



CO-STRUGGLING

Jason Sole launches Institute of Aspiring Abolitionists, Relationships Evolving Possibilities, and Radical Ecosystem Pods

By JAN WILLMS

The past year has been less challenging for Dr. Jason Sole and his abolitionist work, in spite of the ongoing pandemic and the social unrest across much of the country.

The Hamline adjunct professor, who was formerly a felon, gang member, drug dealer and gunshot victim, has continued advocating for defunding the police, safer neighborhoods, and political education for communities.

"People are connecting and resonating with my message," Sole said in a recent interview. "More things have happened to validate what I am doing. Even though the charter amendment (to replace the Minneapolis Police Department with a Department of Public Safety) didn't pass, 44 percent of the people spoke."

"Forty-four percent means a growing desire for something outside of what's there," Sole continued. "I know the number will grow over time, and we're going to work to make sure areas that didn't vote yes will understand we can build different forms of safety and responsibility."



Jason Sole

KICKSTARTER FOR INSTITUTE

Sole's journey from incarceration to becoming a professor at Hamline in the Criminal Justice and Forensic Science Department was highlighted in a *Monitor* article in September 2020. Since then, much of the work he has started as well as new projects he has undertaken has continued to grow.

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Exploring 'Racism as a Public Health Crisis'

Student art part of exhibit at Mia

By ERIC ERICKSON

As an art teacher at St. Paul's Como Park High School, Sydney Willcox seeks to connect student creations with their own lived experiences.

A recent collaboration with local artists allowed that goal to flourish, both for her students and the larger community. Thirteen Como students enrolled in Sydney's painting classes produced pieces that became part of the "Racism as a Public Health Crisis" exhibition at the Minneapolis Institute of Art (Mia).

The idea of addressing racism through art was presented to Sydney in early September of last year by Sheila McGuire, head of learning at Mia. McGuire suggested 7-10 student participants. Without yet knowing her students, nor who was willing to put in the extra time commitments, Sydney presented the opportunity to all her painting classes.

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TEENS PROTEST

Teens from across the Twin Cities walked out of class on Tuesday, Feb. 8, 2022, and gathered at Central High School in St. Paul to protest the use of no-knock warrants and stand up to police violence after the killing of 22-year-old Amir Locke. They walked from the school to the Governor's Mansion. "I want to see change in my community," said Anastatia Pihvogah, 16, a student at St. Paul Conservatory for Performing Artists. The rally was organized by MN Teen Activists and Central High School Black Student Union. "It saddens our heart that we are back again walking out of class and demanding justice, after just last year we organized for #Dante-Wright," organizers wrote in an Instagram post. >> Photo gallery online at www.MonitorSaintPaul.com. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)



Volunteer Gail Frethem plays with Tupelo at the Feline Rescue shelter, located at 593 Fairview Ave N. The organization is always looking for help at its shelter and to foster cats. (Photo by Penny Fuller)

Felines find 'forever' homes

By PENNY FULLER

Longtime Feline Rescue volunteer Nancy Miller writes monthly newsletters and works as a shift lead. "I love this work because I see first-hand the difference that volunteering makes in the lives of so many cats," said Miller.

She and other leads oversee and coordinate daily shifts of volunteers that help with feeding, cleaning and enrichment activities. There are special adoption rooms set aside for interacting with the cats outside of the kennels. The shelter allows for easy

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CSAs enhance farmer/eater relationship

By TESHAM. CHRISTENSEN

Just what is a CSA?

"A CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) is a direct partnership between consumers and local producers," explained Abby Rogosheske of Seward Co-op. "A consumer becomes a member of a CSA by purchasing a share in a farm's harvest, which helps cover that farm's yearly operating costs. In return for that investment, members receive fresh produce or other goods – delivered to specific drop sites in the Twin Cities (including Seward Co-op locations)."

Harmony Valley Farm in Viroqua, Wis. is celebrating its 30th anniversary this year. "While CSA stands for 'Community Supported Agriculture,' it could also stand for 'Community Sustained Agriculture,'" observed Andrea Yoder of Harmony Valley Farm.

"It truly is a way for a farmer and an eater to form a mutually beneficial relationship in which both parties reap the benefits. Plus, learning to eat with the seasons, spending time preparing food and sharing it with others helps to feed not only the body but the soul, as well.

"It's simply a more meaningful way to eat."

In addition to providing food, some CSAs offer training programs and are incubators for small farmers, like Big River Farms in Marine on St. Croix. Through its Farmer Education Program, participants are exposed to the realities of running an independent farm; not just the work of producing food, but the details of running a successful business. It is a primary goal of the program to encourage farmers to think realistically about the feasibility of running and owning their own farm operation, and ultimately build the skills necessary to run successful small farm enterprises upon graduation, according to their website. These farmers contribute to the Big River Farms CSA program, offer their own CSAs, and sell produce at farmers markets.

Big River Farms focuses its land-based training program on supporting immigrant and BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, people of color) farmers, populations that generally have difficulty accessing the resources needed to establish a successful farm business.

Big River Farms is a program of the Food Group, which hosts the annual Emerging Farmers Conference.



"Having a CSA is a way to commit to eating fresh, locally produced vegetables (and other offerings) and to have the opportunity to know and support the farmers growing your food," remarked Josh Bryceson of Turnip Rock, which offers a 22-week session with the option of setting holds on deliveries for vacations. "Think about what's most important to you as an eater. Is it farming practices? Is it social and food justice concerns? Is it convenience? Check out the delivery day, drop site locations, share size options, prices, and see if the farm's offerings match your preferences for veggies. Most importantly, don't hesitate to ask questions of the farm before signing up! Most farmers want potential CSA members to find a good match and will be honest if they believe their farm won't be the best option for you." (Photo submitted)

Q&A WITH A FARMER

Harmony Valley is a family farm run by co-owners Richard de Wilde, Andrea Yoder and Rafael Morales, along with a crew that varies with the seasons from 15-60 team members. The home farm consists of 200 acres of woods, pastures and crop land lying along Spring Creek in Viroqua, Wis. They sell produce and meat through a 1,500-member CSA, a weekly stall at the Dane County Farmers Market, retail grocers and wholesale distributors.

Their CSA membership more than doubled in the spring of 2020 when the COVID-19 pandemic hit, and their retention remained strong in 2021. Yoder isn't sure what 2022 will look like yet but know they remain committed to delicious, organic food.



Andrea Yoder

WHY GET A CSA?

Yoder: The thing that varies with CSA versus buying your vegetables at a grocery store or food co-op is that you get more than just a box of vegetables. You also get connection to the place where your food is grown and the people who grow it. This type of connection allows for transparency and a more secure supply of food as there are no middle men or a long and complicated supply chain to get the food from its origin to your table. Eating from a CSA box is a great way to support regional/local producers and keep your food dollars in the local economy. Short of growing your own food, it's one of the best ways to get fresh, nutrient dense vegetables. Plus, it's a lot of fun to eat with the seasons and many of our customers tell us it's like Christmas every time they open a box!

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF A CSA?

Yoder: In addition to the points I mentioned above, many people find they eat more vegetables when they participate in CSA simply because they are in their refrigerator! Many of our customers also appreciate the wide diversity of vegetables they eat during the CSA season and find there are things they maybe wouldn't select on their own but when they try it, they find out they really like it. We've had some of our customers tell us they consider their CSA box to be their health insurance policy. They'd rather invest in healthy vegetables and reap the health benefits of eating high quality, nutritious food than invest their money in health-care when they get sick. CSA is also a great way to introduce children to the way real food tastes, expand their palates and allow them to experience a wide variety of flavors and textures while also connecting them to nature.

CSA is a way that each individual can be part of creating a sustainable local food supply chain. Every time we make a purchase, we're supporting something. When you choose to purchase a CSA your dollars stay in the local community, but your purchase also allows you to support practices that are in alignment with your personal beliefs and values. Some of these values may include supporting a food system where workers are respected and are paid a fair and living wage. Perhaps you want to support regenerative farming practices that contribute in positive ways to mitigating climate change or you want your food dollars to support farms that invest in providing habitat in their growing areas for pollinators.

WHAT SETS YOUR CSA APART?

Yoder: There are several things that set our CSA apart from others. First, we are experienced growers and 2022 will be our 30th year of growing for CSA. We have learned a lot over the years and are able to reliably grow a wide variety of vegetables over the course of a 30-week delivery season from May-December. We also provide

Q&A WITH CSA FAIR ORGANIZER

For the past 21 years, Seward Co-op has hosted a CSA Fair in the spring. Attendees online and in person learn about a variety of different CSAs, which offer vegetables and fruit, meat, cheese, bread, mushrooms, herbs and more. Some farms also offer add-ons like honey, maple syrup, eggs and flowers. Others allow CSA shares to be customized with various options to fit your needs, including half shares, and weekly purchase options. This year's CSA Fair will be held Saturday, April 23, 2022, and include a celebration of the co-op's 50th anniversary.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF A CSA?

Rogosheske: Some people choose to purchase a CSA because it's a great value for the amount of produce you receive. Others appreciate the direct relationship with a grower, the fun variety of produce or the chance to support our local food system.

HOW DO CSAS ADD TO LOCAL FOOD SYSTEM?

Rogosheske: Becoming a member of a CSA is a great way to support small, local growers because you are purchasing the harvest upfront. Many farmers share that this provides needed capital investment as the growing season starts. In other words, when you purchase a CSA, you're not just a consumer of local food – you are an investor in our local food system. In some ways, this is similar to becoming a member-owner of Seward Co-op – when you do this, you are investing in the co-op; you're an owner, not just a shopper.

WHAT TIPS DO YOU OFFER FOLKS?

Rogosheske: These last few years, we've added a virtual component to our annual CSA Fair (at first it was out of necessity, due to the pandemic, but it's been so popular that we are continuing the "virtual fair" even though we are also planning an in-person event). As part of this, we offer a really helpful guide that includes our full list of CSA Fair participants, with information on the type of CSA, drop-off locations, and price range. Farmers also share video introductions. This is a great way to "shop around" ahead of time – and then you'll have a chance to chat face-to-face with farmers at the in-person event on April 23!

our customers with a variety of resources with each delivery to help them find success with every box. These resources include a weekly newsletter that highlights new vegetables, offers storage and preparation information, and updates from the farm. I am also a professional chef, and provide feature recipes every week that are simple and delicious. Additionally, we post a "Cooking With the Box" article on our blog every week that provides links to recipes from a wide variety of sources to help guide members/customers in finding ways to use their vegetables.



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SIGN UP AT HARMONYVALLEYFARM.COM

Exploring 'Racism as a Public Health Crisis'

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The initiative included four virtual workshop sessions, three of which already aligned with Sydney's lesson plans. The willing and able students collaborated with professional artists in the areas of idea generation, materials/technique, individual artmaking, and group collaboration.

"All four teaching artists, Kprecia Amber, Akiko Ostlund, Juan Lucero, and Nancy Ariza have wonderful ideas and very different presentation styles," Sydney said. "Observing the similarity of goal and the difference in style is causing me to reflect upon both my teaching and my making practice. I am as enriched by the experience as our Como students."

Freshman Amaya Sanders expressed gratitude about the artistic journey. "It's nice to know we have a voice and that we can share our stories in different ways," Sanders said.

As for guiding her students through the project and the complex subject of "Racism as a Public Health Crisis," Sydney did not see herself as the teacher who needed to provide direct instruction.

"As a person of privilege, I felt I could



Como students worked with professional artists to create screen prints as part of their exhibit in the Minneapolis Institute of Art. (Photo by Como art teacher Sydney Willcox)

not instruct how students express their experiences. Instruction in this case is to provide access, then get out of the way," Sydney said.

As for technique, the professional artist input was inspirational and empowering. It allowed student voice and indi-



“

It's nice to know we have a voice and we can share our stories in different ways.”

Amaya Sanders

vidual expression to shine through the process and not be limited by specific art principles.

With an abundance of rich, colorful expressions being produced, the number of Como students chosen to share their

work in the Mia exhibit was increased beyond the originally stated target. Similarly, art was emerging from students at two other selected high schools: Minneapolis North and the Minnesota Transitions Charter School.

By November, Mia was ready to open a new public art exhibition in their Community Commons Gallery featuring the student artwork. Sponsored by Blue Cross

and Blue Shield, the exhibit provided the local artists and high school students a chance to share their unique perspectives on how race relates to our public health.

Through their own works, and through mentoring of the students, the local professional artists created an authentic community partnership. A Mia press release from McGuire said the exhibit created multi-generational "conversations about the impacts of systemic racism inside and outside of Mia."

In January, Mia hosted an in-person reception for the contributing artists.

In pre-pandemic times, field trips to an art institute might have happened for some fortunate high school art students. But for high school students enrolled in a beginning painting class... going to the Minneapolis Institute of Art to see your own art on display?

Como junior Fuad Abdi said, "That was pretty cool."

Asked to summarize how her students reacted, Sydney simply said, "Awe."

"Awe, at the museum. Awe, that they are part of the experience. There were so many people there and news cameras."

She added, "I'm grateful for the opportunity to bring students to Mia. Mia is this terrific community resource. I want our students to be able to know of it, enjoy it, see themselves, and their experiential expressions in the museum."

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STILL AN INTERN AFTER ALL THESE YEARS

I often tell people that I came into my current work in community newspapers as the "Intern Who Never Left." The statement usually draws a smile and perhaps a look of surprise since most employees today never make it past their two-year anniversary, as studies suggest, but in fact, my statement is not far from the truth.

As a senior at Hamline University in 1979, I had already edited the student run *Hamline Oracle* my junior year and thoroughly enjoyed my experience. I had a talented staff who were devoted to the *Oracle* and its mission of bringing high quality news to the Hamline community, but we were also a close group of friends and colleagues who enjoyed working together, often engaging in vigorous debates on a wide range of topics. We invariably knew what was happening at the University before anyone else given our role in the media and we enjoyed a network of acquaintances that spanned every academic and athletic department on campus. We even shared part of our newsroom with the staff of the Hamline Law School's newspaper, which was a section within the undergrad newspaper. It was my first experience, in a real sense, with community journalism.

Several of my staff members went into journalism as a profession. One of my assistant editors bought a newspaper of her own in a western suburb of the Twin Cities years later, becoming quite successful

STOP THE PRESSES!

BY DENIS WOULFE,
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as a community newspaper publisher. Another assistant editor worked for a number of outstate dailies upon graduation, won numerous press awards, and eventually landed high profile jobs in Washington, D.C., working for a DFL congressman and later a well-known vice-presidential running mate who bragged that she could see Russia from her home state.

But in the spring of 1979, upon my own graduation, I accepted the offer of full-time employment from deRuyter-Nelson Publications, and moved from my dorm at Hamline to a modest upper room in a home on the 1400 block of Van Buren in the Midway. *Monitor* headquarters at the time was located at Thomas and Fairview, so my commute each morning, as you can imagine, was a matter of minutes. It was my first full time job and my introduction into the work world.

While I started as editor back in 1979, my path in journalism has been a circuitous one. While I wrote and assigned stories for the *Monitor* and edited copy, I

also did typesetting for the graphic arts division of our operation and eventually started selling advertising for the *Monitor* in addition to my editing responsibilities. One of our typesetting clients were the owners of the *Longfellow Messenger* (before it expanded into *Nokomis*), who approached us about buying out the *Messenger*.

As the company and its commitment to community journalism grew over the years, the decision was made to redirect my time exclusively to marketing and advertising. Today, with new owner TMC Publications, my work continues in 2022 selling print and digital advertising for the *Monitor*, the *Messenger* and our newest newspaper, the *Southwest Connector* in southwest Minneapolis. And our commitment to community journalism continues to grow.

And while we no longer have our headquarters in the Midway – for many years we officed out of Iris Park Place which now is the base for Sejong Academy – I have been fortunate to remain connected to the communities we serve in various ways. I sit on the Hamline University Annual Fund Board which helps to raise money for scholarships and financial aid for Hamline's best and brightest. I also sit on the board of the Longfellow Business Association which has been working with other community organizations the past two years to help rebuild Longfellow after

the tumult from COVID and the civil unrest.

But despite all the changes I've seen to the communities we serve and the incredible evolution of our newspaper industry as a result of the changes in technology over the years, I have remained steadfast in my belief that community journalism is important now more than ever before. As our nation has navigated the challenges of the pandemic and dealt with contrasting story lines about the virus and best practices, it does not escape notice that readers have needed the integrity of the Fourth Estate to help them navigate uncertain times and assist them in sorting out fact from fiction.

And I'm proud to be working in a profession which helps provide quality information to readers who are anxious to find out what is happening in their neighborhoods – to their neighbors, to the businesses down the street from where they live, to their elected officials, and to all the little things that make their community what it is, to their quality of life.

But beyond that, I'll just come out and say it: I still continue to see myself as an intern after all these years. I'm still a student constantly learning new things about our industry and about the clients that we serve. I've always been a believer in lifelong learning and the more I have learned the more I have realized that there was more I needed to learn. That's right: Keep reading, keep learning, and keep sharing what you learn with others in your community by supporting community journalism!

AND THE AWARD GOES TO...

Many of the famous awards shows occur around this time of year. There are the Grammy awards for music, the Oscars, Emmy, and Tonys in acting. At the Midway Chamber, this is the time of year we also give out our awards – the Leadership Awards – in the categories of Rookie, Nonprofit, Small Business, Large Business, and Volunteer. On Feb. 26, the chamber announced this year's recipients at our annual celebration. Here are the nominees...

Rookie of the Year: Ceiba Forte Law, Flying Pig Thrift, Neighborhood Development Center

And the award goes to... Neighborhood Development Center (NDC). NDC has been operating in our community for years, helping several businesses get their start. This year, they are also nearing completion of a new building at the northwest corner of Dale and University, which will house their offices along with a training center, retail incubator space, and affordable housing.

Nonprofit of the Year: African Economic Development Solutions, Junior Achievement North, WomenVenture

And the award goes to... WomenVenture.

WomenVenture equips women with the skills and resources to create and

BUILDING A STRONGER MIDWAY

BY CHAD KULAS,
Midway Chamber of
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grow profitable and sustainable businesses. Lack of access to capital, gaps in business knowledge, and deficient support networks are still major barriers to launch and profitability for women entrepreneurs. WomenVenture's programs open women's access to entrepreneurship by surmounting these hurdles. Their seven core training programs, microloans up to \$50,000, business coaching, and community of support ensure clients are prepared to lead successful businesses. WomenVenture recently moved to Saint Paul, located at the Blair Arcade building on Selby Avenue.

Small Business of the Year: Elsa's House of Sleep, Lloyd's Pharmacy, TST Creative Catering

And the award goes to... Elsa's House of Sleep

Established in 1997, Elsa's House of Sleep is a full-service furniture store

that offers delivery and assembly, lay-away, and a full line residential furniture including rugs, mattresses, lamps and accessories. Elsa's House of Sleep was founded by Elsa Rezene in 1997 as a mattress store, but she intuitively expanded into all types of home furnishings. In 2002 she moved the store to its current University Avenue location where the business continues to prosper. Her children continue to this day in her tradition of honest bargains and great customer service.

Elsa's was chosen as one of the highlighted businesses on Small Business Revolution, a reality show helping small businesses. In part through the show, Elsa's has been busy renovating its space with a completed date expected this spring.

Large Business of the Year: Comcast, Hamernick's, Mortenson

And the award goes to... Mortenson
Over the past two years, Mortenson has been involved in assisting with the rebuild of many Midway buildings. This continues with the RRR Fund, where they help with façade improvements along University Avenue.

Volunteer of the Year: Tonya Bauer, St. Paul Port Authority; Sara Betru, Jennings Community School; Matt Meyers, SPIRE Credit Union

And the award goes to... Matt Meyers
Matt has been a Midway Chamber board member since 2014 and served as treasurer and on the executive committee



Left to right: Michelle Murzyn of Riverland Bank, Midway Chamber President Chad Kulas, Matt Meyers of SPIRE Credit Union and Sabrina Fay of Thrivent Financial. (Photo by Cam Cloman)

from 2015 to 2021. Not only does Matt have a thorough understanding of the financials, as treasurer, he clearly communicated issues and explanations so that everyone on the board understood past, current, and future implications. He took extra time to consider questions others may not be thinking about that he believed were important for the board to consider, often submitting written documentation to accompany spreadsheets. This was particularly valuable in 2020 and 2021 as the chamber navigated the unprecedented challenges brought on by the pandemic.

We were excited to announce this year's recipients and recognize them for their great work in our community and helping build a stronger Midway. Think about others you know who help make our neighborhood better and brighten their day by telling them thanks for their contributions.

Monitor

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News for you!

The *Midway Como Frogtown Monitor* is a monthly community publication in the Midway, Como, Hamline and Frogtown neighborhoods of St. Paul, owned and operated by TMC Publications, CO. Visit our website for our calendar and publication dates.

Story ideas always welcome.

Keep in touch with the *Monitor*. Letters to the editor under 200 words and news releases for publication can be sent via e-mail to news@monitorsaintpaul.com. Unsigned letters will not run.

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The *Monitor* is for profit and for a purpose – and we don't sacrifice one for the other. We consider ourselves a zebra company, one that is both black and white, both/and. As a media company, we work to highlight issues, solve real, meaningful problems, and repair existing social systems. We are working with our readers and advertisers to create a more just and

responsible society that hears, helps and heals the customers and communities we serve.

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Why won't city release public comments, make library meetings public?

SPPL's lack of transparency on Hamline Midway Library project is astounding

by Barbara Bezat, Tom Goldstein, Roy Neal, Jonathan Oppenheimer and Bonnie Youngquist



Nearly a year after the Hamline Midway community was given just weeks to provide input about the fate of our beloved library, St. Paul Public Library (SPPL) leadership and the city of St. Paul are poised to again rush through a flawed and opaque process that threatens to unnecessarily divide our tight-knit community. We urge neighbors across the city to unite and demand a resident-led engagement process that can be trusted and rallied around.

As community members who believe that this historic library building is integral to the fabric of the neighborhood and should be preserved, we recognize that some in the community may believe that a new building is necessary to provide increased accessibility and additional space to meet the needs of a modern library. Unfortunately, all voices – not just ours – have been minimized in this process, one in which SPPL's desire to tear down the current building has been evident from the outset.

Since last fall, after a data request revealed SPPL's preferred outcome and the duplicity of their actions, library administrators had months to either set the record straight or lay the groundwork for a process this year that would reflect meaningful public engagement and a genuine interest in community feedback. Instead, SPPL hosted a single virtual open house meeting that left the public with more

questions than answers, followed by a single "listening session" that failed to ask the public for feedback on the one critical question on everyone's mind: whether they supported a renovation or rebuild?

Administrators have refused to place a member from Renovate 1558 in the group; refused to make Ambassador meetings public; and, most recently, refused to release public questions and comments from their first open house virtual meeting on Feb. 24. Now we are in March and no further listening sessions or engagement opportunities have been publicly announced before SPPL makes its decision. The lack of transparency and fidelity to anything resembling community engagement is astounding.

Given that SPPL has established a timeline in which building designs for either a renovation and expansion or a demolition and rebuild could be presented as soon as April, the urgency to reset and reframe this process is paramount – particularly since library leadership seems determined on demolishing the current library building, known for its diamond-paned windows, carved stone rosettes, wrought iron lanterns, and stone medallion.

We are requesting, in no particular order, the following:

- The city of St. Paul agrees to delay

any decision about the future of the Hamline Midway Library until at least September to give adequate time for community engagement;

- That Project Ambassador meetings be made public;
- A member from our group be named as a Project Ambassador;
- If a thorough community-engagement process determines the existing library building cannot be renovated to meet staff and community needs, SPPL will commit to another site for a new library building and seek a new tenant for the current building.

The historic Henry Hale Memorial Library, Hamline Branch – the name etched in the façade atop the library's main entrance – was built in 1930 thanks to a generous bequest by the Hale family 40 years earlier, the detailed expertise of architect Carl Buetow, and the support of countless community members determined to bring a permanent lending library to the neighborhood. Some 92 years later, the library continues to play a central role in community activities, hosting lectures, readings, organization meetings and neighborhood events in its space.

Despite SPPL's willful neglect of exterior repairs and maintenance upkeep, the library continues to attract thousands of community members to its thriving environment, and the library's own commissioned reports from 2017 and 2021 show the building structure to be in good condition, not "an old, crumbling building" as SPPL leadership would have the public believe.

Beyond the charm of historic buildings and the importance of aesthetic character to our community, we believe the decision to preserve this building is

environmentally sound, fiscally responsible, and most consistent with the city's own public policy documents. As noted by the Heritage Preservation Commission, "demolition stands in conflict" with the 2040 Comprehensive Plan's commitment to heritage and cultural preservation, and a staff member in the Planning and Economic Development department advised SPPL in early 2021 of the strong neighborhood opposition to demolition of the Hamline Midway library building. Yet SPPL continues to preach engagement while publicly ignoring any call for preservation.

Healthy public engagement does not seek to stifle dissent, push for predetermined outcomes, or provide limited opportunities for residents to share their opinions – regardless of what they might be. Unfortunately, when SPPL leadership fails to recognize that a large number of community members support preservation, community engagement becomes a tool for public coercion, something that is completely unacceptable if the process is going to have any integrity.

Renovate 1558 insists that SPPL commit to an engagement process that listens to all voices interested in the future of our library, and, if they are unwilling to do so, we intend to create a process of our own that will produce the kind of input that SPPL has neglected to seek for more than a year – despite a grant of hundreds of thousands of dollars in taxpayer money for that purpose. The people in our community deserve much better.

The authors of this op-ed are members of the group Renovate 1558, which is committed to reimagining the Hamline Midway Library building through renovation, renovation and expansion, or repurposing. You can learn more at renovate1558.org

JOIN US: FRIENDS READING CIRCLE

PLANTING SEEDS

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



Intergenerational reading programs have numerous benefits. It is a method that is the basis of the Justice and Friends Reading Circle. This program was recently launched by the Planting People Growing Justice Leadership Institute (PPGJLI). Our goal is to help children to find joy in reading. To achieve this goal, we are using an intergenerational approach that promotes literacy and diversity in books.

PPGJLI now hosts the monthly read-aloud event virtually with a variety of Black authors. Individuals can participate from the comfort and convenience of home. The Justice and Friends Reading Circle officially launched in February 2022 and will be held every fourth Saturday at 11 a.m.

A wealth of scholarly research is available in prestigious journals about the benefits of intergenerational reading. It provides a bonding experience, enhanced self-esteem, improved memory, and better decision-making skills, in addition to promoting literacy.

An exploration of intergenerational reading by Drs. Emi Isaki and Mary Towle Harmon at Northern Arizona University, published in *Communication Disorders Quarterly*, demonstrated that it even affects mood and communication in older adults with neurocognitive deficits and mild dementia, and positively influences school-aged children's perception of older adults.

Intergenerational reading also helps to foster the type of community where lifelong learning is a core value. It expands beyond the schoolhouse to living rooms and kitchen tables where families gather to read together. Reading is an integral part of childhood. I still have fond memories of reading with my grandmother in her den, filled with books. I also remember our weekly trips to the Salvation Army where she purchased books for me. This type of bonding experience lives in children's memories for their lifetime.

Through a virtual format, the Justice and Friends Reading Circle launched in February 2022 is a modern adaptation of that experience. It is a unique opportunity for adults and children to gather virtually and hear books read by Black authors, while bonding with parents and grandparents at home.

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.

NEXT BOOK READING MARCH 26

The next book reading on March 26 will feature Robert P. Dixon, Jr. the author of *Gumbo Joy*. This book is a celebration of history and culture. Watch live on our YouTube channel: [youtube.com/c/ArtikaTyner](https://www.youtube.com/c/ArtikaTyner)



Robert P. Dixon

Letters

THANKS FOR VOICES AGAINST VIOLENCE SERIES

I'm a Hamline Midway resident and have read a couple of articles in the *Monitor's* Voices Against Violence series this past year. I just wanted to say thanks to you and staff for making that a focus! I feel it's a theme that's very much a reality in our community and for many people has been worse in recent times.

Greta Knaeble

WE'RE HOSTING A TOWN HALL FOCUSED ON CLIMATE, TRANSPORTATION AND SPPS

In January 2022, the Saint Paul City Council declared that we are in the midst of a climate emergency. Within this declaration, the city points out how we are already feeling the effects of our delayed and timid response to climate change.

The declaration notes that we have seen signs across the world, for some time, that a changing climate is dangerous for all. We also now see the impacts of climate change impacting us close to home. We have, and will continue, to see more extreme weather such as drought conditions, heat waves, flooding and more violent storms. If this wasn't bad enough, we also see that as the temperature increases the other problems we face are only exacerbated (i.e., poverty, public health, violence in the community, disruptions to student learning).

As we face a situation which is wors-

ening daily, it is obvious now is the time to ACT. Action, in this situation, means we to reduce our carbon emissions quickly and dramatically. So, where do we start? Well, the good news is that starting with any source of emissions is good. But if we look at what sources of emissions are growing, and which will be the hardest to reduce, we do not have to look far to see the transportation sector. Some sources of emissions, locally and nationwide, have started to decrease but transportation has stubbornly been increasing. As the transportation sector is an area which touches us all, we all will need to be part of the solution in making that sector cleaner. We will need to examine how transportation impacts our lives, impacts the planet and how we can make change.

On April 13, 2022 the Saint Paul Federation of Educators will be hosting a virtual town hall focused on Climate, Transportation and SPPS. All are welcome to attend this event to hear more about how we can make our community, and our school district, a leader in creating a cleaner and more sustainable transportation system for future generations. If interested in hearing more about this event, you can register to attend at <https://forms.gle/fXweqWL4UwK488UC9> or contact Tom Lucy at telucy73@gmail.com.

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

GOT AN OPINION? JOIN THE CONVERSATION.

Got an opinion to share about climate, transportation, local leaders, the library, or the future? Let us know what you think. Letters should be under 200 words and can be emailed to news@MonitorSaintPaul.com.

Will Pierce Butler Route ever be extended?

Building to be demolished but future of street extension still up in the air

By JANE McCLURE

A long-vacant, city-owned building in Frogtown can be demolished and pollution cleaned up, thanks to funding allocated by the St. Paul City Council. But the demolition of 677 Pierce Butler Route doesn't mean a once-controversial street extension project is even slated for completion.

The council in January approved spending up to \$350,000 to demolish the building. The city's Long-Range Capital Improvement Budget (CIB) Committee recommended approval earlier that month.

CIB Committee Chair Darren Tolb asked if the demolition means that the Pierce Butler street extension project would be going ahead at any time soon. But Public Works staff said that's not the case.

The Pierce Butler extension isn't in the Public Works five-year street plan. The project has been on the books since the 1990s.

In 2005, the city purchased 677 Pierce

Butler and two adjacent properties. Properties in the area were heavily contaminated from past uses. One contaminant found was arsenic, which triggered cleanup efforts to be overseen by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA). Arsenic was used years ago in some pesticides.

An MDA map shows the area at and around 677 Pierce Butler to have been the former homes of Chipman Chemical and Hallman Oil. Chipman's products included pesticides.

Also involved in cleanup is Bayer Crop Science. Bayer is a successor company for the firm that caused the pollution years ago. Bayer has agreed to pay cleanup costs, but the city must pay to demolish the building. The city council action earmarked \$40,000 needed to make up the rest of the city's demolition share.

As for the Pierce Butler extension, when that will happen is anyone's guess. Longtime Midway and Frogtown residents may recall the decades of controversy over the proposal.

Ground was supposed to be broken for the Frogtown extension in 2011 or 2012. But concerns from what is now Frogtown Neighborhood Association (FNA) and affected businesses were factors in project delays, along with changes in public works project management. Shifts in the route prompted debate.

Pierce Butler Route was platted in

1961, named for St. Paul native and U.S. Supreme Court Justice Pierce Butler. It extends from Transfer Road-Prior Avenue to West Minnehaha Avenue, just east of Dale Street.

In the 1980s and early 1990s, Pierce Butler was a possible route for what is now Green Line light rail. Later it was eyed as a reliever route for east-west truck traffic through area neighborhoods.

City officials began discussing extending Pierce Butler east and west in the 1990s. The western extension to Highway 280 ran into opposition from St. Anthony Park Community Council, as well as topographical challenges.

Discussion shifted to a two-mile eastern extension, to connect Pierce Butler to Phalen Boulevard east of Interstate 35E. The extension was discussed as a large Frogtown-North End industrial area was redeveloped into two St. Paul Port Authority industrial parks, Great Northern North and Great Northern South. Those sites were occupied by the old St. Paul Foundry site and Dale Street Shops, which served the Great Northern Railway.

The Great Northern Corridor plan came out of years of study including St. Paul Port Authority, North End Area Revitalization (NEAR), Greater Frogtown Community Development Corporation (GFCDC) and what are now FNA and North End Neighborhood Organization.

The city council approved the plan in 2000. It called for the industrial parks, along with other commercial, and resi-

dential redevelopment. A big focus was always the Pierce Butler extension. The extension, as planned, would be a four-lane road with a shoulder for bicycle commuters and a separate bike trail.

The project popped up in CIB rounds in the 1990s and 2000s. Initial environmental studies on an extension were completed in 2009.

Since the extension talks began, every city, county and state office holder involved in the talks has left office. The two community development groups are gone and both district councils involved have had staff and member turnover.

In late 2016, the city council, at the request of public works director Kathy Lantry, took away funds set aside for the extension. Mayor Chris Coleman also took the project out of the 2016-2017 city capital budget.

At the time city leaders were asked to identify \$7 million in a lapsed federal appropriation and transfer more than \$2 million in other funding to other street projects. Public Works staff argued that spending money on other projects was a better approach than trying to amass the millions needed to eventually extend Pierce Butler from Minnehaha and Grotto Street to Interstate 35E and the East Side's Phalen Boulevard. The project in 2016 had an estimated cost of more than \$50 million. It's not known what costs would be in today's dollars.

CO-STRUGGLING

>> from 1

One of these is the Institute of Aspiring Abolitionists. "I launched a Kickstarter campaign. First time I've done that," Sole said. His goal was to raise \$100,000 in 60 days to provide quality, interactive educational opportunities for 15,000 people in this region by December 2022.

"I took bolder risks with a willingness to fail," Sole said. "I knew how hard I worked, and I felt empowered." He added that he knew there is always going to be pushback against the unknown. Sole recalled a quote by Martin Luther King, "I'm not a searcher of consensus. I'm a molder of consensus."

The fundraising goal was met, and \$105,000 was raised in 60 days in the name of abolition. Sole said he told people about the blueprints he created when he worked in the mayor's office as the first Community-First Public Safety Initiatives director to the city of St. Paul.

Through his work as an abolitionist, Sole encourages people to check each other's safety. His website, www.jasonsole.com carries a statement from the activist Mariame Kaba: "As an abolitionist, what I care about are two things: relationships and how we address harm."

CONNECTIONS AND RELATIONSHIPS

On his journey from prisoner to scholar, Sole said he has met a lot of amazing people. As he reaches out with his ideas and projects, he has reconnected with many of them. "To reconnect with people who always had my back felt good," he noted.

Regarding relationships, Sole said he truly knows what it means to be a friend to someone. "My relationships are primary," he said. "We're not here to have boundaries, stereotypes and not get along. I understand that, but I guess the general masses don't. I don't get lost in 'Oh, my God, I have to achieve this or get to the next level, no matter who gets hurt along the way.'"

Sole said he cares a great deal about the relationships he has with his wife, kids, mom, siblings, cousins, nieces and the whole community. "I'm going to a basketball game tonight in Waterloo, where my childhood friend is now the



Humanize My Hoodie empowers Black people to stand up against racial injustice, according to Jason Sole.

coach. It is so good to go back and still be loved. That shows how my relationships have always stayed solid."

Having conflict with someone you love can certainly happen, according to Sole. "When that happens, I am present, not lost in the clouds," he said. "My work is important, but not more important than the people I have in my life."

WORKING IN CIRCLES

Sole's narrative has not changed. "The police have been choking us," he stated. "When harm happens, we need to sit down and get justice for what happened."

Sole calls upon aspiring abolitionists to be present every day, not just in times of crisis. "A lot of times we can see when others are not doing well," he said. "We see a post or email that gives an indication of a cry for help, really needing someone. It might not be a crisis, but so what? We still need to care."

The fact that everything teaches us to be apart disappoints Sole. "I cannot like you because of your race, color, clothes, gender, and religion. That part of life frustrates me," he said. "I always show up because I know I can plant a seed."

He said he likes working in circles,

not top down or a pyramid. "I always offered up the opportunity to co-struggle with someone else." As an example, when he was chosen to be captain of his basketball team in high school, he picked another senior to co-captain with him. "I want everyone to do well," he said.

HUMANIZE MY HOODIE

Sole and a friend, fashion designer and activist André Wright, started another project that quickly turned into a movement, "Humanize My Hoodie." Sole said that sometimes when you put something out to the universe, it resonates all over the country.

He started wearing a hoodie to teach his classes in an effort to make students more comfortable with Black men in hoodies. It quickly drew responses worldwide, resulting in a book and documentary.

Humanize My Hoodie empowers Black people to stand up against racial injustice, according to Sole. "The hoodie invites conversations and we are using the Humanize My Hoodie sweatshirt, as well as educational tools, to arm our marginalized communities with innovative ways to uplift humanity and fight against violence and racism," he said.

Sole has also done a podcast and may do others in the future. He currently hosts a radio program "The Abolition Hour" on Frogtown station WFNU at 94.1 FM on Mondays at noon. On the show he shares some of his experiences with police violence in the Frogtown community. He outlines effective safety and accountable strategies to community members and shares some of his abolitionist work.

Hamline University has "allowed me to do what I do," Sole said. He said he loves teaching there, and is grateful for his 13 years as a professor. "I am glad my students have learned how to love each other during the pandemic," he noted.

RELATIONSHIPS EVOLVING POSSIBILITIES, RADIAL ECOSYSTEM PODS

Sole believes he is doing some of his best work during the pandemic. He helped co-create Relationships Evolving Possibilities, (REP) a network of dedicated abolitionists showing up to support others in moments of crisis or urgency. He also co-created Radical Ecosystem Pods to "fortify existing networks and support the creation of new networks by improving re-

lationships between neighbors, identifying webs of support that already exist within reach, and reimagining what loving community looks like."

Sole said that as a member of a pod who has trained in de-escalation and is on call, if something is not going right and his friend needs support, he has to be there.

"We just want to love you through your next step," he said. "We've been getting calls, and we hope to get it to be around the clock. We're not there yet, and we are not an alternative to the police yet, but we are working towards a world that is police-free."

As Sole reflected on the many different paths his life has taken, he said it was not the end of his story when he was in jail or selling drugs or getting shot. "People knew I was still trying to accomplish something," he said. "Once I started building trust, they saw me doing something else. I listened, and I never bought into the theory that I could solve everything by myself..."

He recalls the many strong Black women who have been part of his life. "I have got to give credit to them: my mom, sister, aunts and daughters," he noted. He said he learned some skills from his mother and father in just trying to figure out life. And among many others, he recalls an uncle who got his PhD from Princeton. Although the uncle died from AIDS when Sole was only 10, the two have strong connections. Both were in the NAACP, and his uncle named a lot of abolitionists in his dissertation on slaves who escaped to Canada.

"There were a lot who loved him, and so many people are coming forth with stories about him. I am looking at his dissertation, and I'm going to build something around it."

Sole has come such a long way, but experiences from his past still affect him and shape the work he continues to do. "I wrote an application to have my record pardoned, and Gov. Tim Walz and Keith Ellison approved it. But a Supreme Court justice said no without any explanation."

"Even though I can excel, I am still shackled and still not liberated," Sole said. "It's still just a part of my life and keeps me fighting the way I am. I think people can look through my eyes and see I am trying to be the best person I can be, no matter my circumstances."



By TESHA M. CHRISTENSEN

WHAT IS THE HISTORY OF THE BUNGALOW CLUB?

Longtime Bungalow Club President Tim Counts: The Twin Cities Bungalow Club was started in 1995 by Kristi Johnson, who lived with her husband in a Longfellow neighborhood bungalow. (They now live in a bungalow in Duluth). The Longfellow neighborhood association hired a contractor to survey the neighborhood's housing stock. The contractor reported that a majority of houses were bungalows, and labeled them as a liability – small and outmoded, “starter houses” or “grandma’s houses.”

Kristi was livid. Contrary to the prevailing view at the time, Kristi saw bungalows as high-quality housing stock built with sturdy, old-growth wood. Many were stucco-sided (the original maintenance-free siding) and boasted real plaster-and-lath walls. They were also loaded with character – rich oak woodwork, windows with divided lights, built-in bookcases and dining room buffets, and sometimes a brick fireplace or a breakfast nook. You simply couldn't afford to build houses with such high quality materials and workmanship at today's prices. Bungalows also had manageable front and back yards, with plenty of room for flower and vegetable gardens. In an era where suburban house and lot sizes were growing exponentially, bungalows were compact, charming and affordable.

Kristi started the Twin Cities Bungalow Club singlehandedly, and ran it largely by herself for about five years. By that time, the Longfellow neighborhood was putting up metal street signs that read: Longfellow – A Traditional Bungalow Community. The birth of the Twin Cities

PASSIONATE ABOUT BUNGALOWS

Q&A with Twin Cities Bungalow Club President Tim Counts

Bungalow Club coincided with a nationwide revival of the Arts & Crafts style and movement (which originally ran during the first decades of the 20th century), and a renewed appreciation of bungalows. For example, American Bungalow magazine (www.americanbungalow.com) began publication in the early 1990s.

Mission statement: The Twin Cities Bungalow Club is dedicated to fostering an appreciation for these charming and livable early 20th century homes. We are committed to preserving bungalows and other Arts & Crafts style homes of the era along with the neighborhoods they occupy; to learning their history; and to exploring the furnishings and decorative objects that filled them.

HOW CAN PEOPLE BECOME MEMBERS?

Counts: Memberships start at \$15 per year for an individual membership, or \$25 for a household (two people). Discounts are available if signing up for two years. Members receive an information-packed newsletter four times a year, plus free access to quarterly events on Arts & Crafts and bungalow topics, including our annual house tour. Website: www.bungalowclub.org.

WHAT DREW YOU TO THE CLUB?

Counts: In 1994, I was looking to purchase a house. I didn't have much money, so my primary criteria was “cheap.” I looked at quite a few houses in my price range, but they were all disappointing. Then my Realtor and I pulled up in front of the bungalow I would end up purchasing. We both said, “Oooh.” Inside, it just felt right. Even though the walls were painted a harsh white that clashed with the dark woodwork, and the floors were covered with orange and green shag carpeting, the house spoke to me.

After my purchase bid was accepted, I took the home's real estate flyer to work. A coworker looked at the photo on the flyer and said, “That's a bungalow.” I said,

“What's a bungalow?” She said, “I'm not sure, but I think there's a magazine about them.” I asked her to pick up a copy for me if she ran across it. A few days later she brought in a copy of American Bungalow magazine (www.americanbungalow.com), and I fell down the bungalow rabbit hole.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR BUNGALOW.

Counts: My bungalow is modest – just over 1,000 square feet of living space on one level (two bedrooms and one bathroom), plus a full unfinished basement. But I love it. It doesn't have a fireplace, but it does have a beautiful, useful breakfast nook in the kitchen and a handsome built-in buffet in the dining room.

WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT BUNGALOWS?

Counts: Bungalows have loads of charm and coziness. They're small enough to be manageable, yet are fully functional. They can be small, but with a few minor tweaks they still work well for modern living.

WHAT TIPS DO YOU HAVE FOR OTHERS?

Counts: Don't work against your bungalow's aesthetic by painting its interior white, especially the oak woodwork. Today's fashion is bright, white and airy, but painting your bungalow's interior white will not make it cheery, it will just make it look tired. Work with the bungalow's character, using a warm color for the walls, which will bring out the red and gold tones in the woodwork.

PLEASE GIVE US DETAILS ON THE UPCOMING BUNGALOW HOME TOUR.

Counts: The 2022 Twin Cities Bungalow Club tour will take place on Saturday, May 7, 2022. It will last from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. We're still putting the details in place, so watch www.bungalowclub.org for updates.



These two St. Paul bungalows offer unique amenities in the kitchen, a feature bungalows are known for.

BUNGALOW BOOK COLLECTION

Several years ago, Kristi Johnson, the Bungalow Club's founder, established a collection of bungalow, mission, and Arts & Crafts books and journals at the Merriam Park branch of the Saint Paul Public Library (1831 Marshall Avenue). Club members donated many of the first books. Over the years, the Bungalow Club has provided the library with funds for additional purchases. The collection numbers over 160 books.

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Osher Lifelong Learning Institute is a health club for the aging brain

A conversation with the new director, Kate Schaefers

UNDER THE HOOD

BY SUSAN SCHAEFER



Something under the hood is not immediately apparent or obvious. This column will uncover stories that span the neighborhoods covered by TMC Publications.

It is widely known that aging is accompanied by varying rates and degrees of cognitive decline. However, neuroscience research has revealed that by keeping physically, socially, and mentally active and engaged, we are able to mitigate, and even reverse decline.

Here in the Twin Cities, we are fortunate to have a resource that offers highly participatory lifelong learning, and solid camaraderie and engagement. Best of all, accessing it is convenient from all corners of our metro area.

The University of Minnesota's Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, better known as OLLI, is a respected and vital part of the University's College of Continuing and Professional Studies. Geared toward those over 55, anyone is welcome to join and participate.

HERE'S A LITTLE HISTORY:

In 1977, business executive and philanthropist, Bernard Osher, founded his self-named Bernard Osher Foundation to improve the quality of life through support for higher education and the arts, funding colleges and universities across

the nation, with special attention to re-entry students. Investing significant funds through generous endowments, the foundation supports 125 lifelong learning programs on university and college campuses across the country, with at least one grantee in each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Founded in 1995, UMN's OLLI has been recognized as an "exemplary lifelong learning program" by the foundation.

Despite the upheavals caused by the pandemic during the past years, OLLI has managed to pivot and cope. There have been a few changes. The main office recently moved from its former location in the McNamara Alumni Center on UMN's East Bank to its new home in Coffey Hall on the St. Paul Campus.

Also new is OLLI director, Dr. Kathleen (Kate) Schaefers, who brings a wealth of experience, leadership, vision, and passion to the role. We met virtually with Schaefers, who is a licensed psychologist, leadership coach, and educator, who has served as the AARP-MN Volunteer State President, and is a founding member of the Nexel Collaborative, a higher education consortium of institutions exploring ways to bring older adults back to campus. Schaefers graciously answered our questions:

OLLI has been referred to as a "health club for the aging brain," with much research dedicated to how intellectual and social enrichment help counteract cognitive decline. What are your thoughts about this as the new, incoming executive director?

Healthy aging is more than physical. It is about staying active and engaged, from a physical, mental, and social per-



During the pandemic outside OLLI classes continued to be popular, which included a drumming circle. (Photo courtesy of OLLI)

spective. Staying curious, and being open to new learning opportunities, is good for our brains, but also for our well-being as we age.

OLLI offers opportunities to learn and stay mentally sharp, but it's much more than that. As a learning community, OLLI members develop deep connections with others who share a passion for learning. OLLI members actively participate in discussions, explore shared interests, volunteer their talents, and plan joint travel experiences. The bottom line: When we are part of learning activities that fully engage us, that invite us to actively participate and engage with others, we benefit on all levels.

What attracted you to taking the OLLI position? What do you bring to the table?

I am inspired by people in my life who approached their later years with a sense of curiosity, purpose, generosity, and joy. Every one of them embraced life as learners and teachers, mentors, and novices. They are my role models for living life fully at any age. I find kindred spirits within the OLLI community, and I am honored to play a role in helping this community thrive.

I have spent the last decade of my career focusing on ways to tap the talents of an aging population for the greater good.

OSHER LIFELONG LEARNING >> 9



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OSHER LIFELONG LEARNING

>> From 8

As an educator, program administrator, researcher, and writer, I centered my efforts on engaged aging, lifelong learning, and building community. Also, I am part of a network of people and organizations that see potential in our aging population.

How have the past years of pandemic and quarantine impacted our OLLI program?

Like everyone, OLLI had to pivot on a dime to convert our programming to virtual. We went from delivering 100% of our programming in person to delivering 100% online. With 60+ courses each term, this was no small task! We needed to train our instructors on how to teach this way, and help our members get comfortable with using Zoom.

We were all so isolated, especially in those early days of the pandemic. For our members, who were in a high-risk group, this was particularly true for them. We had to creatively explore new ways to connect our members. We are proud of how OLLI helped our members during these troubling and lonely times. We were a lifeline for our OLLI community.

During my time as an OLLI instructor there was much discussion that the membership fee, now up to \$300/year, is prohibitive for some Minnesota seniors. Is there anything being proposed to help defray the cost and/or to subsidize less well-off citizens?

I'm so glad you asked! OLLI offers scholarships to help defray the costs for people in need, through the Miriam B. Seltzer Scholarship Fund. We welcome applications for this scholarship and will help make OLLI accessible and affordable for all who want to join.

It is also important to look at what you get for that yearly membership fee. With four terms, and 60+ courses offered



Dr. Kate Schaefer is OLLI's new director. (Photo by Jessica Mealey)

each term, members have access to a plethora of learning opportunities. Plus, members can join special interest groups and take advantage of other offerings. There is a lot of value that comes with an OLLI membership.

Please tell us a little about yourself: Childhood. School years. Education. Profession. Personal life.

I grew up in a tight knit community on the south side of Chicago. With seven children and a disabled father unable to work, money was scarce. Yet despite those hardships, we thrived, due in large part to the support of our neighbors and community. That early life experience grounded me and taught me the value of being part of a community.

In college, I had two majors: mathematics (because I thought it was practical)

and psychology (because I was fascinated with the field). On a whim, I applied to graduate school at the University of Minnesota, and by some miracle was accepted, so that is what brought me to Minnesota. I fell in love with Minnesota, and soon fell in love with my husband, so the rest is history. We have been married 34 years and raised our two daughters here.

I'm trained as a psychologist (my Ph.D. is in counseling psychology), with much of my career in higher education: developing curriculum, launching programs, and coaching employees as they navigate leadership and career transitions. I have expertise in encore careers and the intergenerational workplace.

My career isn't a straight line, and I'm grateful for that. I have made career choices along the way that have taken me in directions I could not have anticipated earlier in my career. I followed my heart and instincts at times, and it opened a world of opportunities.

As OLLI enters its spring session, what would you like our readership to know that we haven't covered?

OLLI offers something for everyone – we have courses in the arts, science and technology, social sciences, and interdisciplinary fields. From Art of Ancient Greece to The Stories Hidden in Our Genes, we

offer a range of options each term (you can find our full OLLI Course Guide on our website). Our courses are taught by an outstanding cadre of instructors who bring topics to life for OLLI learners.

The OLLI community is welcoming! We have special interest groups that allow members to connect around their passions, like movie appreciation, sharing music or games, or even memoir writing. There are ample opportunities to meet people and develop new friendships through OLLI.

You can join OLLI at any time. We host four terms per year, with the spring 2022 term beginning on March 21. Our website is <https://ccaps.umn.edu/olli>

Author's Note: Classes and events always have been held throughout the metro area, but due to COVID-19 protocols most offerings are now online. With spring 2022 courses just beginning, there's no better time to feed our hungry brains.

Happy learning!

Susan Schaefer is a widely published independent journalist, creative writer, and poet. Her articles appear in the Minneapolis Star Tribune, PBS' online magazine, Next Avenue, Next Tribe, and beyond. She was columnist and features writer for Minneapolis' Southwest Journal and Minnesota Good Age magazine.



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Try tapping a tree to make syrup

By PATRICIA OHMANS

There's nothing more delicious than pancakes with maple syrup – unless it's pancakes with birch, walnut or linden syrup!

That's right, syrup doesn't have to come solely from maples. Local residents are discovering the joys of tapping a variety of trees for sap, and then boiling that sap down to a sweet syrup.

Is it easy? Yes. Is it time-consuming? Yes! It is worth it? Frogtown resident Chris Stevens thinks so. A master gardener and chef, Stevens recently hosted a tree-tapping workshop, demonstrating the how-tos to a group of interested neighbors. The group, known as the Tree Frogs, have long been involved in planting free trees in the Frogtown neighborhood. Members were ready to learn how to harvest syrup from local trees.

One key to a successful tapping is timing, Stevens explained. Temperatures need to be above freezing during the day, and below 32 at night. That small window of opportunity usually opens in early to mid-



Tapping: 'tis the season! Frogtown resident and environmentalist Chris Stevens taps a maple tree. (Photo courtesy of Frogtown Green)

TO TAP A TREE

YOU'LL NEED

- a tree! (sugar maples are best, but whatever tree you choose, it should have at least a 10-inch diameter trunk)
- drill with a 5/16-inch bit
- collection spout for each taphole
- collection container (bucket or plastic bag)
- a bucket for sap storage
- large pan and heat source for boiling down the sap (size depends on amount of sap)
- a candy thermometer

STEPS AT A GLANCE

This is just an overview of the basics. For detailed

instructions, visit one of the many YouTube tutorials online or download this publication from the University of Minnesota: conservancy.umn.edu/bitstream/handle/11299/50491/01067.pdf

- Drill a 1-1/2 inch hole into the tree trunk, about two to four feet above the ground
- Insert the collection spout and tap it lightly into the tree.
- Attach a bucket or plastic bag to the spout.
- Collect sap at least every two to three days
- Empty collected sap into a bucket and keep it cool
- Boil the sap down into in a large shallow pan
- Continue boiling and evaporating until the sap changes color
- Bottle up your syrup!

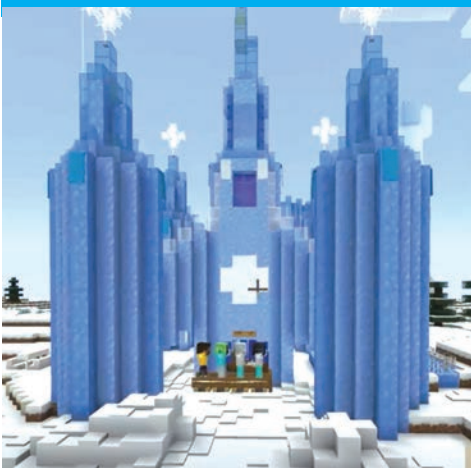
March, but can last as long as the whole month. You'll need some basic equipment, and you'll want to be prepared to monitor a boiling pot of sap for a couple of hours. About 40 gallons of sap are required to produce 1 gallon of syrup – that means 39 gallons of water have to boil off before you can enjoy your pancake syrup!

Intrigued? Want to try it yourself? Google "University of MN and Minnesota Maple Series" for easy but detailed instructions. If you'd like to get in on neighbor-

hood tree tapping, pruning, planting and more, consider joining Frogtown Green's Tree Frogs. They are a friendly group, responsible for planting more than 500 free fruit and shade trees in neighbors' yards.

Frogtown Green is a volunteer-powered initiative to build green beauty in the Frogtown neighborhood. We plant trees, cultivate gardens and work toward a healthier environment. If you'd like to know more, our website is frogtowngreen.com and our phone is 651-757-5970.

Congrats, virtual ice castle winners



12 and under 1st place winner:
Brisa Bolton-Steiner
Minecraft name: dnr3301

13-17 year old 1st place winner:
Tom Reese
Minecraft name: hastypirate



There were 30 participants who built 27 virtual ice palaces in an event organized by Victoria Theater Arts Center (VIAC) on Sunday, Jan. 30 during the 2022 Saint Paul Winter Carnival.

Earning honorable mentions were (top to bottom, left to right):

- Most Traditional: Will Van Elswyk - Phibby27
- Most Magical: MJ Builders
- Most Minnesotan: Notherstars
- Most Ornate: William Poppleton - TheInkweaver



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AMPLIFYING VOICES OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS

In the midst of winter, I discovered that there was in me an invincible summer. – Albert Camus

Black on Black crime is the result of self-hatred. Self-hatred is a result of our oppression. We can't get back at the folks who oppress us so we attack ourselves. – Joseph E. Lowery [This dysfunction is changing and being transformed by self-love; self-love is the result of community-self-love and community-kinship and ownership]

Poetry is not only dream and vision; it is the skeleton architecture of our lives. It lays the foundations for a future of change, a bridge across our fears of what has never been before. – Audre Lorde

Hello Monitor readers,

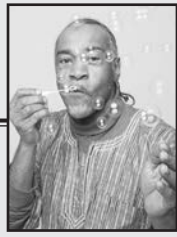
March arrived like a great warm lamb; however, our world seems to be spinning with wild dragons creating fiery mischief, confusion, battles, and the real threat of World War III. Now is the time for sound thinking, patience, and solidarity. It's a time for learning to tame our inner and outward dragons instead of attempting to slay dragons in the same old way. Education and working together is a great way to start taming dragons. When we start educating and preparing our babies and young children with truthful information without judgement, we begin to let go of shame, guilt, blame, anger, trauma, and the unconscious need or desire for forceful power and control.

I appreciated and liked last month's column, "What does 'Unbiased' really Mean," written by the *Monitor's* owner and editor, Tesha M. Christensen. She highlights the dragons she wrestles (not slaying) with daily as the editor of this community newspaper. She offers good insights and wisdom, including it is the "threads that bind us to each other that make us stronger. They help us make decisions that build community."

One of our excellent community threads is the STEPS (Starting Transitions Early to Promote Success) team, an initiative of Saint Paul Public Schools' Office of Early Learning. Next month STEPS will host its spring Growing into Kindergarten event for children who will enter kindergarten in the fall of 2022. Participants will receive information and resources that will promote a successful transition experience for the whole family. Community organizations will be there to create age-appropriate fun and games. All participants will receive a snack on-site, and a food box and pre-prepared meal to take home. Capacity is limited, so registration is re-

PEACE BUBBLES

BY MELVIN GILES
peacebubbles@q.com



quired. The event will be held at Arlington Hills Community Center on Tuesday, April 26, 2022 with session 1 from 3:30-5:30 p.m. and session 2 from 5-7 p.m. For more information go to <https://www.spps.org/steps> to find the link for registration (to open mid-March), as well as other information and resources for families experiencing transitions during their child's first five years. This community thread not only helps to reduce the achievement educational gap, it also assists in nurturing and supporting families by working together with communities.

In fact, the *Monitor* is amplifying community members sharing their voices, ideas, wisdom, and opportunities to learn, work, and play together. Even in the midst of our current crazy-like and seemingly ruthless world, so many great things are happening locally and in our country. For instance, in the *Monitor's* February issue, Dr. Artika Tyner's column provided community and family-friendly information, facts, and resources to learn about, to celebrate and to honor Black History 365 days a year!

So, what were your new learnings or what did you acknowledge during Black History Month? My new learning and acknowledgement is that I really, really believe that we are making healthier progress in our acceptance that we all have been mis-educated and/or misled about how and why America is great and how we all play a key courageous role in reversing the racial and economic dysfunctional current paradigm of supremacy disguised as "order according to the powers (founding fathers) that be." In other words, we must work, play, cry, laugh, talk, sing, dance, and struggle together to keep stretching our comfort zones, in order to create and understand our new learning zones. I also want to acknowledge again, TPT, for their great ongoing showings of Black History documentaries and inclusive shows 365 days a year. TPT is walking their talk that Black Lives Matter and Every Culture and Group Matters! Thank you, TPT! Also, huge shout outs to KMOJ Radio 89.9 FM. The smooth, bold, and outstanding Black radio station also provides 365 days of cultural education and knowledge, and

by far is my favorite radio station, with the music that I love and groove-on. KMOJ also has daily great educational talk shows. KBEM 88.5 FM and KNOW 91.1 FM are also wonderful radio station resources that binds and threads communities together with facts and useful information, instead of dividing community members with fearful false propaganda and misguided information. I love KMOJ's mantra that "We put unity in community!"

'THE GREEN DAWN' PART 3

And, now, part three of "The Green Dawn" by Kieran Morris, a talented artist and urban farmer and bright young man who is making a positive difference and impact on our beautiful world!

... produce grown by the community, for the community provides a source of nutritious food, grown with your people's needs and sensibilities in mind. More broadly, it creates a natural gathering space through the establishment of a garden. Here, people share knowledge and preserve culture. They invent and improvise ways to grow in a changing climate, ways that just might save lives someday, if supply lines break down as they are wont to do. (end of Part Two)

Part Three... Napoleon Bonaparte was a bit of an ass, but he once said that an army marches on his stomach, and I am inclined to agree. People, especially people living in low-income areas with limited food access, benefit from having gardens in their neighborhoods. Nutrition contributes to physical and mental health, and an urban farm setting offers myriad paths to learning about the traditions and sciences of growing. The cultivation of natural remedies and superfoods addresses the effects of sugar and fat rich food deserts. The structure and dedication that come from caring for and studying their crops gives people a sense of purpose and a lifeline to their heritage. Everyone can learn something from their ancestors when it comes to growing if they go back far enough, and, in doing, so they reconnect with the earth itself, as well as themselves. Not to mention each other. Comparing cuisines and sharing meals with other people is one of the surest paths to peace and prosperity.

While nurturing our own lives and bodies, these practices also begin to undo a measure of the damage that industry, habitat destruction and pollution have wrought on urban ecology and biodiversity. Many delicious and nutritious produce varieties are indigenous to this land, and create a sanctuary that our pollinator friends desperately need. Green spaces are also a limiting factor on the urban heat island effect, which creates drought and worsens air quality.

Let this little column be an invitation to you, a call to the arms of shovel and seed. You can commit as much time as you want, design your own plot or just get your hands in the dirt once in a while. There is growing happening all over the metro, in vacant lots, schoolyards and garden boxes. There are beds on street corners and balconies and in plastic containers. Start a new operation, ask a friend, or Google the name of your neighborhood and urban farm or community garden. I guarantee you will find options. In a time of great change, seeds, dirt and water are all you need to create your own change.

Thank you, Kieran for sharing from your heart! I will continue to ask him to share with us, as well as to encourage him to create his own column in the *Monitor*. Kieran can be reached at organizer@tcalt.org. Reach out to him, ask about his blog and learn about his many skills.

I recently heard that developing and opening up pipelines in North America would stop World War III from happening. The reason was that we (America) would not be dependent on any other country for oil. Fortunately, I heard someone else simply say now is the time to invest in green energy, particularly for our transportation, cooking, and heating and cooling needs and usages. When I think of fossil fuels, I think old, depleted, and outdated! When I think of green energy, I think of new, creative, solar gardens, energizing windmills, electric and solar transportation vehicles, community gardens, and many other future innovations that will support and nurture our global community and our children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren for the next seven generations. Please contact our Governor, Lt. Governor, and President Bidden and Vice President Harris to urge them to halt and stop operations of Pipeline 3. The pipeline will not stop any further wars or slay any dragons; it will only continue the destruction of our lovely planet and delay our ability to replenish and heal Mother Earth and All our Relatives, great and small. Green energy means green jobs, just as we have been adjusting to new technology and 21st century jobs and occupations. Yep, it is and will be a bumpy journey. However, we have done similar transitions as educators and grandparents have taught us.

Keep the positive vibrations flowing and stay optimistic and dream and visualize the world you want to see and live now and in the future!!!!

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)!!!!

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- Special education services
- English language learning services
- School culture that emphasizes relationships, community building, leadership and character growth.

FROG FOOD BY Z AKHMETOVA



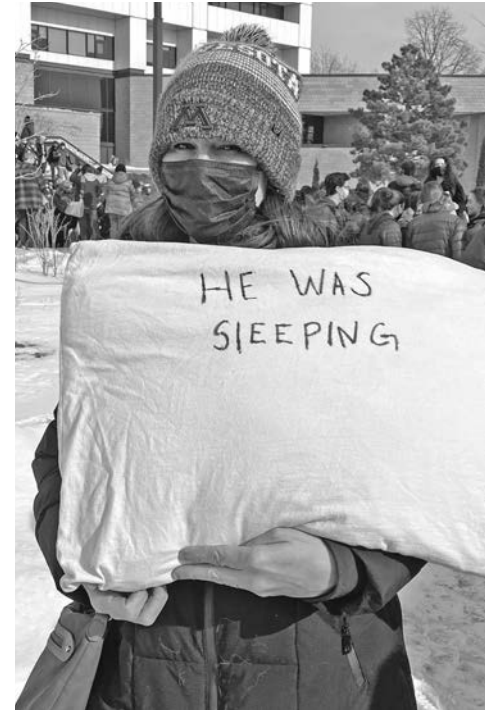
MY TROUBLES SHOW ADMIRABLE INITIATIVE

TEENS RAISE THEIR VOICES IN PROTEST



AT LEFT: Kimathi Keloi, 16, believes protest matters. That's why he participated in the March organized by MN Teen Activists and Central High School Black Student Union on Tuesday, Feb. 8 in the wake of the killing of 22-year-old Amir Locke by Minneapolis Police officers. They were executing a warrant for St. Paul Police. "I want to show my support," he said. "I think it's important that we all come out here to show this is important and we want change. I want police change. I want to reform police. I think they need to do something different and not enter someone's home using a no knock warrant." He's a student at Central High School, where the rally started. Over 2,000 teens and a handful of adults marched from there to the Governor's Mansion.

AT RIGHT: Midway mom of two, Kristine Howatt, held a pillow with the reminder, "He was sleeping" during a rally at Central High School. (Photos by Tesha M. Christensen) >> Photo gallery at www.MonitorSaintPaul.com.



Students check out options during career fair

COMO PARK
SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL



BY ERIC ERICKSON
Social studies teacher

Thirty representatives from businesses, industries, and trade groups shared information and opportunities with interested Como students during the school day on Feb. 23. Students signed up for sessions during their 25-minute advisory time and visited the tables that matched their interests.

Many students prepared for the interactions through advisory lessons, which also overlapped with instruction in elective classes such as natural resources and management, entrepreneurship, agriculture, culinary arts, construction and small engines, introduction to business and more.

The event was organized by Mai Chue Moua of Como's Get Ready program, Bridgette Kelly from Como's Career Pathway Center, and the Como Counseling Department.

JROTC CADETS RETURNING TO WASHINGTON D.C.

For the second consecutive year, a group of Como Park Marine Corps JROTC



Students participated in a career fair at Como Park High School on Feb. 23. (Photo by Eric Erickson)

cadets have qualified for the Junior Leadership Academic Bowl (JLAB) Championship in Washington, D.C. Eleventh grade students Alex Le, Sophia Moore, Jesiah Mason, sophomore Cooper Westrum, and freshman Joshua Lee will participate in the prestigious national JROTC competition from June 24-28 this summer.

HISTORY DAY REGIONAL QUALIFIERS

History Day at Como featured the research and final products of 11th grade U.S. History students. This year's theme was "Debate and Diplomacy in History - Successes, Failures, Consequences." Stu-

dents advancing to St. Paul regional competition include the following:

Group Documentary - Kyle Vang and Julei Hei for "East vs. West: Diplomacy in the Cold War," Ywa Hay and Paw Htoo for "Nuclear Disarmament."

Individual Documentary - Jesiah Mason for "The War on Drugs," Dallas Beilke for "The Abortion Debate."

Website - Liam Schwie for "The Rico Act of 1970 (Long Arm of the Law)."

Group Virtual Exhibit - Pariz Batee, Ellen Chinema and Aundrea Valdez for "The Rwandan Genocide," Jairo Cayetano Rodriguez, Tran Ho Tran and Anisa Abshir

for "The Mexican-American War," Anwar Abdulkadir and Jibril Ahmed for "Pearl Harbor."

Individual Virtual Exhibit - Mohamed Mohamed for "The Little Rock Nine."

Paper - John Mason for "Hong Kong's Kowloon Walled City," Rin Htoo for "The Berlin Wall."

SPRING MUSICAL

Students have been rehearsing, the set has been built and it's almost showtime. "High School Musical" will be presented in the Como Auditorium on Friday, March 18 at 7 p.m., and on Saturday, March 19 at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. Tickets are \$5 for students and \$7 for adults. See tinyurl.com/ComoParkTheater for more information.

WINTER SPORTS STATE TOURNAMENT QUALIFIERS

As the *Monitor* went to press, nine different Como student athletes had qualified for the state tournaments in their respective sports.

Senior Saylor Landrum concluded her Nordic skiing career by making it to state.

Senior wrestler Aaron Adekplovi was the Section 4AA champion in the heavy-weight division and advanced to the state meet at the Xcel Energy Center.

Seven Cougar swimmers qualified for the state meet in relays and individual events: senior Soren Sackreiter, juniors Sig Isaacson, Gabe Napierala, Kai Sackreiter, and Charlie Power-Theisen, and sophomores Kyle Kosiak and Oskar Helgen.

2021 COMO PARK HONOR ROLL RECIPIENTS

DISTRICT 10 COMO
COMMUNITY COUNCIL

BY SHEVEK MCKEE
Executive Director



In January, D10 Como Community Council accepted nominations for the 2021 Como Neighborhood Honor Roll, board members voted to select three honorees among the seven nominations, and the winners were honored at the February board meeting.

Congratulations to 2021 Honorees Rick and Kathy Ziemann, Melissa Liu and Deepa Nirmal, and Tseganesh Selameab and Matthew Cain.

The Honor Roll is an annual tribute that recognizes everyday residents and organizations who make a sustained and lasting impact in their neighborhood. The city has paused its official support of the honor roll program, but it's important that we continue to celebrate our outstanding community members, whose

names will be added to the permanent plaque in the D10 office. You can see more about the 2021 honorees, as well as our record of past honorees. here: District10ComoPark.org/HonorRoll/

JOIN D10 BOARD IN 2022

The Como Community Council is a great opportunity to get involved with your neighbors and learn more about what's going on in the community: Eight seats on our board are up for election in April.

Board seats up for election in April:

- One representative each from the neighborhood's four sub-districts (map)
- Two representatives from the neighborhood at-large
- One representative from the neighborhood at-large who is a renter
- One representative from the neighborhood at-large who is a youth (age 16-24)

These positions serve two-year terms, through April 2024. To get on the ballot, submit a board member application through the website below. The filing deadline is Sunday, April 3. The election is April 19. Find out more information here:

District10ComoPark.org/Elections/

GET INVOLVED: 'CELEBRATE SPRING!' EVENT

Our members have been working hard on our 2022 events calendar. We're planning to have a community event in each of Como's four sub-districts in 2022. On April 30, we're partnering with St. Paul Parks and Rec to host an event at North Dale Rec Center, 10:30-noon.

We're also tentatively planning for a Spring Clean-Up at Orchard Rec Center on May 28, our annual Ice Cream Social at the Como Streetcar Station on July 8, and a Harvest Festival in the Tilden Park area on Sept. 10. Get involved in planning the event in your sub-district, or any of the sub-districts, at our Neighborhood Relations Committee meetings. Find the latest info at District10ComoPark.org/Events/

COMO NEIGHBORHOOD NOTES

- K&L Sales: The second-hand dealer's license for this used-car lot at Como and Arona is up for renewal on March 29. Anyone with input should email the Como Community Council or contact the office of Ward 4 Council Member Mitra Jalali: ward4@ci.stpaul.mn.us.

- Como Golf Course & Club House: The facility's liquor and entertainment licenses are up for renewal April 18. Any-

one with input should email the Como Community Council or contact the office of Ward 4 Council Member Mitra Jalali: ward4@ci.stpaul.mn.us.

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 district10comopark.org/calendar. If you have questions you can email district10@district10comopark.org. Or, call 651-644-3889.

- Land Use Committee: Monday, March 14
- Board Meeting: Tuesday, March 15
- Neighborhood Relations Committee: Tuesday, April 5
- Land Use Committee: Wednesday, April 6
- Environment Committee: Tuesday, April 12
- Board Meeting: April 19

All meetings begin at 7 p.m. unless otherwise noted. Whenever possible, agendas and other relevant documents are posted in advance on District 10's website: www.district10comopark.org

Town & Country sale rejected

By JANE McCLURE

A University of St. Thomas inquiry about purchasing the historic Town & Country Club for athletic facilities and possible campus expansion came and went as quickly as a pop-up fly ball.

The club's directors rejected the unsolicited \$61.4 million offer to buy the golf course Feb. 22, days after it became public. The proposal provoked a firestorm of debate on social media and drew questions at a virtual UST town hall Feb. 21 meeting about university finances. The university's student news source, Tommie Media, reported that lower than anticipated enrollments have impacted university revenues.

While athletic facilities would be the focus of capital campaign fundraising, the notion of buying the golf course had raised questions among students and alumni.

For neighbors, the loss of a space they use for winter sledding and dog walking sparked objections, along with questions about potential game-day traffic and disruption. Some questioned why UST doesn't expand facilities on its own campus or develop the facilities announced in 2004 for the two-block expansion area.

Since its move to Division 1 athletics, UST has considered sites for improved facilities. A hockey area is a major need, as are new baseball and softball facilities. Training facilities and parking have also

been eyed.

UST has softball and baseball facilities on its campus but uses the St. Thomas Academy hockey rink in Mendota Heights.

UST will look at other sites for needed facilities, including the former Ford Motor Company plant in Highland Park. Ryan Companies is developing that site as the mixed-use Highland Bridge development.

"We understand and respect this decision. We appreciate that Town & Country's leadership brought our interest forward to its membership, and we thank them for their consideration," said Andy Ybarra, UST associate vice president for public relations and communications.

While the golf course at Marshall and Cretin avenues would have provided space for new athletic facilities and possibly future campus expansion, two significant hurdles stood in the way.

One is the conditional use permit UST operates under. Almost all St. Paul colleges and universities have conditional use permits, which among other things set campus boundaries and dictate heights and setbacks of new structure.

UST's current boundaries were set in 2004 after a long and contentious fight with neighbors over campus expansion. While that expansion allowed for two blocks to be added to the campus, UST had to sell properties it owned outside of the boundaries.

Expanding the boundaries would



The historic Town & Country Club will remain a golf course, despite being eyed by St. Thomas University for a campus expansion. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)

require going back to the planning commission and likely city council. The 2004 boundary fight sparked legal action at one point.

Another issue would be potential tax liability for the club members. Town & Country leadership immediately sought legal counsel to help its board sort through a series of complex issues, according to Matt Winkel, president of the club. One issue was how much in taxes would be owed if a sale went forward.

Town & Country operates under a state property tax open space program, which allows some taxes to be deferred. The club currently pays almost \$120,000 in property taxes on the club site itself and about \$185,000 on the golf course.

If the property is ever sold, such as to UST or to a future housing developer, that would mean catching up on property taxes for seven years at a cost of \$12 million or

more. The approximately 300 members would get some kind of payment, estimated at \$160,000 had the sale to UST been approved, but deferred taxes would have eaten up part of the sale proceeds.

After the Feb. 22 meeting, club leadership didn't address the tax issues but did make it clear that the course will remain as is, saying in a statement: "Over the last week, the Town & Country Club Board of Directors carefully reviewed the University of St. Thomas' proposal, explored questions related to the proposed transaction and most importantly, listened to input from our members. Having completed that work, the board voted unanimously to reject the university's proposal and inform them that we have no interest in any further engagement on this topic."

"Town & Country Club is not for sale."

Clinic for women reopens in Midway

Motherhood to Menopause in rebuilt Lloyd's Pharmacy building

By TESHA M. CHRISTENSEN

When Lloyd's Pharmacy rebuilt at the corner of Snelling and Minnehaha Ave., the small clinic providing services to women housed in the building reopened, too.

It emerged with a new name and broader mission.

Under the leadership of Catherine Mascari, the Menopause Center shifted from a focus on menopause to meeting needs of women from motherhood on. With that came a new name: Motherhood to Menopause Midwifery Care.

Mascari was one of the Menopause Center's first clients. She now owns the practice at 576 Minnehaha Ave. W.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR BACKGROUND AND HOW YOU ENDED UP IN THIS FIELD.

Mascari: I am a master's prepared nurse-midwife, licensed in the state of Minnesota as an RN (1987) and Advanced Practice RN (APRN), and then nationally certified as a nurse midwife (CNM) through the American Midwifery Certification board since 2004.

My initial nursing career started out in oncology and medical surgical which laid a foundation of "disease management." Then I practiced in gynecology and surgeries; onto labor, birth, post-partum, and the newborn. My current licensing status affords me to practice as an independent and autonomous provider.



After being affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and the fire at Lloyd's Pharmacy, the waiting room is open again at Motherhood to Menopause. (Photo submitted)

WHAT DO YOU MOST LOVE ABOUT YOUR WORK?

Mascari: The longer I am "with woman" the more it becomes clear of having two ears to listen. Women deserve to have their lifetime healthcare needs met in a manner that is respectful without significant time constraints. Providing choices and informed consent are important for their care. When exploring options for relief of symptoms, she decides to pursue or not.

TELL US ABOUT THE TRANSITION FROM MENO-PAUSE CENTER TO MOTHERHOOD TO MENOPAUSE.



Catherine Mascari purchased the women's health practice in September 2021, and renamed it Motherhood to Menopause. (Photo submitted)

Mascari: This was a simple and clear one: Menopause Center clients were asking for more services and Motherhood to Menopause (MTMMC) now offers those to low-risk clients: consults, medication management, well woman exams, drawing blood, ordering mammograms and DEXAs (which screen for bone loss).

MTMMC appeals to women of all ages.

Prenatal services are driven by the homebirth community for those low-risk client services, midwife-to-midwife care, for consults, labs, dating ultrasounds eight weeks and more, biophysical profiles and fetal monitoring.

I offer services for all age groups of women from their reproductive years to post-menopausal.

WHAT ARE COMMON QUESTIONS YOU HEAR FROM WOMEN YOU SERVE?

Mascari: With peri-menopause/menopause usually it is: I should be over this (meaning their debilitating symptoms). The relief they feel when informed their symptoms have other physiological reasons rather than just loss of ovarian function. That women deserve relief from their symptoms.

Women are smart and can understand the research.

Unfortunately, huge pieces of the research for peri-menopause/menopause are based on synthetic hormones.

HOW DID THE FIRE AT LLOYD'S PHARMACY AFFECT YOUR BUSINESS AND HOW HAVE YOU REBUILT?

Mascari: Definitely, visits went appreciably down because there was this limbo state of how to get their appointments done. Unfortunately, health insurance carriers were the driver of where appointments could take place, and once teleconferencing was in place there was a sense of relief not only on a client's part but on mine. I did a lot of outreach to past clients and continue to do outreach to past clients about the changes. I look forward to new clients, and the expanding and broadening of services.

The community and clients were amazing, not just with their support but showing up, as well.

Learn more at motherhoodtomeno-pause.com.

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School of Leadership for Public Service to open

The School of Leadership for Public Service, a free public charter school, recently announced that it will be opening in the Saint Columba school site in the fall of 2022. The School of Leadership will open initially for grades 6-10, then expand gradually until it is a preK to 12 school.

"The School of Leadership for Public Service intends to work with community mentors to help students understand how the skills they learn in class are used each day in work and in public service. The school will be teacher-run," explain representatives. It is authorized by the Minnesota Guild, a successful charter school advisory group. One of the goals of the school is to create a community of communities

by providing before and after school activities, along with evening and weekend functions.

"The school will go beyond the traditional 3R's of reading, writing and arithmetic by adding the 3Cs - Care, Connect and Contribute," explain representatives. "This will ensure that students have the skills needed to work successfully with others."

The founders of the School of Leadership for Public Service are Sheriff Bob Fletcher, Donna Swanson and Roy Magnuson. Background information on the founders and the school's board of education can be found at www.leadershipfor-publicservice.org

PLAN IT

KICKIN' IT IRISH FESTIVAL

Celebrate Saint Paddy's Day in true Irish style with Kickin' It Irish, the family-friendly live Irish music and dance spectacular. The Celtic Junction will host nine shows between March 4 and March 17. The Celtic Junction Arts Center (CJAC) is a non-profit cultural center and performance venue located at 836 Prior Ave North. Voted "Best Irish Center/Festival in North America" by Irish Central's Creativity and Arts Awards, this world-class, intimate venue has been hosting traditional music concerts since 2009.

LIBRARY GROUP MEETS MARCH 21

The Hamline Midway Library Association will hold its next meeting online, open to all, on Wednesday, March 21 at 6:30-8 PM. To receive the Zoom link for the meeting and calendar invites for future meetings, email hmlibraryassociation@gmail.com. Founded in 2009, the Hamline Midway Library Association supports, promotes, and preserves the Hamline Midway Public Library as a community treasure through advocacy, events, and fundraising. They invite all library lovers to participate in these efforts.

SENIOR RESOURCE FAIR APRIL 14

Hamline Midway Elders is holding a Senior Resource Fair on April 14, 10 a.m. to noon at the Frogtown Community Center, 230 Como Ave. Staff from Hamline Midway Elders, North End/South Como Block Nurse Program, St. Paul Parks and Recreation, and Trellis will be on hand to talk about the free and low cost classes, programs and services available to older adults in the neighborhood. Enjoy a cup of coffee and a snack. Try (or watch) an introductory pickleball demonstration. Take advantage of 'Seniors Only' time on the indoor walking track. Get your blood pressure checked, or enjoy a hand massage.

FROGTOWN GARAGE SALE MAY 6-7

The Friendly Frog Events announces its Frogtown Community Garage Sale to benefit seniors living in the Frogtown neighborhood of St. Paul. Each year, neighbors pitch in to collect donated items to sell in the sale, with all proceeds going to fund social activities for neighborhood seniors. The sale takes place annually on the first Friday and Saturday in May, at 411 Blair Avenue. This year's sale will take place on Friday, May 6, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Saturday, May 7, from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. All donations are welcome. To schedule a donation pick-up, or for more information, please call Kim/Henry (651) 488-9671 or Lynn (651) 488-7390. If no answer, leave a message with your name and phone number.

WRITERS' GROUP MEETS THURSDAYS

Read and share written work in progress for constructive feedback with a writers' group. Meetings are at Merriam Park Library on Thursdays at 10:30 a.m.

IN BRIEF

RENOVATE 1558 FORMS

Seeking to ensure that the Hamline Midway Library is not torn down as part of the St. Paul Public Library's (SPPL) future plans for the building, a group of community activists, historic preservationists, and neighborhood residents has formed to push for creative reuse of the historic library building located at 1558 Minnehaha Avenue. Calling themselves "Renovate 1558" - in recognition of the library's street address - the group hopes to steer SPPL away from any discussion of demolition and focus instead on upgrades that address space needs, accessibility, energy efficiency, and water infiltration issues while retaining the historic character of the former Henry Hale Memorial Library. The group believes that if SPPL continues to advocate for a new building to house the Hamline Midway Library, it should pursue relocation so that the present building can be repurposed and preserved, similar to the 2014 relocation of the Arlington Hills Library and repurposing of its former home - one of three Carnegie Library buildings in St. Paul - as the East Side Freedom Library. More at www.Renovate1558.org.

RENA MORAN TO RUN FOR COMMISSIONER

Ramsey County Commissioner Toni Carter, has announced her public endorsement of Representative Rena Moran in her run to succeed her as the next county commissioner. After providing nearly 17 years of dedicated service to the community Toni Carter has chosen to not seek reelection. As the first African American county commissioner in the history of the state, she has been a pioneer in fighting to improve outcomes for children, protect the environment, reform the criminal justice system, improve transportation infrastructure, and create new jobs and economic development.

"Rena will be a fantastic county commissioner for District 4 and all of Ramsey County. The leadership she has now will be a part of her ability to lift our voices. When I see a woman of color who has all of the credentials that Rena has, I stand behind her," said Carter.

"For 12 years, I have worked in the Minnesota State House of Representatives and every day has been an honor and privilege to bring the voices of our community in. When commissioner Toni Carter decided to retire, I thought about the impact of the work that I do, the families, children, and community that mean so much to me, and I realized that I could not let this moment pass me by. I am coming home, I am coming home to Saint Paul, and coming home to the neighborhoods of Ramsey County to be closest to the people, closest to the needs, and closest to creating that change that I know I wanted to create at the Capitol," said Moran. "I look forward to continuing to support the families, businesses, and people of Saint Paul on the Ramsey County Board and am truly honored to have Commissioner Carter's endorsement."

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Felines find 'forever' homes

>> from 1

access during open hours where visitors may meet a variety of individuals. Visiting hours (currently only by appointment) are posted on the website where there is an interactive scheduling process listing available times and dates. "The cats do enjoy having visitors!" said Miller.

Feline Rescue is staffed with individuals at all levels including a veterinarian that provides on-site care. Much of the day-to-day tasks are completed by volunteers. There are also many other ways to get involved.

According to Miller, volunteers and staff have a having real passion for their work and for the cats in their care. She also noted how the organization has expanded to work alongside numerous animal welfare organizations and individuals, even participating in national initiatives such as Shelter Animals Count. She is fond of this saying: "Saving one cat won't change the world, but it will surely change the world for that cat."

Gail Frethem is a newer volunteer. Although she is more of a "dog person," Frethem said she greatly enjoys her role and connects with the cats. "It's relaxing," she said, "without the challenges of working with people and politics."

EVERY CAT IS WANTED

Founded in 1997 by 23 people who wanted to continue shelter services from a predecessor organization, Feline Rescue has been operating out of its present location at 593 Fairview Avenue North since 2006, remarked Feline Rescue Executive Director Phil Manz. They are a limited ad-



Feline Rescue volunteers include (left to right) Gail Frethem, Nancy Miller, Shelley Pecha, Diane Martin, and Vicki Persons. The shelter is located at 593 Fairview Ave. North in a building it has occupied since 2006. (Photos by Penny Fuller)

mission, no-kill organization providing safe shelter, veterinary care and socialization for stray, abandoned or abused cats. Feline Rescue has also provided outreach services for people helping cats in their neighborhood. This past year the Coolers4Cats program retrofitted and distributed over 150 coolers for sheltering homeless cats throughout Minnesota.

"Our vision guides our efforts," commented Manz. "A community where every cat is wanted."

FINDING THE RIGHT HOME

Jenni Charrier began her work with Feline Rescue 20 years ago as a donor because she loved the premise of a positive organization that puts cats first. "It's about finding the right home for each cat and it's essential to rise above human issues to make that happen," she said.

Charrier is involved in many aspects of Feline Rescue, most recently joining their board in January 2022. She helps

to connect Feline Rescue with the public through her media skills including videography, Facebook management and start-up initiatives such as Coolers4Cats, the Cat Claw Clipping Clinic in Wayzata and many shelter improvements. She is also a foster mom.

Charrier said, "Foster caregivers are very important to the organization. The private setting provides tailored care, particularly for cats with special needs. Pregnant cats or those with kittens prior to being weaned, as well as those in need of socialization or special medical care are included in this array. When a cat is ready for adoption, Feline Rescue arranges an opportunity for potential adopters to meet at the foster cat home or the Feline Rescue administration building."

WORKING FROM HOME

Stephanie Carver, a foster mom since 2020, realized that working from home during the pandemic provided an ideal



“

It's relaxing, without the challenges of working with people and politics.”

Gail Frethem

opportunity for this role. "Making observations on each cat's personality and preferences is key to ultimately matching them to the right home," she explained. She pointed out that food and medical

care is supplied for fosters so those with a limited budget or who can't have a long-term pet commitment may find fostering provides an ideal opportunity to enjoy feline companionship.

"Feline Rescue also provides training for individuals, if needed," she said. "I never imagined I could administer subcutaneous fluids to a cat, but I did and I'm very proud of myself for going outside of my comfort zone. It allowed me to care for a cat with special needs."

She described the role of foster as being flexible and well supported, and added, "Volunteers are very helpful with one another."

She is impressed in general with Feline Rescue's leadership and vision. "As a lawyer I am very fussy about what charities I give support to. They really get my stamp of approval!" said Carver. "I'm impressed, too, that their employee assistance program is available to volunteers."

For more, visit www.felinerescue.org.

Monitor in a MINUTE

By JANE McCLURE

BIKE PARKING ALLOWED

Biking to a Loons game or the event at Allianz Field? Stopping at a local spot beforehand? Finding a parking spot may be easier. The St. Paul City Council, acting as the Housing and Redevelopment Authority

(HRA) Board Feb. 23, granted a temporary one-year agreement with Black Hart of St. Paul, 1415 University Ave., to place a bike parking rack next door at 1433 University Ave. The property at 1433 University Ave. has been owned by the city for many years, and is a candidate for future redevelopment. It is currently used for parking by Constantino Real Estate LLC. Owner Tetra Constantino supports the bike rack request.

The site was earmarked several year ago for future redevelopment. Ideas have been brought forward in the past but none have come to fruition. It provides parking for nearby buildings.

STARBUCKS DRIVE-THROUGH WILL GO

A controversial drive-through service at the Snelling-Marshall Starbucks will be permanently removed, with approval from city staff. Removal and replacement with a patio will end debate that began after the coffee shop opened in early 2017. The removal ends a problem of vehicles traveling on Marshall Avenue and blocking traffic lanes, an eastbound bike lane and the sidewalk. Traffic would sometimes back up in the area and spill onto Snelling Avenue.

Plans submitted to the city call for eliminating the drive-through lane. The current drive-through area would be filled with a

patio space, with a pergola-style roof just south of the window. The roof would be attached to the east side of the building and would be above outdoor seating. The current drive-through window would be used for walk-up service.

Starbucks was built as part of a larger plan for redevelopment at the Selby-Snelling intersection to the south. The Snelling-Marshall coffee shop and caffeine-deprived traffic jams were quickly dubbed "Carbucks" and "Snarshall" by irate area residents. Vehicles turning into the Marshall entrance blocked a sidewalk and bike lane, and caused traffic backups that spilled onto Snelling.

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