



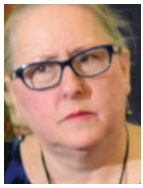
CUAPB President Michelle Gross concerned about how Minneapolis is responding to mental health crises with force

By JAN WILLMS

When five people in the throes of a mental health crisis were killed in incidents with police, Michelle Gross said she knew Communities United Against Police Brutality (CUAPB) had to act.

CUAPB was created 22 years ago following the shooting death of Charles “Abuka” Sanders by Minneapolis police.

As CUAPB has grown from its first meeting at Hosmer Library in Minneapolis,



‘THIS IS TOO MUCH’

lis, so have the tasks it has undertaken.

“When it got to the end of the year and there were five in a row in the state in the midst of a mental health crisis whose lives were lost, I just said this is too much,” stated Gross, who is president of CUAPB.

CUAPB is made up of all volunteers

who meet each Saturday. Work groups meet throughout the week. They are located at 4200 Cedar Ave. S.

TRAVIS’ LAW

One of the volunteers, Bill Czech, had been working on the issue of co-response for mental health calls for quite some

time, according to Gross. “He had been working with counties and municipalities for a while. We started to put together this white paper, and we spent several months researching.

“We learned we have terrific resources already,” Gross said. “All southern counties had access to mobile mental health crisis respondents. We have this resource, but people aren’t using it.”

She said that if people wanted mental health crisis responders to come to their house, they had to know the “secret magic phone number.” She added that the num-

THIS IS TOO MUCH » 11

Get on city council for ‘fulfilling’ job

Ward 12 Council Member Andrew Johnson announces he isn’t running again, urges others to enter race

By TESSA M. CHRISTENSEN

When he ran for office, Andrew Johnson figured he’d serve for about 10 years and then make way for new representation. That decade will be up in 2023, and he announced in mid-October 2022 that he doesn’t plan to run again. He timed his announcement to leave space for new candidates to campaign.

“This is more than a full-time job,” Johnson observed. “It’s very demanding and stressful, but also extremely fulfilling to be able to make a difference in the community.”

‘YOU HAVE TO DO A LOT OF SHOWING UP’

Johnson is proud of the team members he’s worked with over the years, which currently includes senior policy aide Kate Nelson and policy aide Dylan Kesti. Suzanne Murphy served as a long-time senior policy aide.

Four past team members have run for office themselves. Ilhan Omar as Minnesota’s 5th Congressional District Representative, Kate Agnew as Edina City Council Member, Chris Meyer as Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board Member, and Christian Torkelson as Little Canada City Council Member.

“It is energizing to be around people who are excited and passionate about public service,” said Johnson.

He observed, “Anyone can make the leap into public service. I hope someone out there takes that next step and makes that transition.”

ANDREW JOHNSON » 12



Kalpuli Ketzal Coatlicue Dance Troupe performs during a mural unveiling at Wells Fargo (2919 27th Ave. S.) on Sept. 22, 2022. Artist Charles Caldwell, a lifelong Minneapolis resident, set the mural against the city skyline. It celebrates the cultural diversity of south Minneapolis and includes symbols of peace (dove), hope (children), and transformation (butterfly). A yellow ribbon offers a greeting in six languages: Ojibwe, English, Spanish, Somali, Chinese, and Hmong. » More photos online. (Photo by Terry Faust)

Is city taking community engagement seriously?

Stakeholders question city rhetoric while neighborhood funding is cut to a base of \$10,000

By CAM GORDON

Next year, most neighborhood organizations in Minneapolis will receive less financial support from the city than they have in decades, if the mayor’s proposed budget is approved.

Under the proposal, every neighborhood or-

ganization in the Longfellow-Nokomis area faces funding cuts.

The Standish-Ericson Neighborhood Association (SENA) is one of the groups whose funding will be decreased. “We had been receiving almost \$80,000 from the city, but moving forward we will only be getting \$30,000, one-third of which cannot be used for general operating expenses,” said SENA Executive Director Candace Miller Lopez. “While we appreciate the need to focus on equitable engagement, \$20,000 is not enough

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT » 9



SENA has almost 10,000 stakeholders in our neighborhoods. How are we supposed to effect change for \$3 per person per year?”

Candace Lopez



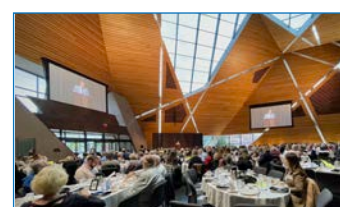
MFD commemorates 30th anniversary of first all-women fire crew

PAGE 3



Support local radio stations that are giving new artists airtime

PAGE 5



Upholding civil rights, civil liberties in the Twin Cities

PAGE 6



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MFD COMMEMORATES 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF FIRST ALL-WOMEN FIRE CREW

Fire Chief Bryan Tyner says it isn't just women who stand on their shoulders. "We all stand on your shoulders."

By JILL BOOGREN

Current and former fire department staff, city officials, friends and family joined together at Minneapolis Fire Station 5 (2700 Bloomington Ave.) on Sept. 23, 2022, to honor the four members of the first all-women fire crew in Minneapolis history: former Fire Captain Jean Kidd, fire motor operator Mary Mohn, and firefighters Vicki Hoff and Bonnie Bleskachek.

The first woman was hired as a firefighter for the Minneapolis Fire Department (MFD) in 1986, more than 100 years after the department was founded. Among those early hires were these four women, who joined the department in the 1980s. From 1992-1994, they worked together as the crew on Engine 5. Now retired, they were recognized as trailblazers in the field.

"For them to step in that role and take that courage to be the first, to go through the struggle of being the first... being the first is not easy," said Assistant Fire Chief Melanie Rucker, the event's emcee. "So we commend these women. And not only did they come onto the department, but they blazed the trail through the promotional ranks, as well."

Deputy Fire Chief Kathleen Mullen listed a number of their other "firsts" and accomplishments: Bleskachek was the first woman fire chief in the history of this department. Kidd was the first woman fire motor operator, the first woman captain, the first woman battalion chief, and the first woman deputy chief. Hoff was the first woman fire investigator. Mohn was an avid part of the union.

"Two of [the women] never took a promotional test that they did not test number one in," said Mullen, to applause. "These women didn't just have to be good. They had to be the very best. And then some."

High-ranking officials in the department spoke to the barriers women faced. Rucker said it took a lawsuit to get the then all-White-male department to include minorities and women. And that was just to hire them.

Mullen didn't pull any punches about one of their biggest obstacles. "Let's keep it real," she said. "The reason this all-woman crew formed is because when Jean Kidd was made captain there were no men that would work with her. So think about that reality."

Deputy Fire Chief Rita Juran spoke of the significance of this crew opening up the space for other women.

"The path these women created has



TOP: (left to right) Mary Mohn, Bonnie Bleskachek, Vicki Hoff and Jean Kidd stand in front of Engine 5, their rig from 1992-1994, when they served as the Minneapolis Fire Department's first all-women crew. BOTTOM: Hoff, Mohn, Kidd and Bleskachek share laughs and stories from their time serving together on Sept. 23, 2022. (Bottom photo by Jill Boogren)



been marched by many women throughout the years. They helped open the door,

proving that women could be competent firefighters and competent leaders," she

said. "These women did not just toe the line, they have excelled, allowing others to excel."

Sherri Waisanen, president of the Women's Firefighter Association who has been a firefighter for nearly 23 years, said she's been on an all-women crew for about four or five years. She described her captains as having their own way of being strong, demanding and forceful – both on the scene and in the firehouse.

"It's been a refreshing change from earlier in my career," she said. "We get things done, just like the others on other rigs. Except we'll get that surprised look from people on the streets when we take our helmets off and step off the rig and [they] see all women."

The number of women in the fire services has dwindled in recent years, however.

In 2002, the MFD included 70 women, 15% of the department. That was their heyday, and MFD was considered a world leader. Today, the number of women is about half that and falling. According to Waisanen, about a third of the women now in the department will be retiring within five years.

A resolution read by Ward 9 City Council Member Jason Chavez states that MFD is on a trajectory to fall below the nationwide four percent of career firefighters who are women – a trend many of the higher ups vowed to reverse.

Juran said inclusion and acceptance come with numbers. Numbers in diversity create balance and equity, which in turn provide a healthy environment where all can thrive.

"This might sound funny, but we need to hire a number of women so we can stop counting the women," she said.

And, as several people reiterated, representation is key.

"You have to see someone who looks like you to understand that it's a possibility for you," said Mullen, who extended that beyond gender to include the Somali, Hmong and Hispanic communities, as well.

As Rucker put it during a Q&A the previous day, "You see it, you can be it."

Fire Chief Bryan Tyner and Waisanen presented a plaque that contains an image of Mohn, Bleskachek, Kidd and Hoff posing together during their time on the crew. "A lot of people have remarked on how the women in this job stand on your shoulders. But the truth of the matter is, that we all stand on your shoulders. We're a better department because of it," said Tyner.

The plaque will be posted at Fire Station 5.

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GUEST COLUMN

BY KRISTEN OLSEN
Ericsson resident



The cry of an animal in distress caught my attention one warm August morning. I hurried outside. Animal suffering mostly takes place behind closed doors, at factory farms and research labs, but the curtain was pulled back when I found the source of the cries: two live traps mounted on a steep garage roof, each confining a raccoon. One animal appeared immobile. The other's trilling quieted when I spoke in a calm voice. "I'm going to rescue you," I promised.

It was a promise I couldn't keep. The property owner had hired a wildlife management company to catch the raccoons getting into his garage through flimsy-looking roof vents. The company's technician told me the raccoons, who'd been lured by cat food, would ride in the back of his pickup truck until three o'clock, when he'd return to the company's suburban office and "gas" them. According

to Animal Control, this was all legal. Minneapolis permits the live-trapping of raccoons, although they can't be killed inside city limits.

South Minneapolis residents frequently see raccoons disappearing into street sewers, or find their droppings in backyards. These intelligent, adaptable critters sometimes make their way into attics, crawl spaces, or garages to safely bear and rear their young. To well-meaning homeowners, live-trapping raccoons or other wildlife sounds benign.

It's not as kind as you may think.

Confinement in live traps causes suffering. Wildlife management companies are only required to check live traps once every 24 hours. Fur-covered raccoons can be trapped on a roof in blazing sun or thunderstorms with no shelter or water for a full day and night. Relocation after trapping may make a homeowner feel less guilty, but it isn't a good option from the animal's point of view. Wild animals are disoriented when moved and don't know where to find food, water, or shelter in unfamiliar territory. A study of trapped and relocated squirrels found that 97% died soon after relocation or disappeared from their release area. Raccoons trapped in Minneapolis are usually destroyed, rather

than released, because they often carry distemper, but the death raccoons experience by "gassing" is not painless. The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) has called euthanasia by carbon dioxide chamber in the pet shelter context "particularly troubling" and "certain to cause pain and distress" for several minutes until consciousness is lost. Finally, if adults are trapped and removed, any orphaned young suffer, too.

Fortunately, we can choose more humane solutions.

According to experts at Humane Wildlife Removal, because of raccoons' climbing ability and strength, sealing entry holes with professional-grade repairs is the single most important and ethical concept. Put steel caps on chimneys, make sure vents are properly screened and that eaves and soffits do not have openings. Removing features that attract raccoons to your property, such as unsecured food waste, is also key. You can also try strategies to repel raccoons, such as motion-activated floodlights, motion-activated audio repellants, or certain scent repellants. HSUS suggests that if animals are not causing damage, consider waiting until the young are big enough to be on their own, and the animals move on. After

they do so, repair your home or garage so wildlife can't enter again. If you can't wait, try humane eviction to encourage them to leave with their litters. A combination of unpleasant smells (e.g., rags soaked in cider vinegar), lights, and a blaring radio at night may work.

The technician I spoke with admitted much wildlife management business comes from shoddy construction using cheap materials, allowing animals to get inside. Squirrels invaded a friend's attic after a remodeler installed a plastic roof vent, for example, but were unable to enter after it was replaced with sturdier steel. Ask contractors to use strong, quality materials when remodeling to prevent animal intruders before a problem starts.

Humans increasingly encroach on wildlife habitat, and for many, it's easy to assume animals who get in our way must be "managed" or destroyed. We do better if we see them as fellow creatures sharing this Earth and not "nuisances" to control when our lives intersect.

Traps remained on that steep garage roof through thunderstorms and hot sun for several more days. I couldn't rescue the four raccoons I know perished. Other animals can avoid that fate if we educate ourselves on our choices and let compassion be our guide.

To learn more about resolving problems with raccoons responsibly, visit the websites humanesociety.org/animals/raccoons and humaneraccoonremoval.org.

I am inviting you to my commital service

STORIES AND JOURNEYS

BY DONALD L. HAMMEN



As far as I can tell I haven't died. I am writing this column. The service will take place at Lakewood Cemetery, the site of my internment. Details to follow. The theme of the service will be coming from my life experience – it's be still and know. I value stillness, especially when it comes to writing this column and making deadline. Ha!

I fantasize there will be an ALL SOULS GATHERING. I intend to invite Paul Wellstone, Hubert Humphrey, a former Walker United Methodist Church pastor, Amy's mom, all eternally resting at Lakewood and my deceased brother. I've never met either of them except my brother. I have reason to admire them. Hopefully their eternal rest won't be disturbed when they get this invite. But when you become a soul, for real, it doesn't matter. Does it?

Will you be there? I hope so! If you have read this far you have taken the plunge into the river of life experiences, human and otherwise, that is Stories and Journeys. It's your decision to read beyond this point. You may find yourself disturbed by what you are about to read. It has been disturbing for me to write it. Just be still and know!

Recently a *Messenger* reader asked me if I was done with my 2021 tax return. My

answer is totally. My focus now is on Medicare Open Enrollment, the current election cycle, leaf raking and bagging.

I AM INVITING YOU TO NOT ENROLL IN AN ADVANTAGE PLAN IF YOU CARE ABOUT MEDICARE.

Come Dec. 26, I will have completed my sixth year of retirement. Here are some of what I have learned and am clear about with respect to Medicare and Social Security.

1. Medicare is Medicare, not original Medicare. Just Medicare.

2. Advantage Plans are Advantage Plans bearing the name Medicare. Currently there is a bill in the U.S. House of Representatives that would prohibit advantage plans from bearing the name Medicare. It's called the Save Medicare Act.

3. Many of the so-called advantages offered by Advantage Plans (like the cost of vision, hearing and dental services) were supposed to be offered by Medicare. I wonder why that hasn't happened?

4. I would like to think I am not so gullible as to base my open enrollment decisions on Advantage Plan ads. I often wonder why are there no ads for Medicare?

5. I have learned that originally Medicare was supposed to become Medicare for everyone. I wonder why that hasn't happened?

6. Some people would have me believe Social Security and Medicare are entitlements. Wrong! They are mine and your earned benefits.

7. I have also learned that there are powerful members of Congress and corporate special interests working to destroy the stability and future of Social Security and

Medicare.

So, here is my plan for Open Enrollment. I'm going to keep wearing my Medicare for All t-shirt. I'm going to stick with my Medicare plus Supplement plan with Part D plan for drugs unless advised otherwise by my broker. And I'm tuning out all the noise from Advantage Plan ads. I'm just going to be still and know.

If any of this pertains to you, dear reader, what has your life experience taught you about Social Security and Medicare? What is your plan for Open Enrollment? Tell yourself, tell others or tell me at news@longfellownokomisemessenger.com.

I AM INVITING YOU TO VOTE IF YOU HAVEN'T ALREADY AS IF YOUR LIFE DEPENDED ON IT.

What captures for me the importance of any election cycle these days are the big picture words from the preface of a book by Thom Hartmann entitled "The Hidden History of American Oligarchy: Reclaiming Our Democracy from The Ruling Class."

"America is at a turning point, and whether we continue our slide into oligarchy and tyranny or pull back to small d-democratic values will depend in no small part, on the planning and work we do now, and the candidates and policies we support and put forward two and four years from now."

There's that notion of ruling class. I wonder if that might be a clue to answering some of my "I wonder why" questions.

In the meantime, I hope I'm not so gullible as to base my voting decisions on campaign ads.

On Election Day, Nov. 8, weather permitting, I intend to go on a nature walk to the Mississippi River near my house in *Messenger* "territory" and Lakewood Cemetery.

in *Connector* "territory." I intend to end up at my poling place. Before I cast my vote I will say the words, be still and know!

So, on what do you base your voting decisions? What grounds you? Tell yourself, tell others or tell me at news@longfellownokomisemessenger.com

In gratitude! Just be still and you will know what you need to do. Cause of inflation? Consider corporate price gauging as the key cause.

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

LETTER

Why do schools spank students?

I am astounded that schools are still spanking students in the United States. Even if its use of it is declining. If a parent hit their kids that's child abuse. If an adult hit an adult that's against federal laws. But if a teacher (parent, adult) hit a kid in school that's considered just fine even maybe wanted from the community, but what does that say about us? As an American it doesn't really sit well. We have a pretty stable country, happy families, and enough food usually. And yet we still hit our kids even though they're just learning? Sixteen states have expressly allowed it, six have no laws against it. The schools don't even ask for permission, some parents are enraged. Other schools use it as a choice like in North Carolina instead of suspension. But how does affect how they grow up? Where do we draw the line?

Joselyn Pettit
Standish

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NUR-D PERFORMS BENEFIT SHOW OCT. 28

**Concert raises funds
for local radio stations
WFNU and KRSM**

By TESSA M. CHRISTENSEN

Catch a Nur-D show and support local radio on Friday, Oct. 28, 5-9 p.m. at Urban Growler Brewing (2325 Endicott St.).

"I love Nur-D's energy and stage presence!" said WFNU co-founder Katey DeCelle. "WFNU has been playing Nur-D's music since his first album was released, but I hadn't seen him perform live until recently. At the Central Honors Philando event this summer, Nur-D performed and I was blown away. Not only is he an amazingly talented performer, he got the crowd up and moving, and added even more positive energy to the event. I knew I wanted him to play at our fundraiser as soon as I saw him perform!"

Expect dancing and a lot of energy. "You aren't gonna see me hold anything back from you, and I perform like it's my last day on the planet," said Nur-D. "Lights, color, sound – every show the plan is to try to blow your mind. My team, my band, and myself do everything in our power to make sure that everyone who comes out to a Nur-D show is given a safe space to be themselves. Dance, sing, cry, laugh, shout – you don't have to worry about looking cool or doing the 'right thing.' All you have to be is yourself."

Shimmer will host the Halloween costume party that will feature a costume contest, vendors, a food truck, DJs and more. Tickets are \$20 in advance and \$25 at the door. Kids get in free. The show benefits two local radio stations, WFNU 94.1 that serves the Frogtown area and KRSM 98.9 that serves south Minneapolis.

LOCAL RADIO STATIONS BREAK NEW MUSIC

Nur-D appreciates local radio stations like WFNU and KRSM, that were some of the first to play his music.

"Local radio is what breaks what's next. It's the first step to the wild music world," Nur-D said. "It's the first interaction many young artists have with music as a business venture, which is incredibly valuable. Local radio allows for a newcomer to an area to get the pulse of it, feel how it is, hear how it talks. As an artist it can help you find like-minded creators in your area, and allow you to gain inspiration for the people around you."

DeCelle added, "Local radio excites me because it puts a spotlight on the art, and leaders in our community, that sometimes mainstream media misses. We offer free radio broadcast and journalism trainings for community members, giving residents control over the narratives they want to tell and a platform to share their talents. I also really love that we get to hear music and news from our neighbors!"

Nur-D appreciates the passion in which these two radio stations have to uplift their community. "It's rare to feel that a company or organization has a loving heart for people sometimes. Often one can feel like a commodity, the thing needed to keep the lights on. And even if that's true to some degree it has always felt that KRSM and WFNU are doing so much of what they do because they love it," said Nur-D.

"That's not something you can



NUR-D points out that local radio is the first step into the "wild music world."

find everywhere. It's really special to see and be a part of."

KRSM 98.9 STARTED

WFNU and KRSM began around the same time. They were part of advocacy work of several media watch organizations, including Hope Community, Voices For Racial Justice, Little Earth of United Tribes, Main Street Project, and the Native American Community Development Institute, as well as a volunteer base of over 100 neighbors. KRSM officially launched in November 2017. It is located in south Minneapolis at the Phillips Community Center.

Listen at 98.9 FM if you are in the metro area listening range. If not, download the KRSM Radio app for Android or iPhone, or at www.krsm-radio.org. To volunteer, reach out via the website.

The mission of KRSM is to provide a platform for elevating the voices, narratives, and cultures of those communities with a history historically ignored, misrepresented, and erased by traditional media; and to serve as an on-ramp to jobs in the fields of broadcast media, audio recording/engineering/production, investigative journalism, and voice-over work.

Andrea Pierre was approached by Brendan Kelly, the founder of KRSM, to volunteer when it started. Initially, she helped with committee work, but felt the urge to have her own show. She volunteered at the station for six years before becoming station manager.

She has always loved media, and attended camps as a teen for journalism and reporting. "I have listened to radio all my life," said Pierre. "Growing up in Saint Paul, we would put a wire hanger to increase our signal to hear KMOJ back in the 80s at my house. It was exciting to hear voices on air that I could relate to and sounded like the elders conversation at the kitchen table."

There is another full-time employee in charge of the KRSM Youth Internship, and a part-time person who manages the website and programming. "We are a very small crew so my days are hectic. I can be meeting with community in the morning, spending lunch at our transmitter site in the afternoon, and in the evening with our youth doing narrative work," stated Pierre.

KRSM is growing. They will be celebrating their five-year anniversary, and expanding the "Ladders to Leadership" model with the KRSM Youth Internship.

"I love how WFNU and KRSM both have authentic connections to the communities they serve," said

Pierre. "We are consistently getting feedback on the unique programming we have on KRSM. Folks can hear programs and commercials in multiple languages and topics that they can relate to from their peers."

THE BEGINNING OF WFNU 94.1

Philip Gracia helped co-found WFNU. "When I was young I used to listen to a radio up to my ear, and pretend that I was doing a play-by-play of the sport I was listening to," he recalled. "The radio announcers always captured my attention as they shared the sport in detail through story."

But he didn't think he could do it as a job.

"The barbershop is a community gathering space in the black community. My shop, The Grooming House, is no different. It was there I learned about WFNU from another patron who wanted to do a show. It was then that I realized my love and interest of radio could be something I actually did," recalled Gracia. "In a matter of days we were in the radio station recording our first show 'Real Talk With Real Brothers.'"

In 2021, WFNU added a mobile app that has greatly expanded its listening audience. It offers on demand programs which provides more exposure for broadcasters with no geographic boundaries. This app has also played a part in allowing WFNU to venture into paid advertising with local businesses who can place ads on the app.

Gracia values the way local radio serves the community. "Recently I saw a poll that stated that the future of radio includes the top two categories as podcasts and local radio. There is a need and a desire for our listeners to hear news and music from their communities. Community radio offers a unique opportunity to bring under-represented voices to the airwaves. WFNU has also been very involved in engaging our youth in radio programming to tell their stories and build their skills."

WFNU continues to offer free radio broadcast trainings for community members. Community members can serve on the board, fund raise, and write grants, and plan events. To learn more, email station manager@wfnu.org or browse WFNU.org/con-tact.

WFNU will be hosting its second annual Frogtown Radio Gala Dinner at DeGidio's Restaurant on Monday, Nov. 14. "This event was a huge success for WFNU last year and we're so excited to be doing it again!" said DeCelle. "Stay tuned to WFNU and wfnu.org for more information about the gala."

HELP SAVE COMMUNITY RADIO

"WFNU is funded by donations from our listeners, grants and underwriting sales. We are a small non-profit with two part-time staff, so the planning and success of fundraisers like these are crucial to help keep us on-air," said co-founder DeCelle.

"It is hard to keep funding consistent as a Low Power FM because we operate solely via grants, underwriting sales and community donations," observed Pierre. "We have been written out from receiving state funds like other stations. WFNU and KRSM have so much alignment when it comes to our values, what we do, how we support local artist and how we are stewards for historically ignored voices. It made sense to begin to work together to save community radio."

HONEST BLACK NERD

Music has defined Matt Allen's life. It was the only class he ever excelled at. It was the thing that connected him to the world and the emotions inside of him.

He began in praise and worship, transitioned to pop rock, and finally found his home in hip hop music as Nur-D.

"It was a journey for sure," said the Rosemount High School graduate who also lived in south Minneapolis in Elliot Park. He now resides in St. Paul.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE HIGHLIGHTS OF YOUR MUSICAL CAREER THUS FAR?

Nur-D: I have played in some of the coolest places and most amazing events. It's hard to narrow it down. I was honored to perform at the one-year anniversary of the murder of George Floyd at George Floyd Square alongside his family, members of the community, and Common. Recently I opened up for Ludacris at Mystic Lake Casino, which was wild. I was the only livestream concert from Paisley Park during the lockdown in 2020, which was really cool. The list just keeps going and going. I have been very blessed so far.

WHAT IS NUR-D ABOUT?

Nur-D: If I could boil it down to three things it would be "Black, Nerd, Honesty." They are the words that distill what I am all about the best. As an artist, it's often hard to describe what you're all about because you can talk about so much. But there are those three things in everything I write about.

Outside of that, one of the things I have is a deep love for my community. I want everyone to have the best, healthiest, and most fulfilling time on this dirt ball as possible. So, when you come to a Nur-D show you are gonna feel that desire.

YOU'VE RELEASED TWO ALBUMS (CHICAGO AVENUE AND 38TH) CENTERED ON CHICAGO AVE AND 38TH. CAN YOU TALK ABOUT HOW YOU WROTE THOSE SONGS?

Nur-D: Those songs were being written in my head as we jumped fences, got shot with rubber bullets (and more), and choked on tear gas. Honestly, so many of the lines in those songs were ripped right from the streets during the uprising. With the very real and constant threat of murder by the hands of a police officer, I didn't want any of my fans to have to guess what I stood for.

Since George Floyd's murder and my subsequent thrust into my hands on activism work, my music has reflected that change. The feelings have always been there. I just no longer think about whether letting them out might make it harder for people to get behind me.

TALK ABOUT YOUR CONNECTION TO GEORGE FLOYD SQUARE.

Nur-D: I think GFS is magic. I think that the energy of that space has changed the world, and it's because the people found their power there. I have been blessed to be able to get to know the people who call that space home, sat in "People's Way," and soak in the wisdom of those who came to speak there. I have been honored to speak there myself. I think that George Floyd Square stands in direct opposition to those in the government who want us to believe that we NEED their boot on our necks to keep us safe. I have celebrated there, I have cried there, I have danced there, I have rested there. Read the demands, accept the demands, no justice no street.

HOW DO YOU THINK MUSIC HELPS US PROCESS TRAUMA AND BIG THINGS IN OUR LIVES?

Nur-D: I think music has a way of reaching into the heart in a manner that words can't. It is infused with emotion that slips past our guards and defense and speaks to us on the level of the soul. Real Talk, music can change you forever. You might find out about yourself something you never knew by just listening to a song. There isn't a major moment in one's life, good or bad, that couldn't be touched on and enhanced by the right song.

WHAT DO YOU HOPE PEOPLE GET FROM YOUR MUSIC?

Nur-D: A sense of connection. A safe moment from feeling alone and uncared for. I hope they get fun, something to share with others and also with themselves when they need it. I hope my music can inspire them or otherwise be the soundtrack to them being a little bit better than they were yesterday.

UPHOLDING CIVIL LIBERTIES, RIGHTS ACROSS THE TWIN CITIES

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.

WHEN IN THE COURSE OF HUMAN EVENTS...*

Sometimes coincidence sparks a column. During the second week of October my volunteer work with the ACLU and attending a Guthrie Theater play coincided with what would have been George Floyd's 49th birthday providing a unique opportunity to introduce how the work of two mainstay Twin Cities institutions supports our civil rights. (*Preamble of the United States Constitution)

THE LEGACY OF GEORGE FLOYD'S MURDER

Residents across the metro area know better than most that the 2020 killing of George Floyd in south Minneapolis changed history. Sparking protests across the United States and around the globe, Floyd's death fittingly raised the tenor of public discourse about structural racism and its devastating impact on the lives of our citizens.

On Friday, Oct. 14, 2022, Floyd's birthday, the National Urban League issued a press release stating that, "civil rights leaders called on the U.S. House of Representatives to pass the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act – a critical step to holding law enforcement accountable for unconstitutional and unethical conduct." Passage of this act is overdue.

According to Sherrilyn Ifill, President and Director-Counsel of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc., "The killing of George Floyd held a mirror up to a truth about the American legal system." Civil rights leaders were moved to action by watching Derek Chauvin's sneer as he bore down on Floyd's neck, "believing that nothing was going to happen to him, that he would face neither criminal penalty nor civil liability," Ifill said.

Although Chauvin has been found accountable, more safeguards of our civil liberties are needed, as is more public dialogue. During the second week of October, the anniversary of Floyd's birthday, our regional American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU of MN) and the Guthrie Theater held events that promoted public discourse about our civil liberties and civil rights.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF CIVIL LIBERTIES

In 1787, in my hometown of Philadelphia, "one of the most remarkable blueprints of self-government" was born when 13 delegates produced the first draft of our United States Constitution. However, many of these envoys felt that the draft was deeply flawed by not specifying individual rights. They believed that the document explained what the government could do, but not what it couldn't. This absence of a delineated "bill of rights" obstructed its ratification for four years. In the end, the framers heeded Thomas Jefferson who had argued:

A bill of rights is what the people are entitled to against every government on earth, general or particular, and what no just government should refuse, or rest on inference.

Inspired by Jefferson, drafted by James Madison, the American Bill of Rights was adopted in 1791 as the Constitution's first 10 amendments. They constitute our civil liberties and are the law of

George Floyd, the ACLU, and Guthrie Theater's 'Sally & Tom'



The audience pays rapt attention at ACLUMN breakfast. (Photo by Susan Schaefer)

the land. Yet, Jefferson himself openly violated those civil liberties as a slaveholder. More on that below.

CIVIL LIBERTIES VS CIVIL RIGHTS:

A BRIEF PRIMER

While most Americans use the terms "civil rights" and "civil liberties" interchangeably, they are, in fact, distinct terms. Civil liberties are freedoms guaranteed to us by those Constitutional amendments to protect us from tyranny. They include:

- The right to free speech
- The right to privacy
- The right to remain silent in a police interrogation
- The right to be free from unreasonable searches of your home
- The right to a fair court trial
- The right to marry
- The right to vote

Civil rights are where law and legislation come in. Our civil liberties are protected against misuse by civil rights laws established through the federal government via federal legislation or case law. Our civil rights entitle us to the basic right to be free from unequal treatment based on certain protected characteristics, such as race, gender, disability, and more, in settings such as employment, education, housing, and access to public facilities.

For example, the right to marry is a civil liberty, while gay marriage is a civil rights matter. So, if a same-sex or opposite-sex couple is denied a marriage license because the court clerk has decided not to issue any licenses, their civil liberties have been violated. But if the clerk denied marriage licenses only to LGBTQ+ couples, it's a civil rights violation.

Unlike civil liberties, which guarantee individuals certain broad-based rights, civil rights imply protection based on certain characteristics.

THE BIRTH OF THE AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION

In 1791, when our civil liberties were enshrined in the Constitution, most citizens had no way to uphold them. Over 100 years passed when "most common constitutional violations went unchallenged because the people whose rights were most often denied were precisely those members of society who were least aware of their rights and least able to afford a lawyer. They had no access to those impenetrable bulwarks of liberty – the courts. The Bill of Rights was like an engine no one knew how to start."

In the early 20th century, all that changed. A small group of visionaries that included the world-renowned author, Helen Keller, "dedicated themselves to holding the government to the Bill of Rights' promises." In 1920, they founded

the American Civil Liberties Union and joining forces with the already established National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, NAACP, "began to challenge constitutional violations in court on behalf of those who had been previously shut out. This was the beginning of what has come to be known as public interest law," providing the missing ingredient that made the constitutional system and Bill of Rights finally work.

THE ACLU OF MINNESOTA

Founded in 1952, the Minnesota Civil Liberties Union, which became the ACLU of Minnesota, carries on this important work of "promoting, protecting, and extending the civil liberties and civil rights of people in Minnesota through litigation, lobbying, and community engagement." It is the pre-eminent civil liberties organization in our state, and a nationally admired leader among all the national ACLU affiliates.

Because of its fervent mission, and the organization's continual delivery on its promise to undo "the pervasive unfairness that leaves our communities less equal, less safe, and less free," I became a member, supporter and active volunteer.

On Wednesday morning, Oct. 12, after years of pandemic quarantining, I gratefully found myself once again as an in-person volunteer for the 2022 ACLU of MN Annual Fundraising Breakfast, held in the soaring, light-filled McNamara Alumni Center of the University of Minnesota. Well over a thousand hearty Minnesotans packed the auditorium to support its mission, vision, values and continued successes.

At this first in-person event since Floyd's murder, the ACLU's program paid homage to the ramifications of this tragic incident. "It is hard to overstate the galvanizing effect of Mr. Floyd's death on public discourse..." a recent New York Times article commented. A video segment of the breakfast program that graphically depicted the attacks by the Minneapolis police on members of press covering the Floyd protests validated the Times sentiment.

Under the "Values" section of the ACLU of MN website are the following principles: "We value civil rights and civil liberties for everyone, especially the most vulnerable members of our community who have been historically and systematically deprived of them. We value equity for all people, and equal justice under the law. We value the inherent dignity of all people."

THE GUTHRIE THEATER AND PUBLIC DISCOURSE

Echoing these proclamations, let's pivot to the work and mission of the Guthrie Theater. Following the years-long quarantine and the social unrest after Floyd's death, the Guthrie emerged with a



In this clever collision of American history and theater, acclaimed playwright and Pulitzer Prize winner Suzan-Lori Parks spotlights the unexpected parallels between 1790 and today.

renewed commitment to "the creation of theater that wrestles with urgent questions and inspires dialogue with audiences; expands the diversity of voices, visions and styles onstage; and engages community members currently underserved by the Guthrie."

In that spirit, we circle back to Thomas Jefferson, the founding father credited with the creation of civil liberties and to the new production, "Sally & Tom," by Pulitzer Prize winner, Suzan-Lori Parks that runs through Nov. 6, 2022. The night before the ACLU breakfast, I sat front row center for this landmark production.

This work is a play-within-a-play that amplifies "the galvanizing effect of Mr. Floyd's death on public discourse," not solely by questioning the nature of Jefferson's relationship with Sally Hemmings, sister of his enslaved valet, but significantly for his lifelong refusal to release his hundreds of enslaved workers. Using a modern theatrical framing device to set this story, Parks brings into sharp relief "the parallels between 1790 and today."

While a major premise of the work rests on the controversy about whether Jefferson had intimate relations with and fathered children with Hemmings, Parks cleverly raises other critical questions about the sheer hypocrisy of this founding father who conceptualized the civil liberties that comprise the central laws of our country, and the unbearable legacy of inequality slavery has left. In a searing monologue, the character of Sally Hemmings' brother James tears apart the inhumanity and lack of dignity all of Jefferson's slaves suffered from this man who wrote of unalienable rights.

THE DISGRACE AND THE GRACE

The Twin Cities are forever disgraced by George Floyd's murder at the hands of Minneapolis police. However, our metro area is graced by two institutions, the ACLU of Minnesota located in St. Paul, and the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis, that in their respective ways battle the violation of the civil liberties through legal and legislative avenues and the arts.

There are many ways to support the ACLU of Minnesota. Please check the website at <https://www.aclu-mn.org>. And if possible, go to see "Sally & Tom" at the Guthrie: <https://www.guthrietheater.org/shows-and-tickets/2022-2023-season/sally-tom/>

Whether by activism or the arts, supporting these institutions honors the memory of George Floyd and fosters continuing dialogue about our civil liberties and our civil rights.

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.

Family, friends celebrate George Floyd's birthday

By JILL BOOGREN

Family, friends and community members gathered on Oct. 14, 2022, at The Square event center (3736 Chicago Ave.) to celebrate the life and memory of George "Perry" Floyd on what would have been his 49th birthday.

Floyd's aunt, Angela Harrelson, described her nephew as good in sports – he played basketball and football – and able to relate to the people in the neighborhood.

"They used to call him Big Floyd. Not because he's so tall, which he really was, but because he really connected with the community."

Before moving to Minnesota, Floyd lived in what Harrelson called a "rough" neighborhood in Houston, Texas, and went through his own personal challenges. But he had been reaching out to programs to help mentor some of the Black and Brown youth in the neighborhood – work Harrelson believes Floyd would have continued here.

"There truly wasn't enough time for him. Because if he coulda did what he was doin' in Texas, it would've been phenomenal," she said. "He just didn't have enough time."

To those who knew him, Floyd's magnanimous nature extended to everyone.

"Floyd is the type of man, he went up to everybody. People that a lot of us just kind of throw away and don't even want to look at and don't wanna be around," said Floyd's significant other Courteney Ross. "I noticed that in him, that none of that mattered. He would go around with everyone... and pray and love them up no matter where they came from or how they looked, what they had. And treat everyone just as a human being. Period."

It is fitting, then, that a whole community has formed in the wake of his death. Another of Floyd's aunts Mahalia Jones from North Carolina, praised those who came forward to protect and hold sacred the space at 38th and Chicago.

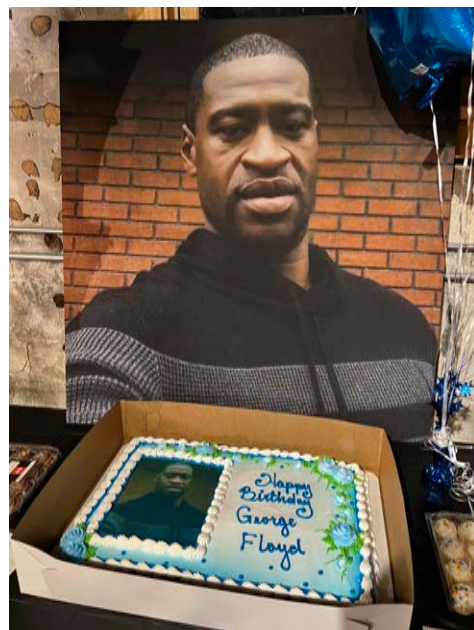
"That was one of the most amazing, powerful things that I ever heard. And y'all did that. And y'all continue to do that," said Jones.

Floyd's cousin Paris Stevens, also from North Carolina, acknowledged that the people at 38th and Chicago have been in "the thick and thin of it."

"To go through that trauma, every single day, and to still stand – we're all still standing. We have to keep pushing forward," she said. "The trials and the tribu-



Toshira Garraway of Families Supporting Families Against Police Violence, shares a joyful moment with George "Perry" Floyd's aunt Angela Harrelson, his aunt Mahalia Jones (holding microphone), and his cousin Paris Stevens at a celebration of Perry's life on Oct. 14, 2022, on what would have been his 49th birthday. (Photo by Jill Boogren)



George Floyd's significant other, Courteney Ross, tells people gathered that Floyd would treat everyone, no matter where they came from, how they looked or what they had, as a human being. (Photo by Jill Boogren)

lations won't stop, but things are getting better. Change is happening."

For Harrelson, this change is the gift Floyd left behind for everybody, change she described as "powerful," a door that people "just ran through."

"For the first time in history Black and Brown people ran through this door. Chains was broken. It's like we was runnin' for freedom. But this time we ran, we

never looked back, because we saw that dream that Martin Luther King had talked about. We saw hope with a plan this time. And everyone was just excited," she said. "So we need to keep that excitement goin', not just for our family, but there's other families that didn't get a chance to have the publicity that we had."

Stevens echoed the calls to continue the work.



George Floyd Square (Photo by Susan Schaefer)

"This has impacted people from all over the world. And we just have to keep the momentum," she said. "It is a movement, and the movement has to continue. It doesn't just stop with us, it continues through you all. We all have a voice. We all have to lift our voices in one way, shape or form."

Earlier in the day, family members received a proclamation from Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey declaring Oct. 14, 2022, as George Floyd Day. Harrelson said it was an overwhelming day, but it was an "incredible birthday present" for Perry.

The evening event was organized by Families Supporting Families Against Police Violence, who support impacted families while seeking justice for the many lives lost at the hands of the police.

Floyd's birthday fell just 10 days before the start of the state trial of the remaining two former Minneapolis police officers involved in his murder, J. Alexander Kueng and Tou Thao; jury selection was scheduled to begin on Monday, Oct. 24. The other two former Minneapolis police officers involved were already found guilty and are serving prison time: Derek Chauvin, found guilty of second-degree unintentional murder, third-degree murder and second-degree manslaughter on April 20, 2021, was sentenced to 22.5 years; Thomas Lane pleaded guilty to aiding and abetting second-degree manslaughter and was sentenced to three years. All four officers were also found guilty in federal court of violating Floyd's civil rights.

Harrelson and Stevens cochair the George Floyd Global Memorial, formed to preserve the offerings left for Floyd as well as the stories of the community. Go to www.georgefloydglobalmemorial.org.

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SEWARD CO-OPS'S CHANGING OF THE GUARD

Sean Doyle ends tenure, Raynardo Williams begins as interim general manager

By KIM FORTIN

Local grocer Seward Co-op's 50th anniversary is coming to a close this year, but there's also another significant occasion taking place where many folks shop for sustainable and fair trade foods and goods. Outgoing general manager Sean Doyle's last day with Seward was Sept. 29 (a position he held for 18 years) and the first person of color – Raynardo (Ray) Williams – has been appointed to the role of interim general manager by the board of directors during their search.

Per the co-op's communication team, the board is just now creating a procedure to hire their next general manager. They anticipate the process may take anywhere from three to six months to find and fill the position.

SEAN DOYLE - OUTGOING GENERAL MANAGER

What led to you deciding to leave the co-op after 18 years?

Doyle: I decided to leave the co-op for the business and store development director role with the National Co-op Grocers (NCG). It's an opportunity where I will be able to use my skills to support food co-ops across the country with their business and expansion projects.

What are some of the things you're most proud of doing at the co-op?

Doyle: I'm most proud of Seward Co-op's demonstrated ability to survive and prosper in a very challenging and competitive grocery marketplace. This speaks to the commitment of our member-owners and their desire to support local producers. They keep dollars circulating in our communities where it makes a positive impact.



Sean Doyle

It's been my pleasure to work with the dedicated and talented Seward staff who do so much to fulfill our mission of service to the community every day. We not only expanded our home store in Seward on Franklin Avenue, but we built a very successful second store on 38th in the Bryant neighborhood.

I am also incredibly proud of our SEED (round-up at the register) program. We founded this program 11 years ago and are approaching \$2.5 million in funds raised for local non-profits.

What are some notable things you've seen while being general manager?

Doyle: I think the most notable thing in my mind is the transformation of how groceries are sold in the United States. When I first started at the co-op in the early 90s, organic and natural foods were not in the mainstream. They were often ridiculed because organic and sustainable agricultural practices were once considered "flaky" and "out there."

Now organic and natural foods can be purchased everywhere, and today's challenge is to give consumers information and choices about what is authentic in the marketplace.

Corporate "greenwashing" is rampant in the industry. Many products are made by large multi-national companies that aren't necessarily interested in supporting small, local producers. A hallmark of food co-ops, and Seward Co-op in particular, is support for these producers.

We created the Community Foods program to better highlight products coming from the community for our shoppers.

What do you hope for the future of Seward Cooperative?

Doyle: Seward Co-op will always be my home co-op. I started my co-op career



Raynardo Williams

GENERAL MANAGERS

- PJ Hoffman (1983-1986)
- Gail Graham (1986-2000)
- Stuart Reid (2000-2004)
- Sean Doyle (2004-2022)
- Raynardo Williams - Interim (current)

MORE ON THE CO-OP HISTORY

- Read the co-ops 40th anniversary book, "Growing With a Purpose," on the co-op's website
- Watch The Co-op Wars documentary on PBS

there in 1992 when it was a small store at 22nd and Franklin.

I have grown up with the co-op in so many ways. My hope is that it continues to offer a community-owned alternative to mainstream grocery stores.

I dream that it will provide leadership for our mission to sustain a healthy community built on food and environmental justice for another 50 years.

RAYNARDO WILLIAMS - INCOMING INTERIM GENERAL MANAGER

Where did you grow up?

Williams: [I grew up in] St. Paul, but I currently reside in north Minneapolis.

How did you initially get interested in working for the co-op and what drew you to it?

Williams: After spending years working in a corporate environment, I wanted to work for a company that was mission-driven and that was more aligned with my personal and career aspirations.

[I] interviewed for the Friendship Store manager position in 2015 and [heard about] the positive impacts Seward envisioned the Friendship store having on the community: [growing] food access, creating jobs and opportunities for local producers/vendors, and a commitment to diversity by using equity as a lens for deci-

sion making. All of those things together increased my desire to want to work for Seward Co-op.

What have you learned from wearing different hats at the co-op since you were hired back in 2015?

Williams: I've learned so much over the years. Prior to Seward, my background was within the financial services industry working in various operational leadership roles. By coming to Seward I was able to apply what I had previously learned to the food cooperative space.

Since my time, I've directly managed the Friendship and Franklin store locations, and have had oversight of our café, production kitchen, operations support, and HR departments.

Throughout these roles, I've learned the importance of cooperation to make decisions that are in the best interest of our staff, customers, reputation, and financial sustainability with the overall goal of providing food access to all.

What are your thoughts on being the first person of color to be a manager at Seward Co-op?

Williams: I am so happy to have this opportunity. Black and Brown leaders in the food cooperative space are rare. So to have been chosen to not only to lead the co-op in capacity, but to be a voice, inspiration, and change maker to those who look like me is an honor.

How do you create good working relationships with the workers now that they're unionized?

Williams: I don't have a strategy or formal process in doing that. I believe in developing authentic and organic relationships with all people I come into contact with. This includes all staff, community members and owners. The key for me is to build trust and by that, positive relationships are formed.

What are some of your favorite dishes or foods from the co-op?

Williams: The Lotus Restaurant frozen Vegetarian Eggrolls. They are so yummy!

What do you hope to accomplish as interim general manager?

Williams: During my time as interim general manager it is my hope to provide stability during a time of transition.

My predecessor Sean Doyle was in the role for 18 years. It is important that all staff, owners and community are confident in the co-op's ability and leadership to continue to thrive.

In order for me to ensure this, I have to continue to foster positive working relationships with all staff.

We have so many passionate staff working at the co-op and it's important that all voices are heard, support is provided, and we cultivate a positive work environment that allows for all of us to continue to do the great work we do.

What we do has so many positive impacts on people throughout the Twin Cities and throughout the world!

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21ST AUTUMN BREW REVIEW AT BOOM ISLAND PARK

Local breweries (left to right) Arbeiter, Venn and East Lake participated in the annual event on Oct. 15. See more photos on the Messenger's Instagram and Facebook accounts.

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WHEN LOCAL NEWS FAILS...

“The consequences may not be obvious, but they are insidious.”
— Margaret Sullivan, "Ghosting The News"

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING THIS NEWSPAPER

Is city taking community engagement seriously?

>> from 1

to support the kind of infrastructure and capacity needed to effectively conduct the kind of outreach and engagement efforts expected by the NCR and the city council.”

The mayor’s proposed budget for 2023 follows guidelines previously approved for the Neighborhoods 2020 program, and includes \$3.1 million allocated through three programs specifically for neighborhood organizations. That includes \$840,000 in the Neighborhood Network Fund, \$2.16 million in the Equitable Engagement Fund, and \$100,000 in the Collaboration and Shared Resources Fund. Last year these three funds received over \$3.7 million.

The Neighborhood Network Fund supports day-to-day operations of the city’s network of 70 neighborhood organizations. These funds can be used for the administration and operating expenses, and provide the same base level of funding for each neighborhood. In 2023, each neighborhood will receive only half what they get this year, dropping from \$20,000 to \$10,000.

The Equitable Engagement Fund will increase by roughly \$170,000 and goes to neighborhoods in varying amounts based on their designation as a concentrated area of poverty, evidence of gentrification and the number of cost-burdened households. Funding is provided to support activities that focus on equity and increased participation in neighborhood decision making.

The Collaboration and Shared Resources Fund provides resources to support the consolidation or the sharing of resources among neighborhood organizations.

In addition to the \$3.1 million dedicated to neighborhood organizations, the mayor has proposed \$250,000 to go into a Partnership Fund. This fund may be used by separate community-based organizations who partner with recognized neighborhood organizations to engage under-represented residents.

NRP TO NCR TO CCP

The amount of overall funding going to neighborhood groups is lower than it has been for decades. From 1990-2010, after the Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP) was established as a joint initiative by the state legislature and city council, \$20 million a year was dedicated to support neighborhood groups and projects from property taxes that would have otherwise gone to the city, county schools and parks.

When the program ended in 2011, the city established a new Neighborhood and Community Relations (NCR) department and, prior to creating the Neighborhoods 2020 program, formed the Community Participation Program (CCP). In the 2019 resolution to develop the Neighborhoods 2020 program, the council set the mini-

mum base funding for neighborhoods at \$25,000. At one point a city work group recommended a funding level of \$10 million a year for neighborhood support with a higher minimum, but the city council at the time directed staff to cap it at \$4.1 million.

The base funding was lowered to \$10,000 following a report the city commissioned from the University of Minnesota’s Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA). The report examined neighborhood funding using a racial equity lens and analyzed data from 1990-2019. It concluded, “The combination of NRP I and II, CPP, neighborhood associations, and City of Minneapolis management reveals a system of institutional racism.” Within the limit of the \$4.1 million annual budget CURA found that a “\$25,000 base funding allocation is racially inequitable.”

According to the plan approved in 2020, and subsequent budget amendments, 2023 will be the first year the base funding reaches \$10,000 per neighborhood.

The report ended saying, “The City of Minneapolis will also have to consider the tension between maintaining a city-wide network of neighborhood organizations and allocating money in a racial equitable way. Part of that tension exists because of how much money is available in the program as a whole.”

ORGANIZATIONS CAN'T PAY STAFF

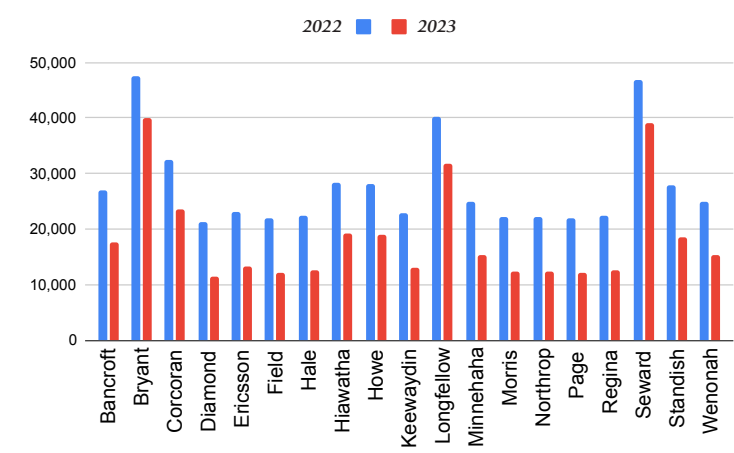
Brandon Long is feeling that tension as executive director for the Nokomis East Neighborhood Association (NENA) that includes four neighborhoods – Keewaydin, Minnehaha, Morris Park, and Wenonah. “The city’s funding cuts are having a catastrophic impact on NENA’s ability to serve its residents,” he said.

As a result of the redistribution of available funds, SENA has had to close its office and now operates virtually. Lopez’s executive director job will be ending, and SENA will transition to having a part-time administrative staff.

“The potential for the network of neighborhood associations to fundamentally impact racial and socio-economic disparities through grassroots, high-quality programming has been undermined by the lack of funding,” said Lopez. “SENA has almost 10,000 stakeholders in our neighborhoods. How are we supposed to effect change for \$3 per person per year?”

Michael Jon Olson is also concerned. While currently Seward Neighborhood Group Director, and Nicollet Island East Bank Neighborhood Association Coordinator, he stressed he was speaking for himself when he said, “The fact that the City of Minneapolis has significantly decreased its funding for neighborhood organizations at a time when it has increased its rhetoric about engaging under-represented groups demonstrates that the city and its department of Neighborhood and Community Relations (NCR) do not take broad community engagement seri-

2022 vs 2023 neighborhood funding



Source: Neighborhoods 2020 Program Guidelines

ously.”

Olsen has worked with community engagement organizations for 25 years, served on the boards of Ventura Village, Inc., the Longfellow Community Council, and the Center for Neighborhoods. Formerly, he was coordinator of the Cedar Isle Dean Neighborhood Association and executive director of the Hamline Midway Coalition in Saint Paul. “Any community organizer worth their salt knows that engaging renters, immigrant communities, communities of color, and other oft under-represented populations in a meaningful way requires a sustained commitment of time, attention, energy, and resources,” he said.

‘HUSHING THE COLLECTIVE VOICE OF THE PEOPLE’

The Longfellow Community Council (LCC) put out a formal statement in response to the proposed budget. “The city and NCR have demanded fundamental systems change from neighborhood organizations while at the same time stripping away funding,” they wrote. “The concept of creating an equitable civic participation system as declared within the Neighborhoods 2020 funding program is spot on. However, the failure comes from not providing the resources needed for neighborhoods to be successful in that work.”

Concerns are being raised elsewhere in the city, as well. The Armatage Board, for example, said, “Over the decades, neighborhood organizations have connected not just neighbors with each other but to their elected officials, resources to help address needs, educational programming, and more.” They continued, “As the city budget continues to reduce financial support for many neighborhoods in favor of non-geographic-based organizations, we risk disenfranchising large sections of the city, cutting communications between the people and the decision makers, and losing a critical and irreplaceable part of what makes Minneapolis unique and special.”

“The new funding program’s additional goals of ‘recognizing the core and vital service neighborhood organizations provide’ and ‘building people’s long-term capacity to organize to improve their lives and neighborhoods’ while critical are also

not achievable given actual funding levels,” wrote LCC. “Almost all neighborhood organizations are dependent on the city for funding as the neighborhood system was created by the city itself to serve Minneapolis residents. Over time, this new program will effectively eliminate neighborhood organizations, hushing the collective voice of the people.”

“Any attentive observer of the city and NCR can suss out their end-game,” said Olsen, “a city where neighborhood organizations are under-resourced to the point that they become completely ineffective or simply non-existent. Ironically, if the city has its way, the only neighborhood organizations that will continue to exist and be effective are those that are, indeed, bastions for wealthy home-owners.”

“Elected officials love to attend our free community events for photo ops and outreach and use us as information disseminators and trusted community partners yet they expect us to do so for essentially zero pay,” said Long. “It is clear that the city’s strategy is to slowly starve organizations like NENA’s until they merge and dramatically decrease the number of these neighborhood organizations.”

“More than half of all neighborhood organizations will receive less than \$19,300 starting next year,” said LCC. “For many, the new program is designed to phase them out.”

CITY COUNCIL COULD AMEND BUDGET

The city council will be considering amendments to the mayor’s proposed budget in the weeks ahead but so far it is unclear if any work is being done to make any changes in funding to neighborhoods.

“It’s too early for me to say whether or not I plan to make amendments to the mayor’s 2023-2024 recommended budget,” said Ward 11 Council Member Emily Koski. “I absolutely support neighborhood organizations and know the value that they bring to the City of Minneapolis.”

Koski served on her own neighborhood group board in the past. She said, “I know about the struggles they are facing around funding, staffing, and I want to help neighborhood organizations, NCR and the City of Minneapolis in finding solutions.”

The city council’s budget committee will be meeting throughout the month with public hearings on the budget set for Nov. 10, at 10 a.m., Nov. 15 at 6:05 p.m. and Dec. 6, 6:05 p.m. when the approval of a final amended budget is expected.

CITY BRIEFS

RIVER DAM REVIEW

The Army Corps of Engineers is considering future options, including removal, for the dams at Lower St. Anthony Falls and Lock and Dam 1 (the “Ford Dam”). They have released a study, hosted meetings and are taking comments until Nov 25. More information <https://www.mvp.usace.army.mil/MplsLocksDisposition/>. Comments can be sent to: District Engineer, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Paul District, ATTN: Regional Planning and Environment Division North, 332 Minnesota St., Suite E1500, St. Paul, MN 55101 or MplsLocksDisposition@usace.army.mil. You can also comment online and sign up for updates from the Friends of the Mississippi on their website or by contacting Maddie Miller at mmiller@fmr.org.

COUNTY TAX LEVY

After Hennepin County staff recommended a 3.5% property tax levy increase for 2023, the county board is considering adding 1%, or \$9 million more. This follows a 0% property tax levy increase for 2022. Commissioner Irene Fernando said that the county needs a larger reserve as the federal funding from pandemic relief is spent. In October, the board supported Fernando’s proposed 4.5% increase by a 5-2 vote, though it must still vote on final approval on Dec. 15.

PARK BOARD BUDGET

Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) Superintendent Al Bangoura presented his recommended 2023 budget to the Park Board on Oct. 12. The Park Board had requested a tax levy increase of 6.16%, but the Board of Estimate and Taxation only approved a 5.4% increase, setting the max-

imum at \$78,456,285. The increase will be used primarily to support the board’s commitment to increase youth investment and to offset the State of Minnesota Local Government Aid (LGA) funding decrease. Find the proposed budget at <http://www.minneapolis.org/budget>. Public comment opportunities scheduled Oct. 26, Nov. 2, 15, 30 and Dec. 6.

TREE CARE AT LAKE NOKOMIS

Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board has announced plans to remove dead trees near Lake Nokomis this fall and winter. Trees identified for removal were specifically identified by Forestry staff as unsafe. Some of the felled logs will be placed along the shoreline to improve wildlife habitat and reduce erosion. To learn more about this project and others, visit www.minneapolis.org/planning

XCEL'S PROPOSED RATE INCREASE

The Minnesota Public Utilities Commission has set public hearings on Xcel Energy’s request to increase electricity costs for all its Minnesota customers. On average, the proposed rate change would increase the electricity bill for a typical residential electric customer by \$18.56 per month. The increase must first be approved by the commission who has set hearings for 1:30 p.m. on Monday, Oct. 31 online and 6 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 2. People can also submit written comments without attending public hearings through Jan. 6, 2023. Contact Jorge Alonso at 651-201-2258 or jorge.alonso@state.mn.us or Ben Gustafson at 651- 201-2247 or ben.gustafson@state.mn.us for more information.

~ Briefs compiled by Cam Gordon



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'THIS IS TOO MUCH'

>> from 1

ber was listed in a corner on one of the webpages for the Minnesota Department of Health. "It wasn't realistic," she said. "And 911 was not flipping those calls."

She said CUAPB went to the legislature and, in the 2021 session, was able to get Travis' Law passed. "The law requires 911 to pass calls to mental health as the prime responders for mental health crisis calls, unless there is a weapon or a threat," Gross explained. "Even if there is a weapon or a threat, we want a co-response so the police can secure the area and then back away and let the mental health responders take care of the situation."

Travis' Law was named for Travis Jordan, a young man experiencing a mental health crisis in Minneapolis in 2019. According to Gross, he had a knife and was suicidal. "The police came and started screaming at him," Gross related. "One cop called his supervisor while the other one kept screaming. Travis shut the window and tried to ignore him. Travis then emerged from the front door holding the knife, and was shot and killed."

Gross said his mother is suing the police. "Her testimony was powerful and heartbreaking," she said. "It's sad to hear people say Travis' Law doesn't matter. It is about a new fight to expect the correct response."

Gross stated that the good thing about Minnesota is that not only are there good resources, but there are already good laws in place so that mental health responders have to be practitioners. Psychologists run the team, with other practitioners in place, and also peer counselors. "I like that they have to be quality teams," she added. "They can stabilize a person in their home, or get people to a program right away. There are times when someone does need to be hospitalized."

"The way to address this in the community is with people who can help as opposed to cops, whose main thing is to wrestle a person into submission and then take him or her to the hospital. We are wasting ambulances, and the person is not getting the optimal care. We need to improve that, and we need to get the police out of the picture because those encounters can be deadly," she said.

Once Travis' Law was passed, Gross said CUAPB held workshops bringing in professional experts from around the country.

CANOPY BEHAVIOR CRISIS RESPONSE CAME AFTER TRAVIS' LAW

Travis' Law was passed prior to the Canopy Behavioral Crisis Response being put together in Minneapolis, according to Gross. She said Canopy was in some ways a response to Cope, the Hennepin County mental health crisis program.

"Unfortunately, we have some problems with Cope that we need to fix if we can," she noted.

Gross said embedded social workers in the process are well and good, but they are actually follow-up and not going out with the primary responders.

"For us, that's a problem," she said. "Less than 1 percent of mental health calls involve weapons or a threat. So in 99.1 percent of these calls, there is no need for police to be involved. The mental health

CLAUDIA'S STORY

Claudia Sago's son, Jomari, is 43, and he has been functioning in society with a family and was employed until COVID-19 ended his job. The loss of his job, separation from his wife and homelessness has taken a toll on him, according to Sago. He had been diagnosed as bipolar.

"He had a mental breakdown on June 6," she said. "He was seeking help to get his child to safety, because he knew he was in trouble." She said she had been unable to get a complete police report, but she was told he was seeking help and a paramedic showed up. Her son changed his mind and said he did not want to go to the hospital. He did not want to be away from his child.

"He had told them he was suicidal, and there was an altercation between him and one of the paramedics," Sago related. "The police came, and they said my son was struggling and they tased him. He fell and hit his head and suffered a traumatic brain injury. They did emergency surgery for the bleeding in his brain, and he was in a coma for 30 days."

Sago said the family was not notified until two days after the incident. He is still in the hospital, being moved from ICU to recovery to a psychiatric ward. She said he is waiting to be released for traumatic brain damage rehabilitation.

Sago was referred by a social worker to CUAPB to try and help her get the



Jomari Sago

complete police report. She was also trying to get video and body cam footage so she could see what happened to her son.

"We hooked Claudia up to an attorney for her son, and he was finally able to access the police report," said Michelle Gross of CUAPB. "That is when we learned the behavioral response unit showed up and either brought the MPD with them or called them. It is unclear as to why."

Sago said she has pictures of her son from the time he was in ICU up until now. She said her son is being charged with fourth degree assault upon the paramedic. "There was no injury, some bruises to his face," she stated. She has sent a letter and the documentation she has been able to get to Attorney General Keith Ellison's office.

"They want my son in court next month, but he is in no condition to do that. This whole thing has just been heart-wrenching."

"All of this because her son called for assistance," said Michelle Gross of CUAPB. "Claudia came to us to primarily help her get the police report. But this is bigger than the police report."

"How dare they not treat him correctly? This was a functional person in our society, and they took this away from him. I am just furious. He was not armed and was not threatening anyone but himself."

crisis responders should be the primary responders. They can always call the police later if they are needed."

RAMSEY COUNTY LEADING THE WAY

She said it is one of the important things to try and get the counties to that place. "Ramsey County is already there," Gross said. "They were the leaders in the whole state and were some of the presenters at our workshops. Not only do they know how to respond to mental health crises, but they have a whole package put together."

"They have a facility for people who need to be taken somewhere. They have a walk-in mental health facility if you feel something's going wrong for you. There are all kinds of these availabilities all around the counties," Gross said.

She cited Dakota County and its early adoption of Travis' Law. "In the first three months, Dakota County deflected 88 percent of calls to the mental health responders, and no police were involved," Gross claimed.

Mendota Heights police have been told they do not need to respond to mental health crisis calls, and they have chosen not to, according to Gross. "It has been a harder battle with some of the other counties, and we have gone out into the communities talking about how Travis' Law needs to be implemented," Gross said. She noted that if an agency does not imple-

ment Travis' Law, that agency is held responsible. "We're waiting for the first case to come through," Gross said, "and that may be Claudia's case." (See sidebar story)

GAPS IN MINNEAPOLIS SYSTEM

Regarding CUAPB's concerns with responses to mental health crisis calls, Czech said he and his sister had engaged with Minneapolis and St. Paul, and for a while Brooklyn Park, to promote co-responders back in 2015. He said that if there was no alternative response to the police, they at least wanted a co-response with mental health professionals. "That got a start, which was good, and it evolved to alternative responses in the cities," Czech said.

"The public does not understand what co-response is," Czech continued. "When they go together, one of the responders does not go a day later or four hours later, they show up at the same time. Some public officials have tried to redefine it."

"There's a second problem, and I wish the media would key on some of this stuff," Czech continued. "When there is a push to get alternative responses, the focus is on how many calls are taken. The focus should be on the most important calls that need professional experience the most, not welfare checks."

Czech said Minneapolis is very much about how many calls are taken away from

the police, but he feels if these are welfare checks and the police are going to the important calls, the priorities are off base.

"People with expertise are being hired and should be used," he said. "It will save lives, and it will save money, as well. What is important to me is that they understand these calls are not just to take away from the police, but part of the mental health system now."

Gross said she likes to think of it as an expanded response, not an alternative response. "We need to have a panel with a button not just for police or the fire department or the ambulance, but we need to expand those buttons to cover other issues. The police do not need to deal with mental health crises or drugs or homelessness."

Czech said that Los Angeles, Houston and other cities understand the situation. "We would like to see a multi-layered response system, with social workers and forensic psychiatric teams. It works better if you have an accounting system that includes all these services, so people can be helped and not have so many problems they have to come back."

"That's why we like Ramsey County; they have layers of response teams. The emphasis is getting people the best care and responses they need. And they end up saving money," Gross stated.

"We want to go to the legislature and get more funding for mental health teams," Gross continued. She mentioned Secure Transport, which instead of an ambulance, is "kind of like a taxi, with the driver trained in mental health and first aid. It's very inexpensive, and you would save a ton of money," she said. She said a person suffering a mental health crisis could be stabilized and transported, if necessary, without the need for police intervention. "This kind of seamless network is what is needed," she said. "Minneapolis made a stab at it, but it's not 24-7 and connecting with the rest of county services. This one little team is not connected to the rest, and that's our complaint."

Czech added his concern that Minneapolis has not done a good job of collaborating with Hennepin County. He cited a story from the New Yorker entitled, "Million Dollar Murray." Czech said the story was about all the disconnected services a fellow named Murray received, ending up with spending of a million dollars. Murray was one of the 10 percent who used 80 percent of services. In the end, Czech said, New York could have paid for an apartment and care for Murray at far less expense. Czech emphasized providing services in a smart way that would improve the care and ultimately result in less costs.

Czech related that he and some others visited Duluth, the first place in Minnesota that had co-responders. The city had been told it couldn't be done, that there would be danger in putting clinicians in harm's way on these responses.

"We knew, and we found out through more research, that concern was bogus," one of the Duluth police responded. "Many programs going back to the 70s and 80s never had a fatality or injury. That's a cop-out. The officers secure a scene before co-responders are put anywhere near a person."

Czech said that looking at similar programs throughout this country and in Europe, it hurts to hear how easily it could be done and how easily it is dismissed.

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ANDREW JOHNSON >> from 1

There are many aspects to being on the council, Johnson pointed out. "There's communication. There's organizing. Problem solving. Research. Listening. Working with others."

"You have to do a lot of showing up to community spaces and events. Being able to be present is really important."

A good council member will love the community and want to help solve problems and make it better. "You want to leave it better than when you found it," said Johnson. Part of the job is engaging with other community volunteers.

Johnson remarked that some people may have the skills for a good campaign but not for the role of council member, while others may not be good on a campaign but have the skills needed to be on the council. But both are part of the job of a council member.

The act of running for office can be exhausting, but it is also an incredible experience, according to Johnson. "You get to meet thousands of people and hear their stories and hopes and concerns and dreams for the city. That is such a gift. There's nothing like it."

For those interested in the role, the next step is to work with residents to get their support. In late winter/early spring, the Minneapolis DFL will hold its convention, and officially endorse one candidate. The candidate filing period opens Friday, Aug. 1, 2023 and closes Aug. 15. The ranked choice general election is on the first Tuesday in November. More information will be posted on the city website following the conclusion of this year's election cycle.

"I want there to be several highly qualified and skilled candidates with diverse backgrounds and interests for voters to choose among because that's what will serve our ward well. Democracy is a beautiful thing."

'AMAZING AND HUMBLING OPPORTUNITY'

Now 38, Johnson was the youngest member on the council when he started and the first Millennial to sit on the Minneapolis City Council. He came from a career in IT, working at Target and running his own business on the side. He has battled glaucoma, and decided to make the most of every minute because life is not guaranteed.

Johnson's journey into public service began shortly after he purchased a home in Longfellow and attended the Longfellow Community Council annual meeting. He walked out a new board member, and was elected as board president after his first term.

Johnson married Sara Vine in 2016. He has welcomed two sons over the past few years, Elliott and Ben, who spent six weeks in the Fairview Masonic Children's Hospital NICU earlier this year right after his birth.

He's learned how to be a leader by sitting on the council. "I've learned how to effect change using processes. I've built strong relationships and worked with others to get things done. I'm often the deciding vote and able to shape some of the biggest issues before our city."

AN IDEAS PERSON

There's a lot that Johnson is proud of, and more he plans to do with the last 14 months of his term.

He intends to continue working to bridge a compromise between the city, public works and the East Phillips Neighborhood Initiative regarding the former Roof Depot site. He wants to see a better solution to the city's sidewalks in the winter when they're covered by snow and ice, a problem he views as a public safety issue. While the wait times on Hiawatha Ave. due to the light rail are better than they were, he recognizes that it's still tough on residents, and he hopes to implement better technology to deal with the directive to get eastbound traffic moving first to



Andrew Johnson with wife, Sara, and sons Elliott and Ben. (Photo submitted)

get them out of the way of an oncoming train. This means that the rotation is reset every time there is a train, and can leave other directions stuck idle for long periods of time.

He's currently the chair of the Northern Lights Express Alliance and says they're close to getting high-speed passenger rail between Target Field Station in Minneapolis and Union Depot in Duluth.

"When I ran for office, I ran as an ideas person," he observed. He has approached the work by identifying problems and seeking solutions.

One solution was the formation of a small business office. Prior to this, the direction was to put demands on small businesses, but now city staff seek to work with small businesses to get them what they need. In the past, it was confusing for small business owners and entrepreneurs to figure out what the city's rules and regulations were, and difficult to figure out what resources there were. With the new office, there is a small business portal to help demystify the process, pointed out Johnson. "We want entrepreneurs to be successful. It adds value to a community, creates jobs and services, and makes Minneapolis a great place." They've also begun reaching out to businesses to see what they need, versus waiting to be contacted. "I think that makes a big difference," said Johnson.

When his aide Suzanne Murphy became pregnant, Johnson learned that the city didn't offer paid parental leave to its 4,000 employees, but instead required parents to either use vacation or sick time when their children were born or adopted. He helped lead the effort to change that, and then worked to add paid sick leave for all employees.

There was this incentive for workers to come in sick before, pointed out Johnson, because they needed to pay their rent and buy groceries.

The Sick and Safe Time Ordinance took effect July 1, 2017 – which meant it was in place when COVID-19 hit. Employers with six or more employees must provide paid sick and safe time in the city. This affects 100,000 workers in the city.

The Sick and Safe Time ordinance almost didn't pass, recalled Johnson. It became part of a larger package, the Working Families Agenda that also included minimum wage, predictable scheduling, and wage theft. "It became too much to pass on its own," said Johnson. He suggested that a work group be developed to study just the sick and safe time component, and it moved ahead from there. It took

working with community partners and building support to get it passed.

In hindsight, another work group laid the groundwork for bigger changes in the city as it relates to policing. People were already talking about defunding the police in 2018 when the 911 work group was formed. Various people served on the work group, including police, and discussed how some things could be done more efficiently and effectively if police officers weren't doing them. This led to the recommendation that theft reports be taken by 311 or online, parking-related calls go to traffic control, and that there be a non-emergency mental health line. Embedding mental health professionals in the Fire Department, police and 911 were also part of the recommendations.

This effort resulted in the creation of the Behavioral Crisis Response Team that has successfully answered thousands of calls without needing police back-up, and is appreciated by the police department.

Johnson also worked to add items to the city's website to make it easier for residents to get city data.

IMPACT OF GEORGE FLOYD'S MURDER

Serving on the council now feels like a different job from when he began. Part of that is being on this side of George Floyd's murder by Minneapolis Officer Derek Chauvin (with three others also facing charges). Another piece is that he can't just go to a city worker to get information anymore.

You can't pick the challenges you'll face, he pointed out. "To know you helped make things better despite the circumstances feels good."

Aside from having a son in the NICU for six weeks, the murder of George Floyd was the worst moment in his life. Viewing the footage of Floyd's murder made him want to go back in time and stop it, said Johnson. "It's traumatic to even watch. It induced a rage. It's like, I can't believe this is happening. How could this happen?"

Then he watched the community he loves so much burn and saw the fear residents had.

As a Longfellow resident who lives one mile from the Third Precinct, Johnson woke up every morning during the Uprising and saw ashes on his yard. He smelled smoke at home. "It was like living in a war zone," he recalled. "You can participate in the righteous anger over George's Floyd's murder and the racial reckoning, and also feel so upset by what is happening to the community. Everyone was grieving." He

watched neighbors band together at night to protect homes and businesses, and then get up to clean and rally together in the morning. There were peaceful protesters, and White supremacists in the midst.

He was frustrated by what happened because he knew that changes he'd pushed for and others had pushed for had not happened, and it resulted in the murder of George Floyd and the aftermath. "There's a special kind of shock from the vantage of the council," he said. "You see the sum of the issues added up in a unique way."

He saw how Minneapolis Police Department has been an island in the city with oversight only by the mayor instead of the city council. He saw the gaps in the city's body cam policy.

TRANSFER OF POWER FROM ELECTED OFFICIALS TO APPOINTED STAFF

The movement to consolidate power with the mayor has continued after question one was approved by voters last year. Because one person can't be directly involved in everything, the mayor is currently working to set up new staff members who will manage things, such as the Public Safety Commissioner. Decisions will largely be made by these staff members.

"This has transferred power from the council to the mayor. In a larger sense, this has transferred power from elected officials to appointed individuals," pointed out Johnson. "Whether that produces more accessibility and responsiveness for the public is a big open question."

With that, there are fewer dollars going to neighborhoods to do engagement work while more requirements are being placed on them. The amount of money neighborhoods get seems to change based on who is on the council. "That's not a recipe for stability or long-term planning," he said. He thinks the only way that might change is with a charter amendment to designate a percentage of the city's budget to neighborhood organizations.

As a city council member, Johnson can no longer go to a city worker and ask for information. Like it is with journalists, he is directed to specific gatekeepers and department heads. "Now everything seems really slow and there is less information than I was able to get before," he said. He is not sure if this is the new norm, or part of the process of sorting out the new strong mayor system.

He is concerned to see power shift from elected officials into institutions. "There are trade-offs to any change," said Johnson.

READY FOR A NEW CHALLENGE

Johnson is ready for a new challenge, he said, although he doesn't know what that will be. He'll be looking for something that uses the leadership skills he learned while in office.

With the new government structure and new ward boundaries, Johnson believes it is a good time to pass the torch to a new public servant. There is currently only one person on the council who has been there longer than him, and that is Ward 7 Member Lisa Goodman. He said he has engaged in self-reflection regularly over the last nine years, considering both his goals and what he brings to the ward.

He said, "It's been an amazing and humbling opportunity."

HOW TO FILE FOR OFFICE

Step 1: File initial campaign finance report to Minneapolis Elections within 14 days of raising or spending more than \$750.

Step 2: Complete filing paperwork during candidate filing period with the city of Minneapolis. An Affidavit of Candidacy is required for all candidates.

Step 3: Pay filing fee or submit petition instead of paying fee.

Step 4: Complete two types of financial reporting, a Statement of Economic Interest or Campaign Finance Reports.

CREMA COFFEE + CREAM OPENS IN NOKOMIS EAST

NOKOMIS EAST NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

BY SARAH FRIEDMAN
communications manager
sarah.friedman@nokomiseast.org



Nokomis has a new coffee shop! Crema Coffee + Crema at 5013 S. 34th Ave., opened on Oct. 12, 2022. It is owned by Leah Owens and Patrick Hanke and managed by Kit Loose.

Leah's lifelong dream was to open a coffee shop. When she was walking with her son Jack, she realized she didn't have a destination to walk to. Her partner, Patrick, always wanted to own his own business and felt that the dream to create a coffee shop would be perfect. "If we didn't start this, and somebody else did, we'd be customers," Patrick said thinking about the long-time need for a coffee shop in the area.

Leah and Patrick first had the idea of creating a coffee shop when they were eating affogatos (gelato with a shot of espresso on top) on a beach in Mexico. They decided they needed a place in Minneapolis where they could buy such a great dessert. They created Crema Coffee + Cream with the idea that they wanted to offer great

coffee that's accessible (and not snobby) to the public. They put thought into the beans; ordering from Roastery 7, a place where Leah trained to be a barista. Their current drip coffee comes from Costa Rica. This is in particular interest to Leah and Patrick because they recently came back from a trip there. Patrick said, "Opening up that bag [of coffee] is like walking into any establishment down there."

Along with coffee, tea, and gelato, customers may order pastries from Marc Heu Pastries. Marc Heu studied in France and his croissants take seven days to make. Patrick and Leah interviewed with him for two and a half hours to be able to serve his pastries, and are the only establishment to serve them in Minneapolis.

When walking into this extraordinary coffee shop, you will be greeted by a large colorful abstract mural created by local artist Ashley Mary. She worked with the corporate accounts for Target and Starbucks. You will probably be served by the manager, Kit. Kit is working in the shop as he begins to look into creating his own coffee shop in Japan.

Before Crema Coffee + Cream opened, it was continuously a barbershop for nearly 100 years. Most recently, it was Bob's Barber Shop. Because there are three barber shops on the street, Patrick and Leah felt a coffee shop would be a great addition.

Next summer, Crema Coffee + Cream

will have a pick-up window and a space for people to sip coffee outside. It is truly a great place to relax no matter what time of year.

FACADE IMPROVEMENT MATCHING GRANTS

Local businesses and nonprofits who would like to improve the exterior of their buildings are encouraged to apply for this matching grant for up to \$5,000.

Facade improvement matching grants help local businesses with improving the facade of their buildings. These grants are on a first come first serve basis. One matching grant can be a maximum of \$5,000 per storefront.

Examples of what business can apply for:

1. Masonry repairs and tuck pointing
2. Removal of architecturally inappropriate or incompatible exterior finishes and materials
3. Restoration of architectural details or removal of materials that cover architectural details
4. Repair or replacement of windows and doors (if replacement, windows and doors must be architecturally appropriate)
5. Window and cornice flashing and repair
6. Canopy or awning installation or repair
7. Murals

8. Installation or repair of exterior signage

9. Removal of barriers to access the building from outside for people with disabilities

10. Exterior lighting

11. Contracted labor related to any of the above improvements, including design work for improvements that are completed

12. Wall, window, hanging, and monument signs advertising the business name and identity

13. Living wall or "green façade"

For more information, please email Nokomis East Neighborhood Services at Nena@nokomiseast.org

UPCOMING:

12/22/2022: NENA Board Meeting, 6:30 pm at Morris Park Recreation Center

MEET SARAH FRIEDMAN

Sarah Friedman is excited to join NENA as a program and communication manager. She moved to Minnesota to pursue her master's degree in public policy at University of Minnesota. In her spare time, she plays with her one-year-old, rock climbs, and runs. Please say "Hi!" if you see her running around the neighborhood or email her at sarah.friedman@nokomiseast.org.

Meet LCC and SNG tenant organizer

LONGFELLOW COMMUNITY COUNCIL

BY ANDREA TRITSCHLER,
communications
andrea@longfellow.org



Torrie Pernell joined LCC in 2022 after working as an early childhood educator for over 10 years, and is serving as a third year alumna for AmeriCorps through their VISTA program. Originally from Chicago but raised here in Minneapolis, she's been a dedicated educator, volunteer, and humanitarian for youth and equality for over 20 years.

WHERE DO YOU LIVE (CITY/NEIGHBORHOOD)? CAN YOU PROVIDE SOME INFORMATION ABOUT YOU, YOUR FAMILY/PETS, HOBBIES, ETC.?

I just moved to the Maple Grove area after living in Minneapolis for over two decades. It's quite different, but the neighbors are friendly and the scenery is very beautiful. My goal one day is to open my own child care center, with a focus on Kindergarten readiness and keeping scholars at or above grade level with our tutoring services.

I have six beautiful children of my own and two grandchildren who I take great pride in raising and caring for. I love learning about history, reading memoirs, and playing a nice game of pool.

WHAT DREW YOU TO LONGFELLOW AND THIS POSITION?

I applied for the VISTA Tenant Organizer position because I discovered all the ambition and hard work that everyone at Longfellow Community Council was doing to create change for the community, and I knew I had to be involved. Their involvement with projects like Free the Deeds and their barrier-free rental assistance program work to address the inequities in our neighborhood's housing.

It was my goal to use my passion about equality and community to be a part of something great. I am very grateful for this opportunity to contribute to what's ahead, and I look forward to connecting with the renters in the Longfellow



Torrie Pernell

and Seward neighborhoods.

WHAT ARE YOUR GOALS FOR THIS ROLE?

The goals I have for my role is first to be a listener to the community and their needs, doing my best to make sure that every neighbor feels included and has a seat at the table on issues in the community, while getting as many residents connected to resources that best serve and are available to them and their families. As a renter, I know how complicated it can be to find resources and how important it is to have someone to advocate for you. I'm hoping that renters can look to LCC as an organization that can provide them with that support and engage them with their community through events and programming.

WHAT VALUE DOES THE LCC BRING TO THE COMMUNITY?

LCC and SNG focuses on the real issues and needs of the community such as housing, development, transportation and environment. However there needs to be more representation of the BIPOC community in neighborhood organizations, so I value the fact that these neighborhood organizations are working relentlessly at achieving this goal.

Contact Torrie at torrie@longfellow.org.

'The Mary Hanson Show' celebrates 40 years

'The Mary Hanson Show,' the longest-running independently produced cable TV show in the United States, is 40 years old this fall. The talk show also was on public television for 23 years. The award-winning program focuses on health and social issues and provides a forum for area and national experts and leaders. The show has received strong, steadfast support throughout the past 40 years through grants and underwriting as well as from the press.

Guests, numbering in the thousands, have joined Hanson on the set. Guests have ranged from Minnesota Governors to Minnesota Supreme Court Justices as well as national figures such as author/columnist, Dr. Joyce Brothers, and Academy Award winning Director, Milos Forman. Topics have ranged from depression and suicide to student loan debt to interviews with leaders as varied as Will Steger, Amy Klobuchar, Alan Page and Stanislaw Skrowaczewski.



Mary Hanson, a Standish resident

After hosting and producing the show for 40 years, she is sometimes asked if she is ready to retire. Hanson, who resides in Standish, states that she is not. "I continue to be excited about my role as a conduit, bringing the knowledge and insights of my guests to the viewers. I am also realizing the importance of the show historically as we lose leaders such as Dudley Riggs and Congressman Jim Ramstad whom I have had the privilege to interview."

* SMALL BUSINESS MATCHING GRANT UP TO \$5,000 *

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for information, email:
nena@nokomiseast.org

Nokomis East
Neighborhood
Services

TIDBITS

GREAT TOILET PAPER CHALLENGE
AT MINNEHAHA FOOD SHELF

The Minnehaha Food Shelf has seen an enormous increase in demand for its services since the first of the year and several area churches have stepped up to try to meet the demand by collecting a designated personal care item each month. They decided to add a bit of playful competition to their efforts in August by declaring The Great Toilet Paper Challenge to see how many rolls they could collect and how big a mountain of toilet paper they could build.



The churches involved include: Minnehaha United Methodist Church (MUMC), Lake Nokomis Lutheran, Living Table UCC, Spirit Catholic Community, and Sts. Luke & James Episcopal. The friendly competition collected enormous mountains of paper that were documented in photos taken at each church location.

More contributions are needed. The average number of clients has tripled in the first six months of 2022, and the poundage of food provided has increased nearly four times in that same time period – clear evidence that more people are in need of assistance and each family's need is growing as well. The numbers reflect increases in nearly every group of people we serve – singles, seniors, families with children and immigrants.

Collections of various products will continue at these churches in upcoming months. Donated items can also be dropped off in an outside blue bin at MCMU, 3701 E. 50th St., Minneapolis. Upcoming collections will include feminine hygiene projects in November.

For more information, or to make a financial contribution, go to <https://www.minnehaha.org/foodshelf.html>.

The Minnehaha Food Shelf is open for food distribution every Tuesday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. It is located at

Minnehaha United Methodist Church at 3701 E. 50th St. in Minneapolis.

ARSON FIRES AT STEVENS HOUSE

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board Park Police Department is asking for the public's help in solving three recent arson fires at the Stevens House, located at 4901 South Minnehaha Park Drive, in Minnehaha Falls Regional Park. Fire 1 occurred in the early morning hours of Tuesday, Aug. 30. Fire 2 occurred in the early morning hours of Tuesday, Sept. 20. Fire 3 occurred in the early morning hours of Saturday, Oct. 1, 2022. People who provide information leading to the identification of the person(s) responsible for setting these fires will be eligible for a reward of up to \$5,000 through the Minnesota Department of Public Safety's State Fire Marshall Division. Tips can be made by calling 1-800-723-2020.

HOUSING FOR HOMELESS VETS

The Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans (MACV) and the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs (MDVA) are expanding housing for homeless and at-risk veterans in the Twin Cities through the purchase of a 17-unit apartment building in the Powderhorn neighborhood (3057 14th Avenue South). Funding for this initiative was made possible through \$5.41 million allocation in the 2022 Veterans Omnibus Bill. MACV acquired the Powderhorn property in July, and it is now open for move-in. MACV plans to primarily use these multi-family properties as long-term affordable housing in communities with shrinking affordability. MACV has also purchased St. Paul-area housing through the omnibus bill funding.

PLAN IT

ANNUAL ÆBLESKIVE NOV. 13

What is an Æbleskive you ask? It is a little ball of delight! Cooked in a special pan, these spherical delicacies are a cross between a pancake and a popover and topped with powdered sugar. As if they were not delicious enough, a homemade strawberry sauce accompanies these delightful Danish donuts. Once a year, St. Peder's Lutheran Church (the cute church on the corner of 46th and 42nd) cooks up Æbleskiver for the masses from 10 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. Free will offering.



PEACE PARADE AT LAKE NOKOMIS COMMUNITY SCHOOL

To honor International Day of Peace, students from Lake Nokomis Community Schools Wenonah & Keewaydin marched in a Peace Parade on Sept. 21, 2022. Students and staff from both schools left their campuses around 1:15 p.m. and then marched to Bossen Field. Once there, students formed the word "PEACE" before breaking off into small groups to do a peace project together. The goal of this event was to promote peace within the community, elevate student voice and strengthen the connection between the Wenonah and Keewaydin campuses.

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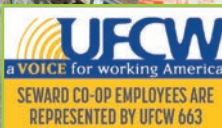
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Financing for this project was provided by the Metropolitan Council Metropolitan Livable Communities Fund, the City of Minneapolis, and the Hennepin County Affordable Housing Incentive Fund and Environmental Response Fund.

