



Cork series
still riding
high >> 2

One latte at a time

*Mission-drive coffee shop,
Flava, opens in Frogtown
Crossing at Dale/University*

By TESHAM. CHRISTENSEN

Frogtown has a coffee shop again. Over three years of planning culminated with the official opening of Flava Coffee and Cafe on Aug. 27, 2022 in the newly built Neighborhood Development Center at the corner of University and Dale.

It's really exciting to be here," said Flava owner Shaunie Grisby.

"I want it to feel like a little piece of home. I want it to be a space where people can be creative and imagine new things. Get comfortable, let their hair down, take a deep breath, and relax."

ADDING FLAVOR

Grisby grew up watching shows like "Moesha" in the 90s, and she wished for a coffee shop like The Den to go to. There were always Black youth hanging out, open mic nights, and community fundraisers. She loved "Living Single," which

ONE LATTE AT A TIME >> 8



Shaunie Grisby hopes to create a place like The Den from the television series "Moesha"—a place that is a community hangout. Flava Coffee and Cafe at 623 University Ave. West serves beverages, breakfast and lunch. "I wanted to create a space like that where people loved being," said Grisby. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)

A LITTLE SAFER FOR ALL

*New stoplight at Snelling
and Englewood after decades
of conversation about safety*

By TESHAM. CHRISTENSEN

For decades, neighbors have been asking that something be done to make it safer to cross the street at Snelling and Englewood.

In October 2022, the city finally installed a stoplight.

"I had heard about this for so long, and I didn't know anything was going to be happening this year," said Hamline Midway Coalition (HMC) Transportation Committee member and Hamline professor Mike Reynolds. "I had just heard rumors that it 'would' happen. Then suddenly one day this summer, public works was at the corner and doing stuff. I texted [HMC Executive Director] Sarah O'Brien and [HMC board member] John Levin and said: Is this it?"

It was.



Mike Reynolds (left) and Jessica Kopp stand by the new stoplight at Snelling and Englewood. (Photo submitted)

A LITTLE SAFER >> 12

Judge allows new Taco Bell

By JANE McCLURE

A new Taco Bell restaurant is going up at 565 N. Snelling Ave., thanks to a successful court challenge by owner Border Foods. Neighbors were surprised that the longtime location was fenced off and then demolished this fall, with construction now underway on a new building.

Taco Bell operations have sparked controversy over the years, with neighbors upset about late-night noise, traffic and patron behavior. The use was also questioned when its site and much of the rest of North Snelling changed zoning to traditional neighborhood use, as a way to promote long-term walkable redevelopment. That study and a light rail station plan for the Snelling area were cited as reasons to now allow a new drive-through restaurant.

The old restaurant, which opened as Zapata, dated from 1973. Taco Bell owner Border Foods for years sought to rebuild or make changes to the aging structure. Border Foods argued that its latest plans would meet all of the needed require-

ments for a new conditional use permit, and that a new restaurant would be an improvement to the neighborhood with more distance from nearby homes, better traffic flow and a more attractive building. Those plans went through city process two years ago.

In September 2020, the St. Paul City Council upheld an appeal by Hamline Midway Coalition (HMC) and overturned a planning commission decision approving the planned new restaurant's needed conditional use permit. The planning commission zoning committee had recommended denial of the permit.

HMC's appeal stated, "Border Foods has deliberately chosen an auto-centric, non-conforming building plan. The applicant is also proposing 18 off-street parking spaces, more than 200 percent over the maximum allowed for restaurants within a light rail transit station area. Although this is a reduction from the existing 1973 site plan, we expect the city to evaluate development based on the standards in the 2040 St. Paul Comprehen-

TACO BELL >> 12



Upholding civil liberties,
civil rights across the
Twin Cities

PAGE 3



Carrying on
a tradition, one
doorstep at a time

PAGE 4



Hamline Midway Library
building to be razed by
city, design released

PAGE 13

19 books into Cork series, and author says he's still growing

'Fox Creek' is Henry's book

By JAN WILLMS

There are some notable differences in William Kent Krueger's latest book in the Cork O'Connor series, "Fox Creek."

His readers are familiar with Cork, the Irish-Anishinabe private investigator; his family members, including wife Rainy and son Stephen and his long-time friend, Henry, an Anishinabe elder who is also a Mede, a healer.

Although Cork is usually at the forefront of each book in the series, "Fox Creek" is Henry's story.

"It's really Henry's book, although he is not the one speaking," Krueger said in a recent interview. "Four years ago, the

O'Connor series was contemporary setting. Last year's book was a prequel set in the 1960s. The last contemporary novel in 2019 left Henry in a precarious situation. Both he and Stephen had envisioned his death. I had to think about what I would do with that."

Krueger said this book needed to focus on Henry, but he had never told a story from Henry's perspective. To do that, Krueger uses other characters to unfold the mystery and describe their connections to Henry.

"I would like to tell you I made that conscious decision," Krueger said. "Typically, I do a Cork O'Connor story with as much decision as I can. But with this story, I waded into it not having any idea where it was going to go. I wrote as Cork. Then it wasn't time to be Cork anymore, so I

thought it was time to write as Rainy. Then it was time to be Stephen, and then another character, the Wolf. And that's how the story came to be."

Krueger said that as he was writing this book, he had no idea what was going on. He said there was something important one of the characters has, and he wondered why she was being chased. "I wanted to do something different," he said, and he determined an issue.

This latest book is also different in that it is told in the present tense. "I have never done that before," Krueger said. "I try to challenge myself in some way with every book. I want to be engaged. If I am engaged, the reader will be engaged."

Krueger said that 19 books in, some critics have said this is his best Cork O'Connor. "I'm not sure I agree, but it is nice to hear readers are not getting tired, that the series is still fresh and I can surprise readers."

He provides O'Connor fans with certain elements that are familiar: Cork, Henry, the Anishinabe culture, the house on Gooseberry Lane, Sam's Place. "I like offering the readers those things they will expect and will give them some comfort, then giving them a bit of an edge, so the comfort isn't quite there anymore. In the end I try to bring them back to that."

Krueger keeps his chapters short, which he said is a very thriller-esque technique. He often leaves a situation hanging at the end of a chapter, with the reader clamoring for more. "We call that a hook and pull in the business. But you try to find creative ways of doing it. You can't always do a cliffhanger at the end of every chapter. With this story structure, we can leave some things up in the air for a while, then come back to it. That's fine."

One of Krueger's favorite authors is Ernest Hemingway. "What Hemingway didn't say was often as important as what he said," Krueger noted. "I'm not as good at that as Hemingway was."

Krueger said he offers his readers a little bit more. "In the mystery genre, I have to suggest a lot. Hemingway didn't do that. Mystery readers are very smart, and I have to give them a little more. You've got to trust your readers' intelligence. They love a good puzzle."

"Mystery readers expect mystery writers to give them everything a literary writer would: dynamic characters, believable relationships, powerful language and a puzzle that will keep them guessing. And at the end, the story has to come together in a way that is believable and emotionally satisfying. That is hard to pull off," Krueger said.

He has been a storyteller for a long time now, and he writes profoundly of a sense of place, offering vivid descriptions. "I try to get all the sensual details that make a place come alive for a reader," Krueger explained. "I don't think a lot about that any more, it comes to me."



Local author William Kent Krueger said, "I try to challenge myself in some way with every book. I want to be engaged. If I am engaged, the reader will be engaged."

I have been up to the North Country so many times, I can typically conjure up a place and write about it. That helps a lot."

Aurora, the town, and Tamarack County are fictional places in his series. "There is a real town, Aurora, in Minnesota but it is not mine," he said. "I wanted to create a town that would feel authentic but not so you could identify it. So I created my own Aurora, and I get letters from readers saying I did a good job."

His books all require a lot of research, and "Fox Creek" is no exception. He has changed his writing method a bit, though. He always wrote in coffee shops.

"During the pandemic, I gave up the coffee shop and started writing at home. I was a little uncertain because the coffee shop was magic. But you know, it works [to write from home]."

Krueger continues to write every day, even when he is on a book tour. "If you are separated from a project for a while, you have to spend some time recapturing that energy. I don't like that," he said.

Krueger has two more books in the O'Connor series under contract, and he is publishing his third stand alone novel next year.

"The River We Remember," like his other stand alone books, "Ordinary Grace" and "This Tender Land" is set in southern Minnesota. The book's time period is in 1958 and has a lot to do with veterans who came back from Korea. "It's a mystery, but focuses on Korean veterans," he said.

Meanwhile, "Fox Creek" has reached No. 5 on the New York Times best seller list and is currently the book most put on reserve by library patrons, according to the Library Journal.

Krueger said he is even more excited with writing now than when he was stumbling his way through his first books. "I still want to have that feeling that I am entering territory that will be difficult for me to travel because of the nature of the story," he said. "I don't want to retire from being a dynamic storyteller. I feel like I am growing, and I want to keep growing."

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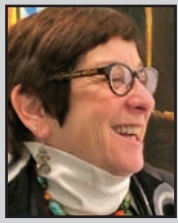
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UPHOLDING CIVIL LIBERTIES, RIGHTS ACROSS THE TWIN CITIES

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 Hemming's 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.

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

CARRYING ON A TRADITION, ONE DOORSTEP AT A TIME

STOP THE PRESSES!

BY DENIS WOULFE,
denis@MonitorSaintPaul.com



It was the summer before my junior year at Hamline University in 1977. I had already been named the editor of the Hamline Oracle, Hamline's student newspaper, for my junior year, and I decided that I wanted to take a class at the University of Minnesota that summer before the rigors of my year as editor began. After reviewing a number of course descriptions at the University of Minnesota, I decided to enroll in an introductory class in Humanities taught by Richard Leppert.

The class was a delight, and I have since learned that Richard Leppert later became a Regents Professor Emeritus at the U of M. Humanities was a subject not offered at Hamline and I found it to be fascinating. Leppert was an excellent teacher and I found myself, once again, to be that student that was continually raising his hand and asking questions during class. I had worried, coming from a smaller private college, whether being on the U of M campus would be intimidating, not to mention the much larger classes, but somehow after a few days went by I was so thoroughly engaged in the subject matter

that the foreignness of the setting seemed to fade away.

We read "The Social Contract" by Rousseau and "The Sorrows of Young Werther" by Goethe, and much more. I absolutely loved my short stint as a U of M student. I didn't spend a lot of time on campus after my class was over, having to get to my job as a waiter at the White Bear Yacht Club in White Bear Lake immediately following, but while I was on campus twice a week, I always managed to find a copy of the Minnesota Daily to take home with me to read.

As a student journalist, I always admired the big stories that the Daily tackled and followed the Daily closely, picking up copies in later years when I was on the campus for dental work at the U of M Dental School. I knew that some of the talented journalists at the U of M later started the Twin Cities Reader and other area newspapers. And I also marveled at the Daily's ability to churn out a newspaper each day. At Hamline, while I was editor, we were scheduled to produce 27 issues during the course of the school year and one special edition during the January interim. But a daily paper produced by college students? It seemed like an impressive feat.

While it's been some time since I have been on the U of M campus, I was saddened to learn recently that the Daily published its last issue in March of 2020. While initially the publication of the Daily

was suspended during the pandemic as classes went virtual, intending to restart publication once in-person classes resumed, recently the staff at the Daily decided not to resume regular print publication, as reported in the Star Tribune.

While the Daily has pivoted to its online presence exclusively, and reportedly is enjoying an upward trend in terms of the growth of its digital audience, it is sad to note the passing of one of the U of M's legacies. When I was editor of the Monitor years back, I remember one community activist recounting how when she and her husband were considering the Midway as a place to live, they were debating the merits of the neighborhood and decided that the presence of a newspaper like the Monitor was a definite plus. Like many readers, they were one of the readers outside the official boundaries who just happened to pick up copies of the Monitor when they visited the Midway, just like when I visited the U of M campus. In both cases, that serendipitous readership doesn't occur with an online subscription. For that you have to sign up and don't just bump into a print copy in a coffee shop. A loss, I would say, for the reader, the community, and the institutions the media outlet represents.

While our industry has changed over the years, and reading habits alike, there is some comfort to know that our readers at TMC Publications are still finding the Messenger, the Monitor, and the South-

west Connector at their doorsteps each month. While other media outlets have moved to only bulk drop deliveries or to digital only, TMC Publications still believes that our readers want a real newspaper that they can touch and feel each month. And they appreciate having one that is dropped at their front door. They want to know what's happening in their neighborhoods, what their neighborhood organizations are working on, and how their neighborhood officials are representing them. They want what's Relevant, Local and Trustworthy.

Bottom line is that we know from the Circulation Verification Council that our readers are reading us and using our newspapers to make purchasing decisions, get engaged with their communities, and help them make decisions on who to elect to represent them and how to live better lives. That's what community newspapers do best. And we plan to continue doing it.

Denis Woulfe has been working with community newspapers of one sort or another since he became editor of the Zephyr Lines, his high school newspaper, back in 1974, and he still considers the work that they do as important in building community. When he's not assisting his clients at TMC Publications with their marketing campaigns, you can probably find him on the tennis court somewhere as he is a captain for Senior Tennis Players Club of Minnesota. You can reach him at Denis@MonitorSaintPaul.com

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NEW ANTHOLOGY CELEBRATES YOUTH WRITERS

PLANTING SEEDS

BY DR. ARTIKA TYNER,
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Third Reconstruction, Racial Reckoning – none of these words could fully encapsulate the reality of the quest for justice. On May 25, 2020, Mr. George Floyd was murdered in Minneapolis, Minn. Darnella Frazier captured the last moments of Floyd's life in a video recording that went viral. Millions around the world watched the video, which compelled them to take action.

Each of us was left with a decision of whether we would remain on the sidelines of life as passive observers. The decision was individual and personal but a decision had to be made. It was a moment in history that ignited a movement. Every day people decided to bring the issues of justice to the forefront of the national

agenda related to racial justice. The inequities could no longer be ignored and were placed center stage.

The future was awaiting us. The work of the present was still undone. My home state of Minnesota, like countless others across the nation, faced a similar challenge. A tale of two cities was no longer a tale of fiction but a lived reality. One experienced great prosperity and immense joy while another was left in abject poverty and experiencing insurmountable despair. One was White. One was Black. Separate and unequal. This is a reality when in Minnesota:

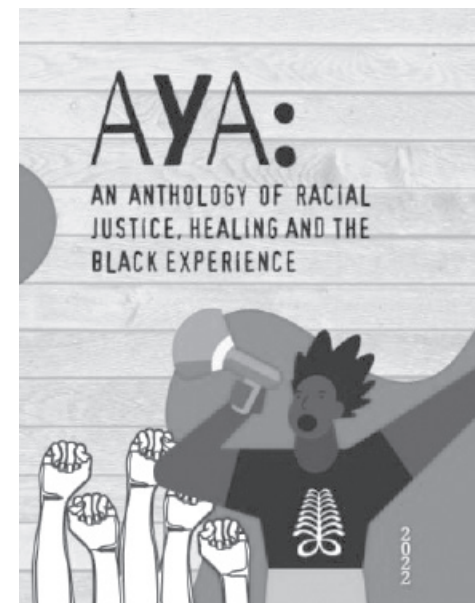
- Wealth: The Black poverty rate is four times the White poverty rate.
- Education: Black students experience one of the nation's worst education opportunity gaps as evidenced by graduation and literacy rates.

A leadership challenge emerged – what will you do for justice and freedom? Or, what is in your hands to make a difference in the world? I decided to take action by joining with other writers and artists to lead change. We came together to create and build a collective vision for the future.

We envisioned a world where the sanctity of life was paramount and the promotion of the common good would be our guiding light. This vision compelled us to act together in building the vision for the future. The youth anthology entitled: "Aya: An Anthology of Racial Justice, Healing and the Black Experience" is a manifestation of the vision. We visited St. Paul schools and community centers to encourage our youth to share their reflections on racial justice, healing, and the Black experience. They taught us key lessons on how to lead, inspire, and build a movement for racial justice. The voices of our youth were compiled into this youth anthology. The publication is a tableau of the United States at a pivotal crossroad on the journey to racial justice.

BOOK LAUNCH

The book launch party will be held on Saturday, Nov. 12, 2022, from noon to 1 p.m. at Subtext Books, located at 6 Fifth St. West, in Saint Paul. The youth authors will read from their contributions. The event is sponsored by Until We Are All Free, Abdur Razzaq Counseling & So-



cial Architecture, Mississippi Market Coop, and JK Movement. The anthology was made possible through a grant from the Saint Paul Cultural Star Program.

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

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Story ideas always welcome.

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

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Disabled workers: the answer to staffing problems

BUILDING A STRONGER MIDWAY

BY CHAD KULAS,
Midway Chamber of
Commerce Executive Director
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As many employers struggle to find workers, one group often gets overlooked: the disability community. Why does this group get overlooked, and how does it benefit employers who hire disabled workers?

The Midway Chamber of Commerce recently held a panel discussion about this topic, featuring Mike Wall, Optum Health; Brittanie Wilson, The Arc Minnesota; and Andrea Zuber, The Arc Minnesota. Here are some of the key takeaways, as well as additional analysis.

What terms do I use? As we strive to be kind, respectful, and accurate in describing different groups, what are the appropriate terms to use when describing people who identify as disabled? As with many questions, the answer can be complicated and depend on the case. While some people prefer to be called by their specific disability (ex: Rene, who is on the autism spectrum), other times it may be most appropriate to say the more encompassing term of "disability community." For the sake of this article, I will mainly use this term as I am describing a large sect of people. One term not to use: "special needs." As Brittanie pointed out at our event, she doesn't have "special needs" – she has "human needs" like everyone else.

Is there a certain industry that is specifically a good fit for people with disabilities? No, but for many years people thought so as they were put into one of the eight F's: food, filth, fetching, folding, filing, flower, festive, and friendly. While these jobs can be good fits for many, they are also typically lower paid and don't

begin to focus on the skills of so many. The reality is we should see all workers the same: find jobs which match the worker's skill set and interests. As Brittanie pointed out, she sought a job doing customer service where she answered phone calls. She has the skill of being a good communicator and nobody can tell she uses a wheelchair (or discriminate against her) while talking on the phone.

Back to the original question: how can job seekers with a disability help an employer? For one, the obvious answer is that with the lowest unemployment rate in the U.S., Minnesota employers should be looking at every option for hiring new employees. Yet often, throughout the United States there are reports of job seekers discriminated against because they have a disability. This discrimination can also be seen in the actual job descriptions themselves, as they often include requirements such as "must be able to lift 50 pounds" even though the job may not ever call for lifting heavy objects or could be done by someone else.

Another reason to hire those with a disability: news travels, and when others realize your acceptance and welcoming environment they are more likely to give you business. Brittanie worked for many years at a bank which had a good reputation toward the disability community. Mike's daughter is also a member of the

disability community, and works for a company which shows respect for all employees.

Some employers discriminate against job seekers with a disability because they are hesitant to accommodate them. But this is another goodwill gesture companies show by making changes to help all employees. Brittanie gave two examples of when her employer showed their support when they added automatic doors on all levels of their parking ramp and when they created a curb cut near an emergency exit. These are examples of ensuring more people can access your building, be they employees, clients, customers, or anyone else (and note, many people enjoy using amenities like these examples). As Brittanie pointed out, access is love.

What does the future hold for employees and job seekers with disabilities? Based on trends, here are some thoughts.

- There will be more workers who identify with a disability. The increase in remote work jobs has meant more opportunities. The call for remote jobs has been in the disability community for years, but many employers wouldn't listen until COVID-19 forced more workplaces into remote work. Another reason we will see more disabled people working in the future – as Brittanie said, when thinking about who is disabled remember if you aren't disabled it means "you are not dis-

abled yet." As people age, they are more likely to develop a disability.

- Another reason more disabled people should join the workforce: for their skills. As Brittanie pointed out, her communication skills helped her on the phone. But some disabilities, including learning disabilities, can also mean certain skills are more common. For example, if someone's disability means they would prefer a job with a defined goal as opposed to one where every scenario is different (and perhaps based on social cues) they may avoid a job in sales and seek out computer programming.

- More employers will understand the impact on their bottom line if they are creating a welcoming environment for all. This also carries into their definition of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI). Many organizations have worked on their DEI plan, but still too many are not factoring in the disability community.

Another hope is more doctors will tell parents of disabled newborns and children to be optimistic. Far too often, doctors will tell parents to not expect disabled children to become independent. But studies show pushing kids with disabilities to be independent, plan to go to college and find a career make it much more likely they will achieve these goals. Again, human needs not special needs.

One more hope for the future: the disability community, as well as more offices and industries, will be led by people with disabilities. Who better to tell the stories of what people with disabilities can do than someone who identifies that way? As we have seen with gender and race, differences get embraced best when people who identify a certain way have a seat at the leadership table. And while some people with disabilities may not have the traditional management experience, they may have hired, fired, managed, and trained several personal care attendants.

The panel gave me hope for the workforce, and that more companies would look at new ways to find workers. With the lowest unemployment rate in the country, employers need to try something different. The places open to all will find the most success.

Generosity, ingenuity, determination and selflessness basis of library historic nomination

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

The Hamline Midway Library and the neighborhood received welcome news in October that will hopefully lead to the building receiving designation on the National Register of Historic Places (NHRP). The Keeper of the National Register agreed with an appeal of the decision by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) not to forward the nomination of the building to the State Review Board in August, a decision based on faulty evidence presented by the City of St. Paul regarding the intentions of its own Historic Preservation Commission (HPC). As a result of the Keeper sustaining the appeal, SHPO has now been directed to present to its State Review Board on Nov. 15 the nomination to the NHRP. If the State Review Board votes to approve the nomination, it will be up to the Keeper to make the final decision whether or not to list the library on the NHRP.

The criteria for the library's NHRP

designation is based on a history of significant educational impact as demonstrated by a two-decade effort of the Hamline-Midway community to establish adequate library services in the neighborhood leading to the building's construction in 1930. The Hamline Midway Library has deep ties to women's clubs in the early 20th century expanding their work from social activities to making a lasting impact in the public sector. This demonstration of resolve by the community and local groups to establish a local library branch represents a lasting educational impact that lives on today in the building.

We feel strongly that the nomination to the NHRP, which highlights the unique community activism that led to this beloved community gathering space being built in 1930, is an inspiring testament to the strength of what is possible when we work together to build a cherished place for every one of us to learn, laugh, and nurture one another. And we continue to stand firmly in favor of historic preservation – in support of the city's comprehensive plan policies on preservation – be-

cause it is environmentally friendly, aesthetically powerful, and important to the diverse character of our community.

From the outset of the discussion about the future of the library, leaders in St. Paul had the opportunity to bring people together to develop an outcome favorable to all, either through a thoughtful renovation of the existing building or by moving the library services and repurposing the building. Unfortunately their predetermined outcome neglected robust dialogue and the exploration of alternatives to demolition at every turn. We continue to call on St. Paul Public Library, Mayor Carter, Councilmember Jalali, and the Hamline Midway Coalition to put an end to the proposed demolition of this building, especially if the library receives national historic designation. A demolition is senseless and unnecessary.

Preservation does not preclude us from creating a welcoming 21st century library that serves historically marginalized communities and provides dignified accessibility to people with disabilities, concerns that have rightly been raised

by many supporters of a new building. Addressing these concerns in no way requires the destruction of the library, but rather it demands a collective effort to design a more accessible building; improve technology services; implement targeted outreach to people who do not readily use the library; develop programming that meets the needs of neighbors with diverse interests; and most important, to treat every last person in the library with dignity and respect. Community members should never have been presented with a false choice between progress and historic preservation.

Together we can take inspiration from those who dreamed a century ago of a beautiful free library open and accessible to all and then made it a reality. This history – one of generosity, ingenuity, determination, and selflessness – is the basis for the nomination of the library to the NHRP, and this legacy, which resides powerfully within the walls at 1558 Minnehaha Avenue, should remain standing for centuries to come.

Letter

I SUPPORT A NEW DAY CENTER IN ST. PAUL

We're all coming out of the pandemic a little worse for wear after so much isolation and struggle with changes in our society. I have noticed as a St. Paulite that there has been a huge increase in the number of folks who are in need of support in the downtown area – there are

more encampments, more people sleeping in our parks, more people who obviously need a place to be with nowhere but outside.

Preventing the Listening House organization from opening the Day Center in the old Red Savoy's seems completely counteractive to the goal of getting these people off the streets. By providing a space staffed by professionals equipped to deal with the poverty crisis, mental health crisis, and substance crisis we're witnessing, we are not only getting these folks off the

streets but giving them a space to heal and work on bettering their lives.

As the weather gets colder, our hearts should be getting warmer. The people on the streets are our neighbors too, and we need to step up and act accordingly to help our community get better as a whole instead of fighting resources that help those who need it most. I am begging our community to not only allow Listening House to open their day center, but to do what we can to emphatically support all the service providers working hard daily

to improve the homelessness situation in our area.

I wish that some of the opposition to these good things trying to happen would find their humanity. How do we connect to our community when there is so much divisiveness and unwillingness to care for one another?

Sincerely,
Lauren Erchul
Como

Community divided over better bike lanes on Summit Avenue

Presentation of the city's draft of the master plan for Summit Avenue bike lanes sparks controversy

By CHLOE PETER

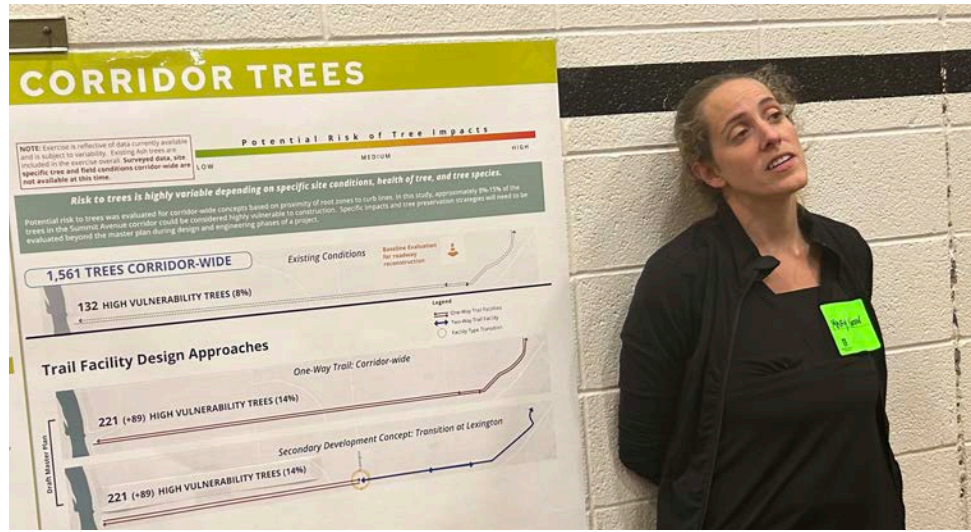
The city's proposal to remove mature trees and parking along Summit Avenue to create a bike trail is creating controversy throughout the Twin Cities. More than 150 people attended an open house at Hidden River Middle School (1700 Summit Ave.) on Thursday, Oct. 27, 2022, to discuss the Summit Avenue Regional Trail master plan. Some attendees stressed making sure the historical aspects of Summit Avenue are protected, while others are concerned over tree loss, landscaping and the 150 driveways along the route. Other attendees are looking forward to a better bike route.

Comments were written on brightly covered post-it notes and stuck to a map of the master plan. They included concerns such as "I still don't know what the plan is," and "Why is preference being given to bikers?" Others expressed support: "Big fan of off-street lanes, I don't want to be in the way!" and "Exciting! We use Summit for E/W connection - this will be great!"

Summit Avenue provides a link between the river and downtown St. Paul. The city has proposed different options for a new bike lane along with restructuring of the road. One option is a two-way separated trail going one direction that would replace the parking lane. Another is a one-way separated trail on both sides of the road.

"Summit Avenue has been an integral part of the St. Paul community since the mid 1800s and remains one of the most iconic and historic areas of the city," according to the city's draft master plan. "Over time, the purpose and use of this corridor has evolved with the needs of the community. This master plan aims to anticipate future needs of the corridor and plan implementation strategies that will maintain and preserve the iconic elements of Summit Avenue."

The open house was a part of the master plan schedule phase three, slated from summer of 2022 to winter of 2023, which includes refining the plan and gaining approval. As of now, the plan for the Summit Avenue Regional trail is only 60 percent of the way done. The approval process will require the Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC), Saint Paul



City Landscape Architect Mary Norton (at right) explains the city's findings about tree loss that would happen when constructing the bike lanes. The city is working with the Forestry Department of St. Paul and will continue throughout the process. (Photo by Chloe Peter)

Transportation Commission, Saint Paul Parks Commission, Saint Paul City Council, and Metropolitan Council Parks and Open Space Commission to sign off on the project.

INPUT FROM BIKERS

Bikers have expressed concerns about safety with on-road bike lanes, and some believe that this new design will help with that.

"I am excited for better bike lanes and bike infrastructure in Summit Avenue," said Susan Sochacki. "It would be a great improvement and make things a lot safer for folks who don't want to be car owners."

Another attendee, Kathy Ebiertz, said, "I'd love to see it safer, and the proposal is good for that. I use the bike lane a lot."

HISTORICAL CONCERNS

The Summit Avenue Regional Trail corridor runs through several historic districts and is next to many historical buildings and sites. The trail corridor provides access to other historical areas, particularly those within downtown St. Paul and near the Mississippi River. The historic districts and sites within the corridor have different requirements and recommendations. In general, some of the significant historical elements along Summit Avenue include the historic architecture, general pervious and impervious rhythm, and other character defining features, unique to individual segments of the corridor.

Cultural Resources Project Manager and Architectural Historian Renee Barnes of Bolton and Menk, the civil engineering company helping the city with this

project, was at the open house to answer questions about historical preservation of the Summit Avenue project.

"The overall goal is that the city will be able to recreate Summit Avenue with no negative impacts to the history," Barnes said.

However, some attendees were still worried that the master plan lacked the steps in place for protecting Summit Avenue's history.

"Summit Avenue is a historic street, and I think it should be preserved as is," said Carolyn McClay. "I think this is liberal progressives trying to tell us what's right. I feel like they are very patronizing, and I don't need them to tell me if I should ride my bike or drive my car."

A citizen group, "Save Our Streets," argues that the existing bike lane along Summit Avenue is adequate, although it should be repainted, and buffers added where possible without reducing parking or green space.

"We request that the historical characteristics be preserved, the features which make Summit Avenue a distinct and nationally known street," said Bonnie Alton, a member of "Save Our Streets."

CONCERNS OVER TREE LOSS

An inventory of trees and greenspace along Summit Avenue was completed by the city as part of the planning process for this master plan. Different aspects of the parkway canopy were mapped including all tree locations, structural and critical root zones, landmark trees, and ash trees within the corridor. The structural and critical root zones are a starting point when considering a trail location and the potential impact on mature trees.

150 TREES CHOPPED DOWN ALONG CLEVELAND

Earlier this year, more than 150 large trees lining Cleveland Avenue were cut down. County officials insisted that the trees must go, in order to widen the road to add both in-street bike lanes and an off-street multi-use path along Cleveland. Pat Thompson, the chair of the St Anthony Park Community Council's transportation committee and others representing the neighborhood firmly disputed the need to cut down the trees.

A statement from community members opposed to the tree loss cited data from the Metropolitan Council (the source of much of the county's funding for the intended project) which correlates lack of tree canopy with health disparities and heat island effects. From the statement: "The urban heat island affects those at home, but also pedestrians, bicyclers, those waiting for the bus. Removing so many trees along this important corridor will significantly increase health risks and the quality of life of people who use and live by this street. The county should balance the need for a street rebuild with the increasing recognition of the value of trees for climate and human health, even if it means delaying the project one year."

Ironically, some of the largest trees removed were on the verdant mall of the University of Minnesota's College of Agriculture.

City landscape architect Mary Norton explained the process the city has used to preserve trees. Project designers worked with the city's forestry department to pinpoint specific tree preservation strategies, which will continue to be evaluated during the design and engineering phases of the project, said Norton. The city estimates that there are 221 trees that will be vulnerable to construction. However, "Save Our Streets" argues that more than 300 trees are at risk.

One member mentioned not supporting the project until tree protections were put into place by the city. However, Mary Norton pointed out that the master plan has not given out the dimensions of the boulevard as these numbers have not yet been set in stone, and that this is not the first time this citizen group has given out possible misleading information about the regional trail.

A draft of the master plan is available on the city's website, and public comments will be open through the end of November. Learn more about the Summit Avenue Regional Trail at <https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/parks-and-recreation/design-construction/current-projects/summit-avenue-regional-trail>.

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Business award winners named in St. Paul

St. Paul's 6th annual Business Awards winners have been announced. The awards recognize local businesses that provide critical services, contribute to the city's community, invest in their employees, and are committed to Saint Paul's values of equity and diversity. Businesses are selected for an award in one of five categories based on nominations from the community. More than 100 businesses were nominated.

The 2022 award winners and runners-up are:

- ABC Realty LLC - Alice O'Brien Award: honoring a women-owned business that is committed to equity and empowerment. (Runner-up: In Black Ink)
- Hmong Village Shopping Center - People's Choice Award: honoring a business that is recognized for its excellence by Saint Paul residents. (Runner-up: Swede Hollow Cafe)
- Mr. Michael Recycles Bicycles - Good Neighbor Award: honoring a business that shows a dedication to improving the community. (Runner-up: Vig Guitar)
- NEOO Partners Inc. - New Kid on

the Block Award: honoring a business that has opened in Saint Paul within the last five years. (Runner-up: Just Imagine)

- Selby Wines & Spirits Inc. - Traditions Award: honoring a business that has been active in Saint Paul for at least 20 years. (Runner-up: Westside Haircare)

The Selection Committee that reviewed the applications and selected winners was made up of past winners from the Saint Paul business community. The committee included:

- Abdiwali Ali, Karibu Grocery & Deli
- Choua Vang, Golden Harvest Foods
- Kathy Sundberg, GINKGO Coffee-house
- Tameka Jones, Lip Esteem LLC

Award winners were recognized by the city council on Wednesday, Oct. 26, 2022.

"I am grateful to everyone who took part in the annual Business Awards from the organizers to the applicants to the selection committee and beyond," said Council President Amy Brendmoen.

The event can also be viewed on City of Saint Paul - Calendar at stpaul.legistar.com or Saint Paul Channel 18.

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ONE LATTE AT A TIME >> 1

focuses on a magazine called "Flavor" – and it seemed like the perfect name to build off of.

When Grisby began envisioning what her own coffee shop could be, she wanted that sense of nostalgia. "I wanted to create a space like that where people loved being," said Grisby. "I wanted to have a space where I felt like I could be reflected."

She took care in naming her drinks, and highlights leaders, creators and activists. She worked to match their lives with the complexities of the beverages. There's the Baldwin (espresso and hot water), the bell hooks (espresso, brown sugar, maple syrup and cinnamon), the Nina Simone (espresso and dark chocolate), the Audre Lorde (cold brew, vanilla, cinnamon and honey cubes), and the Octavia Butler (masala chai).

The cafe at 623 University Ave. W. also serves 'supa dupa' breakfast burritos, sweet love pies, T.L.C. bagels, breakfast bowls, sandwiches and lunch bowls.

Grisby got in trouble in class, and her high school Spanish teacher assigned her a video to watch at home. She found she really enjoyed the Frida Kahlo story, and talking about it repaired her relationship with that teacher. It's a lesson she hasn't forgotten. She named one of her lunch bowls the Two Fridas (corn, black beans, red onion, cilantro, lime juice, sliced avocado and chipotle sauce).

Grisby hopes to add a Little Free Library at the coffee shop so that folks can take a book and/or leave one behind. A bookshelf in the center features diverse BIPOC authors both for adults and children.

Care is put into the music heard in the cafe. You might hear Jill Scott, Loco Hill, Annie Lennox, and Erykah Badu.

CAFE WITH A MISSION

The mission of Flava Coffee and Cafe extends beyond a cup of coffee and a sandwich. It is to build community through coffee and create opportunities for young women of color and gender-expansive youth by propelling them from coffee to career.

This mission has driven Grisby's entire career.

Born in Detroit, Mich., Grisby now resides in the Camden neighborhood of north Minneapolis. She earned her bachelor's degree in sociology and criminal justice from Clark Atlanta University, and her



Urban29 owner Joyce Sanders stands in her new store at 633 University Ave. W., in the new Frogtown Crossing building. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)



Owner Shaunie Grisby (left) and Alexa Clausen serve customers at Flava (623 University Ave. W.), the neighborhood's newest coffee shop. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)

master of education from the University of Minnesota.

She has worked in Frogtown, Rondo and Selby for several years. In 2017, she took a job with the YWCA doing youth

development, spearheading seven different programs that helped prepare girls for careers. She's still there as a contractor, continuing work with the Young Women's

Streetwear at University and Dale

By TESHAM. CHRISTENSEN

Urban29 lost its space at 804 E. Lake in Minneapolis when the building burned after the murder of George Floyd. Owner Joyce Sanders of Longfellow opened a pop-up location at the Mall of America with 16 others affected by the Uprising, and then moved to a second level space on the south side. And as of July 1, 2022, she's in a second storefront, this time in the new Neighborhood Development Center facility at University and Dale in St. Paul.



"It feels great," said Sanders. "I'm grateful to be here. I'm grateful for everything NDC has done. I hope I am an inspiration to others."

A Minnesota native, Sanders grew up in Minneapolis. She was working as a banker when she decided to pursue an interest in fashion.

Earlier in her career, Sanders sold jewelry and accessories through private parties and at Sister Spokesman events, but she eventually got tired of traveling and hauling merchandise around. She managed a clothing store and liked it.

She decided she was ready to have her own store.

Prior to Urban29, Sanders was co-owner in another venture at 29th and Lake, but it wasn't her dream store. More mom-and-pop, Sanders wanted to establish a store with the same professional feel as a Macy's.

Urban 29 offers premium, luxury streetwear for all genders.

"I grew up in the Hip Hop generation," said Sanders. "A lot of my clothing is attached to that culture."

Trendsetting brands sold at U29 include Cookies, Sugar Hill, Streetz iz Watchin, George V, and Blac Leaf.

Being a part of the community is an important part of operating a business for Sanders. Prior to the start of the school year, U29 organized a backpack drive. A coat drive is in the planning stage.

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GET TO KNOW THE NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

In the mid-1980s, St. Paul's Rice Street neighborhood, once a vibrant working class community with scores of mom and pop businesses, was suffering. One by one the shops along the corridor were closing. Muntean's Department Store, Schwankel Drug Store, Schiller's Grocery – to name a few – gone with the rise of giant big-box stores in neighboring suburban communities.



A young Mihailo Temali, energized by a passion for neighborhood revitalization, knew one key to a prosperous community was a strong business district made up of locally owned shops. A son of immigrants from Yugoslavia and Denmark, Temali had grown up on St. Paul's East Side and knew the neighborhood well. Hired in 1984 as Executive Director of North End Area Revitalization Inc. (NEAR), he worked to design and implement dozens of storefront improvements along Rice Street, and then he got the Yellow Pages and a phone. Temali made more than 2,000 calls to encourage established businesses in other parts of the Twin Cities to move or open another shop. It was a tough sell – after six years of effort, NEAR had landed eleven new businesses for the district.

It wasn't until he shifted his focus on Selby Avenue in the early 1990's, another corridor with an ailing economy, did he and the



folks he was working with have their "light bulb moment": What if the auto mechanics and day care providers and beauticians working out of their homes and basements could fill the vacancies on Selby? Revitalization, they realized, shouldn't come from one big corporate employer coming from outside the neighborhood. The best way to change the direction of a neighborhood would be by investing in those people who were already there – the neighborhood residents.

Temali had been hired in 1990 by Western Bank Chairman Bill Sands to extend the bank's already considerable community impact. With a group of community advisors, they created the Western Initiatives for Neighborhood Development (WIND) as a bank community development corporation, to help neighborhoods like Selby Avenue build their own development capacity. WIND's efforts paved the way for the Neighborhood Development Center, launched as a non-profit in 1993 to address pressing needs in the community, with Temali as the first president.

Today, NDC is a thriving organization with 24 employees and an ever-expanding mission to provide more services in more communities. As a nationally recognized model of community development done right, NDC's programs have trained more than 5,000 low-income neighborhood residents write a business plan for their own idea. Currently more than 500 are open for business, employing over 2,300 people at an average wage of \$12 an hour. Disadvantaged entrepreneurs have gotten a shot at prosperity while the quality of life in their communities has increased.

~ From the NDC website

ONE LATTE AT A TIME >> 8

Initiative of Minnesota.

YWI-MN is a partnership between the Office of the Governor and Lieutenant Governor and the Women's Foundation of Minnesota. The initiative brings together nonprofits, businesses, government, philanthropies, and young people to achieve equity in opportunities and improve the lives of young women and gender-expansive people of color, Indigenous people, young people from Greater Min-

nesota, LGBTQ youth, and young people with disabilities.

PUTTING A DREAM OUT THERE

Grisby has always loved coffee and says she knew at some point she wanted to open a coffee shop. Through her work at the Y, she took a group of young entrepreneurs through the 10-week startup incubator Co.Starters at the Hill in 2018. She created a business plan and tucked it in her back pocket as she wasn't looking to start a business yet.

She applied for a nine-month fellowship program for social entrepreneurs with the FINNOVATION Lab, gaining skills in business management, leadership, and business development. As she built community with local social entrepreneurs, she was catapulted forward.

She began working with a business coach, who told her the Neighborhood Development Center was looking for a coffee shop. Then she met with NDC's Natalia Hals just to chat. "Sure, I'll talk to them," Grisby remembers

saying. "I had no idea what I was getting into."

She asked Sammy McDowell if she could shadow him at Sammy's Avenue Eatery and learn the ropes. She was doing a 40-hour-a-week fellowship, 25 to 30 hours at the Y, and two days at Sammy's.

"Networking is what got me here," said Grisby. "It's a little scary to put your dreams out there. It's daunting to put myself out there."

"I'm grateful I did it."

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Hamline Midway Library design released

State to review historic status request in November

By JANE McCLURE

Designs for a new Hamline Midway Branch library have been unveiled, as efforts to save the existing building continue. Designs and floor plans for Hamline Midway, Hayden Heights and Riverview libraries were released Oct. 31, 2022, with community open houses Nov. 5.

Hamline Midway is the only one of the three projects with funding in place, of \$8.1 million. It is also the only project involving library demolition, razing the structure at 1558 W. Minnehaha Ave. The other two libraries will be renovated. The projects are part of the city's Transforming Libraries initiative, working with LSE Architects. Library leaders point to months of community engagement including virtual and in-person meetings, pop-up events, surveys and other outreach.

The designs released are final, said Barb Sporlein, interim library director. Public art and some finish colors may change but otherwise the designs are as released.

Demolition of Hamline Midway Branch is expected in the spring, with construction to take about 14 months. Opponents of demolition have organized as Renovate 1558 and criticized what they see as a less than transparent city process with a set outcome.

The quest to save the 92-year-old Hamline Midway building continues at the federal level, to place the library on the National Register of Historic Places. The nomination is based on its community significance, educational and social history and history of community libraries. While a successful nomination doesn't guarantee preservation, it would force the city to do more extensive documentation before demolition.

The U.S. Department of the Interior contacted the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) in October, asking that the library's nomination be presented to the State Historic Preservation Review Board. The city's Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC), after not being able to vote for or against a designation request, voted to not take a position on the nomination request. City leaders, including Mayor Melvin Carter, have objected to designation.

Barbara Bezat, who prepared the National Register nomination, said the city in its efforts to block state review misinterpreted the motions at the HPC. "The HPC decided to make no recommendation and the nomination is properly before state officials," she said.

The State Historic Preservation Review Board will consider the library's nomination at 6 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 15. The meeting is virtual and the public can testify. A link to it and materials is at <https://mn.gov/admin/shpo/registration/review-board/meetings/>

Bezat said it is significant that Joy Beasley, keeper of the National Register, sent a letter to Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer Amy Spong stating that the library's nomination should be presented to the State Historic Preservation Review Board, despite objections from city officials.



The city has released the new design for Hamline Midway Library (above). Plans call for razing the historic library building (below) and erecting a new facility.

After the HPC meeting in August, Carter sent state officials a letter saying the library doesn't merit designation. HPC staff then sent a letter saying the commission made a procedural error by allowing multiple motions, and that only the first failed motion to support the nomination should count as an objection. Bezat then successfully argued that the HPC staff letter didn't reflect the commission's intent. The keeper of the National Register agreed, saying that the library meets criteria for a National Register listing, and the state process moved forward with the upcoming hearing. If the state board agrees, Beasley then does the final review of the nomination.

But Sporlein said Hamline Midway branch needs to be torn down due to its condition and design, which has access and safety issues. She said the existing



front door arch will be preserved inside the new structure, and will be used to lead into a community meeting room. A brick diamond design planned, but not used in the 1929 building, will be used in the new library.

Bricks from the current building will be used inside and outside, and existing woodwork will also be reused inside.

Full reports on all three libraries are available online at spl.org/transform.

Sherburne Collective aims for deeply affordable housing

By JANE McCLURE

Developers of a changing and complex Frogtown affordable housing proposal have been given more time to put things together. The St. Paul City Council, acting as the Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) Board, voted Oct. 12 to extend the Sherburne Collective's tentative developer status to March 2023 and to commit future city funding of \$1 million.

The collective is comprised of the Thomas-Dale/District 7 Planning Council, Inc. d/b/a Frogtown Neighborhood Association, Model Cities of St. Paul Inc., and Hope Community Inc.

The tentative developer status centers on property at 652 Sherburne Ave., where a vacant eight-unit apartment building of about 16,000 square feet and adjacent land of about 8,000 square feet are located. The HRA has owned the site since March 2018.

Building tenants were relocated after the city acquired the property. The HRA issued a request for proposals in late 2020. Five offers were received on the property,

with Sherburne Collective being selected. The HRA Board then designated tentative developer status on the partnership. The organizations want to develop the site for six units of deeply affordable housing.

Tentative developer status holds a property for parties wishing to develop a site or rehabilitate a building. Past deadlines expired earlier this year, but the developers have made progress on their project, said Nicolle Goodman, director of the city's Department of Planning and Economic Development (PED).

PED staff recommended that the tentative developer status continue.

Project changes prompted some questions from city council members as income limits and funding sources have changed since the original proposal. Another change that has to be factored in? Rising costs of construction, from \$1.9 to \$2.9 million. Yet another need is to address the building condition, which has changed since the city acquired it.

The collective plans to renovate and reconfigure the building. They will add parking, a garden and green space for res-

idents. Two four-bedroom units, three two-bedroom units, and one accessible, one-bedroom unit are proposed. The collective proposes to lease the units to qualified occupant households for five years, transitioning to some sort of community ownership model in the sixth year. That could be a land trust or residential cooperative.

Originally the units were to be for households earning no more than 50 percent Area Median Income (AMI), with a corresponding rent restriction to rents affordable at this income level. The developer has subsequently modified its proposal and now intends to reach deeper to 30 percent AMI income levels and affordability for all six units. While that change meets a dire need for deeply affordable housing, it also changes funding sources and the community ownership plan. The original proposal anticipated a \$600,000 mortgage based on rents at 50 percent AMI. The deeper affordability allowed the project to successfully obtain Ramsey County funding, but rules out potential use of state and federal funding of more

than \$700,000.

The project has \$1.68 million from Ramsey County's affordable housing coffers which were drawn from the federal American Rescue Plan Act. Regional dollars from Metropolitan Council and the nonprofit Twin Cities Local Initiatives Support Corporation also provide funding. But there are concerns that the county dollars could go away if the project doesn't move forward soon.

But the project still has a funding gap. Goodman said the city can consider its own ARPA dollars as well as federal Community Development Block Grant funds to fill in.

City council members, while questioning the open-ended pledge, said they still support the project and want it to succeed. They like the community partnership and the affordable housing goals. They also noted that many projects have had tentative developer extensions in the past.

Ward 5 Council Member Amy Brendmoen raised issues of equity, considering that other developers bid for the site and that the winning project has had so many changes.

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BE PART OF COMO CURB CLEAN-UP

DISTRICT 10 COMO COMMUNITY COUNCIL

BY SHEVEK MCKEE
Executive director
district10@
district10comopark.org



Como Community Council is partnering with Capitol Region Watershed District for the 2022 Como Curb Clean-up.

When it rains, leaves on streets release nutrients into the water that flows into storm drains and the lake. There it becomes food for invasive algae. Studies have shown that sweeping up the leaves that sit against the curb where this storm-water/ice melt flows is surprisingly effective in reducing this damage.

Join 100+ neighbors in sweeping your curb once a week this fall to help keep Como Lake clean. You can learn more and register as an "official" participant to help us track our effectiveness here on the D10 website: District10ComoPark.org/Como-Clean-Up

COMMUNITY CALENDAR DATES SOLIDIFY

While most of the details are still barely a glimmer in our eyes, the D10 Neighborhood Relations and Environment Committees have set preliminary dates for most of our 2023 outreach and cleanup events to help us plan and increase the opportunities for collaboration with the city and our other community partners.

We're kicking the year off with a Feb. 4 winter event at North Dale Rec. Stay tuned for more details, or join our Neighborhood Relations committee meetings

on first Wednesdays at 7:15 p.m. to help us with planning!

If you have any questions or would like to know more about our upcoming events you can view the latest info on our website at District10ComoPark.org/Events or reach out to organizer@district10comopark.org.

D10 SUBDISTRICT 1 BOARD VACANCY

Interested in getting more involved with the Como Community Council? Our board has a vacancy to fill in a Subdistrict 1 Seat (West of Hamline and North of the BNSF railroad tracks). To be considered for the board, submit a board member application at <https://bit.ly/D10Application>.

Vacancies are appointed by the board, all appointed board seats are automatically included in the next annual election, and appointed board members may not serve as officers.

If you have any questions or would like to know more about being a board member you can view info on our website

at District10ComoPark.org/Elections or reach out to district10@district10comopark.org.

D10 COMMUNITY MEETINGS SCHEDULE

- Land Use Committee - Tuesday, Nov. 15, 6 p.m.
- D10 Board - Tuesday, Nov. 15, 7:15 p.m.
- Environment Committee - Wednesday, Dec. 7, 6 p.m.
- Neighborhood Relations Committee - Wednesday, Dec. 7, 7:15 p.m.
- Land Use Committee - Tuesday, Dec. 20, 6 p.m.
- D10 Board - Tuesday, Dec. 20, 7:15 p.m.

As always, you can find meeting details on our website: District10ComoPark.org. All D10 board and committee meetings are open to the public and have space for community members to bring topics for discussion.

A LITTLE SAFER >> from 1

"I've been very excited as it's come into place," stated Mike Reynolds. "I talked with a group of new Hamline University students about the long issues, and how difficult yet rewarding it can be to try to fix what seems like a small problem - but emphasizing the ways the community can be empowered to make solutions happen. I have also been involved with Hamline Elementary in my role at HU, as we develop and keep refining the partnership between the schools. This summer, as Galtier closed and those families sought to learn more about Hamline Elementary, there was a lot of anxiety about walking across Snelling... and seeing the lights finally go in was a huge relief for a lot of folks."

A COMMUNITY PROBLEM

With an elementary school on one side of Snelling and a university on the other, the intersection sees a lot of student foot traffic. The double-laned road makes crossing perilous, as one side of the traffic may stop but the other doesn't. "This is compounded by really high speeds heading south over the bridge into Midway, but also as people speed up from the Snelling/Minnehaha intersection. Various interventions (the flashing speed sign; the planted medians; the pedestrian crossings; public art projects including the murals at Super-America, at Mirror of Korea, and on Hamline Elementary, as well as a yarn project along the fence at the elementary school)

never really reduced speeds or concerns," said Reynolds.

"Without the stoplight, adults have to stand in the middle of the road, facing traffic, to ensure everyone stopped so the children can cross safely," remarked Jessica Kopp, who serves on the St. Paul School Board.

Conversations about the safety at Snelling and Englewood go back at least to the 1990s, when a former sculptor at Hamline, Mike Price, made a rough design of a pedestrian bridge. Around 2004, HMC and Hamline University staff connected with MnDOT and the city of St. Paul to explore options but nothing was implemented. MnDOT did a major study of Snelling Avenue somewhere between 2008-2011, but again, there was a lot of discussion about improving pedestrian paths around schools and libraries, but nothing was done at Snelling and Englewood.

Kopp got involved in about 2017 when her daughter was attending Hamline Elementary School. One year, there was a safety walk when a designated person walked with a group of families and then neighbor and school board member Mary Vanderwert to both be visible to the community and show how difficult it was to safely cross Snelling Avenue. Kopp investigated applying for a planning grant through the Safe Routes to Schools program in 2018. She was part of a Stop For Me program in 2019.

Kopp revived the questions and conversations. Working with Ward 4 and with

the neighborhood's district council, Kopp and other community members reasserted the overarching need to enhance pedestrian safety at this intersection. What street-level changes might be possible at the intersection? These questions were brought to the City of Saint Paul's Traffic Engineer, Saint Paul Department of Public Works - and they got some traction, according to Reynolds and current HMC Executive Director Sarah O'Brien. The city proposed some options to the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT). Then once again, neighborhood activists waited, through a comprehensive investigation and engineering study.

The city's traffic engineer attended several Hamline Midway Coalition Transportation Committee meetings over a two-year period to discuss the intersection, the alternatives being considered, and the rationale behind selecting a traffic signal as the preferred treatment.

HMC worked with Ward 4 and local businesses on a North Snelling revitalization project in 2019. "I know that pedestrian safety and challenging traffic conditions were defined as key criteria for the challenges for increased development in properties along North Snelling," said Reynolds. "I think that last conversation might have been the straw on the camel's back, and got various parties to return to prior proposals and get it out of the 'parking lot' and into budget/planning."

The process of getting this new stoplight was "sometimes a bit mysterious and a little slow, but overall, I think it's pret-

ty amazing how many people put their time, energy, and expertise into moving this along," said Kopp. "Every time it felt like it was fading, someone else picked up the ball and ran with it. As a neighbor, I felt incredibly supported by then Councilmember Samantha Henningson and current Councilmember Mitra Jalali and HMC for taking the views of Hamline Elementary families seriously and gathering information from a variety of neighbors - and then convening the right people to find solutions. It gave me hope that there was, though long, a path for neighbors to be an important part of creating the community they want."

CARRIED BY MANY HANDS

"It's such a great story and so many people made this possible - many people in the Hamline Elementary community including parents Karen McCauley and Jen Power, the Ward 4 office, Hamline University, the City of St. Paul, and of course HMC - current and past executive directors, boards, and transportation committee members were all a part of this story," said Kopp. "I'm probably forgetting someone because this project was carried by many hands."

Kopp is now an employee at Hamline University and watched the progress on the light move ahead on her daily walk to work.

She said, "Seeing the actual stoplights was pretty surreal - never thought a bit of infrastructure could make me so happy."

TACO BELL >> from 1

sive Plan." The district council urged Border Foods to build a larger structure that would better serve more pedestrians and transit users.

The Planning Commission Zoning Committee recommended denial of the permit, saying it didn't meet the required conditions. Another issue the committee raised is the difficulty in revoking a conditional use permit if there are violations. That's been the case with the controversial Starbucks at Marshall and Snelling avenues, which caused traffic backups over the past several years before it closed its drive-through.

But the full planning commission approved the permit, with some commis-

sioners questioning if objections were based more on restaurant clientele than on land use issues.

The city council decision meant Taco Bell could not rebuild, but had to continue operating in its 1973 building. That also allowed operations to continue under the existing conditional use permit, which allows for closing as late as 3 a.m. on weekends and 2 a.m. on weekdays. Some neighbors wanted the hours shortened.

Border Foods took the city to court, and won a judgment in October 2021. That then launched several months of design work and city staff site plan review, which led to demolition and the start of construction recently.

Ramsey County District Court Judge Laura Nelson found that the city council's

denial of the conditional use permit was unreasonable.

One issue cited is the reasons for denial, which included compliance with the city's comprehensive plan and other area plans, and pedestrian safety. But those reasons were called out in the court ruling as subjective. The judge found that the new plans were in compliance with the city's goals and plans as they sought to reduce the number of curb cuts and parking area.

An argument about neighborhood character was rejected, with points made about current character versus "aspirational" character. The judgment cited the number of existing auto-oriented uses around Taco Bell.

"Both parties recognize that the area aspires to be more walkable, more pedes-

trian friendly, and more environmentally friendly. However, the parties also recognize that other similar auto-oriented uses exist near the proposed use," the judgment stated.

Another key issue in the case is a longtime state statute requiring action on zoning requests within 60 days or up to 120 days with an extension. Failure to deny a request within that time is an approval of the request. Denials must state in writing the reasons at the time of denial. While the council vote was within the time frame, the written resolution memorializing the decision and explaining the denial came after the 120 days expired.

Bicycle-powered food drive coming Nov. 19

Mr. Michael Recycles Bicycles is sponsoring Cranksgiving 2022 St. Paul on Saturday, Nov. 19, 2021 beginning at noon. This is a food drive where folks ride bicycles to bring food and sundries to donate to Zion Lutheran Church in St. Paul's Midway neighborhood.

Zion Lutheran Church, 1697 Lafond Ave., operates a weekly food ministry that

provides food and sundries to the needy. Mr. Michael Recycles Bicycles partners with Zion Lutheran annually to conduct a bicycle powered food drive where people bring their food and sundry donations by bicycle to the event.

People can participate three ways:

1) Carry donations to Zion Lutheran Church by bicycle on Nov. 20.

2) Participate in the alley-cat style race to purchase food items at local stores.

3) Call 651-641-1037 to arrange an appointment to have someone pick up food items from their home by bicycle (available only for people living in the Hamline Midway neighborhood).

Volunteers are needed to receive food donations and check in participants in the alley-cat race.

Mr. Michael Recycles Bicycles owner Benita Warns said, "There are so many of our neighbors who are struggling financial-

ly due to the disruptions from the COVID-19 pandemic. Zion Lutheran Church provides food assistance to anyone who shows up at their weekly distribution events. This is our opportunity as a business to share our blessings with our less fortunate neighbors, and to organize a community effort to reduce food insecurity."

For more information on participating in this event, whether by volunteering or donating, call Benita Warns at 651-641-1037 any time daily between 9 a.m. and 9 p.m.

MCJROTC EARNS NATIONAL HONOR AGAIN

**COMO PARK
SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL**

BY ERIC ERICKSON
Social studies teacher



The Marine Corps JROTC (Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps) at Como has been recognized as a Naval Honor School Program for a seventh time.

The award is reserved for the top 20% of all MCJROTC programs across the nation. For the 2021-22 school year, Como's standing was in the top percentile. The evaluation by a national board placed Como's program as second in the country.

The award and ranking are based on several factors including unit enrollment, volunteer campaigns, cadet citizenship, leadership camps, competitions, grade point averages, extra-curricular activities, public affairs, scholarships, MCJROTC academies, national level competitions and unit camaraderie.

To provide insight to those areas, 118 of Como's 1094 students were enrolled in the Marine Corps JROTC last year. Nearly 11% of Como students are committed to the program's rigor and high expectations that included a collective 3,336 hours of community service at 34 different events.

Twenty-two seniors in the program

earned a total of \$446,150 in academic scholarships. An Academic Bowl team qualified for a third straight year of national competition, the male physical fitness team qualified for nationals, as did an Orienteering team who placed first in Minnesota.

Como's resume is rich in credentials and achievements above and beyond what's briefly listed here. But what really makes the program effective, that is harder to quantify, is the spirit and unity of teenagers from diverse backgrounds. They take pride and ownership of consistent excellence, persevering through personal and societal challenges.

"Each year we feel the pressure to uphold the highest of standards and proficiency for our program," said senior Jesiah Mason, this year's Cadet Commanding Officer. "The cadets are always hungry for action and the cadet senior leadership will again prove the wolf is only as strong as its pack. Teamwork!"

Sgt. Major James C. Kirkland is proud of the program, explaining "there remains a steadfast level of pride, maturity and discipline built into each school year in which the littlest of things really matter."

Como staff members who have witnessed the influence of this award-winning program over the years will confirm - attention to details and consistently doing the little things right have made a big difference for the cadets and the Como community.

Como Park Senior High School



Como's award-winning Marine Corps JROTC program. (Photo courtesy James C. Kirkland)

AP GOVERNMENT STUDENTS FUNDRAISING

After a two-year pandemic hiatus, seniors studying AP Government and Politics are once again set for a week of study in the Close Up Washington D.C. program.

Fifteen students are actively fundraising for their February field trip. Beyond part-time jobs (including serving as election judges) the students will be bagging groceries for customers at Cub Foods on Country Road B in Maplewood on Nov. 19 and Dec. 10.

Donations to support this immersive

educational experience are always needed. Contact eric.erickson@spps.org if you're interested in supporting the effort.

AP NIGHT AT COMO NOV. 15

Prospective students and families who would like to learn more about Como's college-level coursework are invited to the school library on Tuesday, Nov. 15 at 6:30 p.m. Como faculty and students will share their experiences in Advanced Placement, concurrent enrollment, and post-secondary education options. Light refreshments will be served.

Development UPDATE

By JANE McCLURE

ALATUS PROJECT MOVES FORWARD

Lexington Station is chugging along, with excavation this fall and much more work to come for the next several months. The Union Park District Council (UPDC) land use committee heard a project update Oct. 17. The building's apartments will open for new residents after 26 months of construction.

"It's been almost five years in the making," said Chris Osmundson, director development for Minneapolis-based Alatus. The project went through numerous neighborhood meetings and found itself in the middle of battles over gentrification and affordable housing.

Alatus purchased the site this summer from the Wilder Foundation, for \$2.5 million. In mid-September, contractor Anderson Companies obtained an \$8 million construction permit to build the foundation and building footings.

The six-story building under construc-

tion will have 304 dwelling units and 288 underground and at-grade parking stalls, with a mix of sizes from studios to four bedrooms. Half of the units will be market-rate at the rest will be offered at 50 to 60 percent of area median income. About 20 units will be at 50 percent area median income.

Alatus hopes to also obtain project-based housing vouchers to create further affordability for more housing units. Although a recent request for vouchers was turned down, Asmundson said Alatus will try again next year.

It will also have about 2,300 square feet of retail in the building's first floor northeast corner. That retail space could house a small coffee shop, as well as a more informal space for residents to meet with Wilder Foundation and access programs.

In February 2021, the project had its site plan rejected on an 8-7 St. Paul Planning Commission vote. Alatus then appealed the decision to the St. Paul City Council, which upheld the Planning Commission decision, 4-3. Mayor Melvin Carter vetoed the council action, allowing the project to move head.

Then in November 2021 the St. Paul voters approved rent control, placing a 3 percent per year cap on rent increases. Lexington Station then got caught up in ongoing rent control debate, losing its original equity partner in late 2021. Another partner also

dropped out.

A shift in the investment market, and a focus on affordable housing and projects with social and community benefits meant that another partner stepped forward. That happened before the city council adopted amendments to rent control, which will exempt Lexington Station.

The building will also feature a rooftop solar array, to generate more than half of the power required by the building. Renewable energy is major focus for the project, said Asmundson, with a heat pump heating and cooling system.

PROJECTS GET STAR DOLLARS

Area projects met a mixed fate in the 2022 Neighborhood Sales Tax revitalization (STAR) Program round. The St. Paul City Council approved the projects Nov. 2, wrapping up months of work by the Neighborhood STAR Board, developers and city staff. The city will fund 21 projects, with another 48 not making the cut.

The city's top-ranked project was Abogados Café, 1053 N. Dale St., snaring a \$25,000 grant for interior and exterior renovations.

Some West Midway projects also fared well. FilmNorth, 550 Vandalia, was eighth, receiving a \$150,000 grant for classrooms, work space, a theater and outdoor gathering

area. Bang Brewing, 2320 Capp St., got a \$25,000 loan and \$75,000 grant for interior and exterior work. Shanghai Warehouse, 640 N. Prior Ave., ranked 15th, receiving a \$150,000 loan and \$100,000 grant for its new warehouse project.

African Economic Development Solutions ranked 12th and received a \$200,000 grant for its Little Africa Plaza project on North Snelling Avenue.

Frogtown projects also got funding. BlendZ Barber Shop ranked 13th and was awarded a \$15,000 grant for its shop at 741 University Ave. Sixteenth was a new commercial kitchen for Mi Linda Tierra kitchen project at 461 University Ave., with a \$216,640 grant. The Black Youth healing Arts Collective will get funding for renovating its space at 843 Virginia St., with a \$481,296 grant. The project ranked 17th.

The total awards were 611,561 in loans and \$1.359 million in grants.

Other area projects didn't make the cut including requests for the Snackchat Networking Lounge, Star Ocean Foods in Como, Tech Dump (now Repowered), Como Lake Bed and Breakfast, Playwrights Center, Minnesota Transportation Museum and Hamline Elementary's request to relocate and preserve the Midway Mural Mosaic from the former Star Foods building to a south-facing wall of the school.

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GUEST
COLUMNBY SONJIE JOHNSON
Como resident

Don McCall estimates that he's been asked that question more than 5,000 times since he bought his velomobile in 2017. The most memorable encounter was with the St. Paul Police, who pulled him over for riding west on Como Avenue, in what they assumed was a motorized vehicle without a license. As with most encounters, the cops ended up in a long discussion and a picture of Don's startling method of transportation.

It's hard to miss. The nine-foot, 60-pound velomobile imported from Holland is a three-wheeled bicycle called an HPV – human powered vehicle. Invented in the 1930s, the body is a hi-tech carbon fiber with an aerodynamic shape that allows Don to reach 25 miles/hour on a good day, on a flat surface. He chose to adorn the Dutch beauty with a Mondrian graphic – how appropriate!

So, what is a velomobile?

The simple answer is that it's a recumbent bicycle with an aerodynamic cover, or, as in Don's machine, the bicycle and carbon fiber shape is a unified, cleverly integrated system. Velomobile bodies are typically light, with a low center of mass that allows for superb handling, especially in cornering. Most velomobiles are narrow in front, with a pear-shaped body.

Aerodynamics is the most important element for human power. After roughly 20 MPH, a velomobile is faster than a bi-



It's Don McCall's velomobile – a three-wheeled bicycle imported from Holland. McCall, who lives in Como, can reach 25 miles an hour in his velomobile on a good day.

cycle. The velonaut (velomobile rider) will expend about one-third of the energy compared to a regular, upright bicycle rider.

The next question comes easily – how did Don McCall get interested in this – bicycle?

The answer goes way back. Don was born and raised in Minnesota. He attended Cretin High School and the U of M. Even as a child, he was fascinated by how things

worked. "Managing speed through the air" might best describe his mind set. After high school, Don became a runner; he has finished 15 marathons. He has been an avid cyclist all his life.

His father worked for Northwest Airlines for 35 years as an aircraft mechanic, and Don followed in his footsteps, as he, too, acquired that certification. Don worked as a mechanical engineer for Aero

Systems Engineering for 40 years. ASE is a unique firm that designs equipment to test aircraft engines.

Although the velomobile is Don's most startling ride, he has owned five other unusual bikes, one of which is a 45-year-old Fuji, and another an old English three-speed.

When ebikes became available, Don was an early adopter. Most days he rides it to work; he has logged 7,000 miles so far. He also uses it for utilitarian errands and rides it all winter.

Is the velomobile as easy to ride as an upright bike?

Because of its aerodynamic body, Don says, flat surfaces ride similar to a recumbent bike, and downhill is a breeze. Hills are another story. Don opens the velomobile cover and shows me the "cockpit."

"Hills are tough," he says. On one side of the cockpit a quote says, "You will go up that hill and nothing else matters." On the other side, "The secret to climbing is accepting the climb."

Don retired Aug. 31, but his lifelong devotion to speed and aerodynamics won't be behind him. Since he is also a licensed airframe and powerplant mechanic, he's qualified to work on any kind of aircraft engine. He's thinking of becoming a volunteer at the Commemorative Airforce and WWII Museum in South St. Paul, where WWI aircraft are maintained and flown.

Note: Don has just returned from a seven-week retirement adventure – cycling the 815-km ViaRhona route from the Mediterranean Sea to Geneva, two weeks of which were with his daughter.

Sonjie Johnson has lived in Como Park for 28 years. An avid nature-lover, she has run or walked Como Lake all of those years, and finds the park's history unique and compelling. She also gardens, reads, and writes.

A GLIMPSE INTO COMO PARK



Submitted by Laura Oyen

This summer students and faculty from the St. Catherine University Summer Scholars program teamed up with community members to complete 10 oral history interviews of longtime Como Community members. Their work for summer 2022 explores the Como Park neighborhood history and brings attention to aspects of Como, beyond the State Fair and the Como Zoo. These interviews are a part of the Como Neighborhood History project sponsored by the Neighborhood Relations committee of District 10. This project is beneficial to the community in that stories are being collected and preserved of life in the neighborhood since its addition between 1873 and 1887 to the City of St. Paul. The scholars were interested in learning about how Como residents remembered and experienced their neighborhood. In conducting these interviews students were able to better understand the legacy of discriminatory housing policies and their lasting impacts in the Como Park of today.

The Como Neighborhood History Project was rolled out to the community this year (2022) at the D10 Sub-district Community events. In June the project team hosted a History tour of District 10. Interested community members and the St. Kate's team joined the group to walk and explore local landmarks.

Interviews started in June and since the conversations were so rich they typically lasted between one and one-half to two hours each. Some families interviewed went back three or four generations in the neighborhood while others were in Como a short but impactful period of time. Interviewees recalled neighbors and playmates, businesses and playgrounds. Every hill seemed much bigger and buildings much taller but the "fun" of growing up in Como was mentioned by all.

St. Kate's Summer Scholars presented a "Story Map" of their work at their August Showcase. The Knight Lab Story Map is an open source software that connects a location to an accompanying picture and story. A Glimpse into Como Park is the product of the team's work. View it at knightlab.com.

A special thank you goes to the following folks who generously gave of their time to be interviewed and share part of their Como story with the community: Bob Connolly, Mike Connolly, Connie Parizek, Reene Jacobson, Sandy Simpson, Judy Anderson, Ronald Anderson, Brendon McGowan, Agnes Dynes and Lu.

We would also like to thank interviewers: Maya Isabel Villafuerte, Sophie Gibson, Professor Rachel Neiwert, Laura Oyen, and Marcia Anderson; and project team member: Lija Greenesid.

PLAN IT

HOLIDAY CONCERT NOV. 18

Four local composers will present their latest works at a concert of new vocal music. The concert will be on Friday, Nov. 18, 7 p.m. at Zion Lutheran Church, 1697 Lafond Ave., St. Paul. The composers, Emily Boyajian, Jared Coffin, Aaron Kerr, and Jonathan Posthuma, are all part of the local new music scene in the Twin Cities.

HOLIDAY CHURCH MARKET NOV. 19

Hamline Church's Holiday market is 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 19 at the church at 1514 Englewood Ave. Come and shop for a wide range of handmade items, including pottery, woodcraft, knitted, sewn and crocheted items and more. Browse a wide selection of gifts, jewelry, embroidery, cards and your favorite products and things to eat. Visit the maker's market for lots of craft supplies, fabric, yarn and more. The Hamline Church Women will also be selling used books, games, puzzles and CDs. Questions? Want to see if a last-minute table space is available? Email hamlinewomen@gmail.com or call 651-646-3473.

YOUTH THEATER SHOW NOV. 21

Join Shakespearean Youth Theatre on Monday, Nov. 21, 2022 at 6 p.m. for a free, one-night-only staged reading of John Milton's "Paradise Lost, Book VII," as imagined by a group of upstart, radical teen theater artists. Milton's epic poem explores nothing less than how the universe was created. See what happens when Milton's vision collides with the imaginations of a teen ensemble breathing new life into the text. The staged reading, the culmination of a semester-long intensive, will take place at The Waring Jones Theater at the Playwrights' Center, 2301 East Franklin Ave. Minneapolis. Free tickets can be reserved at sytmn.org/tickets and will be available at the door.

FNWV HOLIDAY FAIR DEC. 2-3

A wide variety of holiday gifts, unique craft items, candles, soaps, handmade winter accessories, discounted gift cards to local

businesses, used books, desserts, Quaker Treasures, Christmas trees, wreaths, delicious homecooked meals and much, much more will be for sale at the FNWV Holiday Fair on Friday, Dec. 2 from 1-9 p.m. and Saturday, Dec. 3 from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at The Friends School of Minnesota, 1365 Englewood Ave.

JOURNALISTS AT RISK DEC. 8

World Without Genocide will host a webinar, "Journalists at Risk Globally, in Ukraine, and Locally," on Thursday, Dec. 8, 2022, 7-9 p.m. on Zoom. Journalists face increasing difficulty and danger in reporting the truth. They are harassed, attacked, imprisoned, and murdered. Kerry Paterson, Deputy Safety Director, Committee to Protect Journalists, will discuss safeguarding reporters from harm around the world. Terri Nelson, Legislative Director, ACLU-MN, will highlight the recent case prohibiting the Minnesota State Patrol from attacking or arresting journalists in Minnesota. Registration is required by Thursday, Dec. 8, 2022, 6:00 pm CT at www.worldwithoutgenocide.org/journalists The webinar is open to the public: \$10 general public, \$5 students and seniors, \$25 for Minnesota lawyers for 2 'elimination of bias' CLE credits, and free to Mitchell Hamline law students. Clock hours are available for Minnesota teachers, nurses, and social workers.

UPCOMING SHOWS AT HAMLINE CHURCH

Dec. 4, 4 p.m., Hamline University A Capella Choir Christmas Concert – The Holiday Tradition continues under the direction of Dr. George Chu. Free will offering.

Dec. 18, 4 p.m., Christmas with Cantus: Into the Light – Cantus, the premier men's choral ensemble in the USA offers a contemporary take on the beloved British lessons and carols tradition elevated by the Choir of King's College at the University of Cambridge. The program centers on nine themes both intimate and universal, using poetry that speaks to a modern audience and repertoire that reflects a range of contexts and cultures.

Hamline Church United Methodist is at 1514 Englewood Ave.

TIDBITS

URBAN GROWLER HONORED

The Minnesota Retailers Association is pleased to award Urban Growler Brewing Co. with the Building Community Through Retail award as part of the 2022-2023 Minnesota's Retail Champions program.

"Urban Growler Brewing Co. is the very first women-owned microbrewery in Minnesota, and while that is an accomplishment worth celebrating, what is truly incredible about Urban Growler is how they build community," said Bruce Nustad, Minnesota Retailers Association president. "Urban Growler and owners Jill and Deb don't just sell great beer, they have created an inclusive retail environment where your background, your outlook and even your politics are welcome. This is the first time we have recognized an organization for Building Community Through Retail and there is no better recipient. Urban Growler is the community."

BURNING BROTHERS LAUNCHES KITE SODA

With the changes to the Minnesota laws back in July, consumers have seen a surge in the variety of new products introduced containing hemp-based THC. In the beverage space in particular, the majority of new products we have seen are THC-infused seltzers. While seltzers remain popular, they are not for everyone.

Andrew Afrooz, owner of Solid Gold Hemp, recognized there was an opportunity, so he connected with Dane Breimhorst and Thomas Foss at Burning Brothers Brewing. The trio talked it through and

quickly moved to create a product to fill that gap. Kite Soda (<https://www.kitesoda.com/>) launched Sept. 9 with three flavors to choose from: Citrus, Ginger Ale and Root Beer.

ST. THOMAS ALUM, JOURNALIST HONORED

The Society of Professional Journalists has honored Dave Aeikens posthumously with the Wells Memorial Key, the highest honor for an SPJ member.

Aeikens, who served as SPJ national president from 2008-2009, died on Nov. 24, 2021 of complications from a liver condition. He also served as Region 6 director, president of the Minnesota Pro Chapter, chair of the Legal Defense Fund and was a longtime board member for the Sigma Delta Chi Foundation, now the SPJ Foundation. He also volunteered for other journalism organizations and initiatives, including being one of the founding organizers of the Midwest Journalism Conference, held by SPJ Region 6 in conjunction with other media organizations.

A graduate of the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Aeikens began his career in southern Minnesota at the Albert Lea Tribune, his hometown newspaper, later the West Central Tribune in Willmar, Minnesota, and eventually the St. Cloud Times, where he worked as a reporter, editor and digital journalist. He later served as a digital journalist for KSTP, the ABC affiliate in the Twin Cities, and in communications for the Minnesota Department of Transportation. Aeikens is also credited as the father of the Excellence in Journalism convention.



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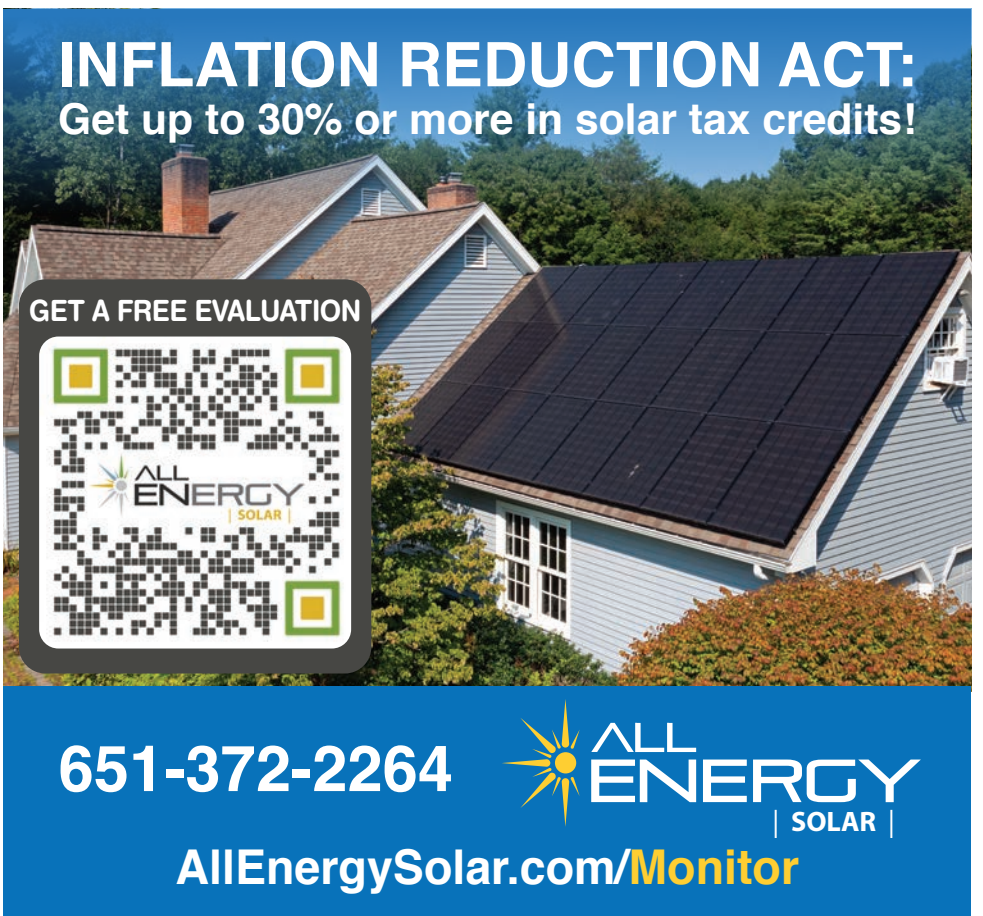
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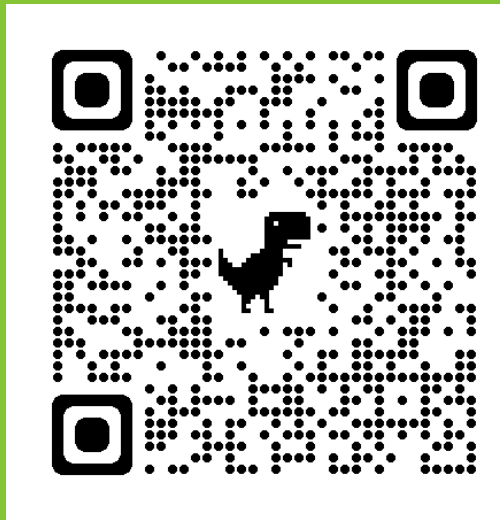
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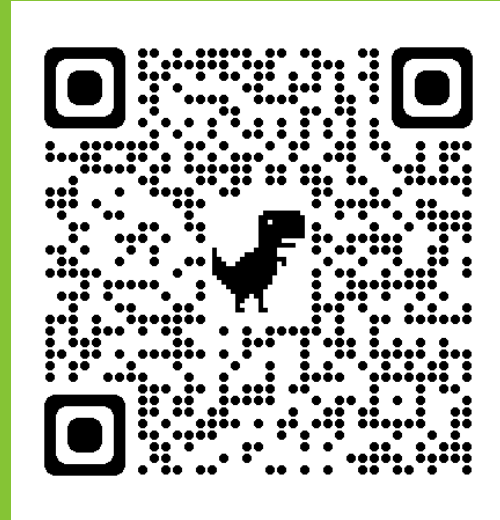
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Visit the Bell Museum this fall



Spotlight Science: Brain Power

November 5, 10 am – 2 pm

Join us at the Bell Museum for an afternoon of brain science and exciting hands-on activities with University of Minnesota Researchers. Explore how the brain changes over time, investigate human and other animal brains up-close, and learn about the consequences of brain injury and drug addiction.



Narwhal: Revealing an Arctic Legend

Now on view

The Bell Museum, a Smithsonian Affiliate, brings an exciting new exhibit, *Narwhal: Revealing an Arctic Legend*. View a full-scale narwhal model and learn the ways Inuit communities and Smithsonian researchers have worked together to help us better understand both narwhals and a changing Arctic impacted by climate change.



November Star Party

November 18, 7:30 – 9 pm

Join the Bell Museum at our November star party! This time, all eyes are on Jupiter. Out on our roof deck, we'll have our telescopes set up to observe Jupiter and some of our favorite winter deep space objects (weather dependent). Inside, we'll have hands-on activities and a look at the research on Jupiter being done by University of Minnesota scientists.



bellmuseum.umn.edu