

SOUTHWEST Connector

NEWS FOR EVERYONE, DELIVERED TO EVERYONE • FEBRUARY 16, 2023 • VOL. 2 • NO. 3 • 22,500 CIRCULATION



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JUMPING IN

It may look like praying when J.D. Fratzke gets into the frigid Lake Harriet water, but he is taking deep breaths to get used to the cold while winterbathing. His six-minute stint on Sunday, Feb. 5 was one of his longest so far this season. (Photo by Terry Faust)



By **J.D. Fratzke**
SAVORING THE 612

As with most things in my life, I just jumped in the first time. I knew myself well enough to understand that if I thought about it too much or just took it one step at a time that I would only be prolonging what I knew I wanted to do.

In the footage my wife took on her phone, you can hear the hoots of gawkers and astonished peripheral commentary.

You can hear me wrestling control of my breath back from the Smartcar-sized patch of open water that determined and whimsical souls cut into Lake Harriet shortly after the ice was deemed thick enough to support the weight of modest crowds. You can see me make my way to the five-foot step ladder laying in the sand on the bottom – setting it up for the exit I knew my body would be telling me in very short order that I needed to execute.

I knew that the ladder had been tipped over by the last person to use the 'Dipping Hole' because I had read that it was protocol – like leaving kindling and a modest stack of logs for the next person

to occupy your Boundary Waters campsite after you strike your tent, pack up the canoe, and shove off toward home. If the ladder is inconsiderately left upright and the temperature is cold enough, it will freeze into the new sheet of ice bound to form overnight or during any period of inactivity. If it lays on the bottom, all one needs to do is smash or cut a new hole open. I loved that when I learned it – a definitively North Country form of thoughtfulness for an endeavor that, from my perspective, is one of the best ways to eliminate thought.

Despite the fact that most of my youth had been spent relying



MET COUNCIL MAKEOVER

Two southwest Minneapolis legislators are pushing for changes to Met Council in wake of light rail issues

By **Cam Gordon**

This could be the year of big changes for the Metropolitan Council. At least that is what two southwest Minneapolis legislators are hoping for.

Later this month, State Senator Scott Dibble and Representative Frank Hornstein, chairs of the transportation committees in the Senate and House respectively, plan to introduce legislation that would overhaul the 7-county regional body to make it more independent. Under their

proposal, its 17 members would be elected directly by voters instead of appointed by the governor, as has been the case since its establishment in 1967. Additionally, the elected members, and not the governor, would select the chair.

Although past efforts to make similar changes have been unsuccessful, including a similar bill last year, Dibble believes there is enough support to get a new bill passed this year.

"I do think we have a good chance of getting a bill passed this year," said Dibble, noting a widespread bipartisan frustration over the Met Council's handling of Southwest Light Rail Transit (LRT) and the feeling among legislators that the council lacks transparency and accountability.

"It is jacketed and ready to go," he said about the new bill. "I am waiting for the right moment to roll it out."

"I'm a huge fan of regional government and I want a Met Council that is in a better position to advocate for the region," Dibble said. "It needs to be elected because that's the true measure of accountability and so it can be representative and deliver on its vision."

The current structure creates confusion, he believes, leaving people to wonder, "is it a local unit of government or a state agency?"

The agency by design is insular," he said. "The whole thing is run by bureaucrats."

WHAT IS THE MET COUNCIL?

As established by the state legislature in the 1967, the Metropolitan Council is a regional policy-making body that includes Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott and Washington counties. It was created in response to a growing region and – what a Citizen's League report called at the time – a growing number of "independen-



INSPIRED

Past meets present in YPC show 'Inspired by Claudette & Rosa' running Feb. 10-26

By **JILL BOOGREN**

Nine months before Rosa Parks, Claudette Colvin refused to give up her seat on the bus to a White passenger. She was 15. Youth Performance Company (YPC)'s "Inspired by Claudette & Rosa" explores the role each played in setting the stage for what would become the Montgomery Bus Boycott in 1955, while drawing directly from the experiences of today's Black youth.



This show has characters that kids like me will be able to relate to."

Amele Brown

In the show, the "Liberation Players" are putting on a high school play and become challenged to do more than just retell past events. The result is a play that blends history and song with contemporary voices and humor to demonstrate the power of each individual to make a difference.

A collaborative effort that began last year with a script by playwright Laura Mann Hill, "Inspired" has been workshopped to include the voices of Twin Cities youth, a process that continued even as rehearsals began.

"I think it helps with the authenticity of the story that they're telling, and they were genuinely inspired by Claudette and Rosa. So, it really was a mutual level of inspiration," said Mann Hill. "It's not even my story. I feel like there were so many people that have been part of this, and I'm just kind of weaving it together, like a quilt."



Turn to page 6 to hear directly from "Inspired" cast members (back row, left to right) Layla Nerayo, Luka McClrath, (front row) Amele Brown, Sha'Vontie Juneau and Ava O'Neal. (Photo by Jill Boogren)

PLAN B

This year's four-week Ice Shanty Project moved to the beach due to poor ice conditions in January.



Artist Robin Garwood invites people to take a pause at the Self Reflection Shanty, and peer inside for a question. This year's Ice Shanty Project ran Jan. 21-Feb. 12. [MORE PHOTOS ONLINE.](#) (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)



Jim Saybolt with daughters Faye and Lucinda (swinging banner) trying out some of the activities offered during the annual event. It coincided with the Lake Harriet Kite Festival on Jan. 28, 2023. (Photo by Terry Faust)



Seward artists Lisa Carlson and Peter Schulze (not shown) build an ice garden, showing both the beauty and fragility of ice. They used a wide range of containers to make the ice pieces that they set up along the shore of Bdé Umāŋ / Lake Harriet. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)



Attendees make musical tones while others meditate at the solitary tree in the Meditation Garden. Made of twisted metal, the roots sprawl out, touching and entwining. (Photo by Cam Gordon)



Re(center)ed is a community healing project at this year's Ice Shanties at Lake Harriet by artists Jayson Randall and the re(center)ed team. From the description: The 42-foot-long serpentine structure creates bays of isolation, where guests can create their own stories of grief and sorrow, which will be destroyed in the release pyre. The flames and drafting smoke release the burden of grief and sorrow of the guests and the community. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)

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▶1 MET COUNCIL

dent single-purpose districts, each with its own policy council, taxing authority and administrative structure.” The Council was granted planning, coordinating and taxing authority to help guide the metro area, and provide essential service and infrastructure to the areas over 181 cities and towns.

Initially it was proposed to take over the functions of the Metropolitan Planning Commission, Mosquito Control District, Metropolitan Transit Commission and Minneapolis-St. Paul Sanitary District. It’s services now include Metro Transit’s bus and rail system, Metro Mobility, Transit Link, wastewater treatment services, regional parks, planning, as well as affordable housing, and economic development efforts. Their funding comes from a variety of sources, including user fees for wastewater treatment and transit services, state and federal funds, and a 7-county property tax.

WHAT ABOUT ELECTING MEMBERS?

The idea of a directly elected council is not new. In fact, it was first among the original 1967 Citizen’s League recommendations that resulted in its creation. “We recommend,” the report said, “that the 1967 Legislature create a Metropolitan Council, directly elected by popular vote of the people, to solve the pressing area-wide governmental problems of the Twin

Cities area in a coordinated manner.”

The 1967 legislature did adopt the League’s recommendation to create the Metropolitan Council, though with more limited powers than the Citizens League had proposed. However, they did not approve having its members elected. Amendments at the time to have an elected Council failed on a 62-66 vote in the House and a 33-33 tie vote in the Senate. Some legislators concluded, the league wrote in a subsequent report, that “if the Governor appointed members, as opposed to an election process, it [the Met Council] would be able to focus on issues 10 to 30 years ahead.”

It is unclear how much opposition there may be to this today. The governance structure has been studied since 1967 and an elected Met Council has not been recommended since in the more formal studies.

The Citizen’s League’s own 2016 report called for some changes to the Council, including adopting fixed four-year, staggered terms for members, but did not recommend that they be elected.

More recently, in December 2020, a committee created by Governor Tim Walz examined the structure and services of the Metropolitan Council and recommended that the Council members remain to be appointed.

Last term, a similar bill that was introduced to change to an elected membership, failed to get through the legislative process.

WILL THINGS BE DIFFERENT NOW?

While this bill will likely be very similar to last year’s, Dibble and Hornstein are hoping that the results will be different.

“We are in a key moment right now,” said Dibble, citing concerns about the Southwest light rail project and a general perception at the legislature that the Met Council needs to be more transparent, accountable, and collaborative.

Concerns have also been raised about the council’s taxing authority and their authority to override local government decisions on land use. The arrangement could be considered unconstitutional, and certainly is open to criticism as being taxation without representation.

Elected members would put the Council, said Dibble, “in a better position to advocate for the region” and make it more “unifying, legitimate, engaging and transparent.”

Beyond the governance, Dibble is also concerned about the council’s capacity, and the wisdom of giving it the authority to manage and oversee massive construction projects, like light rail transit (LRT). The first Hiawatha/Blue Line LRT project was planned and approved by the Met Council but was built by the state Department of Transportation (DOT).

Dibble says that there has been frustration with a lack of accountability and transparency among both Republican and Democratic-Farmer-Labor legislators for some time, but especially over the Met Council’s

handling of Southwest LRT project.

In response to a series of well-publicized delays and cost overruns, last March the state legislature directed the Office the Legislative Auditor (OLA) to “conduct a special review, program evaluation, or a combination of the two, of the Southwest light rail transit project.”

In the first in a series of reports the OLA is making in response to that directive, last September they reported that since 2011, “the Metropolitan Council has increased its estimate of the project’s cost several times.” The projected budget for the line went from \$1.25 billion in 2011, with service expected to start in 2018, to \$2.74 billion in March of 2022 with a 2027 opening date.

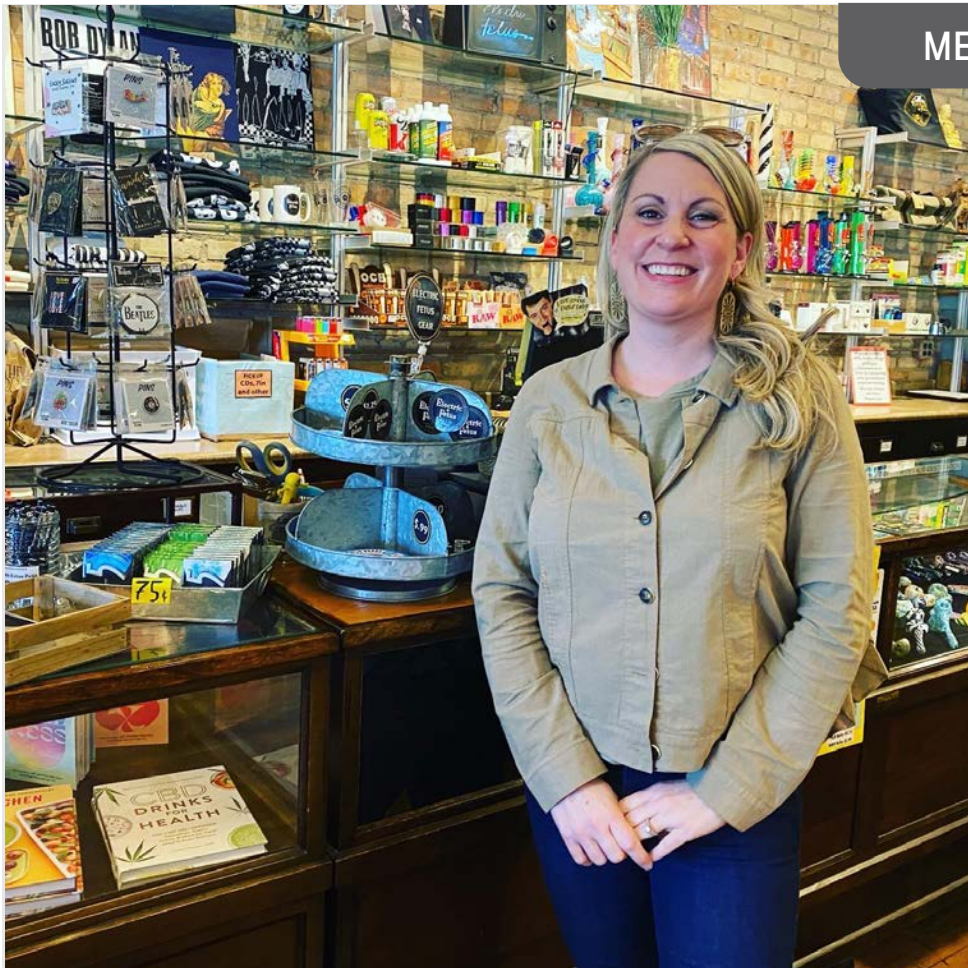
The next OLA report on the project is scheduled for release early this year.

To address this Dibble said, “We may also want to move some of the responsibility to state DOT, especially these larger projects.” He plans to introduce that as a separate measure. Under his proposal, any project costing \$100 million or more would be managed by the state, and not the Met Council. As proposed, this would apply only to future projects.

But even if this measure fails, Dibble believes that the change to make the Met Council more independent with members directly elected will be successful.

If approved by the legislature, he is also confident that the law will not be vetoed. “The Governor says he will sign it if it gets to his desk,” Dibble said.

MEET THE SECOND GENERATION OWNER AT ELECTRIC FETUS



Meet Linden Hills resident Stephanie Covart Meyerring, who took over running the iconic Electric Fetus from her dad, Keith Covart, with her husband Aaron a few years ago. (She previously worked in interior design.) “We want people to have an experience here,” said Covart Meyerring.

In addition to local people, they draw in customers from around the world as it has become a mecca for Prince fans. His last tweet on April 18 before he died contained only a picture from his “Piano & a Microphone” tour and a link to the Electric Fetus, a Minneapolis record store. His fans return year after year. Covart Meyerring said they debated whether to offer Prince products. “It was hard for us to even bring Prince merchandise in here,” she remarked. The Electric Fetus was a place Prince came to, and they knew him. He supported them and they supported him. In the end, they added the merchandise because their customers asked for it. The Electric Fetus closed its Duluth store in 2020, which was a hard decision; the St. Cloud store was closed in 2014. The two had opened on the same day in the 1980s.

When COVID-19 hit, the gift shop was affected and sales of books, toys, clothing, jewelry, accessories, stationery, incense, bath & and beauty products, and housewares dropped. “During COVID, vinyl really kept us strong,” she said. “People were at home listening to music.” In the last six months, their gift department sales have risen. “People are returning to the places they used to go to,” said Covart Meyerring.

The Electric Fetus will celebrate its 55th year in June. “It feels like everyone has a story about the store,” said Covart Meyerring. She loves seeing grandparents introduce their grandchildren to the Electric Fetus. When people come, they stay for awhile. She remarked, “We’re a destination store.”

Meet other staff members on the Southwest Connector Facebook and Instagram feeds.
(Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)



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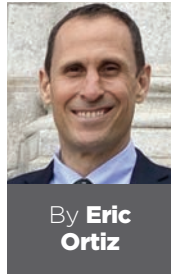
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WANT TO BE ON THE COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS TEAM?

Everybody is welcome. All you have to do is be willing to give.

One of my favorite movies is "Groundhog Day." In the 1993 film, Bill Murray plays a cynical television weatherman from Pittsburgh who goes to Punxsutawney, Penn., to cover the annual Groundhog Day festivities. He predicts a short winter, but after the groundhog sees his shadow, Murray gets more than another six more weeks of cold temperatures. He ends up reliving the same day, over and over again, in a never-ending time loop.



By Eric Ortiz



A car drives on a snowy street during a winter day in Minneapolis. The chaos of streets narrowed by snow and potholes the sizes of swimming pools can create a cycle of trauma. (Eva Ortiz).

At first, Murray enjoys the benefits of being stuck in time. He can do anything he wants with no consequences. He eats like a pig, uses women, steals money, and indulges in his basest instincts. After a while, he gets depressed with this meaningless existence and becomes desperate to escape his circumstances. So he commits suicide in different ways. But there is no escape. Every day, he wakes up, on the same day, in the same bed, alone, with Sonny and Cher's "I Got You Babe" playing on the alarm clock radio.

The only way he can stop the day from repeating is by doing something he never does - being unselfish. Once he stops thinking about himself and starts thinking about everyone else, he transforms himself

into a good person. When he finally gets everything right, the cycle of trauma ends. The calendar turns to a new day.

These days, the world feels like we are living Groundhog Day. Wars are happening around the globe. Tensions are rising. People are struggling. With a global recession on the horizon, about 8 percent of the population, almost 650 million people, live in extreme poverty (surviving on less than \$2.15 a day). Nature continues to wreak havoc, and natural disasters can be deadly.

Closer to home in Minneapolis, it's a similar story on a smaller scale. We have an epidemic of car thefts (700 in January), car jackings remain a problem, and violence is a regular occurrence with shootings. Some lead to death.

On top of that, this winter has brought a lot more snow than usual and not enough plows or shovels to clear it (or even

room for plows to do their job), leaving a trail of icy sidewalks and unplowed streets and alleys across the city. Throw in potholes the size of swimming pools, and it's a recipe for chaos.

That chaos can create a cycle of trauma. Even if we don't recognize the chaos as trauma, all these issues can take a physical, emotional and spiritual toll on our health and well-being. Some problems may seem minor, but the heaviness adds up. And with the major problems of society stuck on repeat, day after day, life can feel pretty demoralizing.

So, how do we come up with solutions? How do we make things right?

By giving. Time. Money. Knowledge. Skills. Work. Giving whatever we can.

Phil Connors, Bill Murray's character in "Groundhog Day," escaped his time loop when he stopped seeing the cycle as a curse and started seeing it as a blessing. When he saw his predicament as an opportunity to do good, he made things right.

We can do the same thing to break our cycles. We have the chance to do good.

The best part is anyone can give. That means anyone can be part of solutions.

As Martin Luther King Jr. said: "Everybody can be great. Because anybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to make your subject and your verb agree to serve. ...You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love."

We are putting together a community solutions team in Minneapolis with the Lowry Hill East Neighborhood Association.

The solutions team brings together community and city leaders and builds on work we are doing with the Minnesota Peacebuilding Leadership Institute.

This work is all about community building that puts kids first and focuses on practical solutions. The concept draws inspiration from a community organization in St. Louis Park called Children First. Their philosophy is about changing the behavior of adults and having everyone in the community use the positive lens of 40 Developmental Assets to help raise our youth. The assets, created in 1997 by a youth development organization called Search Institute, range from family support to positive view of personal future.

The assets outline the relationships, experiences and expectations young people need to thrive. The community helps build these positive traits in the young people they know to put them on a path to a healthy, flourishing life. They have been proven to work.

In the next few weeks, we will be developing an actionable plan with actionable steps to create healthy communities in Minneapolis that put children first. By putting children first, the whole community can thrive.

You just have to be willing to give.

If you are interested in learning more about the community solutions program or being involved, please let us know.



Eric Ortiz lives in the Wedge with his family. When he's not community building, he's the director of media for Big Edition and writes bilingual children's books with his kids. Their first book, "How the Zookalex Saved the Village," is available in English and Spanish.

FROM YOUR CENTER WITHIN

February is a month that includes Valentine's Day and is American Heart Month, a time when all you are encouraged to focus on your cardiovascular health. I have been contemplating the many layers of a healthy heart. How is your heart feeling this month?



By Michele Rae

OUR PHYSICAL HEART HEALTH:

This Heart Month, the Division for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention invites us to focus on learning how to control our blood pressure, manage our cholesterol and blood glucose levels, move more, eat healthier, stress less, work with our health care team, and quit smoking. Do you have your blood pressure checked regularly? Have you seen your primary health care team to know your blood levels of Vitamin D, glucose, and cholesterol panel? As a person who has been pre-diabetic twice in my life, seeing those not so healthy lab value trends has been motivating for me to make positive lifestyle changes. More fresh fruits,

HEALTHY HEARTS MATTER

vegetables, movement, and relaxation have positively impacted my health.

OUR EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL HEART HEALTH:

Stress is inevitable. How are you handling the ups and downs in your life? If you are hypervigilant and on high alert most of the time, you are dumping life-shortening chemicals into your body and aging prematurely. When you notice your body, mind and heart are triggered and your fight and flight kicks in, have a plan. Take some deep breaths. Go for a walk (yes, even in our cold Minnesota February!), call a friend, journal, listen to calming music, draw, paint, dance, laugh. Inner and outer stressors will change, and your capacity to limit their impact on your emotional and mental health is worthy of your intention and attention. Building resilience is a true gift to yourself and your community.

OUR RELATIONAL HEART HEALTH:

Do your relationships enhance or deplete your well-being? Pay attention. Cultivate nourishing connections personally and professionally, in your families and

communities. Are there relationships you think you should put effort into that no longer serve either of you? Consider an exit plan. In any relationship, conflict can arise. Have you developed the ability to respond instead of overreacting out of habit? Practice listening deeply when someone you care about comes to you with a tender topic that is causing them suffering. Be curious, hear them with an open mind and heart. Ask questions. Let them know they count, even if in the end you agree to disagree. When you approach another with your disappointment or needs not being met, speak for yourself instead of telling them they are somehow at fault. Maybe it is time to forgive yourself or another person. This is a great month for the proactive healing process of forgiveness.

OUR COMMUNITY HEART HEALTH:

We have been through a lot here in Minneapolis over the recent days. It can seem like there is a perpetual message that we are divided, polarized and different from one another. We are each invited to settle into our heart's knowing that we

are in fact all connected, all imagining a healthy, vibrant, flourishing community where everyone counts. This month, find an event to attend you have not been to before. Visit a gallery or locally-owned store for the first time. Explore a new outdoor space. Attend a community activity to propel the greater good. Organize a dinner party with great people you know but have not met each other. How else can you positively impact the heart of our community?

When we take a few moments to pay attention to what our heart is telling us, we make empowering authentic choices. Our mind, ego or conditioning can be quick to judge or think we already know. Be playful and open to new levels of wisdom from the lessons your heart can teach you. This is a month to challenge yourself to enhance your physical, mental, emotional, relational, and communal health!



Michele Rae, RPh, MA, NBC-HWC is the founder of The Center Within, LLC and author of "Living From the Center Within: Co-Creating Who You Are Becoming." She provides holistic coaching designed to accelerate and support personal, professional, and organizational transformation.



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DID YOU KNOW DUST IN YOUR HOUSE HAS 10 HARMFUL CHEMICALS?

It's a warm summer afternoon, sun shining through kitchen windows. The front door flies open; kids and dogs come bursting in two by two. Running through the house and right out the back door. As they leap off the back steps, birds and squirrels scatter to the safety of nearby branches. Twenty minutes later, just as the dust cloud settles, the scene repeats.



By Russ Henry

This is the nature of our homes and neighborhoods. We live in busy spaces filled with the lively activity of people and animals. Dust is kicked, stirred, and whipped up into the air inside and out on a daily basis and we breathe it in all day long. What is in the dust?

A study conducted with help from Dr. Ami Zota, a population health scientist at Columbia's Mailman School of Public Health, found at least 10 harmful chemicals in 90% of household dust samples gathered. According to the research, phthalates occurred in the highest concentrations, followed by phenols, RFRs (fire retardants), fragrance, and PFASs (Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances). Adverse health effects of these chemicals include chronic disease risk, IQ deficiencies, and reproductive issues. The wide

variety of consumer chemicals linked to potential threats for children's health were often co-occurring and found in mixtures, a point which Dr. Zota emphasizes in a video explanation of her work, "This is important because the health effects of mixtures have not been well studied."

In a recent study the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) emphasizes the importance of thinking about potential mixtures of products. According to the EPA website, "In this study, EPA researchers focused their analysis on endocrine disrupting chemicals and flame retardants. One hundred household products were tested from 20 diverse household product categories, including shampoo and clothing. EPA researchers found 4,270 unique chemical signatures across the 100 products.... Chemical standards confirmed the presence of 119 chemical compounds."

Phthalates, phenols, PFASs can all be found in various pesticides. These products are often considered "inert" ingredients in pesticide mixtures which also contain even more toxic "active" ingredients. To learn more about the risks associated with household pesticides, I spoke with Drew Toher, the Community Resource and Policy Director for Beyond Pesticides, a national organization that "works with allies in protecting public health and the environment to lead the transition to a world free of toxic pesticides."


Toher explained, "The most com-

monly used pesticides in residential households are insecticides. Within that group, the synthetic pyrethroid class of insecticides are likely the most common. They are the active ingredients found in most RAID products. This use is concerning because studies show that this class of chemicals are linked to a range of adverse health effects, particularly in young children. Children with higher levels of pyrethroids in their urine are three times as likely to have mental delay compared to children with lower levels of exposure. Synthetic pyrethroid exposure increases risk of premature puberty in boys, a finding that was recently expanded to show early puberty development in both boys and girls aged 7-11 with higher levels of pyrethroid in their urine. One study found pyrethroid exposure before, during, and after pregnancy associated with increased risk of infant leukemia."

Toher further cautioned, "Products like the synthetic pyrethroids can linger in homes for well over a year, remaining toxicologically active and risking re-exposure. Pesticides used outdoors can also be tracked inside, with one study finding that the commonly used lawn herbicide 2,4-D was tracked indoors - it was able to be detected in indoor air and found on indoor surfaces throughout one's home." As for mixtures Toher said, "Studies on pesticide mixtures and synergy are unfortunately few and far between. EPA does not require

testing on mixtures or potential synergy despite the facts that products can be packaged with multiple active ingredients, people are exposed to multiple pesticides daily, and consumers may use multiple pesticides inside the home. One concerning synergy that may commonly occur in homes is between DEET products and synthetic pyrethroids. Combined, these products can result in significant neurotoxic effects, and may have even played a role in the development of Gulf War Syndrome among Gulf War veterans."

Managing an organic household and landscape is the best way to protect ourselves and our loved ones from harmful chemical mixtures. Organic foods can greatly reduce our exposure to chemicals in pesticides. Natural fibers for clothing, furniture, building materials, and bedding can also reduce our exposure to harmful chemicals. Choose natural cleaning products like vinegar, washing soda, and castile soap, and avoid pesticides inside and outside the house. Next summer, practice organic house and landscape management to help keep the kids, pets, and the whole neighborhood a little safer.

 **Russ Henry** is a landscaper, naturalist, gardener, soil health specialist, and educator. The Longfellow business owner is devoted to pollinator protection, urban farming, local food system development, and restorative justice.

JUMPING IN

on my body - swimming, skateboarding, scaling bluff country trails to climb into tree stands to hunt deer - something about me had been particularly hardwired to live a life inside my own head. Usually wanting to be anywhere other than where I was, I indulged my imagination with books and films and music and drawing as my go-to forms of escapism. I overthought everything, and to my detriment, spent a lot of time less than present. When I left my hometown in Winona County to move up to Minneapolis, the concrete carnival of our Twin Cities metro area gave me back all of the energy I put into it - which was a resource I needed as I stepped into the cacophonous morass of restaurant kitchen work.

However, for all the victories and fireworks life as a line cook and, later, a chef provided me, I woke up decades later to the realization that it was taking a lot more than it gave - because I had allowed it to do so. Living a life in my head had never really gone away - and because of that I had taken for granted the body I had relied upon to carry my mind.

I know I'm not alone in that. When we channel our passions into our livelihood and our loved ones, we accept all manner of reasons to defer attention to the flesh and bones we ride through the amusement park of life.

The abrupt halt to my work in restaurant kitchens due to the lockdowns of the pandemic made me re-examine all of that - made me ask myself just what I had given up to arrive at where I happened to be standing. I didn't like the view. I didn't like how I looked or how I felt and I really wanted to change a lot of things about the vocation I had chosen to pursue. I knew that all three of those things could only be changed by changing myself, so I gave it a shot. I began returning to a Yoga practice. Meditation. Free weights. A more mindful diet. Time spent outdoors that reconnected me with Mother Nature.

The latter impacted me most. I got greedy for my time on Minnesota's myriad trails and waterways - our free-of-charge, stride-measured, all-weather therapists. I began to understand that my body had rekindled its romance with Mother Nature - that the duress of heat and pressure and



The hole in the ice at the north Lake Harriet beach started during COVID-19, and cold-water enthusiasts continue to take regular plunges. Among them is J.D. Fratke. "That first time I jumped in to Lake Harriet, that first time I discovered that my mind could tell my body to reclaim my breathing, was the first time in a long time that I reclaimed a state of what I can only describe as harmony," he said. (Photos by Terry Faust).

folly in a lifetime of restaurant kitchens hadn't been a punishment from having turned away from her when I left Winona County. Those years had just been proof that I was worthy of her love.

When we really love someone, we know we need to love them far past when they are at their best. We need to love them when they are moody and nasty, lazy and hungry, indifferent, luscious, sharp, and brilliant. We can only really do that, really feel love, when we offer up all of those parts of ourselves. What better way do you show the object of your affection - or yourself - who you really are?

Jumping into the exposed liquid of

a frozen lake wasn't a box I wanted to check off a bucket list or a desire to reap the physiological benefits our species has been harvesting from the practice since we've walked upright. To me, it was simply a way to find out if my body could love where I lived - even if my mind tried to tell me that where I was, chest deep in ice-fishing water, wanted to kill me.

That first time I jumped in to Lake Harriet, that first time I discovered that my mind could tell my body to reclaim my breathing, was the first time in a long time that I reclaimed a state of what I can only describe as harmony. I kept focusing on that breath. Long and slow. Deep into




my lungs and my belly, just like my meditation practice when I was at home sitting lotus on the rug (warm next to the furnace vent).

I didn't concern myself with how long I was in the water. My wife's phone later proved about three minutes, but I let my body tell me when it was time to get out (mostly because my fingers and toes were in serious pain). My mind agreed. All together we made our way back to the ladder I took the time to reposition when I first leapt in.


There are dozens of studies that document the scientific, physiological explanations for the euphoria I felt as I climbed up the rungs and on to the edge of the ice. I can tell you that part of it was anticipation of the hot shower I would fire up as soon as my wife drove us home, part of it was proving to myself that I had accomplished something extreme on my own terms and my own volition. Strongest, though, was the realization that I still wanted to push myself out of the rut I had allowed my body and mind to slip into - and now I wanted to do it again. Jumping into the water of a frozen lake had reconnected me with joy. I wanted to do it again and again. I was greedy for it.

When I finished climbing out and gave it a gentle nudge to tip it over and let it drift back toward the bottom, I thought of that ladder, the journey and the protocol that came along with it, as a stairway to heaven, ready for the next seeker to find it.

 **J.D. Fratke** is a husband, father, wilderness advocate, and word enthusiast. He has spent most of his adult life toiling in restaurant kitchens to varying degrees of success. A lifelong Minnesotan, JD and his family live in South Minneapolis.

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Playwright Laura Mann Hill, director Duck Washington, and stage manager Erin Gustafson gather during a rehearsal of "Inspired by Claudette & Rosa" at the Midway-based Youth Performance Company. (Photo by Jill Boogren)

'INSPIRED'

YPC is located in St. Paul's Midway neighborhood (641 Fairview Ave. N.). Performances take place at The Conn Theatre (1900 Nicollet Ave.) in Minneapolis.

CHANGING THE WORLD

Before directing this show, Duck Washington directed "Periphery" at YPC, which was about the Greensboro lunch counter sit-in. Both plays are about not just historical figures but historical youth who impacted their world and made a difference. For Washington, seeing youth get excited and passionate about making a positive change in the world – and inspiring courage and confidence in them to take action – is what makes it all worthwhile.

"In a place where things are happening in their community that seem impossible, like the Uprising in South Minneapolis and the loss of George Floyd, this kinda gives them an idea that they have the ability to impact it a little bit through their actions and their voices and that they're not just helpless," said Washington. "Claudette was 15 years old. The students in the lunch counter sit-ins were all in high school. But all of them moved the needle to make the world the place that it is today. And [today's students] can do that [too]. They have the power, the capacity. If they have the will and the bravery, they can make change in this world."

It is evident that this exchange between the adults and students involved at YPC is mutually beneficial.

"I learn things from them all the time," said Erin Gustafson, who has been the stage manager for YPC performances since 2019. "I stand by that kids are the smartest humans in the world, and I will continuously be learning from them."

Five "Inspired" cast members chatted before a January rehearsal about what theater, YPC and this show in particular mean to them. Here's what they had to say:

AMELE BROWN, 18

First performance at age 4. Has done shows with YPC since age 11 or 12. Playing the roles of Rosa Parks and Annie from the Liberation Players. Helped workshop the play.

"We read through [the play] and talked with [the writer] about our experiences as Black youth and Minnesota and with George Floyd. I'm really into activism and I go to a lot of protests, so they wanted some of this generation's input to make the show more current and relatable... It was super cool to be able to do that because I think it's so important that we know adults who are creating these are listening to the kids, 'cause that's how you get that accuracy and that's how you reach that audience and you make the difference."

"I think what this show does so well... is they kind of reflect on today's

"INSPIRED BY CLAUDETTE & ROSA"

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Black youth as well as the history of Black activism and fighting for their rights... because they have that double-sided aspect, where it's the high schoolers in the school making the play about the history. So honestly my character, I have so many similarities with her, at least the Annie one... Annie's kind of my age, she's applying for colleges which I just finished doing, she's into acting, obviously she's a Black little girl, so you know, I feel like this show has characters that kids like me will be able to relate to when they come and see it, as well as... pay homage to that history."

SHA'VONTIE JUNEAU, 12, HOPE ACADEMY

Began at YPC doing camps at age 6 or 7. First play in 3rd grade, played the title role in "The Velveteen Rabbit" in December. Playing Jean, a narrator, and a podcast host.

"I love it 'cause I just love acting and being on stage and being able to connect with people. And just because it's based on a true story with Black people and racism, our history, I just feel it really connects to me and my heritage and what my backstory is, so I just really love being part of these kind of things."

"I think [the show is] gonna be really great, and I just love being a part of plays because I love the cast and how we get to meet new people. I just feel like it's a great experience for people who might not like... be around people, I feel like it's a new experience, I feel like it's really laid back and just like an opportunity to start [in theater]."

LUKA MCILRATH, 13, CAPITOL HILL MAGNET SCHOOL

Has done lights for YPC. First time acting on stage. Playing the role of Thomas.

"It's definitely a new experience but it's also quite a fun one to be honest, 'cause I mean you get to meet all these new people from different areas with different experiences, and you all get to come together and make something amazing. And we can all work hard together and have fun. I mean, that's the main thing."

"I've been doing lights with YPC for a bit now, and it just looked really fun. 'Cause you get to see the whole cast have good bonds with each other and have fun while on stage and just show their excitement, ready for the whole audience to see. As a person who's up in the booth all the time you get to see it, too. Also, I started theater doing lights specifically around

▶ 6 'INSPIRED'

this time last year, so it's been almost a year where I've been actually involved in theater, and I just wanted to take part in a civil rights play that YPC does.

"Theater is an amazing way to get along with others and meet new people... anyone can get involved with theater."

AVA O'NEAL, 15, ROSEVILLE AREA HIGH SCHOOL

First show at YPC. Playing the role of Sonia.

"I like that this show is really a discussion about social injustice and issues like that. A lot of the shows that I do in school, they're not really as serious, they don't delve into real topics like this, they're more fantasy. I was really excited to start doing a show that talked about real issues. Also I liked that in this show it's not just about social injustice, but it's about people my age learning about it and learning how to deal with struggles surrounding it, and that was something that's really important to me.

"Something I've learned from the show so far is that it's okay to still be learning. Sometimes I feel a lot of pressure to have as much knowledge as possible on social issues, and while it is important to have knowledge and be educated on those things, this show is helping teach me that it's okay to still be learning because we're kind of always gonna be learning, and it's okay to not know everything all the time."

LAYLA NERAYO, ROSEVILLE AREA HIGH SCHOOL

In theater since age 5. First show at YPC. Playing the roles of Claudette Colvin and Nyla.

"[Claudette] was a 15-year-old girl who had done essentially what Rosa Parks



Cast rehearse a scene from "Inspired by Claudette & Rosa" at Youth Performance Company in January 2023. (Photo by Jill Boogren)

did about nine months prior. She held her seat on the bus refusing to give it up, but it was later decided that she wasn't going to be the face of the bus boycott because of many reasons, one of which was colorism within the Black community, because she was darker skinned, and the other being she was young, she was a teenager. And people felt that the public would trust Rosa Parks more.

"I really did love learning more about her throughout the process of this show. A lot especially about Black history has come to light within the past few years, so I had heard about her but being able to really dive deeper and hear about what she did and why she did it was really interesting.

"I really love the fact that the show makes a beautiful effort to incorporate a majority of the history surrounding Claudette, so it's not only her history with the bus boycott but with Rosa and with her struggles even within the Black community, which I think not enough people pay attention to."

LAND OF 10,000 OUTDOOR HOBBIES

Urban students pick up tools and fishing poles thanks to grant from Uptown VFW

By Jan Willms

Winters can be frigid in Minnesota, but Karl Erickson, the woodworking program manager at Elpis Enterprises (2161 University Ave.) can find ways to make the cold weather both fun and a learning experience.

Elpis has been providing internships for homeless youth in screen printing and woodworking since the late 1990s, and part of the woodworking training has been taking youth into the community and teaching children how to build birdhouses and birdfeeders.

As part of a new project called "Land of 10,000 Diverse 4th Grade Birdwatchers," the building of birdfeeders has expanded this year.

The program was initiated by a grant from the Uptown VFW in Minneapolis to help 14 schools do the project at no cost. "Our interns go to the schools and help mentor and guide the kids through the building process," Erickson said. "As of Feb. 8, we have visited 13 schools, and 518 students have built birdfeeders."

The birdfeeders are built from reclaimed wood, according to Erickson, and the fourth graders also learn about the importance of birds in the environment and how to identify birds by their looks and sounds.

"We have over 50 schools that want this project to happen," Erickson said. "We

are looking for more schools and fourth grade teachers who are interested, and if they get on our wish list we will seek grants, funding and sponsorships."

Also on the winter activities roster is ice fishing. Erickson, a former teacher at Higher Ground Academy before starting at Elpis this past September, said he has helped over 700 students at the school learn to ice fish over the years.

"We are hoping to help more schools become urban anglers," he said. The Uptown VFW provided a grant for three schools to take ice fishing trips: Higher Ground Academy and Sejong Academy in St. Paul and Bultum Academy in Columbia Heights. The first two schools will fish on Como Lake, and Bultum Academy students will be on Silver Lake.

Police cadets from the St. Paul Police Activities League will assist kids at Como Lake, and military veteran volunteers will help the Bultum Academy students.

He said the ice fishing program is open to youth from fourth grade and up. They learn how to identify species, as well as fishing regulations and about cold weather conditions. "They are taught heater safety, hook safety and hole safety," he said.

Erickson said with the ice fishing, he can rotate between 100 and 150 students per day, with one class every hour.

"I'm lucky Elpis allows me to branch out with these projects," Erickson said. "Next year we are hoping the Elpis trainees will be able to help with the ice fishing."

Any schools or educators interested in ice fishing or birdfeeder building for their students can contact Erickson at karl@elpisenterprises.org

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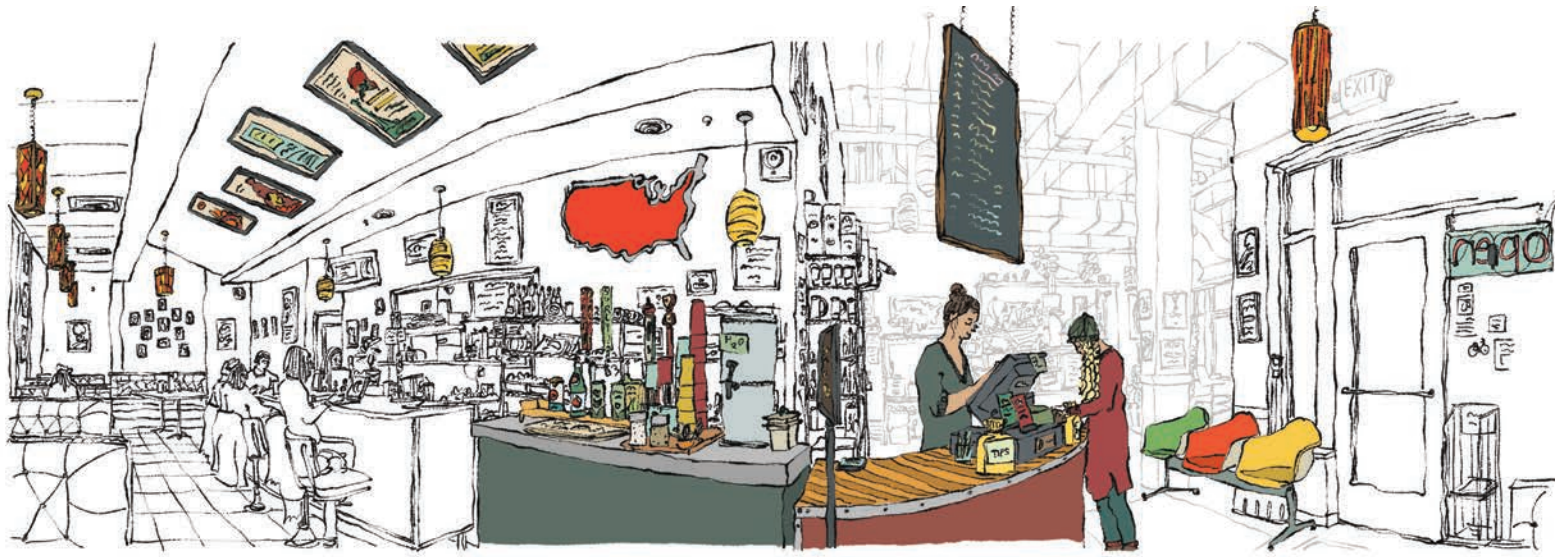
How do you make a birdfeeder? Students from Lake Harriet Community School Upper Campus build their own from reclaimed wood on Thursday, Feb. 9, 2023. Elpis intern LaShay DeClerq-Ransom explains the drilling-the-hanger-wire-hole stage of birdfeeder construction as (left to right) Izzy Spallino, Kennedy Kaplan, and Atticus Donald watch. They also learned about the importance of birds in the environment and how to identify birds. >[MORE PHOTOS ONLINE AT WWW.SWCONNECTOR.COM](http://WWW.SWCONNECTOR.COM). (Photo by Terry Faust)

SUMMER IS FOR EXPERIMENTATION

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It's sad to see have the Bad Waitress is closing... but 18 years is a great run for any business, especially a restaurant. it speaks to the passion and dedication the owners put into a pretty cool idea. (Illustration by WACSO)

INTRODUCING CONNECTOR LIVE! – LOCAL MUSIC PLAYLIST SERIES

Showcasing individual local live music venues and the musicians that play there

TEAMING UP FOR GOOD

Connector LIVE! – as part of Teaming Up For Good – will soon feature live venue and music information along with specially curated streaming playlists for your listening pleasure. Read about the food and libations, the ambiance, the bands you might see, and hear some of the cool stuff that's available many nights a week in this musical treasure trove we live in.



By Larry LaVercombe

This column was going to be the first in this series – but when I tried to get it all done in the week since I hatched the idea, I realized... I can't start it this soon! So this column is instead dedicated to notes about a few recent shows, and accompanying each of these is a "semi-professional" video of a song performed there. Check 'em out!

July 8, 2021, Mears Park – The Flamin Ohs! On a gorgeous summer evening just weeks into the first wave of COVID-19 lifting, this band of local heroes, including bassist/composer/vocalist Jenny Case, widely admired (and widely employed)



Little Man (left) and Cindy Lawson are two local music highlights. (Photo submitted)

guitarist Terry Isachsen, keyboardist Bob Burns and legendary frontman Robert Wilkinson, rocked the park. It was what live music can be like in Minnesota. Perfect-sized venue, giant dance floor, and a band that kicks your ass harder than they did back in 1977 in Duffy's Bar. To see a three song clip from this show – Go to YouTube, search for Larry LaVercombe, and there you will see this video along with several others that correspond to each show listed below. (Warning: after watching the first fifteen seconds of this one, you'll be hooked for the full 12 minutes.)

July 3, 2021, just three nights earlier, The Suburbs killed it at First Avenue's 7th Street Entry, their first night open in two years. Late-great lead guitarist Bruce Allen died young, but the current guitarists, Jeremy Ylvisaker and Steve Brantseg, are among the very best in town. Chan sings most every song now, and his voice has become wiser and deeper. Hugo hasn't lost a beat. Max and Rochelle still bring



the sax. Go to my YouTube page to have your Bones Rattled by Music for Boys.

Hosted by Hi-Fi Hair and Records impresario Jon Clifford, the Hi-Fi Stage in the back alley behind The Loring is the place for Sunday summer afternoon concerts. Lots of musicians attend these shows, playing one week and supporting each other the next. One day Little Man filled in with an impromptu show when an out-of-town band had to cancel. Another lovely day had both Gini Dodds and Cindy Lawson performing her latest single. Seriously – If someone invites you to go to the Hi-Fi Stage with them, say yes. It's not every Sunday, but it's cool every time.

Sunday, Feb. 5, 2023 – David Bowie Acoustic Tribute at the Hook and Ladder. I could rave about the players (including front piano/guitar/vocal John Eller, beloved vocalist and collaborator Leslie Ball, percussionist Joe Petinni, Suburbs bassist Steve Price and Chris 'Little Man' Perricelli), but what stood out this night

was the level of audience participation – howling after Diamond Dogs, crooning the entire chorus of Starman, and nailing the ending vocal on "Ziggy played guitarrrrr..."

And, finally, if you have never seen the annual John Lennon Tribute at First Avenue, then you have not only missed out on one of the most fun things found in all of Minnesota, you have missed one of our city's most consequential players. Curtis A leads that incredible show every year, and he also often plays at Schooner Tavern, where I caught him last week on his 72nd birthday. I won't try to describe the skills and charisma on stage that night, but there's a version of Yer Blues on the YouTube page that you won't soon forget. (Note Steve Brantseg on guitar, playing the George Harrison leads as he does each year at the Lennon Tribute. This night also featured a surprise guest appearance by Robert Wilkinson.)

So, enjoy my videos! And write in if you have any suggestions. Tell me your favorite venues for live music, and tell me who to catch there. Larry@larrylavercombe.com. And again – to watch any of these videos, simply search for my name on YouTube. You'll see all these and about 10 others.

Enjoy! And get out and support our clubs and players!



Larry LaVercombe is a writer, filmmaker, and activist, born in Detroit and arrived in Minneapolis in 1975. He lived in a treehouse in San Diego before getting an MFA from the USC Film School. He writes most days, and as Team Larry he has been selling residential real estate in Minneapolis for 26 years.

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HEARTCENTRIC COMBINES ART WITH SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

THE ART OF...

Meet Karina Muller and Lana Gendlin Brooks of HeartCentric. The two women are dedicated to helping people connect to their intuition with the help of a pendulum. "We handcraft one-of-a-kind pendulums, and other spiritual jewelry, and coach clients on how to use them to connect to the guidance already inside of all of us," they explained.



By Suzie Marty

"Our greatest joy is seeing the look on someone's face the first time they try using a pendulum. It's a cocktail of astonishment, awe, excitement, and newfound awareness. We love educating our clients and those who are curious about pendulums and demonstrating how to use them. Connecting with others in this way is a big part of our approach to introducing pendulums into their lives."

Karina and Lana accidentally discovered that they both speak Russian and came to this country as immigrants in the same year during a random conversation with a few friends.

TALK ABOUT THE BIRTH OF HEARTCENTRIC.

When the two of us met during the COVID-19 pandemic while obtaining our life coaching certifications, we had no idea that we'd be finding our purpose by running a business called HeartCentric. We are the quintessential examples of two women letting go of external expectations from our families, friends and co-workers and tapping into our inner guidance to navigate our lives. By strengthening the connection to our intuition and taking action on the guidance from that inner voice, we have been able to transform both of our lives to live every day in joy, happiness and freedom. Our careers and personal lives are enormous sources of fulfillment for us. We are both corporate and nonprofit recoverees who learned that if something is in need of change, we are willing to surrender and allow our intuition to lead the way. It wasn't always that way. We both spent decades in somewhat fulfilling careers that ultimately drained us.

It took only a few short months for the Universe to conspire and set the path to manifest HeartCentric, LLC into reality. The name HeartCentric has special meaning to us. It's the combination of La-



A meet-up during the COVID-19 pandemic changed the trajectory of the lives of Lana Gendlin Brooks (at left) and Karina Muller. They found their purpose by starting HeartCentric. (Photo submitted)

na's own company called HeARTs Work Coaching and Consulting and Karina's company, ClientCentric Consulting and Coaching.

WHAT EXACTLY ARE PENDULUMS AND HOW ARE THEY USED?

Pendulums are weighted tools that help you connect with your intuition and access information buried in your subconscious mind. They are powerful, tactile tools that we can see and feel working with our own energy. The pendulum is often likened to that of a radio transmitter. It's a conduit that carries information from your subconscious mind and connects with your heart, where your intuition resides. It then transfers that information to create a physical and visual movement. This unlocks the true nature

of your intuition and opens your mind to different perspectives. Think of this as an extension of your intuitive abilities that can help you connect with your soul, spirit, angels and other beings for guidance.

Pendulums are one of many tools to check in with ourselves and discover our inner wisdom and guidance. They have been around for centuries, yet the majority of mainstream society knows little to nothing about their use and value. We are on a mission to bring them to light and share how anyone seeking clarity, wisdom, and guidance can work with pendulums for success — whether in business, relationships, health, and life in general.

HOW ARE YOUR PENDULUMS CREATED?

HeartCentric is founded on the principle that each one of us is unique and

special. That's why each pendulum is designed and hand-crafted by the two of us to be one-of-a-kind. Just like each soul, no two are exactly alike. We also make a necklace that converts into a pendulum, which we have trademarked as the pendulace™. Our creative process is truly divinely guided. Getting into "creative flow" to help improve our lives and live in our creative spirit is of the utmost importance to us. It is when we align our hearts with our minds and access our creativity, that we are able to bring ideas to life and bring them to market faster. That's the underlying principle we operate on when making our pendulums.


HeartCentric Divine Creations pendulums are typically crafted with crystals, gemstones, and metals. We gravitate towards crystals and gemstones because they already hold a high vibration and offer hearing and nurturing properties. The crystals and gemstones used in all HeartCentric products are selected with intention and contain healing properties that are matched with an angel number for added guidance and inspiration.

ARE THERE SPIRITUAL PRACTICES/BELIEFS ATTACHED TO THE PENDULUMS?

For centuries, pendulums have been revered for their accuracy, simplicity of use, and effectiveness by spiritual and cultural leaders, scientists, shamans, medical professionals, and many others across the globe. It is believed that they are conduits for healing enabling positive energy to flow into the body as negative energy flows out.

Setting an intention before your pendulum session is a powerful way to get clear and focused on what you are trying to achieve in the present moment. It creates meaning and purpose for your desires and aligns your mind and heart.

Our online store is at www.hcdi-vinecreations.com. We take part in many events where we create an educational and immersive experience for our clients. We have just completed the first-draft of our manuscript for our book, which explores how the pendulum, an ancient tool, can be used by everyone in the modern world. In this first book, we will cover the basics of pendulums and how to use them. Stay tuned!

 **Suzie Marty** is an artist and curator at Everett & Charlie art gallery in Linden Hills. She is also an avid supporter of buying local, and a marketing specialist for the *Southwest Connector*. Contact her at ads@swconnector.com.



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OUT AND ABOUT IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD: MINNEAPOLIS COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN



Minneapolis College of Art and Design's (MCAD) bustling campus in the Whittier neighborhood is home to student housing, outdoor art displays, indoor galleries, art classes, continuing education, summer camps, and more. TMC Publications owner and publisher Tesha M. Christensen and marketing representative Suzie Marty got a crash course from Annie Gillette Cleveland (vice president of communications and marketing strategy), left, and Mara Rosen (marketing coordinator and project manager) about MCAD last week. Seven students apply for positions to get real world experience creating the marketing materials for MCAD - which include the ads that appear in the Connector. In the main gallery space, an exhibit features Jerome Fellowship artists KOBİ, Sarah Sampedro, Brooks Turner and Shun Yong. Upstairs, there is a Faculty Sabbatical Exhibition and Forum through April 15. "Love from Minneapolis" by Maren Hassinger uses a skyway as an exhibition space. Wander under the warm pink sky built by many hands, including MCAD students. The plant-based, biodegradable bags will be woven into sleeping mats and donated to help unhoused neighbors when the exhibit is over.

CITY BRIEFS

CITY NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS

On Feb. 7, the City Council received a report on the status of settlement negotiations between the City and the Minnesota Department of Human Rights (MDHR) relating to MDHR's investigation into racist practices of the city and its police department. Since August 2022, city officials and MDHR have met approximately 27 times, often for full-day, in-person sessions to address the findings of racial discrimination. The city attorney indicated that negotiations have been fruitful but that they "cannot describe the content of the negotiations because they are confidential."

POLICE "OFF DUTY" WORK TO BE EXAMINED

In January, the Minneapolis City Council voted to review how the city's police department allows its officers to do off-duty work. An audit the city conducted three years ago identified concerns about how the department assigned and tracked the extra hours worked. The department's off-duty police work system allows businesses and organizations like nightclubs, stores or neighborhoods to hire officers while in full uniform and using a city squad car.

CITY GREAT STREET GRANTS AWARDED

The annual 2023 business district support grants have been awarded and 23 local business associations, community development corporations, neighborhood groups, and other not-for-profit organizations working on commercial district health will receive \$671,275. Notable awardees for the southwest Minneap-

olis area include the Jungle Theater for \$28,500 to support the Lyn Lake festival this summer; the Lake Street Council for \$75,000 for a marketing campaign and promoting Lake Street art; Lyndale Neighborhood Association for \$16,950 towards community events; the Midtown Greenway Coalition for \$12,000 to support bike and walk ambassadors; the Minneapolis College of Art & Design for \$35,000 to activate and beautify the former Kmart site and create a public art installation; Our Streets Minneapolis for \$36,000 for open street events; and the Uptown Association for \$20,000 to support the Uptown Art Fair.

LAND USE REGULATION UP FOR REVIEW

People are encouraged to comment on the city's draft land use regulations through Feb. 26. The proposed new rules will address allowed uses and development standards for various zoning districts throughout Minneapolis. This is the next major step in implementing the city's 2040 comprehensive plan. The city hopes that the new regulations will allow a range of uses appropriate for each district and provide greater predictability for everyone. Find more details and submit comments at <https://minneapolis2040.com/implementation/land-use-rezoning-study/>. The City Planning Commission will hold a hearing, accept testimony and make recommendations to the City Council, tentatively on March 20 with a City Council review and vote expected in April.

NEW CITY HEALTH COMMISSIONER NOMINATED

There will be a public hearing on Feb 15, 2023, to consider the mayor's nomination of Damon Chaplin to be the next Minneapolis Commissioner of Health. According to the Mayor's nomination let-



Damon Chaplin has been nominated as the city's new health commissioner.

ter to the council, "Mr. Chaplin brings decades of proven public health leadership and expertise to the table. As the current Director for the New Bedford, Mass. Health Department and a Board Member with the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO), Mr. Chaplin has driven positive change in community health and health equity in historically vulnerable populations."

MORE MPD WORKERS COMP CLAIMS.

In February, the City Council approved another group of legal settlements of workers' compensation claims of Minneapolis police officers including Dean Christiansen for \$175,000, Keith Smith for \$150,000, Jeremy Howard for \$175,000, Thaya Wallace for \$110,000 and Derrick Foster for \$125,000. It is now estimated that over \$25 million has been paid out in similar settlements to over 100 officers since the police killing of George Floyd in May of 2020.



Briefs compiled by Cam Gordon.

IS IT KINGFIELD, KING FIELD OR KING'S FIELD?

Well, it's an ongoing debate, pointed out longtime resident Sarah Linnes-Robinson. She's the executive director of the Kingfield Neighborhood Association. The city calls the neighborhood King Field in many official documents, but also calls it Kingfield in unofficial ones. Other debate is to if it named after the park, or named after Colonel William S. King's fields where the cows roamed (see here: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_S._King where they say it is the latter.)

Sometimes you will also see it called Kings Field, and typically this is in reference to the park that is now officially named the Reverend Doctor Martin Luther King Junior Park. That was an entirely separate debate.

WHO WAS WILLIAM S. KING?

William Smith King (Dec. 16, 1828 - Feb. 24, 1900) was a Republican U.S. Representative for Minnesota from March 4, 1875 to March 3, 1877. He was a journalist and businessman. King was born in Malone, N.Y., and became a farmhand at age 12 when his mother died. He moved

to Minneapolis in the summer of 1858, and founded a weekly newspaper, the State Atlas. He became known for his strong editorials and columns opposing slavery. He helped create the Minneapolis Tribune, was a major stockholder in the Pioneer Press, and (likely) a principal owner of the Minneapolis Journal. He

KING'S LEGACY

- **King's Fair:** precursor to the Minnesota State Fair that was held in South Minneapolis from 1877 through 1882. Since 1979 the name has also been used for a biennial gathering in the Seward neighborhood. William S. King was a sponsor and organizer of the early fairs.
- **King Field:** neighborhood in South Minneapolis named after William S. King, whose borders extend from Lyndale Avenue in the west to Interstate 35W in the east and from 36th Street



served one term during the 44th congress as a U.S. Representative, and was a member of the Minneapolis Board of Commissioners. In 1877, he built a large pavilion at Lake Calhoun/Bde Maka Ska, that was eventually destroyed in a fire. He helped organize the Lakewood Cemetery Association (where he is buried). His 1,400-acre estate named Lyndale Farm was home to a herd that included some of the finest breeds of cattle.

in the north to 46th street in the south.

- **King's Highway:** section of Dupont Avenue in South Minneapolis honoring William S. King.
- **King's Hill:** popular sledding hill at Lyndale Farmstead Park.
- **Lyndale Avenue:** Minneapolis street taking its name from Lyndale Farm, a 1,400-acre estate owned by William S. King.
- **Lyndale Farmstead Park:** recreational area at 39th Street and Bryant Avenue South that was part of a vast farm belonging to William S. King and named for his father, Rev. Lyndon King
- **Northrup-King Seed Company:** prominent Minnesota business, whose founders included William S. King and his son Preston.

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

WANT COMMUNITY CONTROL OF POLICE?

According to Minneapolis for Community Control of Police (Mpls4CCP), work groups, panels, and community review boards have little to no power to stop or prevent police violence. It has a solution - an amendment to the city charter - and is gathering signatures from neighbors to get a 13-person, publicly elected, non-law enforcement affiliated Civilian Police Accountability Commission on the city ballot in November. Mpls4CCP has been doing public education, has charter and ordinance language, and has been gathering signatures since March of 2021. Learn more by attending an information session on Sunday, Feb. 26, at noon, North Regional Library (1315 Lowry Ave. N.). For more information, go to <https://www.facebook.com/mpls4ccp> and at <https://mpls4ccp.square.site>.

CUBA FILM FESTIVAL COMING

Since 2010, the Minnesota Cuba Film Festival (MCFF) has brought to the Land of 10,000 Lakes some of the best Cuban films. This year's festival will take place at MSP Film at the Main Theater six consecutive Wednesdays, March 1-April 5, 2023. The MCFF features films that address the achievements and challenges of the Cuban people through the eyes of its filmmakers. The festival highlights diverse and challenging films of social change, human struggle and the boldness of the human spirit.

'UNTITLED 17' OPENS AT SOOVAC FEB. 18

SooVAC opens "Untitled 17," marking the 17th year of SooVAC's flagship juried exhibition series. The guest juror this year is Alejandra Peña Gutiérrez-Director of the Weisman Art Museum at the University of Minnesota. The "Untitled 17" opening reception is set for Saturday, Feb. 18 from 6-9 p.m. The exhibition runs Feb. 18 to March 25, 2023. Soo Visual Arts Center is located at 2909 Bryant Ave. S.

TWO-PERSON EXHIBIT OPENS FEB. 22

The Department of Art at the University of Minnesota presents, Sites of Exhaust, the Regis Center for Art (RCA) Emerging Artist Program exhibition featuring the work of MALFLOR and Nancy Julia Hicks A public reception is set for Wednesday, Feb. 22, 6-8 p.m., at the Quarter Gallery at the Regis Center for Art (405 21st Avenue South). More at z.umn.edu/quarter.

SWHS STUDENT SERVES AS REP

The Minneapolis Board of Education has announced sophomore Halimah Abdullah and junior Abdihafid Mohamed will serve as the 2023 Student Board Representatives. Abdullah and Mohamed were selected for these roles by fellow students on the MPS CityWide Student Leadership Board. Abdullah is a highly involved student at Southwest. She is part of the school's Muslim Student Alliance, and has also organized and taken part in various demonstrations and protests in order to encourage systemic change regarding issues she is passionate about. She believes as a leader in the importance of courage despite fear and in treating everyone with equal respect and recognition. "I highly value teamwork and the amount of collaboration and balance that is needed for teamwork to be successful. I know when to add input and direction, and I know when to take a step back and follow," said Abdullah.

MINNESOTA MADE SPIRITS TASTING

Celebrate the distilleries of Minnesota at the historic Granada Theater (3022 Hennepin Ave.) in Uptown Minneapolis on Thursday, Feb. 23. Tickets are \$60 and proceeds benefit the Uptown Association. Sample products from over 12 local distilleries, mixers and THC seltzers. More at UptownMinneapolis.com.



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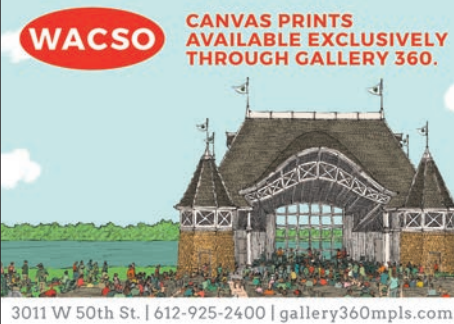
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SUZIE MARTY
believes in buying local and shopping local. She has held various positions over the years that promote local artists and tourism, including as an art buyer for Love from Minnesota Company, artisan manager at St. Croix Promotions and Retail, and docent at MIA. She is the owner of Everett & Charlie, a Linden Hills art gallery where art meets experience. It features only Minnesota artists. She is a TMC Publications marketing specialist, and can help you develop a comprehensive marketing plan that fits your budget and needs.

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JOB

The COVID-19 pandemic prompted millions of people to reconsider their careers. That reflection has had a profound effect on the labor market. Data from the U.S. Department of Labor indicates that 4.5 million people quit their jobs in the United States in November 2021, which led to a near record-high number of job openings around the end of 2021 and the beginning of 2022.

Though the pandemic may have led millions of people who were previously dissatisfied with their careers to make positive changes, employers forced to confront staff shortages may be wondering what they can do to attract qualified and talented candidates. Finding ways to engage workers more completely could benefit companies in various ways. A recent poll from Gallup found that companies suffer some pretty significant consequences when their employees are disengaged.

No two workers are the same, so there's no magic wand employers can wave that will ensure everyone is suddenly engaged and satisfied with their jobs and career prospects. However, recognition of what

employees value most could help businesses retain workers longer and keep those workers engaged. A recent survey of 540 full-time employees from the market insight firm Clutch found that the most important workplace values for full-time employees are fair pay and fair treatment. It's no surprise that compensation bears such significance, as pandemic-related inflation and global conflicts have led to rising costs on everything from food to fuel.

However, a survey from the risk management experts at Willis Towers Watson found that there's a disconnect between employees and employers in regard to the importance of fair pay and its relation to workplace stress. Employees consider low pay to be the second greatest source of workplace stress, while employers indicated that eight other factors are greater sources of such stress for their employees. Employers concerned about staff dissatisfaction, and the effects that disengaged employees can have on their bottom lines, can make a concerted effort to revisit their compensation policies. An overhaul of such policies could be just what companies need to reengage employees and improve employee retention, giving businesses a significant advantage in an era marked by significant turnover in the labor force.

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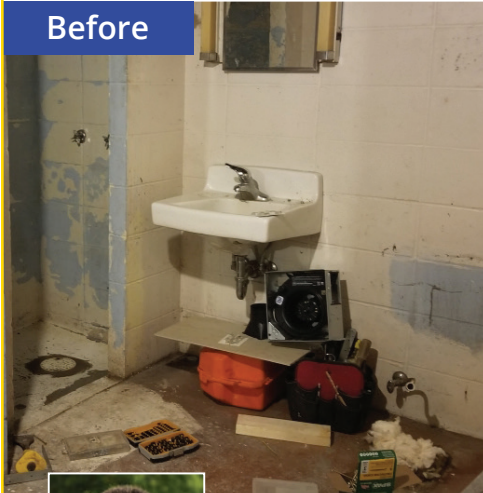
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