



City removes Dight name in favor of honoring its first Black fire captain

IT'S CHEATHAM AVENUE NOW



Minneapolis' second Black fire chief, Bryan Tyner, speaks at the renaming ceremony in Longfellow on March 17. "I'm just so happy to see this day finally here," said Tyner. >> [Photo gallery and more at LongfellowNokomisMessenger.com](#). (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)

By TESHA M. CHRISTENSEN

Dight Ave is no longer named after a man who launched a crusade to bring the eugenics movement to Minnesota and wrote fan letters to Hitler. Instead, it has been renamed to honor John Cheatham, a man born a slave who served as the

city's first Black fire captain.

A ceremony was held on March 17, 2022 at 38th Street and Cheatham Avenue to mark the name change. Members of his family, many of whom still live in the neighborhood, were present.

Lifetime Longfellow resident Tammy Crockett said, "It was awesome" to see

the new name be unveiled, honoring her great-great-great uncle.

Her grandson, 11-year-old Levonte Stephens, helped during the ceremony when the new name was unveiled from behind the old one. "It was fun to pull the rope off," he said.

CHEATHAM AVE. >> 2

DISTRICT CHANGES DUE TO CENSUS

Area boundaries move for state and city representatives to reflect population shifts

By CAM GORDON

The state and city redistricting processes have concluded, and thousands of Minneapolis residents will be in new legislative districts for the upcoming Aug. 9 primary and Nov. 8 general elections.

At the state level, a panel of five judges released a court-ordered final map of legislative districts on Feb. 15. The Minneapolis Charter Commission approved new city ward and park district boundaries on March 2.

The city council is scheduled to approve the precinct boundaries before the March 29 deadline. Once approved, those same precincts will be used for all elections until the next redistricting that will follow the 2030 census.

Because the state legislature was unable to agree on new boundaries for state and federal legislative districts by the required date of Feb. 15, that responsibility fell to the five judges appointed by the Minnesota Supreme Court, whose map includes new boundaries for all state and federal legislative districts in the state.

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Hockey players saw resurgence coming

By MATTHEW DAVIS

As a Minneapolis Storm youth hockey player, Zander Zoia realized he and his teammates had a chance to compete with the state's best someday. Zoia said his last youth team gained a lot from facing squads from hockey powerhouses in Edina, Maple Grove, and Wayzata.

"It was cool being able to play them, so we know what level we could play in the state," Zoia said.

Zoia and his Minneapolis high school varsity co-op hockey teammates brought Minneapolis hockey back to the high school state level this month. Minneapolis beat Delano 3-1 on March 2 to end a 28-year state hockey drought for public schools in the city.

"We knew it as soon as summer training started," Zoia said. "We knew we had the talent to do it."

The Minneapolis co-op formed in 2010 amid the city schools dropping hockey programs. This year's squad hopes this state tournament will grow hockey in the state's biggest city.

HOCKEY PLAYERS >> 5

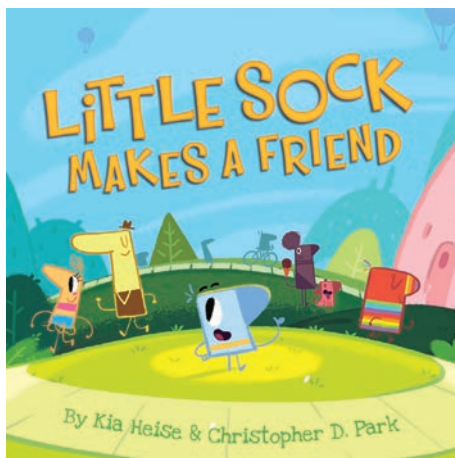
Little Sock's adventures resonate in pandemic

Nokomis couple write sequel together

By JAN WILLMS

Like everyone else, a sock needs a friend. And with that in mind, Kia Heise and Chris D. Park wrote their second children's book "Little Sock Makes a Friend."

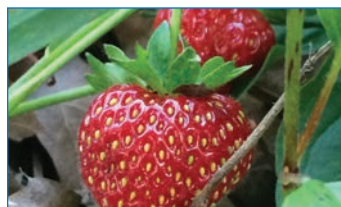
The book by the Nokomis neighborhood couple is a sequel to their first book, "Little Sock," where young readers learn about Sock City, the exciting place where lost socks gather.



Little Sock has ventured to Sock City, but he finds there are some things to do that just are better with a friend. So in this second book in the series, he sets off to make one.

Park and Heise decided to make the theme of their first book an answer to the age-old question "What happens to lost socks?" That book focuses on the bravery of trying new things and opening up to new adventures. Their second book shows young readers that even though it might be scary, it is worth it to reach out and make a new friend.

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Get tips on how to create a food forest

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DRIVE & RIDE
'Under the Hood' literally goes under the hood

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Minneapolis educators strike for 'safe and stable schools'

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ABOUT CAPT. JOHN CHEATHAM

John Willis Cheatham was born a slave in St. Louis, Mo., on Jan. 15, 1855. He was freed on Jan. 1, 1863, when the Emancipation Proclamation went into effect. Shortly afterwards, his family moved to Minneapolis where he attended school. After graduation he held a number of jobs, including porter and church sexton.

On March 13, 1888, John Cheatham was one of 37 men appointed to the Minneapolis Fire Department by Frank L. Stetson, chief engineer. Although the records aren't entirely clear, Mr. Cheatham was, if not the first African-American firefighter in Minneapolis, certainly one of the earliest. He had a distinguished career within the department, holding several positions of responsibility and receiving numerous promotions. He began as a pipeman and was promoted to driver after three years. Less than three years later he was promoted to lieutenant. On Jan. 1, 1899, he was promoted to captain.

John Cheatham and his wife, Susie, owned a home at 3020 20th Avenue. Their four children, Ethel, Bertha, Gilbert and Wesley, attended South High School, and the family belonged to Bethesda Baptist Church. On June 16, 1906, Susie Cheatham died from typhoid; she was 46 years old. Within a year of her death, John Cheatham found himself at the center of the one controversy of his career.

In 1907, John Cheatham and two other African-American firefighters (Lafayette Mason and Frank Harris) were placed in charge of the Minnehaha Fire Station located at the intersection of 45th Street and Hiawatha Avenue. Their appointment met with resistance from some local residents who circulated a petition demanding that the men be replaced by White firefighters on "general principle." That move was "strenuously resisted" by another group of residents who circulated a petition in support of the firefighters.

An article in the Minneapolis Journal detailed the excellent records of Cheatham, Mason and Harris. The article noted that Cheatham had "distinguished himself" in the House of the Good Shepherd fire and said that there was "no man on the books of the department who can show a better record."

Cheatham's response to the situation was straightforward. He said that all he wanted was "a chance to educate my children and get them started right." He described the move to replace him as "drawing the color line and drawing it stiff."

Cheatham's supporters were successful, and John Cheatham remained at the Minnehaha Fire Station until his retirement. He died on Aug. 15, 1918, from chronic endocarditis at the age of 63. He is buried next to his wife and his daughter, Ethel. Ethel died on April 16, 1911, from tuberculosis; she was 25 years old.

Info from: <http://www.friendsofthecemetery.org>



A renaming ceremony was held on March 17, 2022 at Dight Ave. and 38th Street as the name changed to Cheatham Ave. to honor the city's first Black fire captain. After Cheatham, there wasn't another one in Minneapolis until the 1990s. The fire department was not desegregated until the Minneapolis Legal Aid Society filed a lawsuit in 1971 that former Judge LaJune Lange worked on when she was a law clerk for U.S. District Judge Earl Larson. Lange has helped uncover the history of Cheatham and fire station #24. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)

CHEATHAM AVE. >> from 1

Crockett lives a few blocks away from the renamed street, and can point to the homes her relatives have lived in nearby over the decades since John Cheatham's parents chose to settle in Minneapolis. They left Missouri after the Emancipation Proclamation when John was eight. Crockett said she didn't know much about John Cheatham until she received a call as genealogists worked to track his descendants down. Then she started researching him - and Charles Dight whom the street was named after previously. Her grandchildren attend Friendship Academy of the Arts down the street (3320 E. 41st St.), and she feels proud to know they will be on a street named after their family member.

"It's nice to have history and be a part of it," stated Caprice Stephens, who bought her grandparent's house a few blocks away.

This street name is "a recognition of my connection," said Crockett. "It makes me feel more connected."

John and his wife, Susie, lived at 3020 20th Ave. in Corcoran and their four children attended South High School. He worked at Fire Station #24, a station built in 1907 at 45th and Hiawatha to house the city's Black firefighters and to support the station at Minnehaha and E. Lake Street (now the home of Hook & Ladder Theater & Lounge). The station was closed

in 1941 and transitioned to private ownership and industrial use.

Many forgot about its first use. Much of the history of the station was lost until former Fourth Judicial Judge LaJune Lange heard about it from an elder, and began working to pinpoint its location. It took her two years, but she worked with the city to have the building at 4501 Hiawatha designated a historic structure in January 2022. It is currently occupied by Adventures in Cardboard, and still has the original lockers.

START OF RECONCILIATION FOR ST. JAMES AME

St. James AME Church (3600 Snelling) has been asking the city to rename Dight for over a decade. The church sits between Dight and Snelling, and has for 107 years. Half of the church's 85 members live in the neighborhood and half live elsewhere. Throughout the years, the relatives of John Cheatham, the Websters (who lived at Snelling and 36th), McIntoshes, and McDavies, have attended the church.

St. James AME Reverend Dr. Tracey Gibson said, "It's progress, and we have a long way to go. It's healing." She added that it is the start of reconciliation.

"It's the mosaic of the community coalescing once again. The mosaic that is the Longfellow community is coming back together," said longtime church member and leader Stephen Dye.

Church historian Larry Burt stated,

"It's a relief to go from villain to hero. It's a great change and a relief that's not attached to our church anymore."

The church had originally suggested the 10-block stretch that runs south from 34th to 44th be renamed to recognize Rev. Noah Smith, who pastored there for about 25 years ago and is one of the "foundational stones in our community," said Dye.

CHEATHAM AVE. >> 3

WHO WAS CHARLES DIGHT?

Charles Fremont Dight was a doctor, a professor and a Minneapolis alderman whose efforts to promote food safety earned him a spot on the street map. He lived in a tree-house on the banks of Minnehaha Creek and believed America could and should breed humans like livestock to create a master race. He wrote fan letters to Adolf Hitler and founded the Minnesota Eugenics Society. His name stood for decades on the former Charles Fremont Dight Institute for the Promotion of Human Genetics at the University of Minnesota. The forced sterilization laws he championed remained on the books in this state until 1975.

- Paraphrased from Star Tribune columnist Jennifer Brooks, who has been writing about the movement to rename Dight Ave.

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The descendants of John Cheatham, the city's first Black fire chief, local leaders, and members of the African American Firefighters Association gather to rename Dight Ave. on March 17, 2022. >> More photos online @ LongfellowNokomisMessenger.com (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)

CHEATHAM AVE. >> from2

'IT'S A GOOD DAY'

"I cannot emphasize enough, Charles Dight does not and has not and will never reflect the values of this community," said Ward 12 Minneapolis Council Member and Longfellow resident Andrew Johnson.

"It's a good day because we're taking that name down. But it's a better day because of the name we are putting up. Captain John Cheatham stood up at a time when he faced tremendous racism and oppression to serve this community with honor and to protect the residents of this community. He truly is a name we should drive by, walk by, and see lifted high above us not just to lift up his legacy but as an example of how we should act and how we should move forward in this world."

"What we're doing is writing history the way it should have been written," remarked Mayor Jacob Frey.

"We are lifting up the name of John Cheatham," observed Andrea Jenkins, the first Black transgender city council president.

Minneapolis Fire Chief Bryan Tyner, the city's second Black chief, observed, "I know I stand on the shoulders of those who came before me."

He pointed out that after John Cheatham, there were no other Black captains in the Minneapolis Fire Department until the 1990s. Along with other members of the African American Firefighters Association, Tyner stated that he works to help those who come up behind him. "Continuing that tradition, continuing that progress is what I will strive to do," he said. "I'm just so happy to see this day finally here."



St. James AME Church historian Larry Burt, at left, stated, "It's a relief to go from villain to hero." With him are Reverend Dr. Tracey Gibson (center) and Stephen Dye. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)

EFFORT OF COLLABORATION

John Cheatham's relatives were present thanks in part to the work of researchers Cindy Lindau and Robin Macgregor, of the Minnesota Genealogy Society. Lindau learned about Cheatham after reading a column written by Jennifer Brooks in the *Star Tribune* that mentioned a search for his relatives. She thought, "I can help with that."

The search took a long time, in part, because they were working backwards. Typically, genealogists start with the now and work backwards. With this case, they started backwards with John Cheatham and sought to move forward.

"It truly is an effort of collaboration," observed Lange.

She added, "The city of Minneapolis did something very important. They gave a descendant of an enslaved family a living wage job that he could buy a home, settle in the city, make a contribution to his community, and live and earn the respect of others. Living wage jobs must continue. Single family housing must continue. And I hope that you can join me as we continue to work to uncover the stories of so many African-descendant people in the Longfellow community."

New Minneapolis Public Works Director Margaret Anderson Kelliher said she looks forward to working with residents on projects like this.

Coming next may be the renaming of Edmund Boulevard, a 10-block section adjacent to West River Parkway that honors a Longfellow developer who wrote the first covenant restrictions blocking people of color from buying property in Minneapolis.

THE CHEATHAM FAMILY

Wife Susie Rachel Robinson, was born about 1860 in Virginia. Susie died of typhoid in 1906 at the age of 46 years.

Daughter Susie Ethel, was born about 1886. She died April 16, 1911 of tuberculosis.

Bertha was born March 24, 1888. At age 20, she married Guy H. Stephens and they had one daughter, Margaret Elizabeth.

Gilbert Willis was born July 15, 1895. His wife's name was Louise, and he worked as a porter. He died July 4, 1923 at 27 years.

John Wesley was born Nov. 4, 1898. His occupation was moulder at Minneapolis Steel and Mch. Co.

Sister Johanna McIntosh, born 1949, had 11 children and 9 survived to adulthood. She and husband Isaac owned a house at 1215 Spring St.

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Join the conversation, and let us know your diverse thoughts on the issues that affect your neighborhood. Send letters and guest commentaries to news@LongfellowNokomisMessenger.com.

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 as a community newspaper publisher. Another assistant editor worked for a number of outstate dailies upon graduation, won

Still an intern after all these years

VIEW FROM THE MESSENGER

BY DENIS WOULFE

Sales manager

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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!

For me, 2022 will be the Year of the Woman

As I make my way down the river of life experience with those of you who have taken the plunge and joined me as readers of *Stories and Journeys*, I always knew this moment would come. Initiating conversation with people I interact with during my day is one thing. Recently one of you, a reader, approached me in a grocery store and initiated conversation about *Stories and Journeys*.

This has me thinking. How do we show up to one another when we encounter one another in the community? Are we wearing a mask like we might at a Halloween party? I'm not very good at wearing masks. Sometimes I feel things deeply. My defense mechanisms may not protect me. Don't let that stop you from approaching me. After all, we are on this river of life experience together as readers; yes, I am a reader of *Stories and Journeys*. I wonder: can our encounters with one another be as simple as we are in the moment? It's hard for me to believe it's that simple.

In this column and the next I am stepping outside of my comfort zone. I am aware that throughout my lifetime I have been influenced and inspired by women. Sometimes our masks have come off just often enough that we are able to see and connect with the divinity in each other. Recently it came into my awareness that I have never really taken a deep dive into women's issues and realities. In fact, at age 77, I have come to the stark realization that even though I have worked for women, been supervised by women,

STORIES AND JOURNEYS

BY DONALD L. HAMMEN

worked beside women as co-workers, and experienced women as friends that I didn't know women at all. I had taken these associations (all of them positive for the most part) for granted. I needed to take a deeper dive with respect to my woman awareness. I have declared 2022 for me The Year of the Woman.

My Year of the Woman begins with me recognizing my mother as a primary source of influence and inspiration. Early on in my life, I was displaying a capacity for being a reflective and deep thinker, at times revealing a curious mind about many topics. I have always experienced myself to be on a quest, a seeker of sorts especially in matters of spiritual awareness. It was my mother's affirmation of my questing and seeking that made life in my family of origin stimulating and meaningful. This in no way is meant to disparage my father and brother. It is my experience in my life that all the pieces fit.

What follows are some of my mother's words that continue to contain a grain of truth for me. For example: "Don, you need to take a stand. If you don't take

a stand people won't know with whom they are dealing." Other words from my mom that remain in my awareness are as follows: "To your own self be true, and it shall follow as night follows day you cannot be false to any man or woman." Other words from Mom: "No experience is entirely lost." "Your happiness lies right under your eyes right in your own back yard." "Learning is a life long experience." All containing a grain of truth for me.

My mother was 77 the year she died. Now I'm 77. It was 1988. I eulogized her around theme, "A Women of Steadfast Presence, Faith and a Devoted Heart." Her influence notwithstanding, I have discovered that my woman awareness needs updating – which will be explored if I am to continue to grow as an elder man given my current spiritual journey. I must embrace the changes taking place as my own spirituality and healing story unfolds.

In the meantime, what about those masks? Are they just part of our daily round? What about those environments where male domination, exploitation of women and masculine imbalance in relation to the feminine can be so prevalent? Look no further than the current authoritarian dictator making headlines!

What positive maternal influences do you celebrate because they have shaped your life and given you a sense of being whole? Tell yourself, share with others or tell me at news@LongfellowNokomisMessenger.com

In gratitude. Stay tuned.

Donald L. Hammen is a longtime south Minneapolis resident, and serves on the All Elders United for Justice steering committee.

LETTER

Minneapolis police need to change how officers are trained

I recently took part in the 15-week Minneapolis Police Academy, and I believe the department has not done enough to change the culture of the officers. I did not want to join the police department, but was persuaded by Chief Arradondo that the department was gutted of the old and now revamped. Recent changes such as not teaching chokeholds or duty-to-intervene training was a start; however, we were thrown into many training scenarios that put officers into positions that make us feel unsafe talking to the citizens, putting our minority residents in more harm.

While we were trying to learn the ropes of being an officer, we were thrown into active shooter training. We were also thrown into a room with strobe lights and death metal music with an individual attacking us with knives, guns, or unarmed. While our profession is a "What if" scenario, these approaches to developing quality officers is ridiculous. Our trainers submitted us to the worst-case outcome, thinking it would train us into better officers, but in reality, it develops officers for swat duty.

While I had some world-class trainers, I also met some trainers who were verbally abusive, and were no help in developing my career path. My vision for training future Minneapolis Police Officers would be spending more time out in our community such as mentoring at recreation centers or developing relationships. Why would anyone want to work for the Minneapolis police?

Cage Jones, St. Paul

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Story ideas always welcome.

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THE TOKEN POC

STOP
THINK
FEEL

BY ABHA KARNICK



I glanced around the room, hoping something would be different this time. Entering yet another door into yet another room. The same kind of room I was just in, funny enough. Crowded, chattery, even a little bit welcoming. But still the same room with the same. Exact. People.

"Oh, you know Abha, right?...Yep, she was adopted!"

"She's right over there! She's from India."

"I think she's the only one here."

Each sentence wraps vines around the cold reality that everywhere I went as a child, I was the token POC. The choice kid of color, the "adopted" kid, the "shortest," "smallest," or "darkest." I shivered with nervousness whenever we left the city, wishing with all my heart to avoid the rural individuals' stares and double-takes.

Heads turned, whether they meant to or not. I couldn't change it, the looks, the stares, the color. I scrubbed soap into my skin, my six-year-old body begging to become white to blend in. To "look like my family."

I listened quietly as White people in my upbringing remained the center of conversations revolving around social justice, Black lives matter, and other movements. It felt backwards, but who was I to know?

I bit my tongue as White mommas asked me "when I came here" and if I "felt lucky to be in a loving family?" I strained my ears to overhear judgment and pity

kissing pride and White saviorism.

"An expensive matter, adoption was," they'd say.

Opening doors years down the road looked the same, speaking volumes to how stalled a society is. I continue to sit as the token POC in my career. I exist as the only POC in my household, with my childhood friends, in the average White church. I'd go on, but I think you get the picture.

These rooms are disheartening and soon enough, I found myself avoiding entering them at all.

White-washed walls have an unpleasant glare.

Transracial adoption isn't easy or pretty or perfect. It's messy and painful and hard. But hold room for something unexpected and beautiful because amidst these shallow realities can live love and patience and boldness. Speak boldly for your children, listen carefully when they don't want to visit your friends again, think deeply when you bring them places

where they're a minority. The world has much to offer. Don't shrink its size by taking away all the types of people in it for your children.

They need to see themselves in others. Implement that, even when it feels unfamiliar and uncomfortable. Let them grow up and confide in someone that looks like them, even when it feels painful. Model for them what a diverse society best looks like, what painting white walls and breaking glass ceilings looks like.

Let them explore their origins, their roots, their cultures and religions and countries. Let them decide who they will be, who they want to be. This in itself is the most loved version of themselves you can give them.

Abha Karnick is a south Minneapolis resident with East Indian roots who graduated from Hamline University in 2019. Her passion lies in storytelling and finding moments to capture.

DISTRICT CHANGES DUE TO CENSUS

>> From 1

The state and city were both required to redraw the boundaries of its voting districts to reflect population changes based on the results of the 2020 census, with each district having roughly the same number of people. According to the census, Minnesota's total population was 5,706,494 and making "ideal population" of the Senate districts 85,172, and 42,586, for the House districts. Because population growth was not uniform across the state, the boundaries of most legislative districts had to change.

In Minneapolis, the population was 429,954, making the ideal number of people for each ward 33,073. The ideal number for each of the six park districts is 71,659. The commission determined that an acceptable range, at 5% above or below those numbers was 31,420 to 34,727 per ward and 68,077 to 75,241 per park district.

The panel of judges and the charter commission faced similar challenges. The judges' order stated, "We start with the existing districts, changing them as necessary to remedy the constitutional defect by applying politically neutral redistricting principles... When one district changes, so must its neighbors – a cascading effect that means even a district drawn 10 years ago that remains within appropriate population deviation will need to change along with the rest of the state."

While the numbers and general areas for all the Minneapolis senate districts (59, 60, 61, 62, and 63) remained the same, all the borders were shifted to accommodate changes in population. Some of the most significant changes occurred in southern districts as adjustments were required to meet growing areas of population in the city and nearby suburbs.

Senate District 63, for example, moved north and west. The the 63B side will no longer includes any of Richfield or the airport and now includes South Minneapolis as far west as Xerxes. District 63A shifted north to I-94 and now will include all of the Seward neighborhood.

Since the new boundaries and maps have been approved, most Minneapolis legislators have announced they will be running for reelection, including the Longfellow-Nokomis area legislators, Senator Omar Fatah in District 62, as well as Representatives Hodan Hassan in 62A, Aisha Gomez in 62B and Emma Greenman in 63B. Senator Torres-Ray (63) and Representative Jim Davnie (63A) announced that they would not be running for reelection well before the maps were released.

When announcing her decision to run for reelection Representative Greenman said, "I will miss representing eastern Richfield folks, but am happy to continue representing my longtime home of South Minneapolis, and new constituents in Diamond Lake, Page, Kenny, Windom, Tangle-town and Armatage."

The only active candidate for the Senate District 63 appears to be Zaynab Mohamed. Devon Kristiansen registered a campaign committee in February but since suspended the campaign.

The House of Representative 63A seat being vacated by Davnie, includes the neighborhoods of Seward, Cooper, Howe, Longfellow, Hiawatha, Standish, Cooper and a small portion of Prospect Park near East River Road. It has generated the most candidates.

So far, four candidates have entered the 63A race. Kevin MacDonald, Samantha Sencer-Mura and Yusra Arab all registered as DFLers, and are actively campaigning. Fabian Bean recently withdrew saying he was supporting Sencer-Mura.

The Senate District 63 Democratic Farmer Labor (DFL) convention where party endorsements will be considered for the district's house and senate seats is scheduled for Saturday, April 9 (for



Rep. Patricia Torres-Ray (above) and Rep. Jim Davnie (below) are not seeking reelection.



more details, email sd63dfmn@gmail.com). The Senate District 63 Republican Party Convention was held on March 19, and the group elected delegates the Congressional District 5 (CD5), and state conventions, but did not endorse any state house or senate candidates.

All candidates running this year for state senator, state representative, judicial, statewide, or federal offices, have until between May 17 and 31 to file for office, so there will likely be more candidates stepping forward in the weeks ahead.

CITY WARD CHANGES

There will be not a city election this year. Still the Charter Commission had to approve new ward and park district boundaries this year, and the city council will set the voting precincts boundaries to be used in this year's election and all elections until the next redistricting that will follow the 2030 census. The next city election will be in 2023 when only the 13 city council seats, and charter amendments, if any, will be on the ballot.

Redistricting is important to people, the commission's chair, Barry Clegg said, because "it is going to effect who the neighborhoods council member is, whether their neighborhood will be split and who they will be in the same ward with for the next 10 years."

One of the commissions goals was to work to keep communities of interest, like neighborhoods, in the same ward. Racial and language minorities, in particular and in accord with the Voting Rights Act, were given careful consideration. According to Clegg, the fifth ward is the only ward with a majority of Black voters. Ward, 6, 8 and

9 have a majority of nonwhite voters.

Because of shifts in population, wards 1, 6, 8, 9, and 11 had to get larger, to include more people, while wards 2 and 3 had to get smaller geographically to reduce population.

To reduce ward 2's population, the southernmost neighborhoods of Cooper and Longfellow were removed from ward 2 and placed in wards 12 and 9, respectively. Its northern border is now at the Midtown Greenway. A portion of Marcy Holmes east of I-35W was also moved into ward 2 making it a more university-centered ward.

Ward 9 needed to grow both because it lost population and because a portion of Central moved to ward 8. So, it has been extended east to include all of Longfellow and much of East Lake Street past Minnehaha. A small portion of Howe was also added to ward 9.

Ward 11 needed to grow to be within 5% of the target population, so portions of Keewaydin and Ericsson were moved from ward 12 into ward 11.

Ward 12 was already within the 5% target, but in order to shrink ward 2 and maintain the demographics of ward 9, the Cooper neighborhood was removed from ward 2 and placed in ward 12. This resulted in ward 12 needing to shrink, which was accomplished by moving portions of Keewaydin and Ericsson into ward 11. There was also a change made at the last meeting of the commission to move all of the Hiawatha into ward 12.

The Park Districts of 3 and 5 cover the Longfellow-Nokomis areas and were changed by the commission. The Central, Powderhorn and Whittier neighborhoods were moved into district 3. District 5 lost population and needed to grow to be within 5% of the target and so Cooper and Longfellow neighborhoods were moved into it.

The Hennepin County and Minneapolis School Boards will adopt their redistricting plans in April.

Hockey players >> From 1

"I think representing the city is a huge part for us," junior forward Drew Pitts said. "If we do really well this week at the X, people will start to take notice and start to be like, 'Minneapolis hockey is back.'"

Minneapolis head coach Joe Dziedzic, who won Mr. Hockey with Edison High School in 1990, informed the players after the game how long it had been since a Minneapolis school reached state. Dziedzic played at the University of Minnesota and in the NHL before coaching the Minneapolis co-op.

"I think that's when we all kind of realized like 'gee, we just did something huge,'" Pitts said.

Minneapolis went 19-6-1 and earned a No. 5 ranking in the Class A poll. The team also earned the No. 1 seed in the section for the first time in program history.

"We didn't get that because of a lucky game or a lucky stretch. We got that because we were pretty consistent throughout the season," Zoia said.

Senior forward Jack Hanson led Minneapolis in scoring with 24 goals and 28 assists. Zoia, also a senior forward, netted 11 goals and a team-high 29 assists. Senior goalie Alex Lamont held teams to 2.18 goals per game and had an .899 save percentage.

Minneapolis couldn't get past Alexandria in the quarterfinals for a 4-1 loss at the Xcel Energy Center on March 9, but ended

the season on a high note with the consolation title.

Hayden Soderberg, Drew Pitts, Evan Grimm, and Jack Hanson all scored goals for Minneapolis in a 4-1 win over Monticello on March 12 at 3M Arena at Mariucci for the Class A consolation title. Alex Lamont stopped 14 shots in goal and had a .933 save percentage.

Minneapolis won the consolation semifinal 5-2 over New Prague on March 10 to advance.

This year's Minneapolis program consists of players from South, Southwest, Washburn, and Edison high schools. Despite being spread across four of the seven public high schools, the players consider their team really tight.

"A lot of people think it's like this big divide when we get to high school, but we've been playing youth hockey since we were five or six with each other," Zoia said.

The team's success led to bigger crowds at Parade Ice Garden toward the end of the season, especially youth night where the team played in front of a packed house.

"It was electric," Lamont said.

Many of the players grew up cheering for the Minneapolis varsity team amid playing youth hockey in the Storm program.

"They might not know my name, but I know most of their names," Zoia said.

Minneapolis players hope the state will know their names and their city's renewed hockey tradition more now, too.



HOW TO CREATE A FOOD FOREST

growing food forests. Growing as a matrix in the soil, mycelium is part of the fungal body that spreads throughout the soil profile. Creating soil structure as it spreads and coating the roots of plants, many fungi maintain essential symbiotic relationships with plants.

Some of our favorite edible mushrooms are capable of symbiotic relationship with some of our favorite food forest plants. Morels, puff balls, and chanterelle mushrooms love growing with trees like oak, beech, and pine. We can inoculate our food forests with edible mushroom spores purchased from reputable labs.

Other types of edible mushrooms such as wine caps are decomposers that work to transform the forest's organic waste into delicious delicacies. The food forest floor should always be covered in plants, leaves, and mulch to encourage the widespread growth of edible fungi.

2 ROOT LAYER

Native plants with edible roots such as daylily, ramps, spring beauty, and sunchoke are excellent additions to the root layer. Don't be hasty pulling weeds because some weeds (including burdock, dandelion, garlic mustard, and nettle) have edible roots.

3 GROUND COVER LAYER

Keep the ground covered in green to protect from harsh weather and scorching sunlight. Edible native options for ground cover include low bush blueberry, sheep sorrel, Virginia waterleaf, wintergreen, wood sorrel, and woodland strawberry.

Bee lawn seed mix containing creeping thyme, self-heal and white clover are a perfect ground cover because all three are edible, easy to establish, and together they feed over 50 species of Minnesota native bees.

4 HERBACEOUS LAYER

Perennial vegetables including asparagus, garlic, horseradish, and rhubarb can be mixed with native edible herbs such as ostrich fern, common milkweed, and wood nettle and self-seeding edible annuals (including arugula, cilantro, dill, kale, lettuce, and mountain spinach) to provide many edible options in the herba-

ceous layer. Blend in grasses, sedges, and native pollinator plants like bee balm, calendula, and hyssop which can be used in tea.

5 VINE LAYER

The vine layer grows in three dimensions – up, down, and across – the forest finding light that would otherwise slip through the cracks in the upper canopy. Grapes are fun and easy to grow, and wild grape is particularly good at spreading from seed by birds and other animals.

Vining veggies like cucumber, nasturtiums, pole beans, pumpkins, squash, tomatoes, and zucchini can be added into the forest edge wherever the sunlight allows.

6 SHRUB LAYER

Birds love the shrub layer. People do, too. Go nuts and incorporate hazelnut shrubs as a protein source in your shrub layer. Bearberry, blackberry, blueberry, chokeberry, currant, elderberry, gooseberry, highbush cranberry, raspberry, and sandcherry, are a few fantastic native fruit options that will have you out snacking with the birds. A honeyberry shrub planted on your property line will guarantee good neighboring relations.

7 THE UNDERSTORY

Short native trees that feed people and wildlife are perfect for the understory. Black cherry, chokecherry, mulberry, pin cherry, serviceberry, and wild plum are a few beloved native fruit trees. Non-native fruit trees can be added at the forest's edge.

Add non-edible understory trees for the bees and birds to enjoy. Blue beech, mountain ash, pagoda dogwood, and redbud are all beloved by birds and pollinators.

8 THE OVERSTORY

Healthy landscapes transform and mature over time. Planning for succession in a landscape means including seedlings of trees that will one day grow quite large. In a typical urban yard there is room for two large trees, one in the front yard and one in the back.

Edible options include basswood for edible spring leaves, black walnut and oak



for the proteins they offer, sugar maple for the sap, and black locust filled with edible flowers every spring. White pine seeds, while not edible for people, will feed a wide variety of animals and they make a magnificent over-story tree.

TIME TO REFOREST

Food forests sequester atmospheric carbon, transforming it into healthy soil. They filter water, provide habitat for pollinators, and they grow local, organic health food for animals and people.

We can regrow the food forests of the world by working together, one yard at a time.

Russ Henry is a Longfellow resident who has served on Homegrown Minneapolis, a local food policy body, and the Minneapolis Parks Pesticide Advisory Committee. He is the founder of Bee Safe Minneapolis, an education and advocacy branch that works with community partners to create safe places for pollinators, one garden, yard, business, school, church, conversation at a time.

by RUSS HENRY

Food forests represent an abundant past and a hopeful future. A diverse planting of native trees, shrubs, and perennials that bear edible flowers, fruit, nuts, and seeds; food forests grow all the basic requirements for a healthy diet in humans and wild animals.

Much of the world was once covered in food forests. As people, birds, and other animals spread the seeds of their favorite edible plants, the land reflected the needs and desires of the creatures occupying it. Food forests provided enough nutrition to allow thousands of species including humans to thrive under a canopy of giving trees.

There are eight intertwined layers in a well-planned food forest.

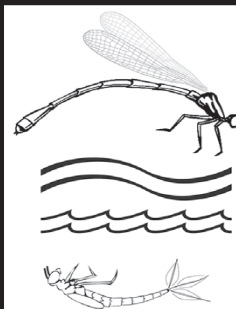
1 MYCELIAL LAYER

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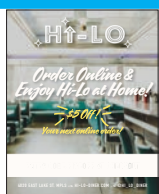
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WONDERING WHAT TO PLANT IN THOSE TOUGH SPOTS?

THE CITY GARDENER

BY LAUREN BETHKE,
MASTER GARDENER



As a Master Gardener, people ask me lots of questions about their yards, but probably the most common type of question is “I have a spot that’s hard to grow things in. What should I plant there?” So, this is the first of a short series of articles on plants for difficult areas that many of us in south Minneapolis have to deal with. This month, we’ll cover some tips for growing plants on boulevards and under black walnut trees.

A boulevard is the narrow patch of land between the sidewalk and the street. Because boulevards are right next to the road, they often contain high levels of road salt, which is damaging to many plants. They are often dry, with poor quality compacted soil. They may be used as a frequent pathway when people park on the street. However, there are a number of perennials that tolerate these conditions well and can be used to beautify your boulevard.

Before we get into it, I want to note that it is important to follow city ordinances on boulevard plantings, and remember that this area may be dug up or damaged if it is necessary for road construction, utility work, or other purposes. In general, it is permissible to plant flowers and grasses on the boulevard, but make sure that they do not obstruct the sidewalk or street, or make it difficult for drivers to see around a corner. If you want



Not sure what to put in your boulevard? Plan ahead for success. Pick plants well-suited to the conditions.

to plant a tree on the boulevard, you will need to get a permit from the Park and Recreation Board. Also, before you dig, it is recommended to contact Gopher State One Call and have utility lines marked. Better safe than sorry!

Plants that will tolerate a sunny, dry boulevard include yarrow, bearded iris, purple coneflower, aster, phlox, sedum, sea holly, and speedwell. If your boulevard is shady, try astilbe, foxglove, vinca, or verben. Daylilies and hostas are also common on boulevards and they tolerate a wide range of conditions.

If you do want to grow grass in your boulevard, try fine fescues, which are much more tolerant to road salt than the common Kentucky bluegrass. Another

good option is a short native grass such as blue grama, which is a particularly rugged species that grows well in dry sites and full sun.

Before you start planting, prep the boulevard by removing grass and weeds and breaking up compacted soil. If you have a tree on your boulevard, be careful not to damage the roots. Adding organic matter such as compost can also help improve drainage and provide nutrients. Also, make sure the soil stays just below the level of the curb so soil and mulch don’t run off into the street. The middle of the boulevard should ideally be two or three inches lower than the curb. You may need to remove some soil to achieve this.

Although boulevard gardening can be

challenging, planning ahead and choosing plants well-suited to the conditions makes it much easier!

Next, we’ll talk about planting under black walnut trees. Black walnut trees are common in south Minneapolis and as you may know, not all plants grow well near them. The bark, roots, leaves, and nuts of black walnut trees contain a toxic compound called juglone, which help the tree outcompete other nearby plants. Plants sensitive to juglone may die quickly when planted near a black walnut tree. Signs of juglone toxicity include wilting, yellowing leaves, and stunted or slow growth.

Unfortunately, there is no way to reverse juglone toxicity or remove the compound from the soil. Instead, for any plantings within 50-60 feet of a black walnut tree, choose juglone-resistant plants. You can also try planting non-resistant species in raised beds or pots, but be sure to remove any black walnut leaves, nuts, or stems that fall onto the soil.

Luckily, there are many juglone-resistant plants that grow well in our climate. Suitable perennials include hollyhock, Jack-in-the-pulpit, astilbe, coral bells, bee balm, phlox, and spiderwort. For trees and shrubs, try serviceberry, river birch, mock orange, sumac, and viburnum, among others. If you are planning a vegetable garden near a black walnut tree, onions, beets, squash, carrots, parsnips, beans, and corn tolerate juglone best.

For more information on these and other tough sites, check out the publication “The Best Plants For 30 Tough Sites” from the University of Minnesota Extension. You can access it for free through the University of Minnesota Digital Conservancy, at conservancy.umn.edu.

For more information, check out the University of Minnesota Extension Yard and Garden website. Extension resources are written by experts and contain the latest and most reliable research-based information. Happy gardening!

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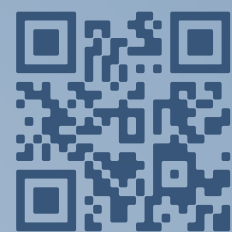


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ADVICE AND SERVICE TIPS FROM BOBBY & STEVE'S AUTO WORLD



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.

After a brutal winter, Minnesotans know it's time to tend to our vehicles. And for metro area residents there's no better place than the locally owned Bobby & Steve's Auto World, boasting a long and storied history, with eight convenient locations nearby all our readership neighborhoods – Downtown, South Minneapolis, West Minneapolis, Columbia Heights, Bloomington, West Bloomington, Eden Prairie, and the newest location remodel, in West St. Paul, scheduled to reopen in this month.

Colorful Bobby Williams is founder, senior partner, and common owner. Growing up on a farm just south of Mora, Minn., Bobby attended the University of Minnesota, then bought his first gas station in the early 1960s. The ongoing success of his venture fueled his confidence to buy more stations around the metro area. In 1975, a fellow named Steve Anderson called with a tip about a Shell station for sale at 494 and France Avenue in Bloomington. Steve soon became Bobby's first partner, and by 1996, the two men opened the first Bobby and Steve's Auto World at that very location. The company now operates with four other partners.

MEET ALLEN SANDO

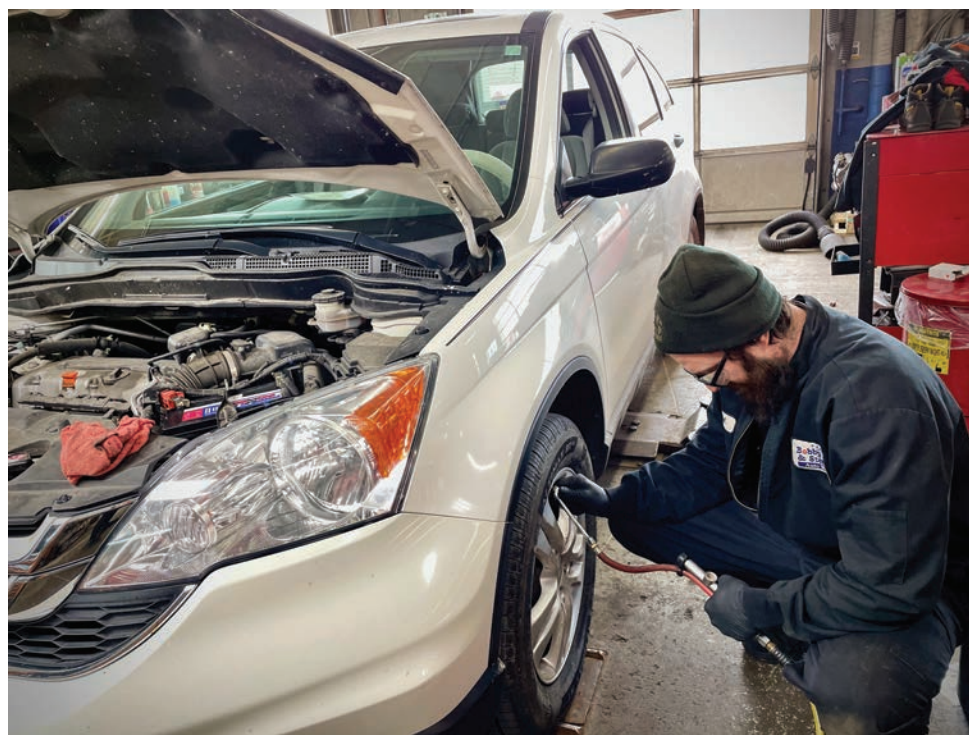
On chilly March morning, I sat down with Allen Sando, operations leader of Bobby & Steve's Auto World's iconic, two-story Downtown location on Washington Avenue. It's hard to miss this flagship station, highly visible from the busy intersection of I94 and I35W.

Sando grew up with the company, joining Bobby & Steve's Auto World in 2000, starting as a light service technician, and rising quickly to become the leader of that department. Promoted in 2004 to Service Leader, he explains that he ran the best service department in the company for several years. His hard work paid off when he was promoted to his current position.

LEADERSHIP IN AN EVOLVING INDUSTRY

Speaking of leadership, prominent on

'Under the Hood' literally goes under the hood



Technician Paul Edgar checks the tire pressure after testing the battery. "We have seen a large increase of people driving less during the pandemic. Letting your car sit for longer periods of time can cause it to fail. A battery not getting fully charged regularly can cause it to fail also." (Photo by Susan Schaefer)

Sando's desk were leadership books that caught my eye. I inquired about the evolving role of the traditional service station in the technical age.

Sando explains that his shop holds weekly leadership meetings where staff discuss not only business opportunities and positive trends in the business, but also are encouraged to read leadership books and articles. "We discuss what we read, how it relates to our work, and how we can best develop our team members," he states. "I'm working to make our team the strongest we can be to serve our customers to the fullest potential."

That type of management creates an atmosphere of respect for workers, making it easier to recruit good people. "Our own team members recruit their friends and family, telling them how great a company this is to work for, and how much fun we have," Sando says. Notably, the company does a lot of promoting from within. "Additionally, a lot of our employees come from word of mouth – customers who say, 'well, this looks like a fun place to work,' and just apply."

Focusing on the future, it seems likely that the grease and lube work of the auto mechanic is increasingly in the rear-view mirror as more electric vehicles hit the roads, running on computer chips.

I ask Sando how the industry is preparing for servicing the surge of electric vehicles. "Our technicians are receiving ongoing training and education to adapt to the changing makes and models," he replies. "And we're installing two charging stations at our remodeled location in West St. Paul. In time, I'm sure you'll see more at other locations."

SPRING TUNE UPS. WHAT SHOULD CAR OWNERS BE DOING NOW?

Minnesota's temperature extremes

require servicing our vehicles regularly. Spring and fall are the right times, according to Sando. We discuss what regular maintenance auto owners should consider as we shift into spring.

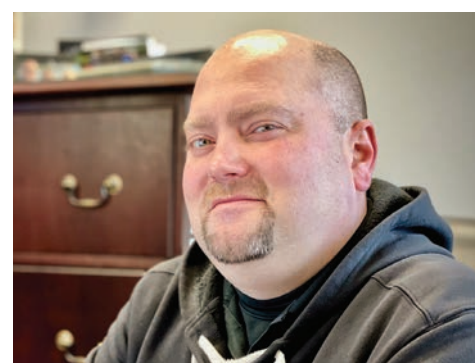
Fluids are the lifeblood of your vehicle, Sando cautions. "When a fluid is low or out of specifications it can cause harm to the corresponding components. When we perform an oil change on a car, all fluids are inspected and topped off. If any fluids need changing due to condition of manufacturer recommendation, we'll recommend that."

What about testing the battery? "We recommend you have your battery tested twice a year," he continues. "Before the heat of the summer and the cold of the winter – our extreme temps can cause a battery to fail. Also," he adds, "we have seen a large increase of people driving less during the pandemic. Letting your car sit for longer periods of time can also cause it to fail. A battery not getting fully charged regularly can cause it to fail also."

Full confession! That's exactly what happened to your columnist! I learned that my lack of driving over the past months had seriously depleted my new battery. Lucky for me, it was still under warranty, so I got to chat with technician, Paul Edgar, as he tested then replaced it. From now on I'll follow his recommendation to take my car for a spin for at least a half-hour each week to keep it fully charged!

Oh yes, it's essential to check your tire pressure at this time of year, too.

What about headlights? My older model Honda CV-R's plastic lenses seemed foggy. Sando explains that lights are another item inspected during their oil change service. "For foggy lenses we provide a service that restores headlight assemblies that have become worn from



Minnesota's temperature extremes require servicing our vehicles regularly. Spring and fall are the right times, according to Allen Sando, operations leader of Bobby & Steve's Auto World. (Photo by Susan Schaefer)

weather and road hazards to their original condition." I invested in this service and see a noticeable improvement. Another worthwhile consideration is to install newer LED lamps for better nighttime visibility.

Moving down my list, I asked when we need new wiper blades and air filters? Sando suggests that wipers can be checked by simply lifting them away from the windshield and inspecting the rubber blade. He adds that a good rule of thumb is to replace the blade if it streaks when using the washer fluid. Air filters are inspected during the oil change, and it's recommended to replace them every 15,000 miles.

While not a requirement, it's wise to keep your machines clean. Winter's salt and sand can wreak havoc on your auto's finish. I topped my spring inspection off with Bobby & Steve's Auto World's car wash, which still features the personalized touch of humans who provide a smile and initial rinse.

HOW TO CHOOSE A REPUTABLE SERVICE STATION

One of the top questions on the minds of the average car owners having their vehicle serviced is how to determine that the service is reputable? Many people fear being oversold or scammed to replace things not needed, or worse, that the service isn't being performed.

I ask Sando for his advice for consumers. "Ask questions," he emphasizes. "If you are unsure about a recommended service, ask why it is important and what benefits it has. In our shop we use digital inspections. This allows us to take pictures of parts that need to be replaced. We also have the capability to send videos showing exactly what we are recommending. This helps build trust that what we are recommending is fully understood by our customers."

He added, "Serving people is the most important part of Bobby and Steve's Auto World. We work hard every day to provide world class service."

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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Little Sock's adventures resonate in pandemic

>> From 1

Heise is an instructor in sociology. "To get your PhD in sociology requires publishing a lot of work, but it is very different from writing a children's book," Park said in a recent interview. Park has been a commercial illustrator, displaying his art in *Rolling Stone*, on PBS and various TV shows.

"This is fulfilling in its own way, but making picture books is something I was drawn to," Park said.

The couple wrote and illustrated their first book on a whim, shortly after their first son was born. "We worked as partners, and luckily we enjoyed each other," Park noted. "It blossomed into the beginning of a series. Sleeping Bear Press liked the first book enough to take a risk on publishing it, and then the second one."

Park said that although the second book was dialed in, it came with its own challenges. "How do you make a sequel, yet it has to be the same?" Park said he had to give credit to their editors. "I wanted to take the book to some kind of crazy places. They told me they were great ideas, but to make it stick to a series."

GETTING BACK OUT INTO THE WORLD

Park said he and Heise are finding out more and more with their recent book that it seems relevant to how people are feeling during the pandemic. "Getting back out into the world seems a little jarring, but we hope the book helps kids feel that even if things are scary, the characters are teaching them to be brave and try new things," Park said. "We're finding a lot of relevance to the story after it was published."

The message of the book can also apply to adults, according to Park. "You get comfortable after awhile in a situation, and you don't go out and make new



Chris D. Park and Kia Heise wrote and illustrated their first book on a whim, shortly after their first son was born. "Little Sock" was released in 2019, and joined by "Little Sock Makes a Friend" two years later. (Photo submitted)

friends." He said one thing that he finds cool about the story is that it can mean different things after it is written. "We had a vision, but it is affecting people in ways we originally did not think about," he said.

Park did the illustrations, but they both worked on the writing. "We totally could have stayed in our own lanes," he said, "but it seemed like a missed opportunity to not put our heads together."

He said Heise did all the proofing and editing. "I am such a bad speller," he admitted. He said she kept everything grammatically correct.

With the series, the authors are having the artwork silently tell stories. "Whoever is reading the book, we want them to point to an illustration and discuss it. We want them to explore the emotional side," he remarked.

The emotional side of the book is

something they had not anticipated. "We initially didn't plan for the social and emotional feelings," he observed.

Park said that when they presented the book to educators and librarians at a conference, it showed him how green he was and how great educators are. He said they discussed how the book could be used to help kids. "As more time went on, it became less about this fun little thing we do, and more about how this book can help children explore emotions."

Because "Little Sock Makes a Friend" is a sequel, he was already doing sketches for it when they started working on the book. For their first book, he imagined people as socks and saw them as socks. He took a notebook and spent time sketching people's faces, then drawing them as socks. "It was an interesting challenge, because the shape of a sock is very recognizable. I needed to keep the shape the same,

but have every sock look different.

"Normally we do all the writing first and then sketch out the rough images of how the story might progress. We build on top of it, do a skeleton first and then the features, like building a house." This time, since the look was already established by the first book, the writing and sketching were in tandem.

"I think another feeling with this book is that it was like a Wizard of Oz thing. Little Sock steps out, and the colors are brighter. It represents that people are different, and there is a visual smorgasbord of different things happening. You can read the book, come back to it, and see new things that make it worth coming back to and rereading over and over."

The many colors and details of the characters and Sock City are reminiscent of a Richard Scarry classic.

UP NEXT

Park is currently working on illustrating a book with another Minnesota author, John Coy. He is also working on a manuscript that he is both writing and illustrating.

"Now that I have dipped my toes in the writing pool, I realize it is not an easy thing to do," Park said. "A lot of people have great ideas, but to write it and fit it into 32 pages is hard."

Park said it felt natural switching from the commercial art world to the publishing world – except for the pace. Commercial illustrating has quick deadlines, but publishing a book can take up to two years from the time you first get the publishing deal.

"For my job, I get to stay home and draw pictures," Park said. His family now includes two young sons, and the older one likes the Little Sock books. "I don't think he realizes Mom and Dad wrote it, but I am glad he is not bored of it."

Park said with his work, he loves the idea that he may never want to retire. "You know you'll never perfect (your work), but you keep working at it."

Native American Community Clinic combines medical care, classes and Indigenous spiritual practices

By CHLOE PETER

A patient who had an appointment for a COVID-19 vaccine was having second thoughts. They were anxious to receive the vaccine and did not know if they wanted to continue on the day that they were scheduled for. Anita Tapio, the traditional healing coordinator at the Native American Community Clinic, set up smudging with the patient. Smudging is a ceremony involving sacred herbs or resins that purifies or cleanses the soul of negative thoughts of a person or place. After smudging and having a conversation with Tapio about getting her own booster, the patient felt less anxious about the vaccine and was ready to receive it.

"I think combining healthcare and culture is vitally important because without having culture, there will always be that piece missing," Tapio said.

The Native American Community Clinic (NACC), located at 1213 East Franklin Avenue in Minneapolis, opened its doors in 2003 to address the health disparities within the urban Native American community of the Twin Cities. Their mission is to promote the health and wellness of mind, body, and spirit of Native American families, and offer a full range of healthcare services that include medical, behavioral health, dental, and substance abuse programs. As a community clinic, NACC will see patients regardless of ability to pay.

NACC combines their healthcare services with traditional medicine and culture. The clinic aims to honor health and tradition by providing spiritual care and

access to traditional healing. To promote these ideals, the traditional healing committee planted sage in the garden outside the clinic. Sage is used for smudging within the clinic, and is given to community members. The clinic has also planted tobacco, sweetgrass, cedar and other traditional medicines around the clinic to provide teachings and to be used by community members.

"The relief that some of our patients feel when we're able to provide sage or smudge, I don't even know how to describe it, but it's such a cool feeling to know that we're able to help people in this way," NACC Operations Manager Ashlee Jallen said.

NACC also provides classes for the community members that they serve. One of these classes is making jingle dresses where participants will be given the necessary materials and taught how to create them before pow wow season. Classes like these help people to come back to their culture and find acceptance and support. Tapio mentioned that many participants will come back and are excited to make jingle dresses for their granddaughters and friends.

"Knowing that there's something bigger than you and having spirituality is vitally important," Tapio said. "Just as important as the medical piece."

The clinic also has a holistic approach to healthcare. They aim to address the root causes of health disparities like access to food, housing and health insurance. According to the Minnesota Department of Health, entire tribal communities, like the Red Lake Reservation, lack access to fresh



The Native American Community Clinic at 1213 East Franklin Ave. works to promote the health and wellness of mind, body and spirit of Native American families. (Photo submitted)

and healthy food. And, according to the Minnesota Homeless Study, 48% of Native Americans were homeless in 2018. The clinic addresses these disparities through resource navigation, care coordination, outreach and community-based activities through the use of peer recovery coaches and community health workers. NACC also partners with outside businesses and nonprofits in order to connect any individuals with the care that they need.

"Our patients tend to come here more than once, and we get to build that relationship with them and we really make sure that we get them the services that they need. If we can't provide it, we find outside resources that can," Jallen said.

In addition, NACC offers several unique substance abuse treatment programs in partnership with the Red Lake Nation. They provide a heroin and opioid addiction program that includes daily dosing, harm re-



"It's such a cool feeling to know we're able to help people in this way," said NACC Operations Manager Ashlee Jallen. (Photo submitted)



Anita Tapio is the traditional healing coordinator at NACC. (Photo submitted)

duction services, spiritual care, mental health care, nurse care coordination, and drug and alcohol counseling. A culturally-centered approach outpatient program is also offered, which is rooted in Indigenous spiritual practices to treat substance use disorders. This program includes individualized programming with a gradual step-down, daily prayer and cultural teachings by NACC's Elder in Residence, medication assisted treatment, health education, relapse prevention, individual, family and group therapy, and peer recovery support.

"I've seen women who were recovering from addiction. They came in and made Ribbon Skirts or learned dances that they've wanted to but never could," Tapio said. "Seeing them complete that and get excited about their culture brought tears to my eyes. It sparks something in them."

Meet Bennett Olupo

Bennett Olupo is the new Longfellow Community Council Community Organizer.

Olupo joined LCC in 2022 after teaching at Shakopee West Middle School. Before teaching at Shakopee, Olupo taught physics and chemistry at Huntington Park Senior High in Los Angeles, Cali. Olupo derived joy from empowering students and watching them grow as people in each of these places.

Olupo grew up in Shakopee, Minn. He studied biology and spanish at the University of Minnesota. During his time at the university, Olupo volunteered at Pratt Elementary School, Roosevelt High School and other organizations around the city while maintaining a strong presence on campus. He looks forward to calling Minneapolis home again.

TELL US A BIT ABOUT YOU.

I recently moved back to Shakopee after living in Los Angeles for a couple of years. I spent a lot of time with my parents and brother over the last year, and I could not be more thankful. I look forward to moving to, or at least closer to, South Minneapolis later in the year. After volunteering across Hiawatha at Roosevelt High School, I am somewhat familiar with the area. However, I have a lot to learn. I have enjoyed some of the beautiful nature in the neighborhood while attending the University of Minnesota.

I love to woodwork, play basketball and be in nature in my free time. I am learning to box at Ludy's Gym, and I see myself practicing the sport for years to come. I cannot wait for the warmth to come back so I can garden, as well. On top of looking forward to gardening at home, I am excited to enjoy Longfellow's gardens and nature scenes.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE THING TO DO IN LONGFELLOW?

One of my favorite things to do in the



Bennett Olupo

Greater Longfellow is to go to the Longfellow Gardens. I grew up helping my grandmother in her garden, and I love being outside. It is hard for me to want to be in a different place during the spring and

summer. Maybe a solid restaurant would be the only other place I would rather be. I do love food and I have fallen in love with some of the Ethiopian restaurants along Hiawatha. I cannot wait to explore the different eateries in the area.

WHAT DREW YOU TO LONGFELLOW AND THIS POSITION?

After the murder of George Floyd, my heart stayed in Minneapolis even though I was in Los Angeles. The emotions following the murder of George Floyd compounded the feeling of frustration I was developing as a teacher. The students were struggling due to problems outside of the school. I felt like my efforts to help the students as a whole were too little, too late. I wanted to seek opportunities where I could enrich the home lives of students, and people in general, can be their best selves in any situation. As soon as I saw the position open, I knew I wanted to be a part of the organization and participate in the enrichment of Longfellow.

WHAT STRENGTHS DO YOU BRING TO THE POSITION?

I have a calm and warm demeanor that opens up communication. People often feel comfortable around me, and I think it is essential to be a beneficial member of any community. The sense of comfort is important to help open up about struggles they face to help lead to broader change.

In addition to creating an open environment, I am persistent. I believe this will be useful to help realize the community's goals. I have a hard time stopping my fight until I see that promises are met. I hope to bring this energy to community members' requests and those who wish to see a better Longfellow.

WHAT ARE YOUR GOALS FOR THIS ROLE?

The goals I have right now are open-ended. I am still a guest in the community as a whole, so I want to amplify the goals of others. As long as people in the community become happier over time, I will be happy and my goals will be met. Much of my attention will be focused on empowering the marginalized communities of Longfellow and making sure all resources are utilized.

WHAT ISSUES AND CHALLENGES FACE THE LCC?

Some of the larger challenges the LCC face center around engaging communities of color and low-income communities. We need to provide tailored services to these communities and give them a platform to

have their voices heard. Longfellow is stronger together and we need to make sure every group is fairly recognized and advocated for. We also need to support local businesses and help them rebuild for life after the pandemic. These two areas have a wide range of needs and will take a great deal of focus.

WHAT ARE YOU EXCITED ABOUT IN THIS ROLE?

It is hard for me to think of things that I am not excited about. I have done many things related to being a community organizer as a teacher, but I have never intentionally done community organizing on this scale. After reading, speaking and being involved in protests, I cannot wait to focus on change on this level as a profession. There will be a lot to learn, a lot to experience and a lot to give.

WHAT VALUE DOES THE LCC BRING TO THE COMMUNITY?

The LCC helps create a sense of home in the community. A focus on the environment and events engaging all ages of the community is needed. Something that highlights this is the Share the River Gorge event. Longfellow Community Council brought people together to enjoy simple pleasures in Longfellow's backyard.

I can't wait to build relationships and learn more about the community day by day!

NENA FOOD TRUCK RALLY SET FOR APRIL 23

Join us on Saturday, April 23, from 4 -7 p.m. for the spring Food Truck Rally! Gather with our neighbors for great food, live music, lots of mingling, and raising funds for NENA's community programming. Meet us in the parking lot of NENA's Office at 5005 34th Avenue. More info at www.facebook.com/events/902734037017979

ANNUAL MEETING & COMMUNITY MEAL

NENA's popular event returns in person, and we will be serving one of our community's favorite hot spots - Dominquez Family Restaurant! Join us on April 28 at Crosstown Covenant Church (5540 30th Ave. S.) from 5:30-7:30 p.m. for our community meal, vote for board candidates, hear about the new strategic plan, and get involved in your community! Learn more online at www.nokomiseast.org/planning

RUN FOR A SEAT ON NENA'S BOARD

You can run for a seat on the NENA Board. Apply by April 11. Serving on the board is a great volunteering opportunity to connect to your community and build leadership skills. Board candidate information and the online application are now available at nokomiseast.org/run-for-a-board-seat/. Online and telephone voting opens on April 12 for Nokomis East to elect its NENA leaders. In-person voting will be available at the NENA Annual Meeting on April 28.

STRATEGIC PLAN AND NRP PLAN MODIFICATION

The NENA Board will present our 2022-2024 Strategic Plan, including a multi-year strategy for funding housing, commercial, streetscape, environmental, diversity, safety and livability, and community engagement projects initiated by the neighborhood.

To implement the next strategy plan, NENA's Board also recommends an NRP Plan Modification to reposition city funding allocated to Nokomis East. The board will share details with our community about the updated community priorities and funding

NOKOMIS EAST NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

BY BECKY TIMM,
executive director
becky.timm@nokomiseast.org



strategies and ask for a vote of approval from the community at the annual meeting on April 28. More information is available on NENA's website.

The board proposes to move \$190,000 to community outreach programming, \$102,000 to housing programming, \$97,000 to environmental programming, \$12,000 for business promotion programming, and \$245,000 for administration and operations. These funds will be reallocated from overfunded program areas, including housing initiatives and undeveloped programs like Children First Grant Program. This reallocation of close to \$650,000 will be added to existing NENA funds and strategies to be implemented over the next five to six years. Finally, the plan modification requires minor language changes to allow for expanded programmatic use of NRP funds.

START PLANNING YOUR SPRING PROJECTS

Check out the housing resources available through NENA for homeowners, renters, and residential property owners in the four Nokomis East neighborhoods of Keewaydin, Minnehaha, Morris Park, and Wenonah.

We offer small matching grants for Curb Appeal and Home Security projects. NENA offers up to \$7,500 through our Staying in Place grant program. And we also have a home improvement loan program with competitive rates and the home emergency repair forgivable home loans for income-qualified residents. Visit www.nokomiseast.org for more information.

APPLY TO THE LCC BOARD!



Join the LCC board of directors & make an impact in your community. Find more info on our website!

Board members:

- attend monthly meetings
- Join LCC committees
- vote on organizational decisions
- volunteer + more!

Elections

begin May 14
at our annual
membership
meeting!



Longfellow Community Council

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Nokomis East
Neighborhood
Association

April 28
5:30 PM

Annual Meeting & Community Meal



Crosstown Covenant Church
5540 30th Ave S

➤ Connect with your neighbors and enjoy a free, family-friendly meal.

➤ Elect NENA Board Members for your neighborhood.

Online and telephone voting is also available from April 12 - 27.

➤ NENA's 2022-2024 Strategic Plan, NRP Plan Modification & Bylaws.

➤ This is your neighborhood and your time to get involved!

More information at nokomiseast.org.

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BRIEFS

POLICE CHIEF SEARCH

The city has hired Public Sector Search & Consulting Inc. (PSSC), from Rocklin, Calif., to lead the search for a new Minneapolis Police Chief. Mayor Frey has also formed a committee to help review, interview and recommend candidates for consideration. Interim Civil Rights Director Alberder Gillespie, the mayor's chief of staff Mychal Vlatkovich and the mayor's policy aide Jared Jeffries will support the committee. The city issued a statement that said the search process will include engagement with internal and external stakeholders and is anticipated to be completed this summer.

REVIEW OF CITY'S RESPONSE TO UNREST

In March, the city received a report from the Hillard Heintze security risk management firm concerning the city's response to civil unrest from May 25 to June 3, 2020 following the murder of George Floyd. The report found that, the city "did not use its emergency operations plan effectively to guide its response." Additionally, it found that there was poor communication, an absence of planning, a failure to follow city plans and policies, and that "The city did not capitalize on its training and experience from previous large-scale events to establish a framework for crisis response and guide its actions."

Interim Police Chief Amelia Huffman said in a statement published after the report was released, "This after action review forces us to revisit one of the most traumatic chapters of our city's history, but it's a necessary step to make sure we are prepared to effectively protect our community the next time we face a significant crisis. Moving forward, we are committed to examining our policies and training to ensure they reflect best practices and our commitment to care for our community. MPD will work collaboratively with other City departments to enact the city's emergency response protocols during times of crisis."

METRO B LINE LAKE STOP IMPROVEMENTS

Metro Transit hosted a virtual open house in March announcing new platform locations at Lake and Lyndale, Lake and Bloomington, and Lake and Cedar. The platform locations at stop will be moved to the northwest and southeast corners of these three intersections. The changes still need to be formally adopted through an amendment to the B Line Corridor Plan.

~ Briefs compiled by Cam Gordon

PLAN IT

LOCAL HOMES ON APRIL 30 – MAY 1 TOUR

Three southeast Minneapolis homes are on the Minneapolis & Saint Paul Home Tour, where homeowners find "real homes, real people, real ideas," for remodeling any and every room in the house, creative ways of finding or adding useful space and functionality. Homes will be open for the free, self-guided tour Saturday, April 30 and Sunday, May 1, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. both days. www.MSPHomeTour.com or get a guide in late April at most metro libraries.

Messenger-area homes on tour include the new three-season porch at 3300 47th Ave. S.; kitchen, primary suite and mudroom at 4905 10th Ave. S.; and the kitchen expansion at 3124 E. Minnehaha Parkway.

SEE 'THE MISER'

Classics Lost 'n' Found Theater Company is pleased to announce their spring 2022 production, "The Miser" by Jean-Baptiste Moliere, will honor the 400th anniversary of the playwright's birth. The CLFTC production will be presented April 29-30 and May 6-7 at 7 p.m., with a pay-what-you-will matinee on April 30 at 2pm. Phone 612-724-4539 for reservations. For more information, contact Classicslostandfound@gmail.com.

CSA FAIR APRIL 23

As Seward Co-op celebrates 50 years, people are invited to reflect on the co-op's legacy and continued work to support a thriving and resilient local food system. This year is the return of their in-person fair, held on Saturday, April 23 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the Seward Co-op Creamery parking lot at 2601 E. Franklin Ave. Visit www.seward.coop to participate in the CSA Fair virtually. This event is open to all.

2022 OPEN STREETS DATES SET

The city council has approved five Open Streets events for this year. During the events, the streets are closed to motorized traffic and open for use by people walking, rolling, and bicycling.

- Lyndale, from W. 22nd St. to W. 42nd St. will be held on Sunday, June 5;
- Franklin from Portland Ave. S. to 26th Ave. S., Sunday, July 10;
- Lake Street from 2nd Ave. S. to 22nd Ave. S., Saturday, Aug. 13;
- West Broadway from Penn Ave. N. to N. Lyndale Ave., Saturday, Sept. 10; and,
- Minnehaha from E. Lake St. to E. 46th St. on Saturday, Oct. 1.



CELEBRATING 50 YEARS EST. 1972

Seward COMMUNITY CO-OP

CSA FAIR

Enjoy special treats, prizes, and face time with local growers as we celebrate and look to the future.

Sat. 4/23
Seward Co-op Creamery parking lot

seward.coop/celebrate-50-years-of-seward-co-op

HE IS RISEN

CELEBRATE THE SAVIOR

Palm Sunday, April 10, 10:30 a.m.
Holy Thursday, April 14, 7:00 p.m.
Good Friday, April 15, 7:00 p.m.
Easter Sunday, April 17, 8:30 & 10:30 a.m.



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MINNEAPOLIS EDUCATORS STRIKE FOR 'SAFE, STABLE SCHOOLS'

By TESHA M. CHRISTENSEN

"Our community deserves safe, fully-funded, stable schools," said Roosevelt High School bilingual science teacher Ana Vasquez, an Indigenous woman.

She found it meaningful to rally with fellow Minneapolis Federation of Teachers and Educational Support Professionals (ESP) Local 59 union members on day one of their strike – which also happened to be International Women's Day.

Vasquez pointed out that many of the district's ESPs are women struggling to make ends meet. They work multiple jobs. She observed that Superintendent Ed Graff earns \$230,000 a year while educational support staff bring home \$600 or less every two weeks.

"No one can live with these poverty wages," she said. "It is not fair that our ESPs are paying the same health care premiums as those who are making six figure salaries."

"This is who we are standing out for," agreed Shannon Nordby, a Native American science teacher at Roosevelt.

"Our ESPs and our teachers have been working through historically trying times over the last few years and deserve to get paid fair wages; wages that keep up with inflation and cost of living. Our ESPs, especially, should be paid competitive wages and receive affordable health care for themselves and their families," said Wendy Ledesma on Tuesday morning, March 8, 2022. Her family lives near Roosevelt Library. She was with children Santiago (age 11) and Noemi (age 9), and Pearl Jones (age 7), students at Green Central.

"As a parent of MPS students, I would love to see our ESPs' starting salary start at \$35,000 while also paying less for their health benefits - it's not fair that they pay the same for insurance as others in the district making three times as much.

"Our students deserve more mental health supports in the form of social workers and counselors to work through everything that's happened in the last few years, as well.

"The time is now to make things right."

'THE MONEY IS ALREADY THERE'

Minneapolis Public Schools has taken the position that the Minnesota Federation of Teachers and Educational Support Specialists Local 59 is asking for more than the district can afford.

The 4,500 staff on strike since March 8, 2022 don't see things the same way, and say it is a question of priorities.

"The money is there already," said Sharon Alton, a speech language pathologist at Justice Page Middle School and Washburn High School who lives in Standish. "Historically, the district claims there is no money in contract years and – time and time again – a few months later they have a sudden pot of money. This has happened many contract cycles."

This year, the state of Minnesota is projecting a \$9.25 million budget surplus. "We also need the support of the legislature," Alton added.

"We have not been able to give our best to our students because we do not have the support we need," said Vasquez. "What about the bigger disruption for decades because we are not fully funded? There is money. There is not a good allocation of that money."

Right now, Minneapolis teachers can leave the district and make \$10,000-\$20,000 more in a neighboring district. The average pay in Minneapolis is \$71,000 compared to \$85,000 in St. Paul.

"I could be making \$20,000 more in Minnetonka," said Alton.

When Alton started in Minneapolis 24 years ago, MPS was number one for salary. "It's dropped considerably," noted Alton, whose children graduated from South High.

"We've got a problem with declining enrollment. We've got a greater problem with declining enrollment than Saint



Wendy Ledesma was with children Santiago (age 11) and Noemi (age 9), and Pearl Jones (age 7), students at Green Central, and their dog, Jyn Erso, at Roosevelt on Tuesday, March 8 to stand with educators in Minneapolis. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)

Paul, but I think that's in large part related to the Comprehensive District Design (CDD). We need to put money in so we can attract students and improve things in the long run," stated Alton. The district's enrollment dropped from 33,500 in fall 2019 to 28,700 in October 2021.

LOOKING OUT FOR EACH OTHER

"One of the reasons I value union membership is that we've got protection," said Alton. "We've got people who are looking out for everyone."

The last Minneapolis teacher strike was in 1970 and lasted for 14 days. All classes in Minneapolis were canceled beginning Tuesday, March 8, and remained through the *Messenger* press time. Ninety-seven percent of the teachers and 98% of the Education Support Professionals with MFT Local 59 voted in favor of the strike.

DISTRICT LOSING EDUCATORS OF COLOR

As a teacher, Alton is making a living wage although it isn't competitive with other districts, she pointed out, but education support professionals (ESP) are making only \$24,000 a year. Eighty percent of the district's ESPs are people of color.

"That salary makes it hard to fill positions," said Alton. "There are hundreds of open positions in March. There are positions that have been open all year. That's hard on kids. That's hard on the people who are here. People are pushing to do the best by kids but there aren't enough people to do right by our kids."

Due to the vacancies staff may end up doing the job of three people. For teachers, not having enough ESPs means that they spend less time teaching and more time on discipline issues. They don't have enough help to complete required paperwork, make phone calls to parents, and give students individualized attention, pointed out Alton. ESPs work with students in small groups or individually. ESPs

also help with bilingual students.

The issues are compounded by staff shortages in every area of the school.

In the last 18 months, over 640 teachers and support professionals have left the Minneapolis Public School district, according to MFT59. In that same time frame, 120 teachers of color have left Minneapolis Public Schools for surrounding districts that pay more, taken early retirement, changed professions, or have been fired. In fact, Black teachers are 7.9 times more likely to be fired by MPS than White teachers.

The district has yet to accept the memorandum of understanding BIPOC educators proposed in 2019 to help retain educators of color. The effort was "proposed by educators of color, led by educators of color, for educators of color," stressed Vasquez, who added that it shows a lack of respect by the district to not approve it.

Among other things, the MOU establishes procedures for making retention of educators of color a priority (in alignment with the demographics of individual schools), and allowing excess educators to return if a vacancy arises. When any educator of color leaves for any reason, the type of separation will be detailed on the next quarterly report and a process for repairing harm and restoring relationship would be offered to the departing educator.

Trey Carter is a Black man and has been an ESP for seven years but was excessed from Barton Community School this year. He spoke at a press conference led by Black educators at the Davis Center on Wednesday, March 16 to highlight issues educators of color face. He is early to school and leaves late, but still can't pay his bills on what he earns as an ESP, he said.

"I'm standing for the teachers of color," stated Carter. "I'm standing for a living wage. I'm standing in solidarity with you all."

"This is how we make one Minnesota," said Leslie E. Redmond, former

Educators rally in downtown Minneapolis on March 16, 2022. They have also been at the Governor's Mansion and the Davis Center. >> Find photo galleries and updates at www.LongfellowNokomisMessenger.com



"No one can live with these poverty wages," said Roosevelt High School bilingual science teacher Ana Vasquez. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)

NAACP president and founder of Don't Complain Activate.

STUDENT ANXIETY IMPACTS EDUCATION

The union is also asking for smaller class sizes, and more mental health supports.

Mental health issues have gone up, especially in the last two years as the world has dealt with the COVID-19 pandemic and the murder of George Floyd by a police officer.

"There have always been students who had mental health needs, but the numbers have increased dramatically," said Alton. "Anxiety is more of a health need but it absolutely impacts education. We can't ignore it because students can't ignore it."

Even those schools with a mental health professional need more staff, according to Alton. "Their schedule is full in September. There are not enough spots for students who have needs."

She added, "Our social workers are filling in at the front office for lunch breaks. Our social workers are being pulled in a thousand directions, and that makes it so much harder to be responsive to student needs."

'OUR COMMUNITY IS WITH US'

As a bilingual teacher, Vasquez also wants to see compensation for the time she and other spend creating materials for their classes in other languages. She pointed out that she doesn't have materials provided to her in Spanish, and must spend multiple prep hours preparing for her classes and translating the materials herself. She is not paid for that translation work. "There's a lot of extra work," she said.

"Our community is with us. We are not alone," said Vasquez.

"The quality of schools make a huge difference in the quality of a city," said Alton. "We want better. We can do better for Minneapolis and our kids."