



Photos of a
movement
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RESIDENTS SPEAK UP TO SAY 'NO' TO CITY'S ROOF DEPOT PROJECT

'We're tired of being a sacrificial zone'

Indigenous people and allies rally around basic rights, reducing pollution and illness at homes and schools

By TESHAM. CHRISTENSEN

For the Indigenous people and allies living in south Minneapolis, the Roof Depot conflict is an issue of life or death. And they can back it up with data.

Their decade-long fight to stop a city-run expansion of its truck training facility continued with a recent site occupation, protests at city hall and gatherings at the State Capitol in late February and March 2023.

"The community is tired of being a sacrificial zone," said Little Earth resident Cassie Holmes. Her son, Trinidad Flores, died at age 16 from a heart problem she attributes to the high levels of pollution in the area. It includes arsenic and lead, as well as other airborne pollutants from Interstate 94, Hiawatha Ave./Highway 55, Smith Foundry and Bituminous Roadways. Her best friend's daughter also died of a heart issue.

The area has high levels of asthma and heart disease. Studies have shown that the pollution also gathers over South High School just three blocks directly south of the Roof Depot site, affecting all of the students and staff there each day. Teenagers from throughout Corcoran, Longfellow and Seward attend South High.

The Metropolitan Urban Indian Directors' (MUID) 25 organizations collectively oppose the Hiawatha Expansion Project. "The membership of MUID believes there are better community-led, green initiatives to be pursued that will better mitigate the negative social determinants of health caused by environmental racism," they wrote in a letter to the city. "American In-ROOF DEPOT SITE » 2



"You're talking about our children breathing. You're talking about our children living past 25 and not having heart issues that we don't understand where they got them. It's our future and our children," said Jolene Jones on Tuesday, Feb. 21 at the Roof Depot site during an occupation that began that morning and was broken up by over 100 officers that evening. An eight-block radius that included Cedar Ave. was shut down for hours, and eight Indigenous protestors and allies were arrested. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)

*** POLLUTION AFFECTS SOUTH HIGH, MULTIPLE OTHER SCHOOLS**
"Our students deserve to be safe and healthy both in and outside of school. That's why we have organized with our communities/other unions and taken very clear, strong positions against the demolition of the Roof Depot and to shut down the HERC incinerator," said MFT59 President Greta Callahan. Read statement from MPS on page 5. Photo gallery and more online.

4 VIE IN WARD 12

By TESHAM. CHRISTENSEN

The four residents vying for the Ward 12 City Council seat being vacated by Andrew Johnson shared their views during a candidate forum on March 8, 2023 at Nokomis recreational center. Candidates include Aurin Chowdhury, Jerome Evans, Nancy Ford, and Luther Ranheim.

View the entire forum online via the Nokomis East Neighborhood Association or Longfellow Community Council Facebook pages.

WARD 12 FORUM » 13

WHAT DO CITIZENS WANT AT THE THIRD PRECINCT SITE?

The Longfellow Community Council will hold four meetings in April to ask community members if they want the police building to be in the current location at Lake and Minnehaha or a different predetermined location chosen by the city. » See more on page 13.

NEW FOOD VISION

Minneapolis prioritizes food justice and healthy food access in new plan

By CAM GORDON

Minneapolis has a 10-year path to establish a more resilient, just, and equitable food system in the city.

The Minneapolis Food Vision (MFV) plan prioritizes six goals that are focused on local food supply, urban agriculture, local food business, healthy food access and skills, food waste, and food systems research and outreach. By implementing the plan, according to the vision, "Minneapolis residents, community-serving organizations, and city government can partner to make sure our food system is healthy, affordable, equitable, profitable, and good for people and the environment."

"I am excited that the Minneapolis City Council has unanimously approved the Minneapolis Food Vision," said DeVon Nolan, a member of the Minneapolis Food Council and northside resident who has been shepherding the plan's development since 2019. "The Food Vision is a blueprint built in partnership with community to help foster a more equitable local food system."

Created as part of the Homegrown NEW FOOD VISION » 10

Hundreds rally to defend trans lives

Minneapolis 'is a refuge'

By JILL BOOGREN

Chants of "Trans Liberation/Not Assimilation" rang outside the Lake Street/Midtown station on a snowy evening March 9, 2023, as 200 people rallied to celebrate and defend trans lives. The rally took place 10 days after a transgender woman was brutally assaulted at the station, and as an unprecedented number of anti-trans bills are being introduced across the country.

The rhetoric against the LGBTQIA community has also become increasingly hostile. At the Conservative Political Action Conference on March 4, host of The Daily Wire Michael Knowles called for the "eradication" of "transgenderism" [sic].

Speakers at the Minneapolis rally, themselves transgender, non-binary, gender expansive and intersex, expressed joy at being together in community, and anger over the physical, verbal and legislative attacks on their community.

"I'm sorry that my trans existence is threatening to your masculinity. You don't



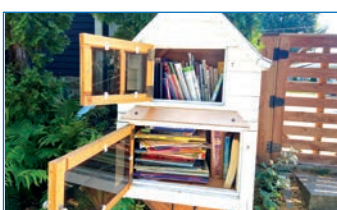
Two demonstrators on March 9 outside the Lake Street/Midtown station share a laugh as one holds up a sign that reads: "Trans joy is resistance." (Photo by Jill Boogren)

DEFEND TRANS LIVES » 7



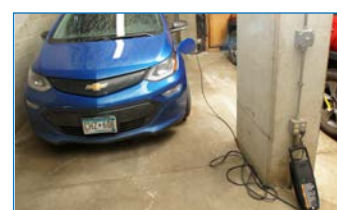
Why Representative Hodan is working to strengthen workers rights

PAGE 4



HOME & GARDEN
Take a book, leave a book

PAGES 8-10



Becketwood boosts electronic vehicle access with charging station

PAGE 15



AN URBAN FARM INSTEAD?

The East Phillips Indoor Urban Farm project would repurpose the existing 230,000-square-foot former Sears warehouse built in 1947.

The indoor farm at the 7.5-acre site would produce organic aquaponic grown fish and produce. It would provide very affordable family housing along with free housing for people experiencing homelessness with the promise of food, jobs and safety. The project would also include one of the largest solar arrays in the state on the roof; a world café, coffee shop and food market with a gallery to display and sell neighborhood artisans' works all run by local youth; a bike shop on the Midtown Greenway; and space for many of the burned out Lake St. businesses resulting from the murder of George Floyd.

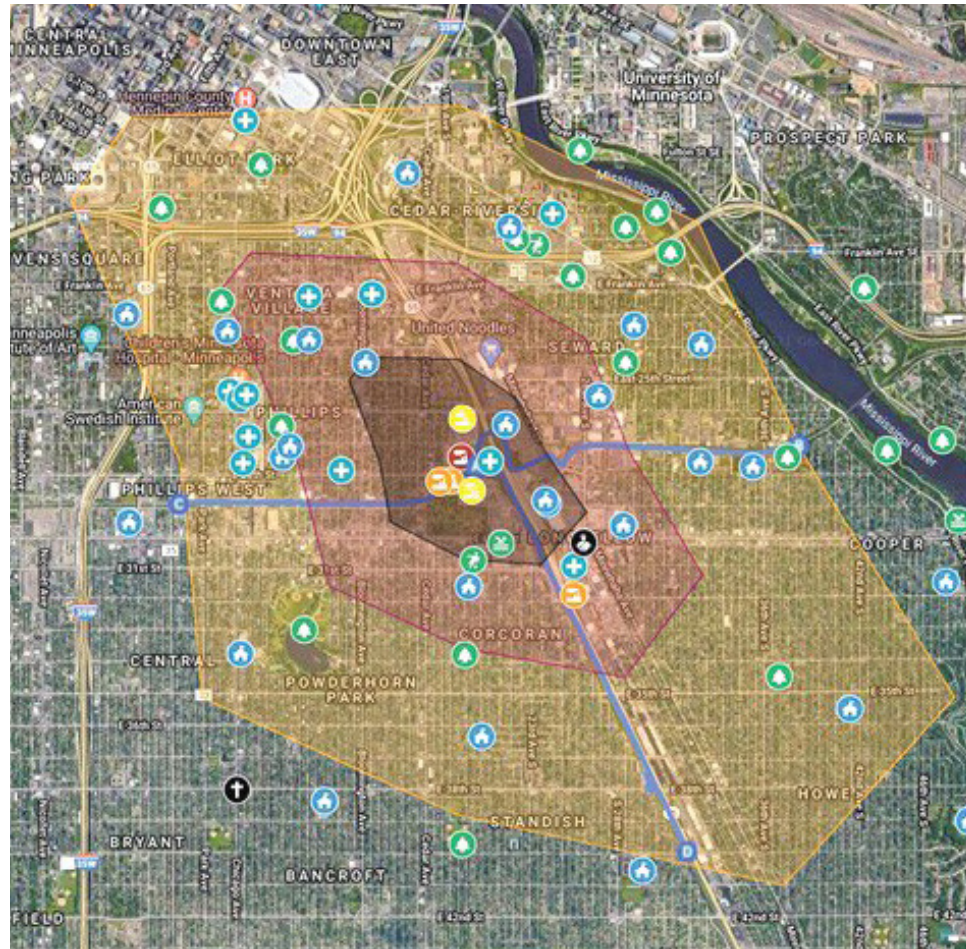
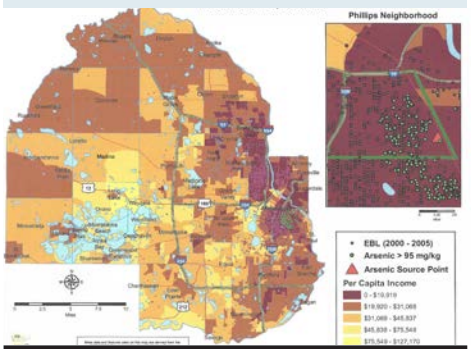
The project meets every goal of the South Side Green Zone and is in the South Minneapolis Opportunity Zone. It is also supported by the wide range of diverse organizations in the neighborhood that is 83% people of color.



OTHER PUBLIC WORKS SITES: NORTH-EAST, COLUMBIA HEIGHTS, 394 BRIDGE

The city's plan is to demolish the iconic Sears warehouse, and many are worried it will release arsenic in the air that is currently encapsulated beneath the building. It would be replaced by a series of sheds for 400 commercial city vehicles (most of them diesel), a hot asphalt storage facility, diesel-fueling station, and multi-story parking ramp for the 400 employee vehicles that would be coming and going twice a day. They would also store manhole covers, sewer pipes, and sand-salt mix. No water would be treated on the site; that is done at 4500 Reservoir Blvd. in Columbia Heights.

The city's current water maintenance facility, known as the East Water Yard, is located on 2.4 acres in Ward 3 at Hennepin Ave. E. and 5th Ave. N. It dates back 120 years and is the hub for maintaining the city's 1,000 miles of water mains, 16,000 valves, and street holes, and 8,000 hydrants. A whistleblower leaked a city-generated report showing that it would be cheaper to expand the building there than the Roof Depot site. It is located in an industrial area near 35W. The city also stores items near and under the 394 bridge, a site that is over four times the size of the Roof Depot location.



This map illustrates the pollution effect from the existing businesses near the Roof Depot site in the Arsenic Triangle. Neighbors say the cumulative effect of Smith Foundry, Bituminous Roadways, and the city's public works facility, along with diesel truck traffic from Hiawatha Ave. and Interstates 35W and 94 is too much. View full graphic at www.east-phillipsneighborhoodinstitute.org.

RESIDENTS SPEAK >> from 1

dian people in the Phillips Neighborhood suffer from the poorest health outcomes and highest rate of health disparities in the state of Minnesota."

"Minneapolis is committing environmental racism that will further the genocide of Indigenous people and community members of south Minneapolis," said Rachel Thunder at a press conference at 1 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 21, 2023 at the Roof Depot site (named Nenoocaasi Camp by protesters). Thunder is a member of the Plains Cree, part of the American Indian Movement (AIM), a Little Earth Protector, and a community member of south Minneapolis. On Feb. 22, she said, "We are standing together united and in solidarity to say we do not want the city to demolish the Roof Depot. We want to have control of the site to have an environmentally-friendly food center to feed our people and boost our economy."

Marisa Miakonda Cummings stated, "We have suffered. We suffer from the effects of institutional and generational trauma and we live in this every day. Some times it feels like we are being left again to die... This is the definition of institutional genocide." She said they are standing up "because it is the right thing to do." She added, "We're not asking for anything outside of basic human rights."

The community's plan for the 7.5-acre site includes an indoor urban farm, aquaponics, solar array, very affordable housing, bike shop, and other small businesses. It would reuse the Roof Depot building and leave the arsenic-laden soil dating to the former pesticide plant encapsulated underneath.

"The Roof Depot is the heart of the Green Zone," observed Robert Lilligren, who is a third generation self-described urban Indian, 36-year Phillips resident, White Earth member, and former city council member. He stated that he was part of the robust citizen input that resulted in the plan for the East Phillips Indoor Urban Farm, beginning in 2014. "The city has never really been interested in the plan. ... The city says things like trust and reconciliation are important. Putting them into action is required. Here is an opportunity to put those beliefs into action in a more environmentally-friendly, community-driven way."

The city is proposing to increase the amount of vehicle traffic on the roads around the Roof Depot site, which include Hiawatha, Cedar, 26th and 28th (near the Midtown Greenway crossing) by 67 percent. Currently, a total of 1,100-1,300 heavy commercial vehicles travel a day on Hiawatha, according to the Minnesota Department of Transportation T9 Urban Freight Study in 2018. The city's proposal increases that to about 2,000.

Also spewing pollution in the air in that area, dubbed the Arsenic Triangle, is Bituminous Roadways and the Smith Foundry, two businesses that have permits that grandfather them in and have purchased pollution offsets from other businesses in the city to continue to exist in East Phillips. Recognizing the high level of pollution already there, in 2008, the state government passed the Clark-Berglund Environmental Justice Law that prohibits additional pollution in the Arsenic Triangle around the Roof Depot site. Despite that bill, the city has continued with its plans to more than double its public works facility there.

A COMMUNITY AGAINST THE CITY PLAN

Residents question why their elected officials and city staff have continued to push forward a plan that the community is against.

"The city of Minneapolis claims to listen to communities, but we have been systematically denied a voice," observed 25-year East Phillips resident Amy Pass, who has raised two children in the neighborhood. Her brother-in-law, who grew up in East Phillips two blocks away from the Roof Depot site, needed open heart surgery in his early 40s. "Other communities have asked to have the city water yard expansion project located in their space. Why is the city so desperately insistent that it be located in East Phillips? This is about racism and power. It's about keeping us in our place and making it clear that we can't have what we want."

The people of south Minneapolis have never supported the city's proposal for the public works project, and city council representatives have passed measures back and forth over the project. Some council members have flipped their votes, including Ward 8 Council President Andrea Jenkins who supported the EPNI plan last year. Little Earth resident Jolene Jones questions the narrative that the city held meetings with the community and asked for input on the Hiawatha Expansion project. While working at Little Earth, she learned about a meeting and attended it. No one else from her community was there. When she was told that the city had sent out notifications to Little Earth residents, she pushed back. After investigating the issue, staff told her that none had actually gone out.

"How do you miss a whole community? We get our water bills. We've got 220 households. How did you miss us?" she asked.

The neighborhood group, EPIC (East Phillips Improvement Coalition), hosted two large community meetings at East Phillips Park in November 2017 and September 2018 with approximately 250 community members at each. Votes were taken at both as to those favoring the city's plan or the community's indoor urban farm project. No one at either meeting voted in favor of any of the city plans.

Public input on the city-fashioned environmental assessment worksheet in March 2021 during the COVID-19 pandemic was "unprecedented," according to city staff. Over 1,000 people submitted comments. Only two were in support of the city's plan. Indoor urban farm supporters point out that says something about the city's decision-making process when one of the widest margin of citizen comments in city history is ignored.

AN OCCUPATION FEB. 21

At a press conference at 1 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 21 at the Roof Depot site, Thunder read out their list of demands (also available at www.defendthedepot.com):

- 1) Total relocation of the Hiawatha Expansion Project
- 2) Hand over control of Roof Depot to the community
- 3) Plans to remove Bituminous Roadways and Smith Foundry
- 4) Enact a moratorium on encampment

RESIDENTS SPEAK >> 3

2007 The federal government declared the 'Arsenic Triangle,' including the Roof Depot site, a superfund site from 2007 to 2017. The Environmental Protection Agency found unsafe arsenic levels in 600 area homes, and by 2011, had removed about 50,000 tons of contaminated soil. A former company produced and stored arsenic-based pesticides from 1938 to 1963. Sears built the warehouse in 1947.

2014 Visioning begins for the East Phillips Indoor Urban Farm at the Roof Depot site to clean up the Arsenic Triangle, and a group begins negotiating to purchase the property.

2015 The city threatens the owner with eminent domain and purchases the 230,000-square-foot building for \$6.8 million. Water and heat at the site is shut off.

MARCH 2021 Over 1,000 people submit comments to the environmental assessment worksheet the city put together on its own project. Only two of the 1,000 were in favor of the city's plan. City staff label the amount of feedback "unprecedented." This may be the widest margin in Minneapolis history.

FEB. 21, 2023 Beginning with a prayer ceremony at dawn, Indigenous people and allies start an occupation at the Roof Depot site. They set up tents and a tepee within the fenced lot that is owned by the city. At about 6:15 p.m., over 100 police officers and 50 squad cars block off an 8-block radius around the Roof Depot and arrest seven protesters. They refuse to allow media to view what is happening. A group of over 100 people gathers at Cedar and 27th for several hours until police reopen the street. A police guard is left at the Roof Depot site.



RESIDENTS SPEAK >> from 2

ment evictions

5) Provide funding for peer support workers

6) Invest in pilot programs to shelter and services to the houseless community like the former navigation center

7) Provide funding for the community's vision for an indoor urban farm at the Roof Depot site

A statement from Defend the Depot pointed out that East Phillips is a neighborhood with over 70% residents of color and home to the Little Earth housing development, where 38 tribes come together.

According to a Wilder Foundation Study, Indigenous people make up 1% of Minnesota's adult population but a disproportionate 13% of the houseless population. A survey of a large encampment in Minneapolis in 2020 found that nearly half of the 282 people living there were Native. People who are homeless have higher rates of illness and die on average 12 years sooner than the general U.S. population, according to the National Health Care for the Homeless Council, and chronic medical conditions are a common cause of homelessness. Unhoused people are more likely to suffer from heart attack, hypertension, diabetes, HIV, hepatitis C, depression and substance use disorders.

Mike Forcia, a member of the American Indian Movement, pointed out that the 50th anniversary of Wounded Knee was on Feb. 27.

He stated, "We were always told to go through the process. There's always a process. That process is a systemically racist process set up to benefit them. It's not for us."

The city council approved an agreement labeled as a "compromise" in city documents, that would give three acres on the corner of the 7.5-acre property to the neighborhood for development.

"We don't want them to bring more pollution in. That's our main point," stressed Holmes, who serves on the East Phillips Neighborhood Institute (EPNI) board (www.eastphillipsneighborhoodinstitute.org) and the city's Southside Green Zone committee.

"Do we want to convince our people just for three acres and still have them poison us? No."

Jolene Jones agreed. "They can take their three acres and shove it because you're talking about our children breathing. You're talking about our children living past 25 and not having heart issues that we don't understand where they got them. It's our future and that is our children."

OCCUPATION BROKEN UP

Over a hundred Minneapolis Police Officers and 50 squads shut down an eight-block radius around the Roof Depot site on Tuesday evening, Feb. 21, 2023, at about 6:15 p.m., and forcibly removed Indigenous people and allies who had began a peaceful occupation of the site that morning at dawn.

Cedar between 24th and 28th, along with sections of 26th and 28th between Hiawatha and Cedar were blocked for more than two hours. Neither residents nor press were allowed within two blocks of the site.



After a Minneapolis Police Officer pushed a White south Minneapolis woman on Tuesday, Feb. 21, 2023, Little Earth resident Cassie Holmes decries the treatment of "an elder." View the video of the altercation and more photos at www.LongfellowNokomisMessenger.com. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)



Indoor urban farm supporters pose with Representative Hodan Hassan, who represents a portion of south Minneapolis, to celebrate the House Economic Development Finance and Policy Committee passing legislation to invest \$20 million into the East Phillips Neighborhood Institute for the East Phillips Indoor Urban Farm project on March 1, 2023. (Photo submitted)

(Note: The Longfellow Nokomis Messenger/Southwest Connector arrived at the scene by 6:20 p.m. before the entire area had been blocked off with crime scene tape, and was the only media outlet at the Roof Depot fence. View video and photographs from the scene on the Messenger website, as well as Instagram and Facebook accounts. Other media, including Unicorn Riot and the Indigenous-led NDN Collective, were prevented from viewing what was occurring at the Roof Depot site, and remained at 27th and Cedar covering the gathering of protesters who were there.)

Thunder, who was arrested with seven others at the site for trespassing and released later that night, stated, "There is no trespassing on stolen land." She was treated on Feb. 22 for a knee injury she said she received when a police officer forced her into the squad car she was stepping into.

A request to the mayor's office and to the Minneapolis Police Department on the cost of deploying over 100 officers to

protests and encampments was not answered. As of press time, an open data request to the city submitted on Feb. 24 had not been filled.

Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Center President/CEO Marisa Miakonda Cummings read a letter on behalf of the Metropolitan Urban Indian Directors (MUID) at a Tuesday, Feb. 22 press conference. "MUID formally denounces the militaristic actions taken by the Minneapolis Police Department on the evening of Feb. 21, 2023, to dismantle a peaceful and ceremonial occupation of the Roof Depot site.... Our membership believes that such community-led civic actions are directly protected by the United States Constitution Bill of Rights regarding the right to peaceful assembly and the right for citizens to petition their government." MUID collectively opposes the Hiawatha Expansion Project.

"Asking the Indigenous people in my neighborhood to compromise with the city is asking them to repeat the same

HOMELESSNESS AND POOR HEALTH LINK

The connection between housing and homelessness is generally intuitive, but the strong link between health and homelessness is often overlooked. People who are homeless have higher rates of illness and die on average 12 years sooner than the general U.S. population.

Homelessness creates new health problems and exacerbates existing ones. Living on the street or in crowded homeless shelters is extremely stressful and made worse by being exposed to communicable disease (e.g. TB, respiratory illnesses, flu, hepatitis, etc.), violence, malnutrition, and harmful weather exposure. Chronic health conditions such as high blood pressure, diabetes, and asthma become worse because there is no safe place to store medications properly. Maintaining a healthy diet is difficult in soup kitchens and shelters as the meals are usually high in salt, sugars, and starch (making for cheap, filling meals but lacking nutritional content). Behavioral health issues such as depression, alcoholism, or other substance use disorders can develop and/or are made worse in such difficult situations, especially if there is no solution in sight. Numerous health conditions among people who are homeless are frequently a complex mix of serious physical, mental health, substance use, and social problems. ~ From the National Health Care for the Homeless Council, www.nhchc.org

COUNCIL CONSIDERS ACTIONS TO LIMIT CITIZEN INPUT

Following recent disruptions at city council meetings by Indigenous protesters and allies, City Council Vice President Linea Palmisano brought forth two items to add to the city's legislative agenda at the state capitol. One would clarify acceptable conduct at council meetings and the other increase penalties for protesters.

"We have had council members and their families threatened. We have had regulatory service workers have their tires slashed and guns drawn on them. We've had public works employees shot at. Harassment, intimidation and bullying is not OK. It is not part of anyone's job description and we owe it to all people serving the City of Minneapolis to do better," said Palmisano in her e-newsletter.

"It's very dangerous to conflate Black and Indigenous residents' genuine and justified fear about a harmful city-led project with right-wing violence. These amendments are a reactionary and retaliatory response to mass protests that we typically see from Republicans," countered Ward 2 Council Member Robin Wonsley. "I'm disappointed to see the conservative city council majority adopting right-wing tactics. From Stop Cop City in Atlanta to Line 3 Water Protectors here in Minnesota, increased criminal penalties are being used as a tool of retribution."

HODAN SPONSORS HF 2093

On March 1, 2023, the House Economic Development Finance and Policy Committee passed legislation to invest \$20 million into the East Phillips Neighborhood Institute for the East Phillips Indoor Urban Farm project.

The bill is authored by Rep. Hodan Hassan (DFL - Minneapolis). "The East Phillips neighborhood has been burdened with severe environmental racism and injustice for years, with high levels of pollution causing measurable adverse health effects to residents," said Rep. Hassan. "With a third of East Phillips residents living below the poverty line, the community is in great need of affordable housing, investment in jobs and infrastructure, and sustainable development. This legislation would provide the community the opportunity and resources to further negotiate with the City of Minneapolis on EPNI's plan to repurpose the Roof Depot into an urban farm complex, creating jobs, housing, and sustainable food sources. I am confident that an equitable and environmentally sound and sustainable agreement can be met, putting this investment to good use in the East Phillips neighborhood."

FEB. 22, 2023

Defend the Depot holds a press conference at the Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Center to discuss what happened the day before and their concerns about how the city has continued with their plans for the Hiawatha Expansion project at the Roof Depot site despite the neighborhood not supporting the project. At the Roof Depot site, the city installs a taller fence inside the existing one. Rachel Thunder is treated at the hospital.

FEB. 23, 2023

City council reaffirms its decision to tear the building down and proceed with a 6-6 vote. Only 30 protesters of 100 present allowed into city council chambers. Roll call: Payne, Wonsley, Ellison, Osman, Chavez, Chughtai - aye; Rainville, Vetaw, Goodman, Jenkins, Koski, Palmisano - nay. Johnson - absent.

FEB. 24, 2023

Hennepin County Judge Edward Wahl issues a temporary halt to the demolition at the Roof Depot site while EPNI and Cassie Holmes appeal a decision to move forward to the Minnesota Court of Appeals. A \$10,000 bond is required and the stipulation that no protesters go to the Roof Depot site. The city had hired Rachel Contracting to begin demolition the week of Feb. 27. Trial is scheduled for April.



FEB. 27, 2023

50th anniversary of Wounded Knee occupation. An 1890 massacre left some 150 Native Americans dead, in what was the final clash between federal troops and the Sioux tribe.

MAR 1, 2023

Minnesota House Economic Development, Finance and Policy Committee votes 6-5 to grant and appropriate \$20 million to EPNI. Bill authors are Hodan Hassan (62B), Aisha Gomez (62A); Mohamud Noor (60B); Samantha Sencer-Mura (63A); and Andy Smith (25B). The Senate companion bill, SF1853, is authored by Omar Fateh (62).

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

FROM A LOCAL OFFICIAL

BY REPRESENTATIVE
HODAN HASSAN (62B)
rep.hodan.hassan@house.mn.gov



One of my top priorities this session is strengthening rights and protections for renters in Minnesota. We are in the middle of a housing crisis, with rental prices soaring and affordable, quality units in short supply. This problem has disproportionately affected communities of color, which tend to have a higher renter rate than White communities. Coupled with fewer and fewer young families being able to afford to purchase a home, residents are in a perfect storm for landlords to take advantage of tenants.

WORKING TO STRENGTHEN RENTER RIGHTS

My colleague, Rep. Esther Agbaje, is carrying a bill package to strengthen tenants' rights, and many pieces of legislation I have authored over my past several terms are included in the proposal. Once passed, this bill will create a host of much-needed protections for renters in Minnesota and put a stop to many predatory practices used by landlords. The list of protections this package will create is long, so I'll jump right in.

Once signed into law, this bill package will prohibit sellers, landlords, real estate agents, and brokers from discriminating against individuals receiving public assistance. It will require landlords to be upfront about rental prices and prohibits hidden fees. Landlords will be required to ensure units have heat capable of reaching 68 degrees when the outside temperature falls below 60 degrees, as happens most

months out of the year in Minnesota.

In Minneapolis, Saint Paul, Rochester, and Duluth, landlords will be prohibited from inquiring about lease renewal until the lease has six months or less remaining, making student housing more accessible for Minnesota's learners. Tenants will also gain the right to terminate a lease if they require assistance with daily living and need to enter a nursing home or seek other long-term medical care.

The bill will create a requirement that landlords perform a unit walkthrough before a tenant moves in and inform the tenant in writing of their right to a walkthrough inspection upon moveout. By doing this, tenants will have a chance to rectify any damages to the unit themselves instead of losing their security deposit to repair costs. This will benefit both parties, with landlords receiving units back in bet-

ter condition and renters getting more of their security deposit back.

The bill also addresses privacy concerns, requiring landlords to give a 24-hour notice before entry, and limits that entry to between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. Landlords will be unable to refuse to rent or require a current renter to declaw or devoice pets. Finally, the bill empowers and supports tenants to take legal action against landlords that violate their rights.

This bill will affect many people in our district for the better. I am proud and incredibly excited to deliver on this for you and make South Minneapolis a better place to live.

Please continue to share your questions, ideas, and feedback with me throughout the legislative session. You can reach me by email at rep.hodan.hassan@house.mn.gov.

I am incredibly honored to get to work for you.

AN OPEN LETTER TO WARD 11 COUNCIL MEMBER

Ward 11 Council Member Emily Koski,

As neighbors in the Ward 11 communities you represent, we have great concerns about your actions on Thursday, Feb. 23, 2023.

First, you repeatedly voted against measures to protect Little Earth and other impacted neighbors in the East Phillips communities from the environmentally hazardous demolition of the Roof Depot building. Then, you followed up these harmful votes by filing a police report against the neighbors who expressed anger and disappointment at your votes. You did not use your role and access to power to help these community members facilitate a conversation with the Mayor or other public officials who could help them. You used your power and privilege to insist that those in attendance be punished for their reactions to your harm. Then you went to the media about it, as the Star Tribune article from Feb. 24, 2023 shows. This is how you show up as an elected official.

This way of holding space for community members is vastly different from the community care and community safety that we discussed at the conversation that you attended with staff on Wednesday, Feb. 8, 2023 hosted by Ward Eleven Allied Voices for Equity (WEAVE). This event, created by and for Ward 11 neighbors, highlighted how relationships are key for creating trust and healing in our communities. Not everyone there was in agreement about a vision for our city, but we all were committed to hearing one another and addressing the divides in our city together.

Had you chosen to bring forth some of the ideas of right relationship and generative conflict that were discussed at WEAVE's event, you may have acted by reaching out to your colleagues on the council who represent the impacted communities or leaders of EPNI and sharing your concerns about the language or behavior that caused you to feel threatened.

Perhaps you all could have used restor-



Protesters attended the Feb. 23 city council meeting to show their support for the community plan for the Roof Depot site, many stood in the hallways when the city council limited how many could be in the chambers. There was no public comment during the meetings, and city council members approved demolishing the Roof Depot building and continuing with the plan to build a new public works facility there. (Photo submitted)

ative practices to heal the broken relationship and distrust that is currently present in your interactions. Your choice to involve police continues the breakdown of relationship and distrust in our elected officials. We don't need more barriers between us. Yet you repeatedly choose barriers and the erasure of groups and communities that do not align with your viewpoints.

During your campaign and tenure, the divisions in our city have widened, and distrust of city officials has heightened. Many in Ward 11 were impacted by the divisive mailers that flooded our mailboxes during the campaign in 2021, and left us feeling as though our voices and concerns were not valued in this community. Since taking office, you have failed to take opportunities to expand and move forward on assurances that you made during your campaign to promote equity and healing in the city of Minneapolis. You have not been transparent about your voting record and the reasoning behind your votes. Some of your colleagues share detailed reports in their constituent emails of what is happening at council and the votes they take and why. As the neighbors you represent, we deserve to know how you are showing

up to vote and whose values and vision of Minneapolis you are upholding.

As your neighbors, we are signing on to this letter to demand that you shift your current path of harm, divisiveness, ambiguity and fear to one of right relationship, healing, clarity and repair. We will be watching your votes and actions as both a representative and candidate, and expect you to be transparent, honest, and willing to move through discomfort without causing additional harm to already marginalized communities in Minneapolis. With the Ward 11 caucus coming up and several of us signed up as delegates, we will be paying close attention to whether your actions are in alignment with our endorsement. Here are three actionable items that you can take towards healing and repairing relationships in our ward and city:

1. SHOW YOUR WORK.

Your newsletter with city news does not give Ward 11 neighbors the information we deserve about how you represent us. Your constituents need to know how you are voting to determine whose interests you are promoting at city hall. Your newsletter should offer a weekly record of your votes,

and information about how you plan to vote on upcoming issues and why.

2. SHOW YOUR LEARNING.

On Feb. 8, 2023, you attended the Ward Eleven Allied Voices for Equity (WEAVE) Conversation on Community Care and Community Safety. This event was attended by other neighbors and community members who are committed to having the deep discussions necessary to promote healing in our city. What did you take away from this meeting? You did not mention the meeting in your newsletter or share feedback with the organizers. Going forward, we expect that when you take part in a meeting, conference or other training that you share with your constituents what you learned, and how it will impact your work representing our community and city.

3. SHOW YOUR VALUES.

During your campaign and in emails to constituents you have described yourself as a connector and bridge. Your actions on Feb. 23, 2023, show that when those harmed by your decisions express anger and outrage, you walked out of the room and closed the door behind you. Filing a police report against Indigenous activists from a marginalized community that is system-involved at disproportionate rates is not in alignment with the actions of someone who values connection and care. Living into the values you proclaim requires accountability and right relationship with community.

Clearly, this relationship is damaged. Going forward, we ask that you maintain all relationships equally, both with your constituents and other city communities affected by your votes in council. We ask that you are honest about your impacts, and right-size these with the discomfort you face. Acknowledge the power in your role, and the opportunities that you have to be a two-way connector and bridge across divides – not a drawbridge that goes up and down depending on who the community is on the other side.

We promise to continue to pay attention and act to help you align the way you represent Ward 11 with a fair and just vi-

AN OPEN LETTER >> 5

Messenger

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News for you!

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Story ideas always welcome.

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Lacking rationale for Hiawatha Expansion Project, council members foment fear to rouse base

By DANIEL SCHMIDT

On Thursday, March 9, Minneapolis City Council passed recommendations to the State Legislature asking for stricter guidelines to remove protesters from council meetings, and to criminalize people who threaten elected officials. Although these recommendations appear broadly agreeable – threats on elected officials are never acceptable, context reveals that the laws are designed to silence BIPOC Minneapolitans and people concerned about environmental justice.

The recommendations were written because of the high tensions around the East Phillips Roof Depot demolition that has been raging in recent months. Council members in favor of these recommendations told false narratives that protesters against demolition are violent and destructive in their tactics. Their actions resemble other dangerous nationwide attacks on democracy coming from right-wing politicians.

The recommendations were written by Council Member Linea Palmisano of

Ward 13 who says she felt threatened at the Feb. 23 council meeting in which Indigenous elders protested the demolition of the Roof Depot building in East Phillips. Ironically, elders are protesting because the demolition and proposed Hiawatha Expansion Project actually threatens their lives.

Council Member Jason Chavez, along with Jeremiah Ellison, Aisha Chughtai, and Robin Wonsley, argued that the recommendations are thinly disguised methods of silencing already stifled constituents, and criminalizing already oppressed populations. Chavez points to the hypocrisy of the policy, saying, "I have received many death threats... and my family and loved ones [have been] reported to Immigration and Customs Enforcement... And I have yet to receive any help from council leadership... I have heard nothing of that sort." Council members who oppose these recommendations argued that the laws will not protect council members; they will punish protesters.

Council members who voted in favor of the recommendations based their ar-

guments on their fear of BIPOC residents. LaTrisha Vetaw said, in reference to a police report she filed against constituent DJ Hooker (who is Black), "My life flashed before my eyes." Her comments resemble stand-your-ground laws in which fear of BIPOC citizens is twisted into legalized racism. Vetaw and other council members are treating this constituent as guilty before due process – a racist phenomenon that Black people often have to deal with in the American justice system.

In another case of fear-mongering, Council Member Michael Rainville posted a campaign advertisement on Twitter in which he claimed that East Phillips protesters "shut down" a city council meeting. This is a bold lie. At the meeting he is referencing, the council succeeded in voting, and when protesters exclaimed their frustration, they were escorted out of the hall by security.

City Council members who lack rationale for demolishing the Roof Depot building in East Phillips are turning to racism and lies to sway constituents.

Ward 10 City Council Member Aisha

Chughtai analyzed the council's recommendations precisely: "In the places that have implemented laws like this... the impact in real life, in real time, has been harsher criminal penalties and criminalization of people of color, of LGBTQ people, and of those without permanent citizenship status... These laws historically have been carried by far-right Republicans."

All across America, right-wing politicians are taking every opportunity to criminalize basic functions of democracy. Minneapolis is no exception. Council Members Rainville, Vetaw, Goodman, Koski, and Palmisano are using their fear of BIPOC protesters to rouse a base against the East Phillips Neighborhood Institute and Little Earth vision for environmental justice in East Phillips. Out of fear and racism, Council Members are undermining Minneapolitans' Constitutional right to protest. They are attempting to solidify their power against the people.

Daniel Schmidt is a Phillips resident.

AN OPEN LETTER >> from 4

sion for all of Minneapolis,

Ward 11 constituents and community members:

Rebecca Donley, Hale
Anne E Wagemaker, Hale
Theresa Dolata, Windom
Kate Vickery, Hale
Maggie Anderson, Northrop
Henry Bishop, Wenonah
Virginia Zaunbrecher, Hale
Catherine Iliff, Wenonah
Katharine Krueger, Windom
Aneesa Parks, Hale
Maggie Rittenhouse, Tangletown
Lindsay Bacher, Tangletown
Byron Richard, Tangletown
Sharon Thomas, Hale
Molly Leutz, Tangletown
Amy Kennedy, Page
Joan Flaaten, Page
Lauren Mathews, Page
Robert Reed, Northrop
Noelle, Northrop
Gregory King, Hale
Elizabeth Brophey, Wenonah
Stefanie Hollmichel, Wenonah
Dirk Nicholson, Tangletown
Rita Ayers, Tangletown
James Weber, Keewaydin
Karn Anderson, Tangletown

RESIDENTS SPEAK >> from 3

compromises that have left them impoverished, sick, and oppressed for centuries. East Phillips has been given no reason to trust the city. In fact, we have a long history of being lied to. (Go back and read

the history of the garbage burner the city wanted to locate here.) I don't see why we should trust them with a new agreement now," said Pass.

"We are slowly dying. We are slowly being killed," said Holmes. "It's affecting our kids. It's affecting generations to come."

POLLUTION AFFECTS SOUTH HIGH, MULTIPLE OTHER SCHOOLS

"Our students deserve to be safe and healthy both in and outside of school. That's why we have organized with our communities/other unions and taken very clear, strong positions against the demolition of the Roof Depot and to shut down the HERC incinerator," said MFT59 President Greta Callahan.

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency has a station on top of Anderson school, directly west of the Roof Depot site. There are none in the Longfellow, Seward, Powderhorn or Nokomis neighborhoods, or at South High.

The South High community currently has 200 plus

asthma hospitalizations per 10,000 people annually. Elevated blood arsenic and lead levels are at 69-97%. Other nearby schools that fall within the pollution area from the Arsenic Triangle include Anderson United Middle School, Seward Montessori, Folwell, Sanford, Roosevelt, Universal Academy Charter School, and Augsburg College.

On top of that, indoor levels of air pollutants can be 2-5 times higher, and occasionally 100 times higher, than outdoor levels, according to the Minnesota Department of Health.

"MPS will continue to implement procedures and systems to ensure quality indoor air inside all our buildings," said MPS spokesperson Crystal Lugo-Beach of the office of communications. "MPS

Holmes asked elected officials to remember why they ran for office. "You said you were all about climate change. You said you were all about green jobs, green education, green training and all this," she said. "This is going the opposite direction, and we need you to do the right thing."

has also recently upgraded building ventilation and filtration systems that were implemented as part of COVID-19 protocols." She directed people to the Environmental Health & Safety section of the district website for more details.

At what point will MPS determine that outdoor athletics are an unacceptable health risk for the South High student body? Will MPS provide options for students who already have respiratory, cardiovascular, or other health issues to request a different school if they live in these attendance areas? Lugo-Beach stated, "If any school operations or athletics need to be modified, we will work with local and state public health and pollution control officials on a plan to do so."

GOT AN OPINION? JOIN THE CONVERSATION AND LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK.

Letters should be under 200 words and can be emailed to tesha@LongfellowNokomisMessenger.com.

AWARDED

STORIES
AND JOURNEYS

BY DONALD L. HAMMEN



I have recently been made aware that TMC Publications CO, which includes the Longfellow Nokomis Messenger, Southwest Connector, and Midway Como Frogtown Monitor, received 20 awards at the recently completed Minnesota Newspaper Association Convention. That's eight for the Messenger, nine for the Connector, and three for the Monitor. This is a big deal in many ways for TMC Publications. In reflecting on this 20 awards, I became aware that Stories and Journeys is awarded every time you and I pick up a paper or go online to experience being readers of the Messenger or Connector.

So, if you have read this far, you along with me, have taken the plunge into the river (flow) of life experiences that is Stories and Journeys.

DANCING IN MY LIVING ROOM ON THE EVE OF MY SPINE SURGERY

I admit that I have showed up to street dancing on Fridays at 36th and Bde Mka Ska three times. I admit that those are not the only times I have broken out in dance. It happened while I was watching the recently completed Grammys on the eve of my upcoming cervical spine surgery. It happened when Smokey Robinson broke out in his rendition of "Tears of a Clown." Granted, I have to dance with my spine stenosis in mind – which means my moves are limited. The fact is I never know when or where I'm going to break out in dance.

SPEAKING OF MY UPCOMING SPINE SURGERY

If all goes according to plan my surgery will have happened Feb.15 and by the time of my March column writing week I will be at home healing. As a result of this surgery I hope to be awarded the ability to do more dance moves. For me, dance is movement in space within my limits. I hope to have a few less limits so I can do more moves where ever I break out in dance.

The essence of spine surgery for me is captured in the following words: Cervical/neck fusion disks C4-C7.

As I anticipate my surgery, I have been revisiting my personal philosophy of

health that has evolved over time. The fact that I am consenting to my surgery tells me I believe there is a role for Western medicine while being open to what I call 'alternative healing modalities.' So, as part of my post surgery healing, I could use the services of a certified healing touch practitioner (CHTP) who makes house calls if there is such a person. I look forward to resuming physical therapy, acupuncture and massage therapy.

This is my holistic/integrative health (spirituality and healing) approach in play. Do you, dear reader, have a personal philosophy of health that informs your life? Mine includes adequate rest and sleep, nutrition and exercise, and stress management. Tell yourself, tell others or better yet tell me at tesha@longfellownokomessenger.com.

MY LIFE COMPLETION. CHECKING THE BOXES

Lakewood Cemetery in south Uptown. Paperwork signed and paid for services. Check. Bradshaw Funeral Services on Minnehaha Ave. Paperwork signed and paid for services. Check. Courtney Law Office services engaged for legal representation where it comes to creating and implementing my estate plan. Check. All next up is to write my obituary and committal service.

Then there is the back up plan and

that's where the Longfellow-Seward Healthy Seniors" SOLOS" Resource Group comes into play. Briefly, it is made up of the growing portion of the population 60+ individuals who, in my case, cannot always or choose not to rely on family to help them navigate life events and make health decisions. However, in the interest of full disclosure, since the death of my brother, my sister-in-law is very involved with my navigating life events and health decisions along with others. More on the back up plan in another column.

As I write, I am aware that I am about to entrust my body, mind and spirit to a team of other people. I am about to put my trust in the skilled hands of another human being who is Dr. Christopher Martin. I have no idea what my life will be like on the other side of surgery. My hope is that there will be less to no constant pain and discomfort. I hope and pray that I will be able to write again – that we, dear reader, have awarded Stories and Journeys every time you and I pick up a print edition or log on to read the Messenger and Connector. And for that I am eternally grateful.

In gratitude.

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

'LISTENNN' - the movement never stops

By JILL BOOGREN

Anyone attending a protest or march for justice in the Twin Cities over these past few years has undoubtedly heard a call carry over the crowd: "Listennn!" It's a sure bet KingDemetrius Pendleton is there. An award-winning independent journalist and photographer with Listen Media USA, he's been on the front lines of most demonstrations for about seven years, live-streaming events and documenting people and moments through photographs. Some of these are on display in The Third Place Gallery (3730 Chicago Ave.) studio of renowned Minneapolis street photographer Wing Young Huie.

Called "The Movement Never Stops," the exhibition and accompanying book is a collection of Pendleton's images from countless gatherings with family and community members seeking justice for Minnesotans killed or impacted by violence. The photographs are at turns raw, beautiful and painful – and offer perhaps the most comprehensive body of work surrounding the local Black Lives Matter movement to date.

As Pendleton's artist statement reads: "The images I capture give voice to the voiceless. I focus on the social justice movement documenting the powerful words and actions of the people, so they won't be erased from memory."

Pendleton came to this profession later in life, a direction moved, sadly, by tragedy. His daughter, Brandy Ann Banks-Sutta, was killed by a drunk driver in 2013 at the age of 21. Determined to fight for justice, Pendleton began live-streaming events. When Jamar Clark was killed by police officers in 2015, he saw firsthand how readily a false narrative was spun by authorities and reported on by the media. He recalled a young child recounting what he saw happen to Clark.

"A lotta times we ignore our children's cry," said Pendleton. "This young child was so convincing, and not only that, he knew exactly what he was sayin'. He described all the details and everything." But according to Pendleton, the child's mother began receiving threats if her son talked again.

As Pendleton became more and more of a fixture in the movement, he said he saw a pattern in coverage by the mainstream media.

"All these things was happening, and every time the news would say somethin' it would be somethin' that was totally different from what I've seen. And I'm boots on the ground, grassroots," he said.

He describes his earlier photos as "very shallow." With encouragement from friends, especially from Felicia Clark, who really inspired him, he attended Minneapolis Community & Technical College. In 2019, he earned a degree in applied science and another in photography and digital imaging – nearly three decades after being out of school.

As a single dad with six of his kids ages 11 on up living at home with him, Pendleton was proud they were able to see him walk across the stage for his graduation. He got to show them it's never too late to get an education.

"It's never too late, right?" he said. "So, when they see me do that, then I just wanted to keep on doin' more."

'LISTENNN'

He began calling out "Listennn" when a speaker would make a poignant statement, because he truly wanted people to listen – with a critical ear. This led to the name of his platform, Listen Media USA. After George Floyd was murdered and Pendleton's photography garnered a lot more notice, he put his hat in the ring to be among the pool of reporters allowed in the courtroom to cover Derek Chauvin's trial. Listen Media wasn't selected, but a



Award-winning independent journalist and photographer KingDemetrius Pendleton poses inside Wing Young Huie's The Third Place Gallery at 3730 Chicago Ave., where his exhibition "The Movement Never Stops" is on display. The exhibition includes photographs Pendleton has taken from the front lines of the social justice movement in the Twin Cities over the past seven years. (Photo by Jill Boogren)

cohort he was part of, Move for Justice News, was.

Pendleton was inside the courtroom on three separate days during the trial. On the first day, he came face to face with Chauvin, who was walking freely – with officers, but without handcuffs. He said Chauvin stopped in his tracks.

"The reason why he stopped in his tracks is because I practice Islam, so I had

my kufi on my head, my Muslim hat. And I was dressed to the 'T' with my briefcase and everything... He had this look like, 'Oh [expletive]... we got a Muslim in here on me," said Pendleton. "But ah, it was phenomenal to see the expression on his face, to see he was totally shocked."

A fan of both the television show Perry Mason and Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, Pendleton was in awe

KingDemetrius Pendleton's photos from front lines of social justice movement featured at The Third Place Gallery, GF Square

of special prosecutor Jerry Blackwell. He was impressed by how Blackwell painted the picture of the full weight bearing down on George Floyd's neck, beginning with Chauvin's body weight and one by one adding on the service belt, the service gun.

"[Blackwell] whooped 'im fiercely. He didn't let up and he didn't get up," said Pendleton.

BALANCING COMMUNITY SERVICE

It's hard work being on the front lines of the movement, especially balancing time to be present with family.

"I want my children to understand that, when you see me out here doin' this, this is not for fun. This is me givin' back to my community," he said.

Pendleton battled addiction for nearly 15 years of his life but said even then he knew that wasn't him. With a "praying grandmother" who was a Christian and an uncle who introduced him to the Nation of Islam, he knew "right from wrong." He had the best of both worlds – on the one hand spiritual songs that made his hair stand up on end, and on the other hand, an education.

"Anything I learned in school, it wasn't beneficial to me. But when I went to the mosque... they taught me my history, they taught me the true value... of different things, and that was a plus plus for me," he said.

'LISTENNN' >> 13

AJ BANTLEY GUIDES VISITORS ON PHOTOGRAPHIC TOUR

By JILL BOOGREN

Visitors to George Floyd Square who find their way to The Third Place Gallery on the weekends are likely to be invited inside by AJ Bantley. Administrative manager for Listen Media USA, she's volunteered her time at the studio nearly every Saturday and Sunday since last summer when KingDemetrius Pendleton's photographs were first displayed there. She has greeted visitors from all over the United States and the world – Europe, South America, Australia – taking time to provide stories and context for the photographs.

"There's that saying, a photo speaks a thousand words, which it can. But if you don't know the back story it's not necessarily true. So, I feel it's important to give the storyline," she said. She'll share stories of about 12-15 of the photographs. Some people stay for a few minutes. Some have stayed for hours.

Bantley has encountered a few what she calls "closed-minded" people, but feedback in general is positive. Most people, she said, especially People of Color and people who are active in their own countries, appreciate what's being done. For a few, it's so traumatic and triggering that they've had to walk out.

"That's really hard. Even sometimes there's been a lot of tears," said Bantley. "But I always tell people this is a safe place. We never speak about race in this place to be divisive. We always speak about race because we know that there's this race problem because of these systems, and... we're standing in solidarity."

The thing that uplifts Bantley most is seeing the younger generation, families coming in with kids, having conversations her generation never had.



(Photo by Jill Boogren)

Bantley developed a passion for social justice at an early age. She recalls being in about second grade going with her mom into a Kmart and wanting a Black Baby Doll. She had seen a National Geographic magazine and was really taken by the different people, customs traditions and clothing pictured inside, which may be what prompted her to want this particular doll. Her mom told her, "We don't play with Black babies."

"As a little kid I understood that this was ridiculous. Like, how could you be against – and this was a doll, not even a human being," said Bantley. "I understand my mom was a product of the [1950s], a product of her very White culture, but... that just did not sit with me. And I walked out of there with my baby doll."

Fast forward a few decades to a very encouraging interaction with a teenage girl from the Dakotas who was visiting the Square. She told Bantley that at the daycare where she worked there had been no dolls of color, only White dolls. When she told the owner they needed to bring in some BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) dolls, the owner asked, "Why? We don't have any BIPOC clients." And the girl replied, "Because we live in a world of not only White people."

Bantley met Pendleton a few years ago and began doing small projects for him behind the scenes – editing, researching, placing online orders. With 30 years in the publishing industry, she also

helped Pendleton put together his book, "The Movement Never Stops." Having been on the protest lines herself, she remembered certain images and suggested them for the book.

Working with Pendleton has become Bantley's way to be an ally in the movement. A point she makes to visitors is that these systems are all rooted in White supremacy – housing, banking, health care, education, criminal justice – and that People of Color shouldn't have to fight the fight; they've had enough burden.

"White people really need to pop the bubble of other White people who are still living in their ignorance," she said. Having grown up the same way, she understands where it comes from. But she also believes that silence is not an option. Being in the gallery is a way for her to help people understand what's really going on in the movement – while uplifting Pendleton as an artist.

"It's all kind of fate that I was planted here, but now that I'm here I don't wanna be anywhere else," she said.

Like Pendleton, Bantley is a staunch believer in independent media.

"We know that our mainstream [media] does not go into this depth. I really respect King, because he's got such passion and drive," she said. "A lot of mainstream media will just show up for five, 10, 20 minutes, get their story and go. And he's out there, not only taking photos but oftentimes live-streaming for hours upon hours upon hours. And that takes tenacity."

Bantley welcomes visitors to the exhibition "The Movement Never Stops" at The Third Place Gallery (3730 Chicago Ave.) on Saturdays and Sundays.

DEFEND TRANS LIVES

>> from 1

get to try to erase me. You don't get to end my life. That is not your choice. You don't get that power," said Rehema Martinez of Minneapolis to loud cheers from the crowd at the rally. "The power is mine. I deserve to be here. I deserve [to take] public transportation. And I deserve to do it in safety."

Gabbi Pierce of Minneapolis called for people to take collective action to support one another.

"We need to be building community and structures of power where we can keep each other safe. Where we can give each other support," she said. "We need historic action for trans liberation now."

Quintin Branch said being transgender in her hometown of New Ulm, Minn. – which she described as "small town America" – made her very vulnerable. She was uplifted by the show of support.

"That they were proud of me being who I am really means something to me," she said. "And that's why we're here. We are here to represent who we are... We are here to fight for our lives and our rights [as transgender, non-binary people], whoever we are... We are human... and we deserve the right to live and be ourselves as we wish."

Conrad, a Minneapolis resident who grew up in Alexandria, Minn., said his hometown is an extremely conservative place and that many LGBTQIA people leave.

"I'm trans masculine. I'm White. I have all this privilege and still had to leave," he said. "That is what Minneapolis is for a lot of us. It is a place we came [to] for safety. And we need to make sure it is a place that stays safe." He called on people to take the time to get to know each other, take care of each other, and even to learn basic First Aid.



Conrad (holding a trans pride flag) and Rehema Martinez stand with Gabbi Pierce as she speaks at a rally to celebrate and defend trans lives held March 9 at the Lake St./Midtown Station. "We need to be building community and structures of power where we can keep each other safe. Where we can give each other support," said Pierce. "We need historic action for trans liberation now." (Photos by Jill Boogren)

"That builds up strength and community defense, and that is extremely important," he said. "[Minneapolis] is a refuge. We will not let it not be a refuge... We will defend ourselves. We will keep ourselves safe."

Liberty Kirkeidi of Andover, Minn., who is trans and non-binary, said they came to the rally because of the "wave of horrible attacks on trans people."

They stated, "I find it very scary. I think it's very urgent. I think about it every single day. I'm here with my community to ground myself in our movement and liberation." Their sign, painted in the blue, pink and white stripes of the trans pride flag, read, "I believe that we will win."

MINNESOTA: A TRANS REFUGE STATE

In addition to the much-publicized drag bans and denying trans students use of bathrooms that align with their gender, anti-trans legislation throughout the United States includes prohibiting gender-affirming care and criminalizing parents for helping their kids medically transition.

Activist and researcher Erin Reed, of Erin in the Morning, has been tracking

legislation across the country. As of March 11, eight states have enacted medical care bans: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Iowa, Mississippi, South Dakota, Tennessee and Utah. According to Reed, South Dakota's bill has a "terrifying clause" specifying how forced detransitions should happen.

On March 8, Governor Tim Walz signed an Executive Order "protecting and supporting the rights of Minnesota's LGBTQIA community members to seek and receive gender affirming health care services." The order includes protection against extradition of anyone who would be charged with a criminal violation of this care in another state, effectively making Minnesota a "trans refuge state." It's considered a stop gap measure that can offer protections right away, but it needs to be codified into law for those protections to become permanent.

Trans-affirming legislation championed by Representative Leigh Finke (DFL-St. Paul) is moving through Minnesota House and Senate committees. One protects people seeking gender affirming care. Another bans harmful conversion "therapy."

At a press conference announcing the Governor's Executive Order, Finke said the

action will save lives. According to Finke, this is the fourth straight year of setting a record number of bills introduced in the country that seek to erase the rights of the LGBTQIA community.

"What we're saying here today is that Minnesota is a place that will allow you to be who you are. Many states are asking their queer people to find two spaces that are comfortable – the closet or the coffin – and we are saying that we are not going to accept that in Minnesota," she said. "In Minnesota you can stay and live."

Conrad said more kids and families seeking gender affirming care will be coming here.

"Trans kids should just be doing homework or out having actual fun. They should not be afraid of their government. They should not be afraid of their police, they should not be afraid of their parents, of their teachers, of their libraries, of their schools. They should not be afraid of anything," he said, drawing cheers. "They should be able to see trans people get old. They should be able to see a future."

A Trans Day of Visibility at the Minnesota State Capitol will take place March 31 at 5:30 p.m.

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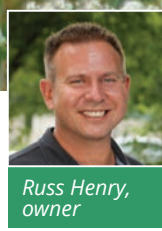
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Margret Aldrich (Photo submitted)

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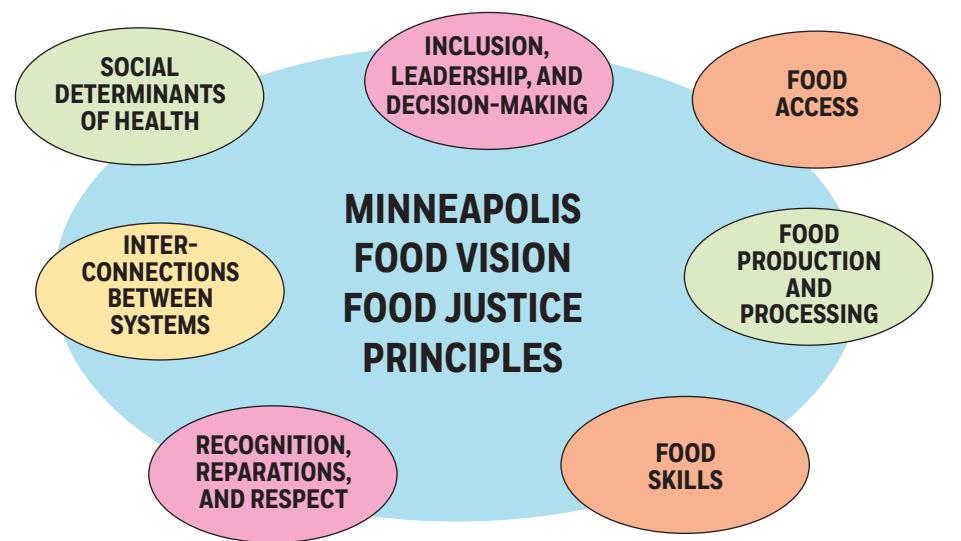
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NEW FOOD PLAN >> from 1

Minneapolis initiative that launched in 2008 as a priority of former Mayor R.T. Rybak, the MFV will be a companion plan to the forthcoming Climate Equity Plan, and is part of a global effort that includes over 200 cities worldwide who have signed the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact.

Minneapolis signed the Milan Pact in 2017 and started work on the Minneapolis Food Vision the next year, in 2018.

Since then, the food council and city health department staff have conducted in-person and online events. They partnered with the University of Minnesota, Princeton University, Appetite for Change, Advancement of Hmong Americans, Comunidades Latinas Unidas En Servicio (CLUES), Harvest from the Heart, and the Somali American Farmers Association to support the development of the vision. Funders included the National Science Foundation, the Sustainable Healthy Cities initiative, and the City of Minneapolis's Health Department.

"I'm proud to say that over 1,000 people were involved in the development of the Minneapolis Food Vision," said Health Department Homegrown Minneapolis Manager Alison Babb. She said that work on the plan slowed down during the pandemic but picked up again in 2021. Work on food justice principles, priority areas, and strategies were the focus of food council meetings, community focus groups, interviews with food experts, and six online events. "In February of 2022 we launched an online survey," Babb said, "that helped us further refine recommendations."

HISTORY OF INEQUITY

The plan identifies a legacy of historic inequities in Minneapolis and racial inequality is part of Minneapolis' food system. It notes that "Just and equitable access to affordable, healthy, culturally relevant foods varies across the city, which is one domino effect from these structural practices put in place many decades ago."

This may be why the plan defines seven "food justice principals" to serve as the foundation and guide for both what will be worked on, as well as how that work will be done.

A variety of specific strategies are

outlined to support each of the six goals in the plan. Examples of these include: provide funding and support to connect local production and local consumption; increase the purchase of locally and sustainably grown foods by institutions and businesses within the city; improve land access in the city for growers and year-round growing; improve conditions for food system workers and small businesses; improve access to affordable, nutritious, locally-grown and culturally-relevant foods; change policies to better connect excess food and those in need; and, raise awareness of food system activities and research.

10-YEAR IMPLEMENTATION

While the plan has a 10-year time frame, implementation will be done in stages. "We will be starting out with a one to two-year implementation plan," said Babb. "There will be three work groups around priorities that the food council has determined to be both important and the most exciting to work on." These workgroups will be, first, on local food procurement; second, on land access and season extensions for growing food in the city; and, third, on fostering healthy food skills. The workgroups will include community members, as well as staff and food council members.

The plan may already be influencing recommendations about city policy. This spring, the food council will be submitting comments on the land use regulations that will be considered by the city council and mayor later year. "The food council voted at their last meeting," said Babb, "to submit a series of comments related to season extensions as it relates to deep winter green houses and regular green houses, as well as hoop houses."

Both Babb and Nolan recognize that while approving the plan is an essential step, implementation will take ongoing commitment, work and money.

"Implementation of the Minneapolis Food Vision will take action from the community and resources from the city, the business community and our philanthropic partners," said Nolan. "I look forward to working with city leaders to obtain the investment needed to bring parts of this vision to life."



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~ Emily, Minneapolis

CITY BRIEFS

NEW SHELTER HOUSING ON 27TH AVE.

This month, Agate participated in two meetings about their new shelter housing project coming to the Longfellow neighborhood. Agate purchased a lot on the 2800 block of 27th Avenue, and plans to build a shelter there for about 54 single adults and with 48 units of housing with on-site case management and other services.

CREEK BRIDGE REPAIR

The pedestrian bridge over Minnehaha Creek near 36th Avenue S. was removed for repairs on March 9. The park board plans to replace the deck and install new footings for the bridge this spring. It will be reinstalled in the summer. People can cross the creek on 34th Avenue S. or the pedestrian bridge near 32nd Avenue S.

VETERANS SUPPORT BILLS

State Representative Emma Greenman has introduced two bills to assist veterans. One, if approved by the legislature and governor, will provide grant funding for Every Third Saturday (ETS), which is lo-

cated in the East Nokomis neighborhood and provides services to veterans. A second bill would provide funding to rehabilitate a building of the Minnesota Veterans Home to bring it back into operation.

LIGHT RAIL SAFE BILL OKED

In February, a Minnesota State House committee approved a bill that would appropriate \$1 million and direct the Metropolitan Council to use it to create a transit ambassador program to improve safety on light rail trains. Following the Feb. 27 violent attack at the Lake Street Light Rail Station, and in response to ongoing concerns, Ward 9 Council Member Jason Chavez held a community meeting and listening session on transit safety at the Corcoran Recreation Center on March 21. The meeting included personnel from Metro Transit and Hennepin County, as well as State Representative Samantha Sencer-Mura and others.

THE HISTORY OF YOUR HOME

Two libraries are offering workshops in April for people to learn about library resources that will help trace the history of Minneapolis houses, neighborhoods or properties, including online permit records, maps, city directories, and photographs. People can register online for ses-

sions Saturday, April 1, 10-11:30 a.m. at Pierre Bottineau Library or Saturday, April 29, 10-11:30 a.m. at Washburn Library by visiting the Hennepin County Library website.

COUNTY TREE SALE THROUGH APRIL 20

Orders are being taken through April 20 for the Hennepin County's spring 2023 tree sale. These are mostly bareroot trees, not in soil, from 18 to 24 inches long that are being sold in bundles of 25 for \$40. You can place your order and learn more at <https://environmentalresources.hennepin.us/TreeSale>.

REPUBLICAN PARTY CONVENTIONS

The Minnesota GOP Congressional District 5 2023 Convention has been scheduled for April 22, at 10 a.m. at the Crystal VFW #494, 5222 Bass Lake Rd. in Crystal. The more local Senate District 63 convention will be on March 25, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. at Burroughs Community School, 1601 W. 50th St.

DFL CAUCUSES AND CONVENTIONS

The Democratic Farmer Labor (DFL) held ward level caucuses for Ward 12 and 13 on March 14. Ward conventions for each ward will meet in April and May as follows: Ward 7 on May 21 online, Ward

8 on May 20 online; Ward 10 on May 13 in-person, location yet to be determined; Ward 11 on May 21 online; Ward 12 on April 29 at Roosevelt High School; Ward 13 on April 1 at Armatage Park. See <https://minneapolisdf.org> for more information. Business to be conducted at the ward convention includes: endorsing a candidate for city council and electing two ward representatives to join the Minneapolis DFL Central Committee.

2023 COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS CONFERENCE

People are invited to participate in the city's annual Community Connections Conference that will be held Saturday, June 10, at the Minneapolis Convention Center. It is a free event.

MARKETS IN THE PARK

The Park Board plans to host "markets" this summer where local vendors can display and sell handcrafted items. The markets that will be held at five parks including at Lake Harriet on Sundays, 2:30-6:30 p.m. from June 4 - Aug. 27 near the bandshell. The initiative is intended to help "local entrepreneurs, producers and artists share their goods and services and grow their business ventures."

~ Briefs compiled by Cam Gordon

EVENTS

VINE ARTS CENTER PHOTO EXHIBIT OPENS

The Vine Arts Center is pleased to present, "The Ways We See It: SelectHons From Four Vine Arts Center Photographers", an exciting and provocative exhibit of photographic images captured by photographers, John Box, Edie Karras, Rubin Latz, and Raven Miller. The exhibit will be held on the second floor of the Ivy Arts Building at 2637 27th Avenue South. The show runs April 1-31 with an opening

on April 1 from 6-9 p.m. Additional opportunities to view the exhibit occur on Saturdays, April 8, 15, 22, and 29 from 11 a.m. until 5 p.m. Vine Arts Center is a non-profit, member-run organization supporting emerging and established artists, partnering with the community, and providing space for visiting shows and events.

FREE EASTER EGG HUNT APRIL 1

Families are invited to a free indoor Easter egg hunt on Saturday, April 1, at 10 a.m. at Trinity Lutheran of Minnehaha Falls (5212 41st Avenue S). There will be games for young children, crafts, and re-

freshments. This free event is sponsored by Trinity Church and Trinity Falls Discovery Center preschool & childcare. For more details, call 612-724-3691.

LISTEN TO YOUR MOTHER COMING IN MAY


Listen to Your Mother is a series of live, on-stage readings across North America on or around Mother's Day. The mission of each LTYM show is to give voice to motherhood - the good, the bad, the ugly, the sad, the hilarious, the golden, and of course, the beautiful - in the form of original readings performed live on-stage by their authors. The show will stay

at its beautiful home, the historic River-view Theatre in Minneapolis on Wednesday May 3, at 7 p.m. and Sunday May 7 at 10:30 a.m.

ANNUAL CHURCH RUMMAGE SALE MAY 19-20

Join Minnehaha Communion Lutheran Church for their Annual Spring Rummage Sale, Friday, May 19, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. and Saturday, May 20, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Expect lots of great buys, from clothes to home goods and so much more. Sloppy Joe's and bars will also be available for purchase. They are located at 4101 37th Ave. S.

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Easter Service, April 9, 9 am,
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WHAT DO CITIZENS WANT AT THE THIRD PRECINCT SITE?

By TESHA M. CHRISTENSEN

After two and a half years, Longfellow residents have the opportunity to tell the city what they want at the Third Precinct site (Minnehaha and E. Lake St.). However, the city is only giving the Longfellow Community Council four weeks to organize and publicize meetings, and another four weeks to gather input. The report is due to the mayor in mid-May.

Phase I will ask community members if they want the police building for the Third Precinct to be in the current location at Lake and Minnehaha or a different predetermined location within the borders of the Third Precinct. That location has been predetermined by the city, but has not yet been shared. The city is planning to go live with a website dedicated to this process on March 27 with an online survey. Phase II will focus on recommendations for a

Community Benefits Agreement regarding the Lake and Minnehaha location. There is still much to be worked out for Phase II. After another series of community conversations about developing a CBA, a working group will be formed to continue the work. The final CBA will be then shared back with everyone who participated in the process for review and comment.

"Longfellow Community Council is thankful and energized to be a part of the community engagement efforts around the future site of the police building in the Third Precinct as it is vital to bring residents, businesses and community organizations into the conversation and that we start the work taking down the barbed wire and bringing the site at Lake and Minnehaha back to community use," said LCC Executive Director Rachel Boeke.

"After 2.5 years of inaction with the promise of intentional and thoughtful

outreach, the accelerated timeline from the city with this process, now that it's in motion, is opposed to the concept of real engagement. The Third Precinct is made of roughly 139,000 residents, not including business owners, employees, etc. The amount of outreach and work required to communicate with a large, representative constituent of this precinct is considerable. The sudden urgency of the city to have a response from residents has reduced our timeline to four weeks for organizing locations, informing the community about each event, and gathering residents into conversation.

"Our goal with these conversations is to involve as many community members as possible so the results are undeniable and cannot be pushed aside. We believe that any decision around the future of the Third Precinct site needs to be made by the people."

UPCOMING MEETINGS

• Business Owners Session: Tuesday, April 11 from 6:30-8:30 p.m., The Hook and Ladder (3010 Minnehaha Ave.), snacks and beverages provided

• Open to all: Thursday, April 13 from 6:30-8:30 p.m., Midtown Global Market (920 E. Lake Street), meal vouchers provided.

• Open to all: Saturday, April 15 from 10 a.m. - noon, South High School Cafeteria (3131 19th Ave. S.), snacks and beverages provided.

• Open to all: Wednesday, April 19 from 6:30-8:30 p.m., Holy Trinity Lutheran Church (2730 E 31st St.), snacks and beverages provided

A website with an online survey will go live on March 27.

'LISTENNN' >> from 6

SUPPORTED BY MENTORS

Pendleton credits a number of mentors who offered guidance and support, especially master photographer Wing Young Huie. He first went to Huie's studio because he wanted to learn, and began volunteering and helping out. Now, some of Pendleton's most striking images are on display in the very same studio.

Huie commented, "I am honored to showcase the important photography of KingDemetrius Pendleton at The Third Place, where over the decade hundreds of local artists have used my gallery as an artistic incubator."

"It's just amazin' for him to open up a space for me," said Pendleton. "Wing Young Huie is one of those people that... don't mind sharing the platform. A lot of times people get on the elevator, and they get all the way up to the top and... they don't press the button so it'll go back down to get other people. He's not one of those people."

Pendleton has received recognition for his efforts and held his first exhibition in St. Paul in May 2022. But as an independent journalist, pay can be slim to none. Sales of his book and prints offer some support, but ultimately he would like to obtain funding to open his own storefront studio with a darkroom where he can mentor others.

"I want my flowers while I'm alive so I can smell 'em," he said. "I just want my children to be able to enjoy the fruit of the land, and I want to be able to enjoy the fruit of the land while I'm here."

"The Movement Never Stops" exhibition is open Saturdays and Sundays at The Third Place gallery, 3730 Chicago Ave. More information can be found on Facebook at Demetrius.pendleton.5, on Instagram at kingdemetriuspndleton and at listenmedia.org.

4 VIE IN WARD 12

>> from 1

AURIN CHOWDHURY

Chowdhury is a first-generation Bengali-American, daughter of working-class immigrants, organizer, and renter. She grew up near Sibley Park and graduated from Minneapolis Public Schools.

Chowdhury has worked as a policy aide for two elected officials. Her first was with Senator Kari Dziedzic and she is current working for Ward 9 City Council member Jason Chavez. In her time at Minneapolis City Hall as an aide, she has helped developed policies to combat wage theft, expand affordable housing for students, and deliver funding for small businesses impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

JEROME EVANS

Since 2018, Evans has represented Ward 12 on the Public Health Advisory Committee for the City of Minneapolis (PHAC). He formerly served on the Nokomis East Neighborhood Association Board, and helped organize residents during the Uprising following the death of George Floyd to protect businesses and homes from damage.

Evans lives with his husband in Nokomis, and has resided there for 10 years. He grew up in Georgia and earned his law degree from the University of Georgia.

NANCY FORD

The owner of Repair Lair on East Lake Street, Ford has lived in Ward 12 for 18 years. She currently resides near 46th and Hiawatha with her boyfriend and two dogs. It took her 15 years, but she earned a bachelor of science degree from the University of Minnesota. She has a degree in



Candidates for the Ward 12 seat include (left to right) Jerome Evans, Aurin Chowdhury, Nancy Ford and Luther Ranheim. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)

civil engineering. She has worked at a variety of different jobs over the years.

She walks many miles throughout the neighborhood every week.

LUTHER RANHEIM

Ranheim grew up near Lake Nokomis, and has lived in Ward 12 for 22 years with his wife, Michelle. He is currently in Howe neighborhood. He graduated from South High School. His first job was manning the front desk at the Nokomis Rec Center.

He earned his degree from Lawrence University in Appleton, Wis. His work life began in the nonprofit sector, focusing on the performing arts. After moving back to Minneapolis in the 1990s, he worked in financial services in the private sector, before returning to a nonprofit. Over the years, he has worked with MacPhail Center for Music, Greater Twin Cities United Way, the Minnesota Orchestra and the Alzheimer's Association. He appreciates arts of all sorts, including music and theater.

DEMONSTRATED LEADERSHIP

Several years ago, Ford approached

Longfellow Seward Healthy Seniors about a partnership. She offered to supply \$5,000 to pay for shoveling at the homes of local seniors. The group was not able to organize the effort at that time, but a couple of years later, the Longfellow Community Council approached her and asked if she was still willing to fund it. She was.

In 2017, Ranheim organized a philanthropic response following the fire at a mosque. That grew into a larger dialogue with the community about how to address rising hate crimes, he said.

After the murder of George Floyd, Evans helped with the emergency network in Nokomis neighborhood. Together, the community stayed awake for three days and three nights to protect local homes and businesses. The only building that caught fire during that time was the Speedway.

Chowdhury was part of a group that talked to businesses along Lake Street and asked how the city could spend American Rescue dollars to benefit them. "We brought forward the stories of small businesses," she recalled. It resulted in \$700,000 for business and technical assistance.

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NENA STARTS RENTER SUPPORT FUND

**NOKOMIS EAST
NEIGHBORHOOD
ASSOCIATION**

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



Minneapolis is suffering from a severe lack of affordable housing. Renters in the city make up 48% of residents and, according to Minnesota Compass, 46% of those renters are cost-burdened households. As rent climbs and people's wages don't, some people are forced to make hard decisions: cutting heat, eating less, or not buying needed medicines. As good neighbors, we need to do something to help people afford shelter. The first step to helping is to become more informed on the issue.

WHAT IS AFFORDABLE HOUSING?

The federal government defines affordable housing as housing that does not take more than 30% of a household's income. The rent or home price that is considered affordable may change from one household to another, but the need to have housing that is affordable is something that is shared by everyone.

HOW DOES THE GOVERNMENT DECIDE WHICH HOUSING TO SUBSIDIZE?

The Department of Housing and Urban Development looks at the salaries of everyone living in Hennepin County every April, then selects the income that is exactly in the middle of that group. This is called the AMI, or Area Median Income. They do this for every size of household. Those households that make 30% of the area's median income would then qualify for federal subsidies.

WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

The number of available rental units that are considered in this 30% AMI bracket at any given time is currently zero. That's right. Zero. So many are forced to pay higher rents due to a simple lack of places to live that are considered "affordable" by the Federal Government.

Making matters worse, because Hennepin County is a large area that includes many wealthy communities, the county's median income (\$118,200 for a family of four) is a poor metric to base affordability for Minneapolis residents since it's much higher than the city's median income (\$70,099).

WHAT ARE RENT PRICES THESE DAYS?

The vast majority of available rental

properties in Minneapolis right now are between 50-100% AMI, with most closer to 80% and 100% AMI. This means that for a one bedroom apartment rents range between \$1,100 to over \$1,760 with the majority of those at \$1,760 or higher.

If you have a family and need to rent housing with more than one bedroom, you will likely find the majority of two bedroom and above units above \$2,000 per month and some units pushing \$3,000.

WHAT ARE WE DOING ABOUT IT?

Nokomis East Neighborhood Association is teaming up with Powderhorn Park Neighborhood Association (PPNA) to raise funds in 2023 for direct rental support for Nokomis East renters.

Selected applicants will receive \$900 in rental assistance. Renters will be able to choose either three monthly payments of \$300 or a one-time payment of \$900. Those selected can then choose to receive payments via PayPal or a mailed check.

Applicants will be selected through a randomized lottery and there are no restrictions on how selected renters can spend the money. One goal of the program is to provide a low-barrier, flexible and efficient program for neighbors to access needed assistance. Once the funds are raised, eligible applicants will need to:

- live in one of the four Nokomis East neighborhoods
- spend 30% or more of their income on housing costs

- have not received Renter Support Fund funding that calendar year
- be 18 or older

Powderhorn Park Neighborhood Association received over 1,650 applications in 2022 from across the city and was able to fund 52 renters, benefitting 141 people (including 68 children).

There were several applications that came from the Nokomis East area and 100% of renters said that the funds made a difference, allowing them to pay rent, bills, or other expenses.

You can find more information and donate to the Nokomis East Renter Support Fund at www.nokomiseast.org/renter-support-fund/.

Are you a business, non-profit, or faith group? Please email brandon.long@nokomiseast.org to discuss how you can sponsor this program.

UPCOMING:

- 4/6/23: NENA Housing|Development Committee 6:30-8:00pm, online
- 4/11/23: NENA Executive Committee Meeting 6:30-7:30pm, online
- 4/13/23: NENA Fundraising Events Team 6:30-7:30pm, online
- 4/17/23: NENA Environmental Committee 5:30-6:30pm, online
- 4/18/23 Wellness and Engagement Committee 7:30-8:30, online
- 4/22/23: Food Truck Rally 4-7pm
- 4/27/23: Annual Meeting 6:30-8:30, online and at Morris Park Rec Center

Apply for Longfellow Community Council Board of Directors

**LONGFELLOW
COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

BY ANDREA TRITSCHLER,
communications
andrea@longfellow.org



Longfellow Community Council is excited to announce that we're looking for candidates to apply to our Board of Directors!

Historically, governing boards have not been accessible spaces for everyone. It's a volunteer position that continues to operate under antiquated ideas of how a neighborhood Board functions – month-

ly meetings with formal rules that create space that is largely dominated by White, home-owning, affluent voices. How do we build systems of change focused on equitable engagement and expand the possibilities for our community when the beautiful diversity of our community isn't fully at the table?

As the neighborhood organization for the Greater Longfellow Neighborhood, Longfellow Community Council's Board of Directors should reflect our neighborhood – queer, disabled, Black, Indigenous, and People of Color, working-class, young folks, immigrants, renters, and unhoused folks. We know that we can't increase involvement with LCC without making some sweeping organizational changes, including who is on our board and how they operate. It also means making chang-

es to how we operate as staff and as committees to minimize barriers of participation and focus on how we can show up and support our community. There are people in our community who need rental assistance and a food shelf within walking distance. We want to be able to connect unhoused people and encampments with the resources they need. We want to support our immigrant neighbors, and help empower them to organize around those issues. We want to address the environmental, housing and racial injustice in our community.

Our board is made up of dedicated members of our community who volunteer their time with our organization. We are immensely grateful for their service and all the time and energy they have dedicated to our neighborhood. This year, in

making a call to our community for new board members, we want to let you know who we need at the table. We need members who are committed to the idea of equitable representation – we need change makers who are committed to working on behalf of the community. We need to do away with the historically classist and prohibitive models of engagement. We need to advocate and organize for our community in ways that bring real and meaningful change to people's daily life.

If you're interested in running, we have open seats in Howe, Cooper, Hiawatha, and Longfellow, as well as a couple of community seats and a business representative seat. Find the application on our website (longfellow.org/our-board) or email Executive Director Rachel Boeke at rachel@longfellow.org for more information.

DID YOU KNOW? 6 of 10 readers say they frequently purchase products and services from ads that they see in the Messenger.

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April 28th | 8:30am

May 21st | 8:30am

June 6th | 5pm



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(Earth Day Neighborhood Clean-up to precede this! Scan QR code below for more details.)

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Music! Food! Makers Market!

Becketwood to boost electric vehicle access

By IRIC NATHANSON

These days, Nancie Hamlett has an easy, hassle-free way to recharge her Chevy Bolt. She can drive into Becketwood's basement garage and plug her all-electric Bolt into a standard 110 outlet.

Right now, electric vehicle (EV) charging at Becketwood may be convenient, but it is also time consuming. A full charge for Hamlett's Bolt, which has an average driving range of 230 miles, can take 24 hours. But that will soon change.

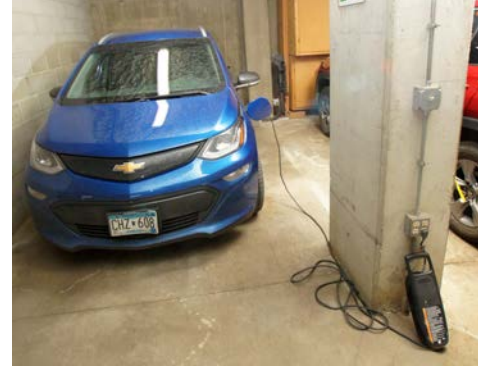
This year, Becketwood is upgrading its charging capability in an effort to boost EV accessibility. The upgrade will replace the current system, known as a Level One charger, with the higher powered Level Two charger that requires a 220 outlet. The upgrade has the capacity to cut charging wait time by 75%. A full charge that now takes 24 hours will be reduced to six hours once the new system is in place.

EV access is not a new issue at Becketwood, says Bob Kirk, one of the co-op's early EV boosters. "As far back as 2010, several of us recognized that EVs represented the wave of the future."

"We wanted Becketwood to prepare for that wave, but not many other co-op members shared our views. Back then, our board had little appetite to invest in EV accessibility. During those early years, no one here was driving an EV so the issue seemed more abstract than real. Now we have people who are driving all-electric so we have a better understanding of EVs and how much they cost to operate."

"Attitudes here have clearly changed," noted John Pegg, who helped promote Becketwood's new EV plan. "EVs are gaining wider acceptance here and in the broader automotive market. As a result, EV availability has increased as more manufacturers convert their production to all-electric vehicles."

Bob Ochtrup, who helped draft Becketwood's current EV plan, said that operating costs for the charger will be user-funded on an on-going basis. "Our co-op is purchasing the equipment and installing it, but we won't be covering the cost of the electricity that powers the charger. That will be the responsibility of the EV owners who will pay for the electricity they use through a sub-metering arrangement."



Nancie Hamlett (at left) charges her Chevrolet Bolt at the Becketwood charging station. It will soon be upgraded to a Level Two system. EV owners will get weekly access to the station on a rotating basis. (Photo by Terry Faust)

Initially, Becketwood will install a Level Two Charger in a dedicated parking

space in the Becketwood garage. EV owners will get weekly access to the charging station on a rotating basis.

"At some point, our board of directors may decide to put a charger in one of our outside parking lots, but that improve-

ment won't happen for a while," Ochtrup noted. "Depending on future demand, we may get another charger in our garage. If so, it is likely to be another Level Two system. We are not planning to go with the highest capacity EV charger known as a Level Three. That equipment is incredibly expensive and it can degrade batteries if it is overused. Level Three chargers are really meant for long-distance driving. That need will be met through the new federal incentive programs that are just starting to roll out."

"In the short term, those programs will boost costs for charging equipment as the EV industry gears up to meet a surging demand," Ochtrup said. "Because we will face higher costs over the next few years, we decided to purchase and install the new equipment now, before the price increases kick in."

Ochtrup added that Becketwood's marketing needs are also prompted the co-op to upgrade its charging capability this year. "More and more, people are asking about our EV compatibility when they consider moving here. Having a Level Two charger will be a real marketing 'plus' for us."

Glenna Dibrell, who chairs the Becketwood Marketing Committee, agreed. "We need to offer as much flexibility and accessibility for EV owners as our facilities and resources will allow. The market for senior housing is changing as technology evolves. We need to adapt to those changes."

PARK NEWS

Sibley and Phelps Parks' new Recreation Supervisor is John Dahl. John takes over for Jotika Weitz-Handy, who is now at the Nokomis Community Center. Dahl is a south Minneapolis native and grew up frequenting Pearl Park. After graduating from college, Dahl worked in another field for a few years before committing to a career in recreation. Since joining the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, Dahl has worked in Aquatics, Ice Arenas, and as a Youth Program Specialist. Dahl grew up in Minneapolis parks and always loved any chance to be outside. He said he feels very lucky to begin his career as a recreation supervisor.

Nokomis Park's new Recreation Supervisor Jotika Weitz-Handy took over from Maggie Mercil in mid-January after Mercil accepted a position as a recreation program lead. Weitz-Handy began working at the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board in 2001 as a lifeguard at North Commons Waterpark. In 2008, Weitz-Handy moved to a Youthline mentor role at Whittier, Armatage and Bryant Square parks. She has

worked as a Recreation Leader/Recreation Supervisor at Morris Park and most recently at Sibley Park. Weitz-Handy said she is excited to be at Nokomis to continue the work that has been there, and hopefully add her own touch to the programming and to the community.

Corcoran Park's new Recreation Supervisor is Joy Fogg. Originally from Saint Louis, Mo., Fogg moved to Minneapolis in 1987 where she was introduced to the Minneapolis Park system and a great Youthline mentor. Fogg's mentor inspired her to work in parks and recreation. Fogg said she is excited and honored to be working for Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, as she has always had a deep passion for youth and community.

Brackett Park's new Recreation Supervisor is Jackie Travis. Travis has worked as a program manager for a local non-profit, tennis instructor, small business owner and art director. Travis has worked with the Park Board since 2008 in roles including youth coach, program lead and childcare specialist. Travis said she is excited to be working for the Park Board because she said she un-

derstands the benefit of the MPRB's parks, programs, activities, sports, recreation and what they can do for a community, youth and those that visit.

Hiawatha School Park has a new Recreation Supervisor, Elise Mohn. Mohn's first site as a Childcare Specialist was Hiawatha School Park, and she is excited to be back working at the same park again. Mohn took over from Aaron Flanders in mid-January. Flanders is now working at Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Park. Before joining Hiawatha School Park, Mohn worked at Audubon Recreation Center as a Recreation Specialist. Prior to Audubon, Mohn worked at the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board as a Childcare Specialist.

Recreation Supervisor Brittney Walsh has moved from Keewaydin/Morris Recreation Center to another park location; the new Recreation Supervisor is Scott Erazmus. Erazmus is a Minneapolis native who played sports in Minneapolis parks as a child and has worked at multiple Minneapolis parks throughout his 20+ year career with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board. Prior to becoming the recreation

supervisor at Keewaydin and Morris parks, Erazmus was most recently at Loring Park. Prior to that he was at Linden Hills for more than five years. Erazmus enjoys programming for all ages and especially trying new programs.

A public hearing on a proposal to name the overlook at West River Parkway and East 44th Street the "**Horace W. S. Cleveland Overlook**" is scheduled Wednesday, March 15, 2023 at 5:45 pm in the Board Room at Mary Merrill Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) Headquarters, 2117 West River Road. Cleveland was a landscape architect hired in April 1883 to advise the newly created Minneapolis Park Board on the development of a park system for Minneapolis. On June 2, 1883, Cleveland read a document to the Board of Commissioners that would provide the framework for today's Minneapolis park and recreation system. That document was called "Suggestions for a System of Parks and Parkways for The City of Minneapolis."

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