outlined the ranked choice process with a focus on the school board candidates to their peers. They maintained the League's non-partisan commitment while visiting every class in senior government and social studies classes with their work.

The program's finale was ably handled by CPHS senior Pa Nra Lee. She became involved with the St. Paul League's Youth Vote program because she was looking for ways to grow and be challenged, was curious about the league, and wanted to work on her public speaking skills.

Lee, Chikamso Chijioke, and Lucy Hebble researched how to encourage teens to register and vote. Pa Nra showed students where to get reliable candidate information and explained ranked choice issues. The team presented their slide show to eight 12th grade history classes. Her

group identified other ways to make one's voice heard if unable to vote, including letter-writing to representatives, testifying in hearings, and attending protests.

Lee explained to viewers the importance of social media to get voting information to high school and college students. A story about voting on Instagram gets shared, then seen at school, then talked about with friends, which helps magnify the issue. Lee found it was hard for high schoolers younger than 18 to engage with voting, so she urged those younger peers to reach out to their broader community, especially parents and older siblings, with the data from her group's project. Lee received high marks from listener feedback on the program for her poise and knowledge during her presentation and the question-and-answer period.

Kloempken ended the program asking both Pak and Lee to consider running for elected office. Neither has immediate plans for a political career, but both would appreciate the community watching this program on YouTube and talking about the Youth Vote Program with friends and family to extend support.

[HTTPS://YOUTU.BE/IVTOYHLYQH4](https://youtu.be/ivtoyhlyqH4)

Learn more about the League of Women Voter's - St. Paul at www.lwvsp.org

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DOUGHERTY FAMILY COLLEGE OFFERS STUDENTS A GREAT START

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

A two-year college through the University of St. Thomas is tailored to motivated, underrepresented students who have encountered barriers in pursuing a college degree.

Founded in 2017, the Dougherty Family College (DFC) provide its students, whom they call scholars, with financial, academic, and personal supports.

Dougherty scholars demonstrate financial need, solid academic achievement (2.5 GPA or above) and a strong desire to succeed. The average, annual out-of-pocket cost for a FAFSA filer is \$2,970. However, almost half of DFC scholars paid \$1,030 this academic year. In addition, DFC provides each student with a laptop, textbooks, meals while on campus, and a Metro pass.

Scholars are automatically enrolled in courses that will prepare them to move into their bachelor's degree program at St. Thomas or another university or college, once they've completed their associate degree.

DFC provides their students with a path forward.

MEET THE DEAN

Dr. Buffy Smith has been the interim dean of DFC since October 2020. She has been a faculty member at the University of St. Thomas since 2004, and was appointed DFC founding associate dean of academics in 2016.

She said, "I see myself through the experiences of our scholars, over 70% of whom are first generation college students. I was the first person in my family to go to college. I was raised by my phenomenal mother and grandmother; we were rich in faith – but not rich in resources.

"We received public assistance and lived in public housing in my hometown of Milwaukee. Neither my mother nor grandmother was able to pursue their college degree, but they always emphasized the value of me pursuing mine."

COHORT-LEARNING FOSTERS COMMUNITY

According to Dr. Smith, "DFC scholars are part of a smaller cohort that functions like extended family: sharing meals and recreational activities, fostering a sense of connection and belonging. The cohort model provides a level of peer support that is essential for academic success."

MENTORING FOSTERS SUCCESS

Dr. Smith continued, "Mentoring is another crucial component of our college experience. Mentoring is what helps our scholars persevere. We've had more than 200 graduates to date, and 75% of our grads are currently enrolled in bachelor's degree programs.

"Every scholar is assigned a faculty or staff mentor, and they meet at least once a month. Their conversations focus on issues that might impact learning: pressures that are work related, family related, or related to other social relationships.

"Mentors also help scholars navigate the hidden curriculum of higher education. The hidden curriculum refers to social and cultural norms of higher education that impact scholars' success, such as establishing positive relationships with faculty and staff.

"At DFC, we encourage scholars to ask a lot of questions and seek support early and often. We empower scholars to bring their authentic selves, cultural backgrounds, social backgrounds, and unique perspectives to college."



“

We believe in high standards, high expectations, high supports, and high educational outcomes. Having high expectations for our scholars will help them reach their fullest potential, but there must be appropriate supports. I have learned that our scholars often exceed our expectations.”

Dr. Buffy Smith

Dr. Buffy Smith, interim dean of Dougherty Family College, see herself in the experiences of the students there. She was the first person in her family to attend college. (Photo submitted)

CULTURALLY RESPONSIBLE TEACHING

DFC scholars take the same courses as all other University of St. Thomas students, and those courses are taught with the same academic rigor. Within DFC

however, professors select textbooks and readings that reflect the rich and diverse cultural backgrounds of the scholars. Dr. Smith said, "We know that college is not

DOUGHERTY FAMILY COLLEGE >> 9

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DOUGHERTY FAMILY COLLEGE

>> From 8

only possible – but that with structured, culturally affirming supports – graduation is inevitable.

“We want our scholars to see themselves as being future public intellectuals. Almost 50% of DFC staff and faculty identify as being members of the BIPOC community, as do 90% of our scholars. Young people must be able to see themselves not just as consumers of knowledge, but as soon-to-be authors and producers of knowledge.

“AT DFC, we help scholars develop the academic confidence they may not have gotten in grades K-12.”

DOUGHERTY FAMILY COLLEGE

DFC is named after the founding co-benefactors Mike and Kathy Dougherty and their family. Mike Dougherty is a St. Thomas alumnus and trustee, and a Twin Cities businessman. The Dougherty family supports the college because they believe in the value of a college education, and want to give motivated, hardworking students the opportunity to succeed in college and beyond.

Dr. Smith said, “Many scholars start their bachelor’s degree program with relatively little debt. We encourage them to complete their four-year degree in five years. It’s more common to matriculate in six years. The first DFC class just graduated with their bachelor’s degrees from the University of St. Thomas. In the past, at least 10 DFC students each year have been awarded a full tuition scholarship to complete their bachelor’s degree. Our scholars are helping to level the playing field of higher education.”

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At DFC, opportunity is about more

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According to the U.S. Census Bureau, only one-third of adults in the U.S. are able to get a four-year college degree.

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than just providing students a pathway to a degree – it’s about providing them a pathway to using it. Through the Professional Internship Program, scholars develop real-life, professional experience in paid internships across the Twin Cities.

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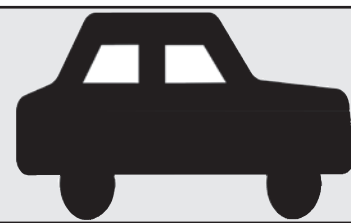
Approximately 38 local corporations, non-profits and schools are currently partnered with DFC, giving them access to a pool of diverse, highly motivated students earlier than most other internship programs. If interested in partnering with DFC to offer a new internship opportunity, email kris.donnelly@stthomas.edu.

DFC is located on the university’s downtown Minneapolis campus. For more information, visit the Dougherty Family College website at <https://dfc.stthomas.edu>.

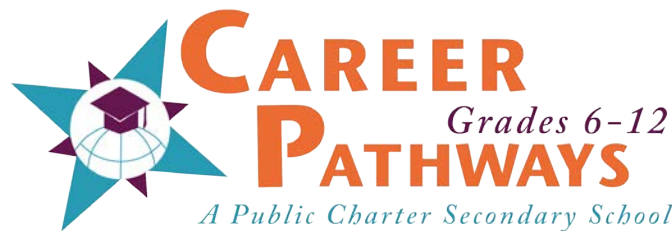
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FIVE (EASY) WAYS TO GO GREEN (AND SAVE SOME GREEN) IN 2022

By PATRICIA OHMANS, Frogtown Green

The news about climate change tends to focus on the economic impact of wildfires, floods and devastating droughts around the world. It's hard to feel like anything we could do locally can make a difference—especially after the holidays, when we're more focused on a flat wallet or a maxed-out credit card than on the global economy.

Is there any way to address climate change and keep some pocket change? You bet! For starters, here are five simple steps we can take in our homes, with our families, and alongside our neighbors to go green and save some green in the process. Think about taking on one of these measures a month from January to June!

1) EAT YOUR VEGGIES AND SAVE \$100 A MONTH.

Everybody's heard about the health benefits of a plant-rich diet, right? But think about this: Plant-based meals are often the least expensive way to eat well. A recent survey of more than 1,000 Americans, reported on CNet.com, found that a plant-based diet was about \$23 a week less expensive than one with meat. And plant-based meals don't have to be high-falutin. In fact, they are as familiar and culturally relevant as—say—red beans and rice, egg foo young, or pasta with pesto.



A Frogtown homeowner and her new tree, planted by one of the "Tree Frogs" last year.

2) HERE'S A RELATED TIP: COOK FOR TWO (MEALS, NOT PEOPLE!)

Next time you're making a meal, consider making twice as much, and storing

half for later in the week. That's lots more economical than making just a bit more than you need...and eventually throwing out the leftovers, which is what we often end up doing.

3) TAKE THE BUS. OR RIDE A BIKE.

Better yet, take your bike on the bus, all for \$1! Bikes are great for making short hops around town, and buses are good for the long haul across the cities. Taken together, the combination is awesome. Every Metro Transit bus has a bike rack on the front bumper that accommodates one or two bikes. Riding the light rail with a bike is even easier; you can wheel your bike right into the car and fasten it to a rack on board. If you are on public assistance like WIC or EBT you can apply for the Transit Assistance Program (TAP) and you (and your bike) can ride for just \$1 per ride. Apply online or at one of several Metro Transit locations.

4) DITCH THE LAWNMOWER.

Here's good news: more and more city dwellers are opting to put their lawnmowers in the garage – sometimes permanently. You don't have to go all wild with native plants, if you don't want to. You'll save money, time, and water if you simply water and mow your grass less often. Taken together, urban lawns make up the

most irrigated crop in America, according to the EPA. That's pretty crazy, considering that we can't eat grass. Letting your grass grow an inch or two longer helps it retain water, resist grub infestation, and generally be more prepared to handle the hotter summers caused by climate change.

5) PLANT A TREE.

Research demonstrates that trees in and around a house can increase the property's value, in addition to providing beauty and cooling shade for the house's residents. An online app from the US Forest Service called "I-tree" calculates the benefit of a given tree, both in terms of "environmental services" like diverting stormwater and reducing air pollution, and in terms of household savings on air conditioning and heating. Neighborhood groups in Frogtown, Hamline-Midway, Summit-U and Payne-Phalen will be giving away free trees this summer, making it that much easier to take advantage of trees' green benefits.


Frogtown Green is a grassroots neighborhood initiative to grow a greener, healthier Frogtown, one which will withstand the impact of climate change. To get involved with our efforts, check our website (www.frogtowngreen.com) shoot us an email (info@frogtowngreen.com) or simply give us a call (651-757-5970).

AS WE ENTER INTO A NEW YEAR

"These days, a premium is being placed on whether White kids might feel bad about their own heritage after learning about things like American genocide, slavery or internment. But no one asks what it's like for minority kids to learn about these things. When I was growing up inside internment camps, my parents tried to shield me from the horror of what was happening. I even recited the Pledge of Allegiance daily from a classroom inside the barbed wire. 'With liberty and justice for all,' I said, not grasping the irony. - George Takei

PEACE BUBBLES

BY MELVIN GILES
peacebubbles@q.com



"There are years that ask questions and years that answer." - Zora Neale Hurston

"Do your little bit of good where you are; it's those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world." -Desmond Tutu

- May Peace Prevail in the New Year. May Peace Prevail On Earth #maypeaceprevailonearth #spreadpositivity #happynewyear2022 #thepeacepoleproject

Hello Monitor readers,
Happy 2022!!!! Yes, happy and will improve 2022! And, sooner than later we will thaw-out on many different levels that seem to be freezing and holding us in challenging situations, patterns, and in uncommon manners. Our New Year greeted me with a bitter bone-chilling re-

minder of Dr. M. L. King, Jr.'s words that "Nothing in the world is more dangerous than sincere ignorance and conscientious stupidity." We continue to struggle, hear and see painful truths regarding climate change, the need to transform our health care system, acknowledging North American history without shame, guilt, and/or rage, and on and on, like our current political-stuck-ness of ideologies and the ongoing denial of women's equality to men or the gift of self-identifying. It is both our minds and hearts that are in need of thawing-out. The thawing-out can be brightly warm with uplifting 21st century truths and respectful values instead of being dreadful with outdated fearful untruths and misleading values. >> 13



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Build virtual ice castle in Minecraft

Register for online event hosted by Victoria Theater Arts Center

>> From 1

Registration opened Jan. 12 at www.victoriatheater.org/mincraft. The cost is \$5. Fee waivers are available. All proceeds from registration will go toward the Winter Carnival.

What is Minecraft? Minecraft is described as a "sandbox game" - a virtual world where users can create their own world and experience, according to Curland. In Minecraft, you create and destroy resources in order to build and develop buildings, sculptures, landmarks - or whatever your mind can think up.

Users can play on a tablet or a computer. They can play in their own game or link up to community servers or community build projects.

VTAC partnered with three Hamline University students last year to construct the virtual performing arts space. They were enrolled in an anthropology class in Minecraft during the COVID-19 pandemic, observed Curland. They built out a Minecraft server to show the before and after Victoria Theater space. VTAC has been fundraising and planning for a renovation at the historic site for the past 10 years after community members in Rondo and Frogtown saved it from demolition in 2007. It was subsequently named a local heritage site. In 2023, the building at 825 University Ave. will be open to the public,

and will feature an 120-seat theater and community arts center.

The mission of the Victoria Theater Arts Center (VTAC) is to build community power by providing a creative home that incubates the arts and amplifies the voices of all people in the neighborhood. VTAC envisions a vibrant neighborhood where the arts welcome, heal, transform and build power for the people of the Frogtown and Rondo communities. The Minecraft server was born out of a question of how to build community online during the pandemic.

Hamline students took the architectural drawings and built two buildings to scale over the course of three months. Users can take the light rail between the two buildings. They have replicated the pocket park and the Demera Restaurant, and more from the 800 block of University Ave.

Working on the project were Sara Smith, who has been playing Minecraft since they were 12; Sarah Wood, who grew up playing Minecraft with her brother, taking turns on their computer; and Emily McKenzie, who says she has played Minecraft since it came out.

They built the server, added a Discord channel for players to communicate, created tours and tutorials, and made a system for sustaining a virtual gathering space in Minecraft for years to come.

It officially launched in the summer of 2021.

More recently, interns from Great



Connect virtually with community members when entering the local Minecraft server hosted by Victoria Theater Arts Center.

River School in St. Paul have worked on building out the realm. Plus, regular open build days are scheduled for young folk, families and adult builders to safely tour, communicate, connect, and create in this virtual arts space, according to Curland.

"It's a playground - but just in a virtual place," observed Curland. She functions as a moderator and observer for the COVID-19-safe place. "I see kids who don't have as much opportunity for interaction blossom and open up."

She's excited about the upcoming partnership with the Winter Carnival. The goal? To have 50 ice castles built.

"This is just the first of many events we hope to do in the Minecraft server," said Curland. "It has been exciting to see unfold and has inspired even more programming for 2022."

ICE CASTLE BUILD ON JAN. 30

VTAC has partnered with Bob Olsen, who is one of two of the world's lead-

ing historians and experts on Ice Palaces. Olsen helped bring the ice palaces back to Minnesota in the 1970s after a long gap. Olsen created a special lecture on history and engineering of ice palaces, which will be hosted on the VTAC website, YouTube, and Facebook. Minecrafters will use the lecture to learn about how ice palaces are built and create their own ice dwellings in a special arctic biome on the VTAC server.

The virtual build will be live-streamed.

On Sunday, Jan. 30, Olsen will tour the arctic biome and choose his favorite virtual ice palace. The winners of the ice palace building contest will receive a certificate of honor, and a custom contest poster featuring their ice palace. Participants will be broken into three groups: under 13, 13-17 and 18+. Their photos will be shown in the February issue of the *Midway Como Frogtown Monitor*.

AS WE ENTER INTO A NEW YEAR

>> From 12

To start the year, I enlisted two young bright rising sparks of light to share their wisdom and insights to prepare us for an improve year of hope, understanding, self-care and respect, care, and love for others and our planet. I asked Kieran Morris to share insights on environment justice and/or climate change from his generation perspective. The following is the first of three parts from a gifted community artist and urban farmer/gardener:

FROM KIERAN MORRIS

In her novel, "Parable of The Sower," Octavia Butler wrote: "All that you touch, you change. All that you change changes you." The quote speaks to the immense power of small interactions, of proximity and detail, the way that every thread of life is woven together to create a bigger picture that we each interpret in our own way.

We've all been given a lot to parse out in the last few years - plague, domestic violence, foreign war and a lack of basic human necessities in a country that names itself First World. And yet, hope is never totally absent. It remains, in people's joy and dedication to their art and practice, growing unnoticed into our daily lives like blades of grass through blocks of concrete. We often forget our power to cultivate this hope, to create something positive and measurable in the face of great uncertainty.

Zooming into our corner of the Midwest, at our land of lakes and fraternal Twin Cities, the big picture is a little faded, and singed around the edges. In the northwoods, oil pipelines spill poison into the earth, and despair into Indigenous communities. In the cities, the state steals souls and redlines communities. This turmoil has drawn out the bloodthirsty four horsemen of police brutality, educational deficiency, military intervention and public violence, where they've rampaged through neighborhoods and communities, shattering the peace for people across the board.

And yet, hope is never totally absent...

Part two of The Green Dawn continues in the February issue.

Kieran can be reach at organizer@tcalt.org

FROM THERESA THOMPSON NIX

Theresa Thompson Nix, known as Queen Tea, is a contributor with Breathe Deep Within. She is an artist, advocate,

and soul medic for communities served and under-served. Her passion is to rebuild health and wellness in everyBODY one breath at a time. I asked Theresa to share her wisdom for nourishment and community love for 2022:

As a soul medic, I provide rapid response in the community as a bearer of light. I respond as a safe stabilizing presence when people are experiencing high blood pressure, dysregulated nervous systems and confusion.

I spent time in deep meditation for the health of our city at the end of 2021. I observed an overwhelming number of people reported feeling numb or jaded.

My words of focus for 2022 are rejuvenation, recreation and re-establishment.

Healing isn't simple, but it is available to all of us through community care, self-reflection and cultural practice.

I am encouraging everyone to create an emotional wellness kit or safe zone in their home or community for 2022. If you have felt numb or jaded too, perhaps a theme for your sacred space can mirror the healing properties of jade which include stability, love, nurturing, good luck, friendship, and self-sufficiency.

Transforming any of our deep negative emotions into the pure potential energy of jade restores our personal power.

Creating a self-care kit can be part of your family or self-care journey. This could look like a mobile sacred table or a backpack filled with items of inspiration, healing and truth correlating to the elements of fire, water, air and earth.

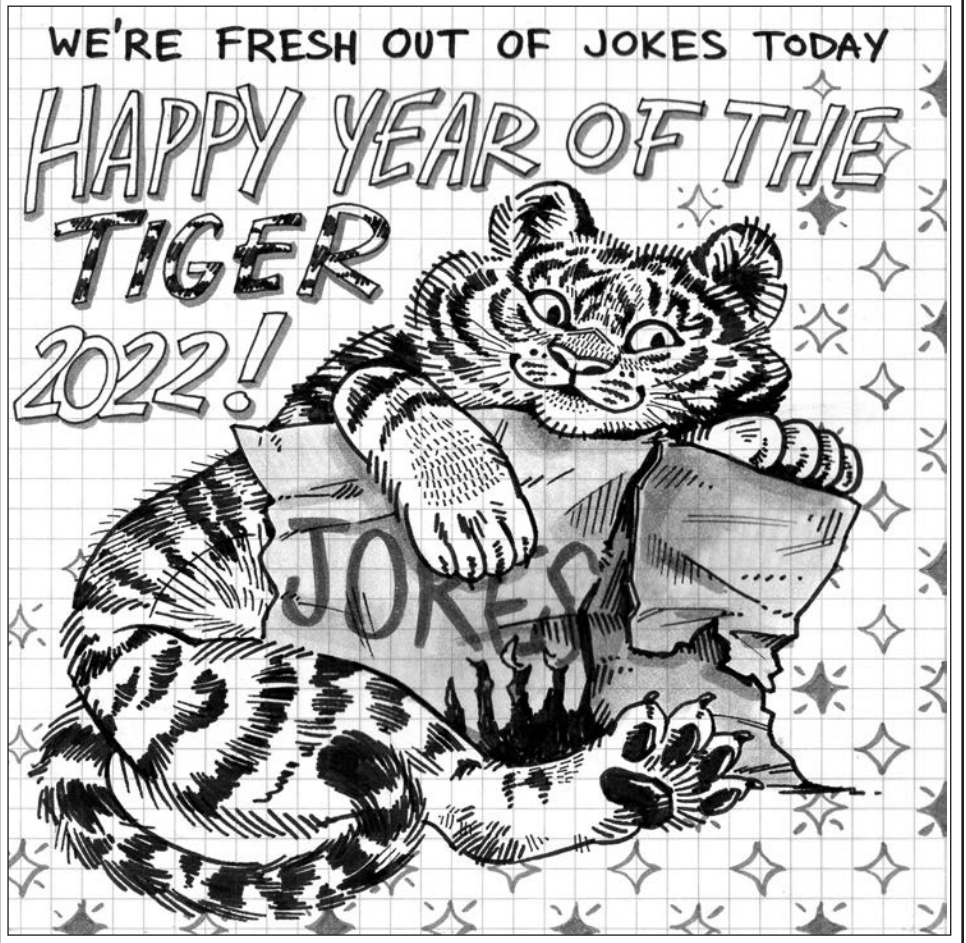
Whatever positive intentions you choose are right for you. There is still time to put healthy intentions into practice this month. For example, in numerology, Jan. 11 opens a portal of positive new beginnings. As a love letter to my community, I am declaring my color of inspiration for 2022 is jade green. Jade is an energetic and sacred mineral. The energetic properties of jade include love, nurturing, good luck, friendship, stability and self-sufficiency.

Theresa's most recent work titled "Soul Travel: Deep Breathing as a Sacred Expe-



Theresa Thompson Nix

FROG FOOD BY Z AKHMETOVA



dition Toward Black Joy" is published in the Black Literacy Matters Anthology of Minnesota Voices. Her blog space called Soul Sessions with Queen Tea is available at www.breathedeepwithin.com. You can join Queen Tea for free Zoom-based breathwork class with licensed meditation facilitator LaDonna Funderburke Mondays, Wednesdays at 5 p.m. and Saturdays at 4 p.m. and 5 p.m. Classes are free, in partnership with the Cultural Wellness Center's Backyard Community Health Hub. Learn more at www.breathedeepwithin.com.

KEEP POSITIVE VIBRATIONS FLOWING

I am grateful that Kieran and Theresa were willing and cheerfully accepted my invitation to energize my first column of the year. I wish us all a healthy and grounded year of wellness, joy, abundance,

healing, forgiveness, and love as we work, play, and grow together. And, please send a note to our Governor and Lt. Governor to halt and stop operations of Pipeline 3. We have the knowledge, capacity, and abilities of utilizing alternative green and clean energy; our kids, grandchildren, and generations to come will thank us for transforming our sincere ignorance and conscientious stupidity.

Keep the positive vibrations flowing and stay optimistic!!!!

May Peace Be In the Rondo, Frogtown, Hamline/Midway, Como, & Surrounding Communities...

May Peace Be In Our Homes & Communities...

May Peace Prevail On Earth (MPPOE)!!!! BE SMART! DO YOUR PART! Get Your Vaccination Shots and Booster Shots if you feel comfortable doing so!!!

Public comments prompt change to proposed religious use ordinance

What's before city now is 'significantly different' than October version

By JANE McCLURE

New regulations for religious uses in St. Paul look very different than they did a few months ago when they provoked outcry throughout the city.

Adoption of the new regulations will clarify and streamline how faith-based institutions can use their buildings and grounds. The current version of the ordinance won a recommendation of approval in December from the St. Paul Planning Commission. The regulations must be adopted before a Feb. 1 federal court-ordered deadline.

On Dec. 17, the St. Paul Planning Commission gave unanimous approval to the proposed regulations, which were extensively rewritten after an October public hearing. Sixteen speakers and about 150 people and institutions sent in written comments, all raising objections to the original proposal. Planning staff and a commission committee worked with the Interfaith Action Coalition and others to revise the ordinance.

Faith leaders and congregation members said the regulations as originally presented would adversely impact their work to serve communities, through a host of programs and services. Potential conflicts with the free exercise of faith under the federal prompted the Planning Commission to drop a proposed set of regulations on accessory uses. It could have limited new construction for accessory uses.

That section of the proposed ordinance was also seen as violating the federal Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act (RLUIPA). RLUIPA prohibits local governments from land use regulations that impose a substantial burden on religious exercise.

AREA CHURCHES WEIGH IN

Several Midway area churches weighed in asking for changes. One is Bethlehem Lutheran Church in the Midway, 436 N. Roy St. Pastor Kirsten Fryer pointed out the church's many roles in the community, including providing refuge for neighbors affected by smoke, tear gas and pepper spray during the 2020 civil unrest following the murder of George Floyd.

"Without question, we said yes because we believe that we are compelled by our faith community to offer shelter to those in need," she said. That led to becoming a food hub serving 17,000 people while local grocery stores were closed.

The church has housed Open Hands Midway since 2009, which provides meals and food. A new food shelf was created in 2020. A previous version of the regulations would have forced the church to go through the conditional use permit review and approval process.

St. Anthony Park United Church of Christ, 2129 Commonwealth Ave., sent the Planning Commission a history lesson.

"... our church hosts a Boy Scout Troop. Troop 17 celebrated its centennial anniversary in 2015. It is the second-oldest continuously chartered troop in Minnesota, and the oldest troop in Minnesota continuously chartered by (the church) one organization. This troop is still meeting in the same building as when it began! Although we expect that this relationship would be grandfathered in, we believe that the rules should support similar new relationships as well ... If a house of worship has more space that they can use for the good of the community, why shouldn't they be able to use it?" The letter was signed by Rev. Victoria Wilgocki and Moderator Beth Magistad.

Rev. John Marboe of Zion Lutheran Church, 1697 LaFond Ave., called the original ordinance "highly problematic." He challenged the city's definition of "accessory" uses. "Religious education is primary. Feeding the hungry is primary. Serving the poor is primary. Fostering healthy communities is primary. A community that 'worships' without engaging in these things is not is not worshipping in deed," he said.

Marboe called out several aspects of the original ordinance as overly restrictive, adding that the ordinance as first written "restricts the ability of religious institutions to do things that actually enhance neighborhoods and communities and

make for a more livable city."

Dozens of others from around the city weighed in, all opposed to the regulations. One person offered to pray for the Planning Commission.

SO, WHAT CHANGED?

The city council will act on an ordinance that doesn't regulate so-called accessory uses and the notion of building more space to accommodate them.

Restricting new buildings and additions is seen as burdensome for growing congregations, Dermody said. Many religious institutions maintain multipurpose spaces that are used for a variety of events, including events open to the greater community.

Many uses the city considered to be accessory uses are actually primary to a congregation's mission. "Institutes provide valued community services that complement government services," the city staff report stated.

The proposed regulations no longer include a conditional use permit requirement for social service and community uses of more than 1,000 square feet. Conditional use permits would now be required for uses of more than 7,000 square feet, and for homeless service facilities such as daytime drop-in centers. That mirrors homeless services zoning regulations adopted by the city council in fall 2021.

Overnight shelters for up to 25 adults and homeless services are still considered accessory uses.

An overnight shelter is a place where people using the shelter pack up and take their belongings every morning. Emergency housing allows people to stay longer. Emergency housing numbers would be limited by occupancy regulations tied to building and fire codes, not to zoning regulations.

Child care centers and preschools, which are only allowed in former regional institutions, would now be allowed in current institutions. Many places of worship lease space to child care centers and preschools, but were grandfathered in because they predate the current zoning code. Changes could have affected Midway churches that house child care centers

and preschools. Those include Hamline Church United Methodist, 1514 Englewood Ave., and Knox International Center, 1536 W. Minnesota Ave.

One proposal raised at the October hearing isn't addressed by the latest round of zoning changes. St. Peter Claver Catholic Church, 375 N. Oxford St., would like to add senior housing to its property. That would be allowed until the current single-family zoning, said Dermody. But the church, school and clergy housing are on a block near traditional neighborhoods mixed-use and multi-family zoning, so a separate zoning change request would fulfill those plans.

Another pending change is to the definition of community centers. That's a change that would go beyond faith-based institutions.

St. Paul has what is defined as "non-commercial recreation centers" for many years. Those regulations have covered city recreation centers, which since the 1970s have been required to have conditional use permits. Dermody noted that several city recreation centers don't meet all of the current requirements. For example, Linwood, Groveland and Martin Luther King recreation centers aren't on arterial streets. Proposed changes would eliminate the arterial streets requirement and the requirement for a conditional use permit for city, religious and nonprofit community centers.

Some small uses, such as travel agencies accounting services or small offices housed at religious institutions would only require a review and approval from city staff for approval. Those are regulated in a manner similar to home occupations.

The proposed changes are triggered by the long fight over Listening House, which relocated from downtown to a Dayton's Bluff church several years ago. The daytime drop-in facility for the homeless opened with city staff approval, but no neighborhood process. Neighbors protested and the matter went to the planning commission and city council.

A debate over city-imposed operating conditions for Listening House that were seen as onerous landed in court. Listening House remains open.

The city needs to spell out regulations for uses at faith-based institutions, as part of a 2019 U.S. District Court-ordered settlement with host church First Lutheran. The city had imposed more than a dozen operating conditions on Listening House, prompting the lawsuit by the church.

Relief coming for businesses hurt in 2020 civil unrest

By JANE McCLURE

Many months after civil unrest and the COVID-19 pandemic upended St. Paul retail districts, more relief is on the way. Whether it will still benefit businesses damaged or destroyed in 2020 remains to be seen.

A total of \$1 million, split between two city programs, will be rolled over from the 2021 to the 2022 budget. Funding guidelines will be released during the first quarter of 2022.

The St. Paul City Council, acting as the Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) on Dec. 9, unanimously approved the reallocation. Council members asked why it took so long, when other nonprofit relief efforts tied to civil unrest and the pandemic have wound down. Many affected Midway businesses have already rebuilt, relocated or opted not to reopen.

"The intent at the time was to provide immediate assistance to businesses," said Ward 2 Council Member Rebecca Noecker. "We allocated these funds some time ago and the idea was to help businesses that were really struggling ... I'm just wondering why it has taken so long to get the dollars allocated."

Noecker also expressed concern about the lack of information, adding that "communication has been somewhat lacking."

Andy Hestness, HRA program director, said the delay was caused by waiting for the Minnesota Legislature to act on funding. "It took longer than we would have liked," he said.

State lawmakers approved a package of finance assistance as the 2021 regular session wound down. The Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) announced the first round of Minnesota Main Street Economic Revitalization Program grants in October 2021, including an award of \$8.9 million to the St. Paul and Minnesota Foundation for three districts within the city.

The HRA also allocated \$500,000 to the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) Community Assets Transition Fund, and gave approval for an agreement for the dollars granted to LISC. This program will help small Black, Indigenous, people of color (BIPOC)-owned businesses that are in danger of losing their storefronts to property sales. Properties could be sold to nonprofits and held until the business owners are able to buy and own their places of business.

Another action reduces the city's early notification system process for requests for \$250,000 or more, from 45 days to 10 days. That is meant to get funds out the door more quickly, said Hestness.

CITY'S \$500,000

One allocation provides \$500,000 to provide matches for \$8.9 million in state dollars in three designated neighborhoods or be used citywide. The designated neighborhoods include sections of Snelling and University avenues and Rice Street, West Seventh Street and parts of the East Side.

The local streets included are Snelling between Portland and Englewood avenues; University between Fairview Avenue and Rice Street, and Rice Street between University and Larpentour avenues.

The districts could include projects within one-quarter mile of designated streets. "These corridors represent some of the areas hardest hit by the civil uprising and where the need for capital project funding is greatest," said a city staff report.

The state funds are for businesses impacted by widespread arson and civil unrest, natural disasters, the pandemic and major plant closures, significant commercial vacancy increases, and/or loss of economic anchor institutions. The \$8.9 million is overseen by the foundations.

Eligible expenses include repair or renovation of real property, building construction, landscaping and streetscaping, demolition and site preparation, pre-design and design, engineering, infrastructure and related site amenities.

LISC'S \$500,000

The \$500,000 for LISC is part of a

proposed, \$25 million-plus flexible, affordable pool of capital that that can be used to acquire commercial and residential properties in or near the districts that were impacted by the civil uprising following the May 2020 murder of George Floyd and the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic. The fund would help with property acquisition as well as with technical, predevelopment, and capacity supports to prospective developers and long-term owners to help them prepare for development and sustainable property ownership.

Council Member Mitra Jalali expressed interest in the LISC funding, saying there are businesses in her fourth ward that could benefit. Business owners are worried about property sales and gentrification pushing them out.

"We have a number of businesses in the Midway that are BIPOC-owned businesses," she said. These longtime business owners don't own their storefronts and risk eviction when properties are sold.

The fund was set up to help with acquisition of commercial and residential properties in or near the districts that were impacted by civil unrest and the pandemic. The maximum investment per project is \$250,000, with loan terms of five years or less. Loan rate is zero percent.

The funds could only be used for property acquisition, with community-based nonprofit organizations as borrowers.

ACTIVISTS RALLY OUTSIDE GOVERNOR'S RESIDENCE IN REMEMBRANCE OF DOLAL IDD

By JILL BOOGREN

Community members gathered in front of the Governor's Residence on Jan. 4, 2022, in remembrance of Dolal Idd, who was shot and killed by Minneapolis police officers on Dec. 30, 2020. Activists called for the release of evidence, including more video footage of the incident, and for Governor Tim Walz to assign a new investigative unit for police murders.

"It's been almost a year later, and [Bayle Gelle, Dolal Idd's father] doesn't have all the evidence he needs... and that's inhumane," said Toshira Garraway Allen of Families Supporting Families Against Police Violence (FSFAPV). "That's inhumane behavior because this family deserves closure. This family deserves answers."

A deeply emotional Gelle spoke to the group assembled on the sidewalk.

"It is almost a year that they take the life of my son... I remember lots of time we have lunch, me and my son, in my home," he said. "Although I know my son is not coming back... but it's still, always in my heart."

According to a case summary issued by Dakota County Attorney Kathy Keena, who investigated the incident, Idd was under investigation for the illegal sale of firearms. A 27-second video clip of a body-worn camera shows law enforcement in vehicles surrounding Idd's car in the Holiday Station Store lot in south Minneapolis before shots were fired. Keena announced in August 2021 that she had concluded that the officers "were legally justified when they used deadly force during this incident."

Paul Johnson is among activists calling for the release of more video footage. He addressed his remarks directly to anyone watching a livestream, challenging them to count the cameras at the Holiday,



Toshira Garraway Allen speaks on Jan. 4, 2022. Bayle Gelle, Dolal Idd's father, stands next to her, fist raised. Demonstrators marched from Summit Ave. to Grand Ave., around the governor's residence and back. >> MORE PHOTOS ONLINE @ www.MonitorSaintPaul.com (Photo by Jill Boogren.)

as well as the number of police and police vehicles, and ask why only one angle was provided.

Gelle's home was also raided the same night Idd was killed. With a search warrant, armed Hennepin County Sheriff's Office deputies barged into the house at 2:30 a.m., traumatizing his family. Gelle said officers pointed guns, including at his four-year-old child, and didn't tell anyone about Idd's death earlier that evening. Gelle didn't know what officers were looking for, and no evidence was found in the home.

"It is unacceptable. We are talking about human life. We are not talking cockroach or rats or insects," said Gelle. "My son and others who the police killed, they are human, and we wish they were here today with us."

He turned toward the front door of the mansion and called to the governor,

"Come out please and share the pain we have. Please come outside and talk to us."

After a brief march along Summit and Grand avenues, Idd's cousin Abdibasit Makadin spoke of Dolal's character and the significant role Idd played in his life.

"A lot of people have said Dolal is my twin. And he was," said Makadin. "Dolal taught me how to shoot my first basketball. Dolal taught me how to play football. Dolal gave me my competitive nature. Dolal taught me how to be a man. He set a great example for me. I don't have any older brothers, but I was blessed with Dolal."

Rep. John Thompson (67A) cautioned activists against being fooled by buzzwords like "equity," "equality" and "reform."

"Don't let [legislators] sell you on this crap. Tell 'em the truth. Tell 'em we

are overfundin' public safety while our schools are closin' right now in this dog-gone state. Let's overfund public schools. Let's overfund mental health providers. Let's overfund homelessness and fix the problem," he said. "You can't tell me we gonna try to reform police officers. You can't tell me that because post George Floyd you shoulda done it. Post Philando Castile you shoulda done it. Post Justin Teigen you shoulda done it. Post Cordale Handy you shoulda done it. And you haven't. You've only given us lip service."

In 2021 Thompson introduced HF 784, the Philando Castile Omnibus Act, which would appropriate funding for African American culture and heritage preservation, entrepreneurial and business training, housing stability, community service centers, culturally competent health services, school breakfast and lunch debt forgiveness, guidance counseling, tutorial services, STEM training and technology access, urban agriculture, crime and violence prevention, recidivism reduction, among other initiatives.

Garraway Allen vowed to be at the Capitol again this year urging passage of police accountability legislation. Among bills brought forward last year by FSFAPV and Minnesota Coalition partners is one that would end the statute of limitations for wrongful death civil suits and another that would create an independent investigatory and prosecutory body for officer involved critical incidents.

There's little confidence in the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension's ability to conduct an impartial investigation among police accountability advocates. Garraway Allen supports shutting it down and replacing it.

The legislative session begins Jan. 31. More information can be found at www.fsfapv.org.

The Hamline Midway Coalition Welcomes New Board Members!

Meet our board members and learn more about HMC at our January board meeting



HMC Board of Directors Meeting
Tuesday, January 25th
6:15-8 pm
Hamline Midway Library Auditorium



Sarah Wolbert



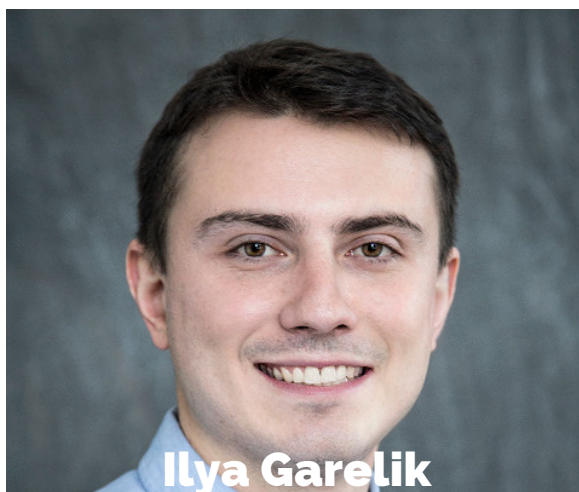
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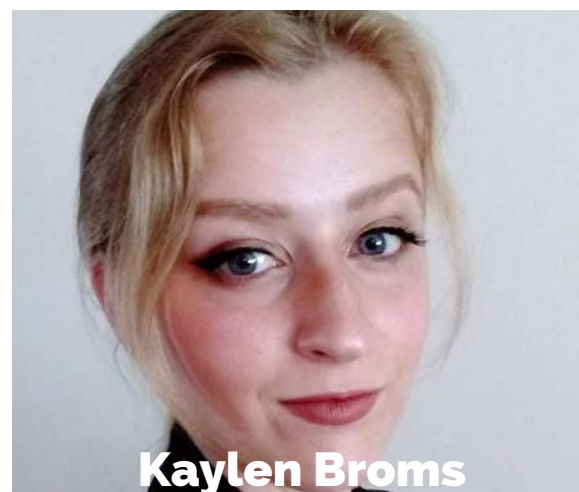
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Danny Baggett



Ilya Garelik



Kaylen Broms

STUDENTS GEAR UP FOR SPRING SPORTS AND MUSICAL

**COMO PARK
SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL**



BY ERIC ERICKSON
SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHER

SPRING MUSICAL

The spring musical at Como will be an adaptation of the Disney film "High School Musical." Performances are scheduled to run on March 18 and 19 in the Como Park Auditorium. Choir director Siri Keller is in the process of organizing auditions and assembling the cast and stage crew.

SPIRIT WEEK

The final week of school in 2021 was a spirited one with thematic dress-up days for Como students. Monday was pajama day, Tuesday was senior citizens day, Wednesday was twin day, Thursday was Christmas/ugly holiday sweater day, and Friday was black and gold day with students and staff sporting the school colors and Cougar gear.

COUGAR GROUNDS



Como students from the Marine Corps JROTC and the Cougar girls basketball program served the community at a Toys for Tots drive last month. (Photo by Sgt. Major James Kirkland)

After a pause due to the pandemic, Como students reimagined the Cougar Grounds coffee shop that had operated out of a corner in the library. The new and improved Cougar Grounds opened up last fall as a combined coffee shop and school store, located in the Commons across from the school cafeteria.

The Cougar Grounds is open for business during periods 1, 2, and 8. It is staffed by students who serve hot drinks and sell Como spirit gear including student-designed sweatshirts. The most purchased staff beverage is coffee with creamer, and the best-sellers to students are a

mocha or hot cocoa.

TOYS FOR TOTS

Cadets from Como's Marine Corps JROTC and players from the Cougars girls basketball program teamed up on a Toys for Tots service project last month.

The students were able to give back to the community by sorting hundreds of donated toys and build camaraderie through their work together. Several Como staff members donated to the cause, as well.

GIRLS BASKETBALL

The senior class for the seven-time defending St. Paul City champions is deep and talented. Ronnie Porter, Kaylynn Asberry, Shakyla Walker, Cloey Dmytruk and Jada James have formed the team's core for several years. Junior Shania Nichols-Van Nett is another highly regarded experienced player.

"They all bring something special to the table," Coach Olonda England said. "With their leadership, this season will be great for those coming behind them as they will have the opportunity to learn from some talented young ladies."

The Cougars are aiming to break through the section playoffs and qualify for the Class 3A state tournament. Their challenging non-conference schedule against top-ranked 4A schools such as Hopkins, Stillwater and Wayzata is helping them prepare.

NORDIC SKIING

With nearly 40 participants in the program, the Cougar Nordic team is eager for a snowy winter. Coaches Sasha Van Voorhis and Dylan Adair are happy to have new and developing skiers in addition to senior leadership including Saylor Landrum, Owen Finlay, Soren Berg and Peter Wenger.

"We have over 25 athletes who are in 10th grade or younger," Adair said. "We have a goal of preparing them for higher level racing when they get a little older."

COMO KINDNESS SHOWS IN THANKSGIVING MEALS DRIVE

**DISTRICT 10 COMO
COMMUNITY COUNCIL**



BY SHEVEK MCKEE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In November, District 10 Como Community Council invited community donations to once again support their Thanksgiving meals drive. Over \$2,200 was donated by the Como community! Your generosity made it possible for us to:

- Work with the North End-South Como Block Nurse Program to provide meals for over 100 Como seniors that you helped purchase and deliver.

- Separately, the North Suburban Kiwanis Club has once again donated nearly three dozen turkeys. The turkeys and Cub Foods gift cards will go to families identified through Como Senior High, Hmong College Prep Academy, and Metro Deaf School. Turkeys will also be going to Como By The Lake senior residents and to augment Focus MN's distribution event.

- Additional donated funds went to support meals for homeless teens and young adults at the Salvation Army's Booth Brown House on Como Ave.

Thanks again to our amazing community donors and volunteers!

BLOOD DRIVES

In December, D10 partnered with the Red Cross and Como Zoo & Conservatory to host a community blood drive at the zoo. Thirty-six units of blood were collected (out of a goal of 29!) from 35 donors, seven of whom were first time donors, and we had some wonderful Como community volunteers checking people in for their appointments.

The Red Cross blood supply shortage continues, please consider signing up to donate at a time that works for you. Stay tuned for future blood drives in the Como neighborhood.

KNOW YOUR COMO? JOIN VOLUNTEER WRITERS!

Are you good at sharing good stories? Then you could be exactly who we are looking for to help with year two of D10 Como Park's Know Your Como project.

Over the past year D10 Neighborhood Relations committee has assembled volunteer writers from the neighborhood to celebrate and appreciate the large and small contributions of our neighbors and the diversity that make Como a special place. The latest Know Your Como pieces are posted in the D10 website newsfeed and weekly newsletter, but you can find all the articles to date at www.district10comopark.org/kyc/.

This year the group will be looking at featuring places and history, in addition to community members. Email district10@district10comopark.org if you would like to join the volunteer team!

NEIGHBORHOOD HONOR ROLL

Know someone who makes the Como Park area a better place to live, work or play? Nominate them for the District 10 Neighborhood Honor Roll. The Honor Roll pays tribute to everyday people who make a sustained and lasting impact in our neighborhood or Saint Paul as a whole.

Submit your nominations by email to: district10@district10comopark.org. Make sure we receive them no later than

Friday, Jan. 14. Tell us who you are nominating and why. The Como Community Council board then selects three of your nominees at its January board meeting to recognize for 2020.

ZOOM OR CALL INTO D10 MEETINGS

Renters, homeowners, and other community members are always welcome to participate in District 10's board and committee meetings. You can join either by video conference or by phone.

To find meeting links and call in numbers go to our website calendar at <http://www.district10comopark.org/Calendar.html>. If you have questions you can email district10@district10comopark.org. Or, call 651-644-3889.

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

- Environment Committee: Jan. 11
 - Board meeting: Tuesday, January 18
 - Neighborhood Relations Committee: Tuesday, Feb. 1
 - Land Use Committee: Feb. 2
- All meetings begin at 7 p.m. Whenever possible, agendas and other relevant documents are posted in advance on District 10's website: www.district10comopark.org

WEDDINGS

Coming in February.

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Families of lost loved ones, supporters rally behind Wright family

By JILL BOOGREN

Families from Minnesota and around the country who have lost loved ones to police violence stood together outside the Hennepin County Courthouse on Dec. 8, 2021 in support of the Wright family.

It was the first day of the trial of former police officer Kim Potter, who was charged with first and second-degree manslaughter in the April 11, 2021 shooting death of Daunte Wright in Brooklyn Center. The first witness testifying was Daunte's mother, Katie Wright.

"Today I had a chance to witness the most emotional, intense, breathtaking thing that you ever wanna have to go through. And I would like y'all to just pray a little harder for this family," said Bianca Austin to the crowd assembled outside after the day's proceedings. Austin is the aunt of Breonna Taylor, who was killed by officers in her apartment in a botched police raid in Louisville, KY in March 2020. "It's not easy. And they have to sit here and relive Daunte's murder all over and be able to stand tall and tell his story. So prayers go to the Daunte Wright family. We stand in solidarity with you, and we will be rockin' with y'all until this is over."

Present were family members and close friends of Black men killed at the hands of law enforcement – Hardel Sherrill, George Floyd, Emmett Till, Philando Castile, Justin Teigen, and Leneal Frazier – as well as family of Jacob Blake, who was shot and paralyzed by a Kenosha, Wis. police officer in August 2020.

"Daunte Wright was a son, but he was also a father, and what you see here today is... Black fathers and uncles and brothers out here demanding justice for Daunte Wright and all stolen lives," said Trahern Crews, of Black Lives Matter Minnesota.

George Floyd's significant other, Courteney Ross, also spoke to the crowd.

"Kim Potter stole Daunte Wright's life, she ripped his future away in one move," she said. "Kim Potter left the Wright family with a lifetime of grief, trauma and sadness. She left his friends with emptiness and mistrust."

Introducing Emmett Till's cousin, Deborah Watts, Toshira Garraway Allen of Families Supporting Families Against Police Violence, said, "We know that these are racially motivated murders, and if you're wearing a Ku Klux Klan outfit, if you're wearing a police uniform, or whether you wearin' regular clothes, we know a racially motivated murder when



Bianca Austin (at center, holding microphone), aunt of Breonna Taylor, stands with families who have lost loved ones to police violence in support of Daunte Wright's family on the first day of Kim Potter's trial at the Hennepin County courthouse. (Photo by Jill Boogren)



Demonstrators rally outside the Hennepin County Government Center and march through downtown streets calling for Justice for Daunte Wright, who was killed by former Brooklyn Center Police Officer Kim Potter in April 2021. (Photo by Jill Boogren)

we see one." On Dec. 6, 2021 just two days prior, the U.S. Department of Justice closed a re-investigation into Emmett Till's murder. Till was lynched in 1955 for allegedly flirting with a white woman. Watts is calling for his accuser, who is still alive,

to be brought to justice.

Temperatures were in the teens as people gathered at Government Center Park. Demonstrators held up signs as a recording of "Justice for Daunte Wright" played on a speaker, and supporters lit lu-

minaries as a show of solidarity. A brief march through downtown streets took place, with volunteer marshals in high visibility vests helping to maintain safety along the route. Street medics, supported by Justice Frontline Aid, pulled carts with water, snacks, handwarmers, face masks and hand sanitizer.

Rebecca Shumard said she flew in for a second time from Phoenix, Ariz. – the first being in April when she learned Mr. Wright was killed.

"He's a year younger than my son, and it just broke my heart," she said.

Carrying a Black Lives Matter flag, Minneapolis resident Keith McCarron said he was there to support the family. He also expressed frustration over Hennepin County Sheriff David Hutchinson's involvement in a car crash and DWI near Alexandria, Minn., reported the same day.

"[It's] ironic that the Hennepin County sheriff is arrested for DWI, but nobody shot him to death. So, if you're Black and you're in the Metro area the smallest of offenses can lead to fatal consequences," said McCarron. "And it's horrible when you think about the original reasons for pulling [Daunte Wright] over was a dangling mirror ornament and expired tabs. I mean... seriously, there's no way that, in a reasonable world, that escalates to gunfire."

From a Dec. 8, 2021 statement posted on his Facebook page, Hutchinson wrote: "I made the inexcusable decision to drive after drinking alcohol and I am deeply sorry. As the Chief Law Enforcement Officer in Hennepin County, I am held to a higher standard. I regret the choice I made and apologize to the citizens I serve, the staff I work with, and the friends and family who support me."

According to news reports, Hutchinson pleaded guilty to driving while intoxicated and on Dec. 20, 2021 was sentenced to two years probation.

As the rally drew to a close, Minnesota Justice Coalition President Johnathon McClellan called to uplift the family of Daunte Wright and continue to demand justice.

"We stand with the community. We stand with all those who came out demanding accountability and justice," he said. "Because an attack on one of us is an attack on all of us. And we cannot be silent."

Kim Potter was found guilty of both counts of manslaughter on Dec. 23, 2021. She will be sentenced on Feb. 18.

“

Kim Potter stole Daunte Wright's life, she ripped his future away in one move. Kim Potter left the Wright family with a lifetime of grief, trauma and sadness. She left his friends with emptiness and mistrust.”

Courteney Ross

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PLAN IT

'SLOW SHOW' ON LAKE COMO

Dancer/choreographer Dimitri Chamblas' Slow Show is a 20-minute collective dance whose visible repercussions are minute, precise, and concentrated. In this iteration at Como Lake (1360 Lexington Parkway North) on Feb. 5 at 1 p.m. and 2 p.m., 50 local participants will respond to their immediate environment on a frozen Como Lake. There will be real-time sound accompaniment made of samples, live electronics, and guitar by artist Eddie Ruscha.

The event is part of the Great Northern Festival. The Great Northern celebrates cold, creative winters through 10 days of diverse programming that invigorate mind and body. More at thegreatnorthernfestival.com.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION

The Midway Project is back for weekly distribution events every Wednesday at Hancock Recreation Center from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Beginning January 19, the plan was to transition from curbside service to a walk-in shopping experience. For everyone's safety, masking indoors will be required. Shopping in shifts will take place to limit the number of people inside at any one time.

For more, contact midway-project@hamlinemidway.org.

MOBILE MARKET STOPS

The Twin Cities Mobile Market stops at the Hamline Hi-Rise (777 N. Hamline Ave.) the second Tuesday of every month from 12:30-1:30 p.m. Twin Cities Mobile Market is a program of The Food Group.

Anyone can shop on the Twin Cities Mobile Market bus for groceries. This nonprofit grocery store on a bus conveniently brings affordable and fresh fruits, vegetables, meat, dairy, grains and other high-quality groceries directly into neighborhoods and specifies areas that don't have easy access to full-service supermarkets, grocery stores, or food shelves.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, staff of The Twin Cities Mobile Market will fulfill orders for all customers. How it works: You receive a list of the inventory, TCMM staff take your payment and fill your order. Please wear a mask.

BRIEFLY

MATASCASTILLO ELECTED CHAIR

The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners elected Trista MatasCastillo as Chair of the Board for 2022. Since 2019, Commissioner MatasCastillo has represented Ramsey County District 3, which is made up of Falcon Heights and the Saint Paul neighborhoods of Payne/Phalen, North End/South Como, Como Park, Frogtown, and Hamline-Midway.



LSE TO DESIGN HAMLINE LIBRARY

Saint Paul Public Library (SPPL) announces today that it has selected LSE Architects (LSE), opens a new window as the architecture and design partner for the next phase of its facilities transformation process, which includes a vision to invest in three libraries across Saint Paul: Hamline Midway, Hayden Heights, and Riverview libraries.

In August 2021, SPPL released a request for proposals to select a design partner to develop community-informed designs for its three priority libraries: Hamline Midway, Hayden Heights, and Riverview. This phase will include community engagement, schematic designs, cost estimates, and 75% completed construction documents. LSE was selected through a competitive process in which a number of local and national architecture and design firms with library experience applied.

Community engagement and schematic design work is slated to begin in January 2022.

GRANTS THROUGH NUFC

Neighbors United Funding Collaborative is now accepting grant requests for up to \$5,000 for small businesses and retail focused nonprofits, and community activation projects from the broader community.

NUFC is seeking ideas and projects focusing on economic justice, ownership, work which spur new improvements, involve placemaking/façade improvements, public art, public safety, community-activation ideas, in total, projects that preserve what people love most about the community. Many of NUFC's small retail businesses and retail-

cused non-profits are owned and operated by immigrants and people of color, and NUFC is committed to ensuring that support is accessible to those businesses and has an equitable impact.

For more information on how to apply: <https://midwayunited.org/apply-now/>

HELP SETTLE AFGHAN REFUGEES

ServeMinnesota, the state's hub for AmeriCorps, partners with Minnesota's Department of Human Services (DHS) to form a new initiative: Refugee Response Initiative. The program creates opportunities for about 40 Minnesotans to serve as resettlement navigators for Afghan refugees new to the state. The DHS Resettlement Programs Office is working closely with community partners like ServeMinnesota and other agencies to coordinate Minnesota's response in welcoming families evacuated from Afghanistan and ensure they have a safe temporary place to stay with access to critical short-term services and longer-term assistance.

Anyone who wants to learn more about supporting the Refugee Response Initiative is encouraged to fill out an interest form at www.serveminnesota.org/refugee.

FOOD SCRAPS DROP OFF SITE OPEN

A new collection site in Highland Park will make it easier for Ramsey County residents to drop off food scraps. The new site is open 24 hours a day, year-round at 800 S. Snelling Ave., Saint Paul.

HOLIDAY DECORATION WINNERS

Congratulations to Gary Kane, whose décor at 989 Barrett St. N. was voted the winner in D10 Como Park's Holiday Decoration Contest. Second Place went to the Hershey's house at 985 Stinson St., and third place was Joe Mabbott and Nell Graham at 1383 Como Ave. Gabe's by the Park donated prizes for the contest.

CERVANTES, HAHM RETIRING

Department of Safety & Inspections Director Ricardo Cervantes and Parks & Recreation Department Director Mike Hahm, who each have more than three decades of public service, will transition out of their respective leadership roles at the end of February 2022.



2021 CELEBRATION OF NONPROFITS

Representatives from the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation were part of the Nonprofit Expo on Wednesday, Dec. 15 at Hamline University. The 2021 Celebration of Nonprofits organized by the Midway Area Chamber of Commerce included speakers and a luncheon. The annual event is open to all members, not just nonprofits. Jeannie Fox of the Center for Public Administration and Leadership at Hamline University moderated a discussion titled, "What Do We Know and How Do We Know it? Data in Decision Making." The panel included Shahir Ahmed, Senior Program Director, Neighborhood Development Center (NDC); Laura Schauben, Research Scientist, Wilder Research; and Jennifer O'Rourke, Director of Government Relations, Ramsey County. (Photo submitted)

Lyngblomsten launches Memory Collective

Lyngblomsten, a senior care organization serving older adults in the Twin Cities since 1906, is launching a new educational enrichment class called the Memory Collective for adults living at home and experiencing memory loss. The online class, which will begin in February 2022, offers participants a supportive community where they will discover ways to keep living their best life possible.

"We are honoring people where they are and building on their strengths," said Julie Pfab, Director of Community Services for Lyngblomsten.

Pfab noted there are resources and support systems available for adults living at home with memory loss, but they're limited. The Memory Collective seeks to fill this gap by providing participants (including persons who may have just learned they have dementia) with an opportunity to come together and form meaningful connections with others on a similar journey.

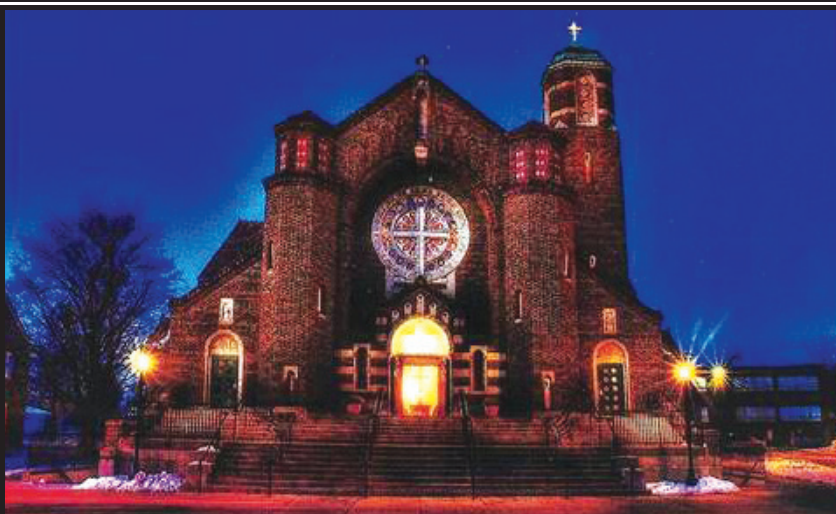
There will be four Memory Collective classes in 2022, each one lasting eight weeks. For the

first seven weeks, the participant and one optional guest (e.g., friend, family member, spouse) will gather virtually with others for a 90-minute online Zoom session facilitated by Lyngblomsten staff. Each session will feature a variety of educational topics and activities, as well as time for participants to share their life experiences as they learn from each other and build a social group. After the online series concludes, the group will come together for an in-person outing at a local destination (e.g., museum, park) based on the class theme.

The first eight-week Memory Collective class begins the week of February 1 and its theme will be Minnesota Fun Facts. The fee for participating is \$175 (which includes the cost for a guest).

For more information about Lyngblomsten's Memory Collective, contact Carolyn Klaver, Community Dementia Care Specialist with 2nd Half with Lyngblomsten, at cklaver@lyngblomsten.org or (651) 414-5292, or visit www.lyngblomsten.org/MemoryCollective.

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Lieutenant Gov. Peggy Flanagan said, "As we come up on the 2022 legislative session, we will fight for the Urban Indigenous Legacy Initiative. Our communities do better when we work collaboratively. The state of Minnesota has been headed in one direction for 133 years. Now we have the vision to do things differently." (Photos by Margie and Pat O'Loughlin)

URBAN INDIGENOUS LEGACY INITIATIVE UNVEILED

>> From 1

THRIVING NONPROFITS = THRIVING COMMUNITIES

The #NativeRISE event drew approximately 200 nonprofit leaders, legislators, foundation supporters, community partners, media and other guests. As the audience learned, six of the proposed Legacy Initiative projects are shovel-ready, five are investment-ready, and the rest are still being planned.

The estimated cost for the project is \$94 million, which will be raised through public and private sources.

The Legacy Initiative addresses disparities highlighted during the COVID-19 pandemic and recent civil unrest, as well as persistent shortfalls in funding for capital improvements in Native American organizations that focus resources on client services.

"Now is the time to commit to funding state-of-the-art facilities with robust programming for the Native American community," Hobot said. "The challenges of the last 20 months have been unprecedented. It's time to build the future we want to see for our people."

POWER OF COMMUNITY

Annessia Swann was 22 years old in 1994. Speaking from the podium at #NativeRISE, she said, "I was a single mom in an abusive relationship and needed career assistance to raise my son. A family member suggested I go to the American Indian OIC."

"I signed up for a one-year training program. The OIC had an on-site child care center, which made it possible for me to complete my program. I found work after I graduated, first with a marketing firm and then in a corporate setting. After a few years, I got a job at OIC, and I've been there ever since. I grew up there. My kids would say they grew up there."

Swann, now the director of Adult Basic Education/GED at AIOIC, is grateful for the support and services she received from the organization. It has made a difference in her life, she said.

The Legacy Initiative will make it possible for AIOIC, located at 1845 E. Franklin Ave. in Minneapolis, to expand and improve its facilities. Funding will ensure that students at the on-site high school have an enriched learning environment with up-to-date technology and resources. Students in the job training program will receive career counseling and skills that help them enter, reenter or advance in the workforce with living wage jobs.

The Legacy Initiative will make it possible for the OIC, located at 1824 Franklin Ave. East in Minneapolis, to expand and improve its facilities. Those facilities include the on-site high school Takoda Prep, and the job training program Takoda Institute. Takoda is a Dakota word meaning "friend to all."

IMPORTANCE OF CULTURAL SPACES

Attorney Patrice Kunesh is board chair of the Wakan Tipi Center and Lower Phalen Creek Project on the east side of St. Paul. From the podium, she explained, "We're trying to restore land to its original habitat. We've transformed 27 acres desecrated by the railroad and by industry at the Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary."

The organization's goal is to honor and bring connection to the sacred site. The building – deemed "shovel ready" – will feature a community gathering area, classrooms, and gallery space to showcase the value of sanctuary as a place for cultural healing, life-long learning, and inspiration.

Once built, the organization will operate the interpretive center rent-free for 30 years, as part of a public/private partnership with the city of Saint Paul.

"We're very grateful," Kunesh said, "to the city, the legislature, the state, the Met Council, local philanthropists and foundations for supporting a gathering place that will benefit Native Americans and the whole community."

RECLAIMING INDIGENOUS FOOD PATHWAYS

Indigenous chef Sean Sherman has spent more than 30 years perfecting his craft. Co-founder (with his partner Dana Thompson) and CEO of the Sioux Chief, the Indigenous Food Lab, and Owamni, the new Indigenous restaurant in downtown Minneapolis, he was the keynote speaker for #NativeRISE.

"North America's history begins with Indigenous history. Now is the time to step up all together. Now is the time for evolution and revolution," Sherman said. "We are reclaiming Indigenous narratives, Indigenous spaces, and Indigenous food pathways that were broken with colonization. We will be the answer to our ancestor's prayers, but we can't do it by ourselves. We will rise together."

For further information about the Urban Indigenous Legacy Initiative, contact Ann Merrill at the American Indian OIC: annm@aioic.org.

Funding for #NativeRISE was provided by the Bush Foundation and Bremer Bank. Singing and drumming was provided by the West End Singers.



American Indian OIC President Dr. Joe Hobot, shown with emcee Deanna Standing Cloud (right), said, "Our buildings have deteriorated, and it is time to add to the legacy of what we inherited. Welcome to the moment – as we move forward from this critical crossroad."