

# SOUTHWEST Connector

NEWS FOR EVERYONE, DELIVERED TO EVERYONE • APRIL 6, 2023 • VOL. 2 • NO. 6 • 24,000 CIRCULATION

**5** HOME & GARDEN Spring yard clean-up in a word: wait

**4** City council members foment fear to rouse base

**9** Ranked Choice Voting closer to becoming statewide

**11** 'Minnesota Mean' movie tells story of roller derby players



## COLLABORATORS NOT COMPETITORS



By Allie Johnson

Empty storefronts and “For Lease” signs have been a frequent sight along West Lake Street in Uptown over the last several years. But, it appears things are starting to turn over and along one stretch in particular, two new local businesses are injecting energy in the area - and they have a lot in common.

Legacy and Les Sól both relocated to the same 1600 block of West Lake Street - between Irving Avenue South and James Avenue South - last summer. The two businesses have a lot in common: Both are women-owned boutiques that sell primarily women’s apparel - Legacy with vintage pieces and Les Sól with mostly new, sustainably made items.



Legacy co-owner Ruby Stinson (left) and Les Sól co-owner Mikaela Harrod (right) at Legacy send customers to each other’s stores, located on the same 1600 block of West Lake Street in Uptown. (Photo by Haley June)

## KINGFIELD’S PERFORMING ARTS CENTER EXPANDS

By Tesha M. Christensen

Artist Jackie Hayes was living in New York and was writing a dissertation for her Ph.D. in performance studies when she visited her parents after their move to Minneapolis. She was drawn to the city and its artistic community - and decided to stay.

She drove past 3754 Pleasant Avenue and saw the for sale sign. “That’s when it began,” she recalled.

In 1995, Hayes bought the building with the help of micro loans from local artists and neighbors to create the Center for Performing Arts (CFPA). She envisioned a place with studios, rehearsal space, offices, and housing.

Hayes lived in the center, and raised her two children there. Over the years, many artists and teachers have had studios there, along with various organizations, including the Kingfield Neighborhood Association. For a time, there were honey bees on the roof.



Everyone shared a vision and end goal knowing the large, positive impact this completed project would have on the neighborhood and the Twin Cities - a vision that is already coming to fruition.”

Jackie Hayes



## WHY THROW AWAY A HOUSE WHEN PARTS CAN BE REUSED?

Better Futures Minnesota helps deconstruct homes to make way for new projects and avoid landfills.

By Margo Ashmore

From early 20th Century thrift to building cabins from contractor cast-offs, building materials reuse had long been an informal norm. But in a more recent world, entire houses have been thrown in the trash to make way for new construction. Landfills, many of them not lined to contain harmful chemicals, are filling

up with construction debris, 90 percent of which is from demolition.

Better Futures Minnesota at the ReUse Warehouse, 2620 Minnehaha Ave. in Longfellow, is among those trying to prevent and divert that waste stream through deconstruction, which serves reuse and recycling. Here’s how people and systems can help decrease waste.

“We started the project, then realized we needed help,” said Libby Wilson of Longfellow. She and husband James employed a Better Futures crew to open an enclosed back porch bump-out. The crew took off exterior stucco and the siding underneath it plus ceiling and floor, leaving the structural elements.

James shared, “As a carpenter and employee owner at Terra Firma, all our ex-

periences with Better Futures have been positive. There was no doubt who we were going to call when it came to our house. It’s great that there is such a considerate deconstruction and salvage operation in the Twin Cities.”

Libby added, “We also love to come to the store. A dryer, a toilet, an old door...there’s lots of stuff we’ve bought from there in our four or so years of living here.”

Like the Wilsons, most consumers know home deconstruction from the store perspective, finding used appliances, cabinetry, or vintage hardwood flooring matching their southeast and southwest Minneapolis 1900s to 1950s floors. Better Futures Waste Diversion Project Manager Jason



The Wilson’s back porch was opened up through careful deconstruction by a Better Futures crew. (Photo submitted)



# Everett & Charlie

a gallery where art meets experience

FEATURING ONLY MINNESOTA ARTISTS



2720 West 43<sup>rd</sup> St, Linden Hills

◇◇◇◇◇ everettandcharlie.com ◇◇◇◇◇



There are two new performance venues at the Center for Performing Arts. Both feature flexible seating up to 100 and sprung maple floors. The spaces can be used for creation, rehearsals and performances. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)



Minneapolis St Paul International Film Festival<sup>42</sup>

APRIL 13 - 27 2023

# MSP IFF

190+ INTERNATIONAL FILMS  
PARTIES | PANELS | SPECIAL GUESTS

PRESENTED BY



SUPPORTED BY



PRIMARY VENUE



115 SE MAIN ST, MPLS

Full Lineup, Tickets & Info:  
mspfilm.org




**TAKE ONE FOR A SPIN**

**BUY, SELL, TRADE**

4534 Nicollet Ave. S.  
Minneapolis MN  
**(612) 822-0613**  
roadrunner@landspeedrecords.com

When the occasion calls for chocolate – but not just any chocolate.

# Hop Online



Real Chocolate Bunnies and Eggs  
Organic Chocolate Bunnies  
Handmade Chocolate Ganache  
Locally/Woman Owned

*Pre-order online to save. 15% off*

Use coupon code: hoponline

Bunnies and eggs available in our boutique.

# chocolat céleste

www.chocolatceleste.com

652 Transfer Road, St. Paul | Online purchasing with local pick-up or shipping in US



**1 KINGFIELD CFPA**

As they grew, Hayes began dreaming of an expansion. They had been at capacity for years, and would benefit from bigger performance spaces.

She decided to work with Alliance, a design and build firm that has done projects for Medtronic, Ecolab, General Mills and the University of Minnesota. Marcelo Pinto, a principal at the firm, brought his children to piano lessons at CFPA and was familiar with the space. He rented an apartment in Kingfield before moving to Tangletown 17 years ago.

They started developing the concept in 2018, and honed it the next year. Construction began in the fall of 2020 in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The four-story, 21,000-square-foot addition more than doubled the size of the Center for Performing Arts. The work was complete by fall 2021.

Because of the pandemic, use of the building ebbed and flowed around what the current restrictions were. Things shifted to virtual when that worked best.

"We didn't have to negotiate construction with balancing all the usual things we do," remarked Hayes. "There were moments of challenge, but we did very well, considering."

**OLD AND NEW TOGETHER**

The original building (now known as the "east wing") is 15,000 square feet. Tearing it down was never an option for Hayes. They opted to pair a sleek and transparent addition on the west side with the classic brick original, filling what had been a parking lot and garage. The footprint came before the inside design. The new structure is taller than the old and levels are offset.

Hayes didn't want to try to match the existing building. "I appreciated the modern design submitted by the architects," she stated. The use of wood (thermally modified ash) with metal and concrete was deliberate as they considered sound sensitivity throughout the process. They sought to use new materials to complement the historic building. "They have to relate and embrace each other," explained Pinto.

The work factored in the existing commercial node at Grand and 38th, and the busy use along 38th by vehicles, mass transit, bicycles and pedestrians. "We look inward, but we also look outward towards the city," observed Pinto. "We got inspired by so many things."

They worked to keep a focus on natural light, and use large windows that open to bring in light and air.

A new sidewalk porch and public entry off 38th connect the old with the new so that they are in relationship. "The front porch works as an entrance, but also a shelter for the bus," remarked Pinto.

An important design consideration was how to add on without blocking the windows of the original building. The main-floor lobby abuts the 100-year-old wall, visually connecting the old and the new. It also provides a social space that is important to their mission, observed Pinto.

Instead of building the new space tight up to the old on every level, there is visual space between the two. Upper levels are linked via a skyway on the second floor. Accessibility was a big goal for the renovation, as the original building was not easy to access. The addition includes



Lindsay Mackworth of Twin Cities Music Therapy is glad she was able to help design the space they moved into. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)



A new sidewalk porch off 38th connects the old with the new and welcomes the public in. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)



Marcelo Pinto (left) of Alliance and Jackie Hayes of the Center for Performing Arts stand in the space that bridges old and new. An elevator was added to aid accessibility. (Photos by Tesha M. Christensen)

an ADA accessible elevator and chair lift, along with new ADA-compliant restrooms on each floor.

There is a catering kitchen, service area off the alley, and refreshed community garden.

**DESIGNING THEIR OWN SPACE**

Designed as a \$5.5 million project, the work went over that cost, and was paid for with the equity in the existing building along with private funders.

Hayes lined up users for the new areas – including Illusion Theater, Ragamala Dance Company, Uptown Swing, Studio Fidicina, and Twin Cities Music Therapy Services – and their space needs were factored into the design. Some are new tenants, and others moved from the original building to the new one.

"It was like a dream when Jackie said you can design what you want your space to be," said Lindsay Markworth of Twin Cities Music Therapy Services. They started with 10 part-time employees and have grown to seven full-time staff during their time at CFPA. Having wheelchair access was really important for them, and they appreciate having a waiting area now for clients.

"I love it," remarked Cheryl Hornstein of Ensemble Music as she stood in one of the large studio spaces. "It's a great spot." She observed that there is so much natural light that she sometimes forgets to turn on the lights.

Planners sought to create a variety of spaces that could become whatever a performer needed it to be. There are two new performance venues on the ground floor, Studio 105w and Studio 112w. Both feature flexible seating for up to 100 and sprung maple floors, with 1,700 square feet of space in Studio 105w and 1,900 square feet of space in the slightly larger Studio 112w. The spaces can be for creation, rehearsals, or performances. An artist can reserve them for six months, four hours or two minutes, according to Hayes.

Hayes is excited to see how the various artists at the center work together and collaborate on projects.

"We're all working very hard to create meaningful experiences," stated Hayes.

**ASHARED VISION**

With the building addition came the need for more staff. CFPA grew from 1.5 people to five. They now have four part-time support staff and one full-time per-



(Photo submitted)

**HISTORY OF A BUILDING**

One hundred years ago, a three-story building was constructed on the northwest corner of 38th Street and Pleasant Ave. to house the nuns and teachers of Incarnation Catholic Church. It took eight months to build and cost \$84,412.00. There were rows of sleeping rooms on each floor, a chapel, kitchen, dining room, community room with sun porch, and four small parlors.

The various church buildings of Incarnation occupied each corner of the intersection. The church sanctuary dating to 1917 is on the National Register of Historic Places, and a seven-month recovery process after an altar fire on March 9, 2022 was recently completed. Incarnation holds services in English and Spanish. Two structures remain school buildings, although the original church school closed; the one on the northeast side (Cleary Hall) houses Lake Country Montessori School, and the one on the southwest (Moynihan Hall) is home to Venture Academy and Hiawatha Academies.

Later, the convent was a woman's shelter, the Incarnation House.



son to manage the schedule and production.

Coming next will be commissioned art pieces and a build out of the coffee station in the lobby.

"They gave us the bones, and so our work in 2023 is to fill these spaces," said Hayes.

A big event will be held this fall to commemorate 100 years.

"We are truly proud of this project for CFPA," said Pinto. "The design respects the existing building while supporting the owner's goal to better serve the community and immediate neighborhood. This project exemplifies the way an addition can be modern yet complementary to an existing, almost 100-year-old building."

"This elegant new addition by Alliance gave us a design solution that truly works for us and the performing arts community we support," said Hayes. "Everyone shared a vision and end goal knowing the large, positive impact this completed project would have on the neighborhood and the Twin Cities – a vision that is already coming to fruition."

Learn more at [cfpampls.com](http://cfpampls.com).

MULTIPLE  
DIAMOND  
AWARD  
WINNER

FIVE STAR  
AGENT

TOP TEN  
SALESPERSON

Call your neighbor and SW Mpls real estate expert, Jill Amundson, today for information and guidance about today's real estate market.

**fazendin**  
REALTORS SINCE 1965

**Jill Amundson** | Making Your Home Investment Work For You  
Realtor® | 952-212-3249 | [Jill@fazhomes.com](mailto:Jill@fazhomes.com)



# FOCUS ON WHAT'S STRONG, NOT WHAT'S WRONG

This is what sustainable community building looks like and how we create change.

Everyone has a gift. That gift is a talent or passion. But not everyone gets to use their gift, talent or passion. Sometimes, people are not invited to share their gifts. We see this a lot.

There is a problem. It could be big or small. Some people or groups are labeled as the source of the problem. They are called a nuisance, incorrigible, incurable or worse. They get cast aside, then forgotten. And the problem never gets solved.

That doesn't mean the problem no longer exists. It just means "it's not our problem anymore." We may choose not to see it, but it's still a problem. This way of thinking is how we get unsolved problems and why we have the same longstanding issues that don't change.

As Oliver Hardy famously said to Stan Laurel so many times, "Well, here's another nice mess you've gotten me into."

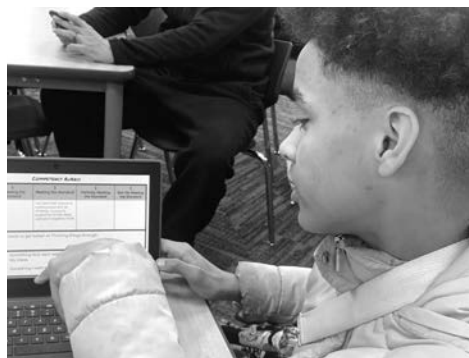
We are stuck in a neverending loop of "nice messes." And the stakes keep increasing.

Imagine if we created a circle of compassion where no one stood outside that circle.

Imagine if no one in that circle was disposable, everyone was invited to share their gift, and we focused on what's strong



By **Eric Ortiz**



A student at Ella Baker School in Minneapolis shows his work and progress. (Photo by Molly Dengler)

with people, not what's wrong.

This is the focus of a powerful TED Talk on community building by Cormac Russell, the founding director of Nurture Development and a member of the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) Institute at DePaul University in Chicago.

Asset-based community development (ABCD) is a way of strengthening communities by identifying and amplifying the existing strengths, or assets, that individuals and communities already have. Assets can include skills, knowledge, capacity, resources, experience, culture, heritage, or enthusiasm. Instead of focusing on what a community needs or lacks, the approach embraces existing community strengths. It's a bottom-up, grassroots approach that has been proven to work in communities around the world for decades.

Every community has strengths. As Russell notes, the most effective community builders support the community and

individuals to identify what is strong within them and figure out how to use their strengths to address what is wrong, and make what is strong even stronger. Change comes from the bottom up, not the top down. From the inside out, not the outside in.

Our society is better with helpful and thankful people. Raising each other up makes us all shine. But some help can be harmful. By focusing on what's wrong in communities, to rescue them, people that mean well do more harm than good. This is the top-down approach to problem-solving, or help.

A recurring theme in Minneapolis (and in cities across the United States) is youth culture. A lot of people are asking: What's wrong with our youth?

How about we start asking what's right?

Youth have a lot to give. They just need to be guided to the right path. This is where the whole community can step up.

It does take a village to raise a child. That village is made up of many people, including parents, siblings, extended family members, neighbors, teachers, professionals, community members and policymakers. One person alone cannot raise a child by themselves. Everyone in the village has to care for a child.

But our village is fragmented. Individuals are isolated. According to a Wall Street Journal-NORC poll, the percentage of Americans who think community involvement is "very important to them" has fallen from 62 percent in 2019 to 27 percent in 2023.

It will take a team effort from the community to restore our village. We need to

meet the youth where they are. We need to go to schools and support overworked, under-resourced teachers and school administrators. There are many amazing school communities with amazing teachers, principals, staff and parents doing amazing work. They need more assistance. They aren't enough hands on deck for students.

If youth aren't in school, we need to find them, listen to them, develop relationships, build trust, and figure out how we can create a learning environment that will get them back in school.

Ignoring the youth will not make things better. Too many youths have slipped through the cracks. They're off the tracks. More are slipping and could be headed that way. We must close the cracks, get them back on track, and lift up our youth. We can invite them to share their gifts. For those with self-doubt, we can show them they have gifts to share.

Change will not come from outside organizations (governmental or nongovernmental) throwing money or programs at a problem. The community has the solutions. We, the people, have the solutions. We must focus on what's strong in our communities, not what's wrong.

When we focus on what's strong and not what's wrong, we will see ordinary people do extraordinary things.



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

## 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 In-

digenous 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 protestors.

Council members who voted in favor of the recommendations based their arguments 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.*

### CORRECTION

In the March 16 edition of the Connector, we incorrectly spelled Commissioner Marion Greene's name in the article titled, "Plan aims for zero-waste future." We apologize for the error.



## SOUTHWEST Connector

The Southwest Connector is a twice monthly community publication in Southwest Minneapolis, owned and operated by TMC Publications CO. Visit our website for calendar and publication dates.

### Owner & Publisher:

Tesha M. Christensen, 612-345-9998,  
tesha@swconnector.com  
Editor: 612-255-1181,  
news@swconnector.com

### Story ideas always welcome.

Keep in touch with the Connector. Letters to the editor under 200 words and news releases for publication can be sent via e-mail to news@swconnector.com.

### Unsigned letters will not run.

### Advertising & Marketing:

Suzie Marty, 612-255-1180,  
ads@swconnector.com

Denis Woulfe, 651-917-4183,  
denis@LongfellowNokomisMessenger.com

Sandra Mikulsky, 612-260-7967,  
sandra.tmcpub@gmail.com

Design & Layout: Tesha M. Christensen

Billing: billing@swconnector.com

### Printing by: ECM/Adams Publishing Group

This issue of the Connector is printed on recycled paper using soy-based ink. Approximately 95-97% of material that enters the print facility is recycled.

Delivery: 612-235-7197,  
Delivery@TMCpub.com

Mail subscriptions available at \$80/year.

### Contributing Writers & Photographers:

Allie Johnson, Jan Willms, Jill Boogren, Cam Gordon, Eric Ortiz, J.D. Fratzke, Terry Faust, Suzie Marty, Larry LaVercombe, Donald Hammen, Michele Rae, and WACSO.

Member of Minnesota Newspaper Association, Midwest Free Community Papers, and Uptown Association.

The Connector is for profit and for a purpose – and we don't sacrifice one for the other. We consider ourselves a zebra company, one that is both black and white, both/and. As a media company, we work to highlight issues, solve real, meaningful problems, and repair existing social systems. We are working with our readers and advertisers to create a more just and responsible society that hears, helps and heals the customers and communities we serve.

All rights reserved. The contents of the Connector cannot be reproduced without express written permission of the publisher. Copyright © 2023.

Sister publications: Midway Como Frogtown Monitor and Longfellow Nokomis Messenger.



5139 34th Ave. S. #17097, Minneapolis,  
MN 55417 • 612-345-9998  
SWconnector.com

www.facebook.com/swconnector/  
Instagram: southwest\_connector





# SPRING YARD CLEANUP IN A WORD: WAIT!

Especially this spring, after what feels like an endless winter with February weather in March, most gardeners are understandably impatient for the snow to melt and clear the way for yard work. But wait! If you feel you must clean up, hold off until pollinators that overwintered in your garden or yard can emerge.



By **Constance Pepin**



A true sign that spring is on the way or has actually arrived is the appearance of the Mourning Cloak butterfly (*Nymphalis antiopa*). (Photo by Constance Pepin)

Minnesota pollinator expert and author Heather Holm explains that raking leaves out of gardens and cutting plant stalks too early can leave pollinators out in the cold and vulnerable to spring snowfalls and frosts. For the sake of those pollinators, each spring the Xerces Society begs gardeners and homeowners to press pause and find ways to occupy our weekends with activities other than yard work. "If there is still a chance for snow and frost, your invertebrate neighbors still need cold weather shelter," they point out. And we humans need these creatures for a healthy yard and environment.

The right timing of outdoor maintenance tasks is specific to our ecoregion and our yard, as well as our goals. If we want to help wildlife and support ecosystem function, choosing to delay and minimize spring yard work is essential. Cleaning up at the expense of pollinators reduces the environmental value and health of our gardens and yards, at a time when insects, birds and other wildlife need our help more than ever to sustain biodiversity.

## 50 DEGREES IS JUST A STARTING POINT

According to experts, there's no hard and fast date or temperature when it's fine

to disturb your yard from its winter rest. The Xerces Society suggests we wait at least until we've put away our snow shovels and winter coats, mowed the lawn's new growth, and planted tomatoes. To protect pollinators that emerge later than most, they suggest waiting until apple and other fruit trees are done blooming.

Another option is to relocate leaf and plant debris to a corner of the yard for another week or two before removing it from the yard. Better yet, leave that debris corner alone, allowing beneficial soil fungi and bacteria to improve soil health and create a supply of free mulch. (But wait to mulch in spring until the soil has warmed sufficiently; otherwise mulch can slow the reawakening of plant roots and inhibit plant growth.)

A common message circulating these days is to wait until temperatures reach 50 degrees for at least five consecutive days before moving leaves or cutting down dead plant material. But this message, while helpful in reminding people to give insects a chance to leave their overwinter-

ing spaces, is oversimplified. Author and garden designer Benjamin Vogt disputes what he calls misinformation about the 50 degree guidance, because various insects "wake up" at different times throughout the growing season, with some not emerging until late summer. The original 50 degrees advice might have referred to soil temperature, a cue for spring planting.

## MAINTAIN WITH NATURE IN MIND

Vogt writes: "We're still definitely stuck in this traditional, mow-and-blow maintenance idea that specific actions must occur at specific times of year and be performed in specific ways; that's not gardening with nature, but against it. How we manage for best ecosystem functions ... will be different season to season and year to year as we evolve in response to what the landscape is telling us."

Holm also explains, "We need some new messaging to counter the 'cleaning up the garden' recommendations. Leave the leaves is good, but people still want to remove leaves in the spring. ... Mother Na-

## MORE RESOURCES

- Bee-friendly garden cleanup with Heather Holm at [awaytogarden.com](http://awaytogarden.com)
- For Pollinators' Sakes, Don't Spring Into Garden Cleanup Too Soon! by the Xerces Society
- Spring Cleanup doesn't start at 50 degrees by Benjamin Vogt

Find links at [www.swConnector.com](http://www.swConnector.com)

ture does not remove leaves from natural habitats. Why would we not mimic natural patterns and processes in our gardens? It can only benefit all the invertebrates, plants, and other organisms that rely on leaf litter." Until those cold May days are over, it's likely that bees and other pollinators are still sheltering under leaf litter until they are ready to depart.

To calm worries that plants won't be able to grow through a thick layer of leaves, Holm reminds us that leaf litter insulates plant roots, prevents the soil from drying out, suppresses weeds and weed seed germination, and most importantly, provides a place for many different types of beneficial insects – including bees, moths, fireflies, ladybird beetles and others – to complete one part of their life cycle.

"I often receive emails from people asking me when it's 'okay' to clean up their garden in the spring. The answer is don't clean up your garden," said Holm.



**Constance Pepin** is co-founder of the Friends of Roberts Bird Sanctuary and co-leader of the Linden Hills Trolley Path Naturescape project.

# Step Outside!

Design • Patios • Retaining Walls • Gardens • Lawns

It's your place. Your space.

Let us help you make the most of your backyard!

Fresh air • Rest and relaxation  
Entertaining spaces • Beauty and tranquility  
Habitat for birds and pollinators

**Russ Henry, owner**

### APRIL SHOWERS BRING MAY FLOWERS

Rain gardens are a simple, elegant solution to solving drainage problems on properties, and water quality issues state-wide.

**Take these 5 steps to make a splash in your backyard:**

- **Choose a site** - Observe water flow on your property and build your rain garden in the best place to receive it.
- **Size and Shape** - Rain gardens can be any size or shape, but I recommend rounded, half moon, or kidney shaped.
- **Excavation and Soil Prep** - Excavate enough soil so your garden has a flat bottom, encouraging faster water infiltration.
- **Plant Selection** - There are excellent choices for both sunny and shady rain gardens. Aim for one native perennial plant per 1.5 square feet of space.

BEFORE

AFTER

Call us at **612-724-5454** to see what is possible with great landscape design and organic gardening.

[MinnehahaFallsLandscape.com](http://MinnehahaFallsLandscape.com)

Minnehaha Falls Landscaping creates outdoor environments that grow beauty, and support health and wellness. From this foundation grows our garden division, Giving Tree Gardens and our advocacy branch, Bee Safe Minneapolis.





When you support your local newspaper, you support your community.

Coming Soon

TED BERGSTROM  
Ted@TedBergstrom.com



4 bd 2 ba -  
S MPLS gem!  
Steps from  
Minnehaha  
Pkwy!



612-723-5444

RE/MAX  
ADVANTAGE PLUS  
THE MINNESOTA  
REAL ESTATE TEAM

PLEASE CONTACT FOR DETAILS

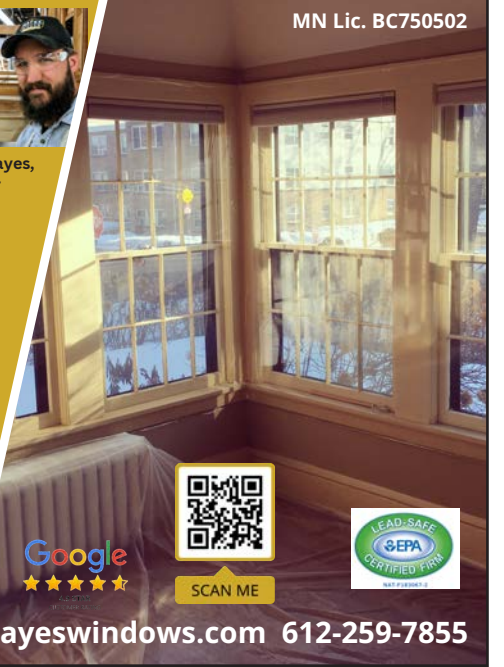


Joe Hayes,  
Owner

MN Lic. BC750502

BRING NEW LIFE TO  
YOUR ORIGINAL  
WINDOWS

- Sash cord repair and tune-up
- Weatherstripping
- Restoration and refinishing
- Putty and glass repair



SCAN ME



hayeswindows.com 612-259-7855



# Gardening Angel Garden Design

YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD LANDSCAPER!

Design • Install • Maintain  
Residential & Commercial



Margi MacMurdo 612.206.7089 gardeningangel612@gmail.com

# OLD HOME AFICIONADO

EXPERIENCE + PASSION



SYLVIA I.  
**Anderson**  
REALTY EST. 1958



**Mike Smith** Real Estate Broker  
140 Homes Sold & 63 Million in Sales for 2022  
651-324-6211 | AndersonRealtyMn.com

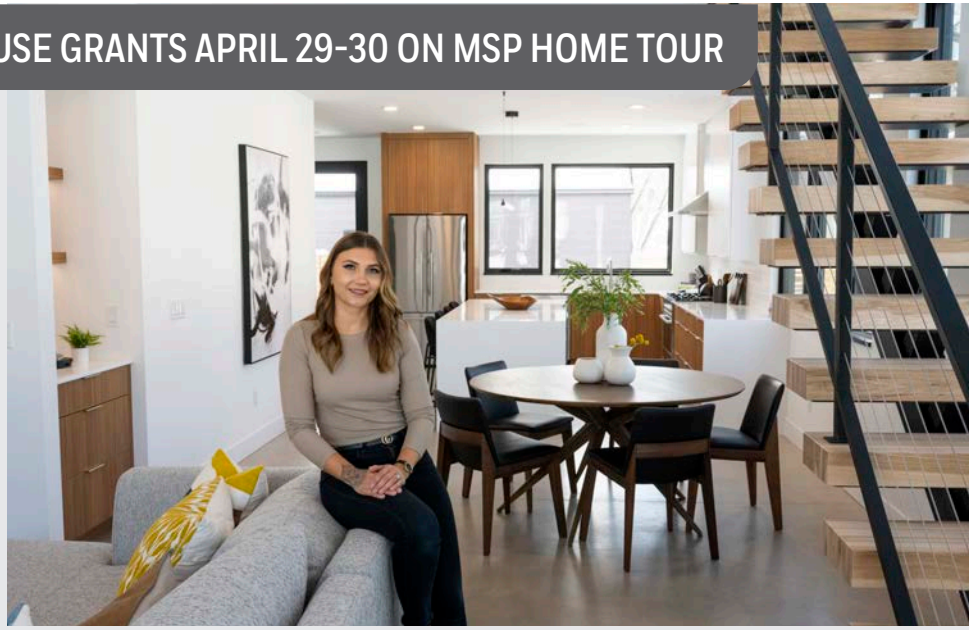




LEARN ABOUT BUILDING REUSE GRANTS APRIL 29-30 ON MSP HOME TOUR

Ryan Hanson of the Linden Hills-based Sustainable 9 Design Build sees deconstruction – and when applicable, use of a Hennepin County grant that helps with the cost – as part of their sustainable business model. Their featured home at 3900 Ewing Ave. S. will be on the MSP Home Tour April 29-30; it's part of a large lot that once held a 1950s rambler that Better Futures disassembled. Other properties Sustainable 9 deconstructed with Better Futures include a 1940s home where "Linden Row," a sustainably built three-unit rowhome overlooking Linden Hills Park, was constructed. It was featured on the tour last year.

"There is both a moral and financial case for including deconstruction on all projects requiring an existing home to be torn down," said Hanson. "Not only does the deconstruction process divert usable material from the landfill, but when these materials are reused and given a second life it also prevents new materials from having to be produced, which saves resources and energy. Charitable deductions and grant programs like Hennepin County's also help alleviate much of the financial burden of doing the right thing from homeowners and developers. By extracting and repurposing the components of an existing home, it creates a sustainable business model that benefits both the environment and the client's bottom line."



Nataliya Beccera, marketing person for Sustainable 9, visits 3900 Ewing Ave. S. (Photo by Scott Amundson for MSP Home Tour)

Olivia Cashman, who administers the Hennepin County Building Reuse Grants program, said four other projects in the southwest area, three by homeowners and one by KJH Ventures currently underway at 6101 Nicollet Ave., received deconstruction grants recently.

Cashman will give a talk at noon Saturday, April 29 at 3900 Ewing Ave. S., Minneapolis during the Home Tour, that runs Saturday

and Sunday, April 29-30 from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. (msphometour.com) "Over 70% of building materials from demolitions, rehabs, and remodels end up in the landfill," she said. "Learn how to reduce waste on your next project and find out about grants and other resources available. Discover local used building material retailers to visit during Hennepin County's upcoming Salvage Crawl taking place May 1-31, 2023."

budget to help fund similar programs at counties that do not currently have the financial means. We know there's a high demand for deconstruction and building material reuse. We will continue to work to support this growing sustainable system," Wenzel said.

What can residents do to discourage demolition waste? Wenzel says use the systems and services that already exist. "Demand for these services will help drive them. USE used building materials. Items donated are often higher quality and lower cost than new items. Plus, you will likely own something far more unique than what you can find at big-box stores." She hopes that cities and counties offer building material/tool/household goods swap days or donation days.

"Definitely reach out to your local government contacts asking for these services. They WILL offer opportunities when enough people ask for them."

*Editor's note: Margo Ashmore is Better Futures Minnesota's Deconstruction Marketing and Business Development person, former owner of MSP Home Tour and former publisher of the Northeaster newspaper.*



The Baker-Rowland site, owned by the city of Minnetonka, is being deconstructed to make way for a multifamily development. (Photo submitted)

1 WHY THROW AWAY?

Allen said huge, hand-hewn old growth timbers also go quickly. "The uglier it is, the more demand there is for it," Allen said. With work, these become fireplace mantels, furniture or art pieces.

Deconstruction could mean anything from a "partial," such as a kitchen remodel or condo where the wood color doesn't fit the new owner's taste, to a "full deconstruction," an old house making way for apartments. Deconstruction crews remove fixtures, cabinetry and appliances in the first pass. Flooring is removed, de-nailed and packaged on site. Good trim and built-ins are carefully removed. To access the structural lumber, plaster or drywall must come out, and that goes into a recycling dumpster along with wiring, siding and other parts to be sorted at a transfer station. About 85% of demolition waste can be reused or recycled, according to Hennepin County's Climate Action Plan. Currently only about 30% is.

Better Futures' crews consist of men coming out of incarceration participating in a two-year voluntary workforce development program. They're provided with 12 different certifications including OSHA 10 accident-prevention training. They cross-train in the nonprofit's other business lines of lawn-and-snow, janitorial, and appliance recycling. Crews have a supervisor and at least two experienced members, plus one or two trainees.

A block away from ReUse Warehouse, Habitat ReStore at 2700 Minnehaha Ave. accepts materials already removed by the homeowner or a contractor. They also carry furniture, paint, tools and smaller home improvement sundries. The proximity of the stores brings customers to both and presents a variety of goods.

FUTURE OF DECONSTRUCTION AND REUSE

Melissa Wenzel, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) Built Environment Sustainability Administrator, has seen "movement, momentum, and more success stories" since joining this work in

2019. Hennepin, Ramsey and Washington County offer deconstruction grants, and she said two other metro counties have expressed significant interest in deconstruction projects and/or funding.

About policy and lawmaking, Wenzel said: "We're already seeing cities that have sustainability, climate resiliency, waste management, emergency response, workforce development, and other similar goals. They are adopting more 'sustainable built environment' practices. St. Louis Park requires those receiving 'green building' funding to meet certain requirements: <https://www.stlouis-parkmn.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/23233/637902841408170000>.

"We're seeing more counties implement similar programs like Becker County's Waste Diversion and Reuse Program and (Duluth area) WLSSD's reuse program. Pope/Douglas and Dodge County's future waste/material management campuses will include a building material and/or household goods reuse area.

"MPCA has a request in the governor's

MORE RESOURCES

- Find a growing list of building materials reuse businesses on this Hennepin County website: <https://www.hennepin.us/business/recycling-hazardous-waste/construction-demolition-waste>
- Statewide resources compiled by Melissa Wenzel of Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and others: <https://www.allforreuse.org/ecosystem-map>

READ OUR TEAMING UP FOR GOOD COLUMN THIS WEEK.

LAKES AREA REALTY

Locally Owned, Community Focused.

Diane Mach & Larry LaVercombe

612-845-5273 | DianeandLarry.com | larry@larrylavercombe.com

**Bell Bank Mortgage**

Building or remodeling a home is an exciting process and **Bell Bank Mortgage has everything you need under one roof.** I'm ready to help find the perfect loan for your situation and guide you through every step of the process.

**Contact me to get started!**

**Peggy Ryan**  
Mortgage Loan Officer • NMLS# 460431  
Office: 952.905.5417 • Mobile: 651.900.4891  
Email: [pryan@bell.bank](mailto:pryan@bell.bank) • [peggyryanhomeloans.com](mailto:peggyryanhomeloans.com)

[bellbankmortgage.com](https://bellbankmortgage.com)



By Jan Willms

# MSPIFF 42 BEGINS

Whether a long-time film society member or new to the scene, film buffs all over the Twin Cities and beyond are getting ready for the 42nd Minneapolis Saint Paul International Film Festival (MSPIFF) running April 13-27 at the Main Cinema, 115 SE Main St. in Minneapolis. Films are also being shown at the Capri in North Minneapolis, the Landmark Center in Saint Paul and in Rochester. Full passes to the festival are available for \$400 to film society members, \$500 to the public and \$75 for students.

MSPIFF will also be taking over Prana next door during the festival and have beer, wine and other drinks available, as well as food.

The opening night film, "Dreamin' Wild" is very mournful, haunting and quite beautiful, according to MSP Film Society Executive Director Susan Smoluchowski. "It's based on a true story about the Emerson Brothers, who were creating music in the '70s in their basement. Their music just never got the kind of attention they wanted, and they came to terms with that."

However, their music was picked up online 40 years later, and a cult following developed. "They were overlooked and undervalued and went on with their lives," Smoluchowski said. "The movie looks at what happens when their music resurfaces all these years later." She said the film is reminiscent of "Love and Mercy," a picture about Brian Wilson of the Beach Boys that Pohlrad directed in 2014. Pohlrad has produced numerous Oscar-winning films over the years and has recently returned to directing. He will be present on opening night to discuss the film.

The closing night film at MSPIFF is also music-related. "It's Only Life, After All" directed by Alexandria Bombach tells the story of the Indigo Girls. "The documentary reveals how they stayed true to who they were as artists and people," Smoluchowski said. They are also great activists and worked closely with Winona LaDuke. Smoluchowski said the director will be present closing night, and if LaDuke's schedule allows it, so will she.

Smoluchowski highlighted several other films that will be shown during the festival. Jimmy Chen and Chai Vasarhelyi have directed "Wild Life," a film about Patagonia, the company, and about the extraordinary generosity of the founders of that company. "They took an exceptional interest in the environment and did what they could to save parts of our world that were ruined by development," Smoluchowski said.

Another documentary, "Being Mary



"It's Only Life After All" tells the story of Amy Ray and Emily Saliers of Indigo Girls – the iconic folk rock duo. View it on the closing night of the film festival, on April 27.

Tyler Moore," features Moore's famous hat and the house in Minneapolis she lived in. "It's just a very moving documentary about her," Smoluchowski said. She also pointed to a film called "Food and Country," directed by Laura Gabbert and focusing on how the food industry was affected by the pandemic. New York Times food writer Ruth Reichlis is featured, as she reaches out to food producers across political divides to explore how they have tried to survive independently during the pandemic and beyond.

Smoluchowski also recommended "20 Days in Mariupol," a film depicting journalists from the Associated Press during the earliest days of the Ukraine-Russian war and the ferocious bombing of the city of Mariupol. "It shows the horrors of the attack and how the citizens rallied to survive these attacks," she said.

"Il Boemo" is a period drama about long-forgotten Czech-born composer Josef Myslivecek who lived during the 1700s. "He was a mentor to Mozart," Smoluchowski said. "The film is a social romp, very appealing to our audiences."

A story of the unlikely lifelong friendship between two men is told in the Italian film "Eight Mountains." Another Italian film, "L'Immensita," stars Penelope Cruz and is a coming-of-age feature. "It's about a family who goes to the seaside every summer, and their daughter who is questioning her gender," Smoluchowski said.

A film from Pakistan that is also notable, according to Smoluchowski, is "Joyland," a film that was shown at Cannes

and describes a typical family from Lahore who become involved with transgender performers. And finally, she described the "Gods of Mexico" as a film that has no dialogue, only spectacular photography.

This year's MSPIFF will present a small number of films online during the Best of Fest, which runs some of the most popular films immediately following the festival. "At this point in time, most distributors want their films to be seen on the big screen," Smoluchowski explained. "It's more difficult to negotiate online screening, and we are glad of that. We want to encourage people to come back and be together in the theater."

It has been a year since the MSP Film Society took over use of all five theaters at the Main location, and Smoluchowski said it is both exciting and a little challenging, as people test re-entry to public events after the pandemic.

Avid cinephiles have appreciated that the Main is a part of their community. One film society member said he had moved to the area so that he could be close enough to walk to the theater.

"We have been showing a range of films," Smoluchowski said. "We want to attract our stalwart filmgoers and members, and also bring in a few commercial films, as long as they fit our mission. "We have shown "Nope and Black Panther," for example. And others of that ilk. We want people to know we are a part of this wonderful neighborhood."

See a full schedule of the films being shown at the festival at [www.mspfilm.org](http://www.mspfilm.org).

This year's festival begins and ends with music; Pohlrad film slated for April 13 and one on Indigo Girls set for April 27



Filmmaker Marius Anderson resides in Duluth and his father-in-law does the Arrowhead 135.

## '40 BELOW'

By Jan Willms

Why do people do this?

Documentary filmmaker Marius Anderson tries to answer this question about the reasons people choose to expose themselves to bitter Minnesota wind and temperatures in the annual Arrowhead 135 winter ultra race that begins in International Falls, one of the coldest spots in the United States.

The participants can race by foot, on bicycle or on skis to cover the 135 miles of trail that covers the northern Minnesota landscape.

"We filmed this in 2019, during a Polar Vortex, so it was even colder," Anderson said. ([www.40belowmovie.com](http://www.40belowmovie.com))

"Filming this was very tough for a crew," he said. Anderson researched to find filming equipment that would work in the frigid temperatures. He said the film crew paralleled the athletes. "Some racers do this with no sleep, especially if it is very cold. If you stop, you could become hypothermic, and it could be hours before someone comes by."

He and his crew got by with very little sleep. "I rented a small cabin at Checkpoint Two, and we slept two to three hours. Everything was a kind of blur. You forget everything around you," Anderson explained.

Anderson followed Bill Brad-



**SUMMER IN THE CITY**  
Contact us today to advertise  
[ads@swConnector.com](mailto:ads@swConnector.com)  
612-255-1180

**LAKE HARRIET FREEMASONS**  
SPRING CHARITY BREAKFAST  
**APRIL 30** 8AM-1PM  
FEATURING: ALL-YOU-CARE-TO-EAT PANCAKES + WAFFLES + TOPPINGS  
EGGS + BACON + SAUSAGE + BOTTOMLESS COFFEE + TEA + MILK + JUICE  
\$10 Adults | \$5 Kids (6-12) Kids under 5 eat free!  
4519 FRANCE AVENUE | SOUTH MINNEAPOLIS





MINNEAPOLIS COLLEGE OF ART and DESIGN

## Summer is in Session

Learn new skills or deepen your creative practice—on campus or online.  
Painting, graphic design, animation, printmaking, illustration, UX design, and more.

REGISTER NOW [MCAD.EDU/CE](http://MCAD.EDU/CE) **M CAD** CONTINUING EDUCATION



# RANKED CHOICE VOTING ONE STEP CLOSER TO BECOMING STATE LAW

## TEAMING UP FOR GOOD

Twenty years ago, in Minnesota's 2002 Gubernatorial Election, Republican Tim Pawlenty was elected governor of our state with only 44% of the vote. Minnesota's progressive/liberal vote was split that year between Independent Party candidate Tim Penny, who received 16%, and Democrat Roger Moe, who received 36%.



By **Larry LaVercombe**

Four years later, in 2006, Pawlenty was elected again, this time with 47% of the vote; Democrat Mike Hatch received 46%, and progressive Independent Peter Hutchinson received 6.4%.

The 2006 election was particularly painful and divisive among our state's more liberal majority, as we watched our majority be split and defeated for the second time in a row. Both Penny and Hutchinson were criticized for behaving as "spoiler" candidates, since polling consistently predicted that they clearly would not have enough votes to actually win the election. Their critics feared that those progressive independent candidates would simply enable the Republican candidate to win with less than half the vote – and that is exactly what happened.

Enter Ranked Choice Voting – sometimes called Instant Runoff Voting – a nonpartisan reform that allows voters to rank candidates in order of preference.

Ranked Choice Voting gives voters the freedom to choose their favorite candidate, and then pick a second choice as a backup in case their first choice doesn't win. It ensures that voters won't "waste" votes on a long shot, nor feel forced to betray their true preferences by voting for a candidate they think has a better chance to win.

Over the past 20 years, RCV has been gaining support among reasonable, fair-minded voters, and as many of you know, we already use this method in all



Ranked Choice Voting supporters attend the Senate hearing on a bill to make RCV a statewide practice. (Photo by Larry LaVercombe)

Minneapolis and St. Paul elections.

Said DFL State Senator Kelly Morrison at the bill's hearing, "Ranked Choice Voting ensures that candidates win majority support, and it promotes more civil, representative, and inclusive elections. We have seen RCV work successfully and effectively at local levels in Minnesota, in cities around the country, and statewide in the states of Maine and Alaska."

I have personally been on the IRV-RCV bandwagon since 1998 – the "Jesse Ventura Days" – and, in my opinion, RCV is the single best pragmatic solution to the problems of our body politic. Yet some people remain unconvinced, and more often than not, the main objection has to do with the rule of "One Person – One Vote."

Kingfield resident and FairVote Minnesota Executive Director Jeanne Massey addressed this objection at the March 9 hearing. "Legal challenges to Ranked Choice Voting have gone all the way to the Supreme Court, and the Supreme Court, under Justice Eric Magnuson, unanimously found RCV to be consti-

tutional. And that's because it comports with 'one person, one vote.' In every round of counting, every person has one vote that counts."

Massey added: "In a ranked choice election, we, as voters, rank our options, first, second, third choice, etc. It's very simple, and rather than doing a second run-off election the way Georgia does, RCV triggers an instant run-off, and that's why this is often called 'instant run-off voting.'"

"So, if no candidate, upon counting first choices, garners an absolute majority of the vote, then the least-favored candidate is defeated, and then the second choices on those ballots are now counted. Those ballots are reallocated to the second choices only from that defeated candidate. So, if my first choice is still in the race, my first choice continues to count. Everyone has a vote counted in every round, and that process continues until one candidate emerges with a majority of continuing votes."

"It really is that straight-forward, and that's why it is always found to be a

On March 9, the Minnesota State Elections Committee voted 8-5 in favor of The Protect and Advance Democracy Act to establish a task force to develop standards, procedures, and a timeline for implementing RCV statewide.

constitutional voting method, not just in courts here in Minnesota, but across the country."

Said attorney Simon Barnicle at the hearing, "In red states and blue and in cities across the state and country, RCV is being adopted because it gives more choices, encourages broad coalition building, and reduces polarization and gridlock."

"The case for RCV in Minnesota is even greater. For years, partisan operatives have cynically promoted extremist third party candidates in the hopes that they will siphon votes away from the DFL. This bill would end that practice, by preventing third party candidates from acting as spoilers."

We are moving it forward in the Senate Omnibus Bill, and a success there just might help Ranked Choice Voting move to the House and Senate floor, and then to the desk of Governor Walz, who is reportedly eager to sign it.

May we all benefit from this advance in our democracy.



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

SHARE AN E-EDITION WITH AN OUT-OF-TOWN FRIEND. AVAILABLE@ WWW.SWCONNECTOR.COM

## 1 COLLABORATORS

With those similarities, you'd think there'd be some competition between the two shop owners. But, not so, they'll tell you. And in fact, both women say they gravitated towards this particular area because of the other.

"For me it was important to be around like-minded businesses," Legacy's co-owner Ruby Stinson said. "That's why Les Sól was really important. We knew they were coming to this area, and we love them. It actually makes a lot of sense to be with someone that has something similar to offer, that has a clientele that would also bop around to us."

"When we were both considering moving, we kind of knew we were wanting to go to the same place or similar place because we do kind of fit well together," said Les Sól co-owner Mikaela Harrod.

Stinson said that if someone can't find what they're looking for on the many, colorful racks at Legacy, she'll send them down the street to Les Sól. And when Harrod and her intern were looking to launch a line of trendy, upcycled denim maxi skirts for summer, she turned to Stinson to source the jeans.

### LAKE + IRVING MARKETS

Nowhere is that spirit of collaboration more evident than at the "Lake + Irving Markets," typically held once a month on Saturdays. The markets are the brainchild of Harrod and Stinson, and the two have brought other new and longtime business-



Ruby Stinson in front of her store, Legacy, in Uptown at 1610 W. Lake St. (Photo by Haley June)

es in the area such as Combine, a clothing and home decor store, and the popular French café Barbette, into the fold, as well. The businesses host exclusive pop-ups from local makers with entertainment and discounts with the ultimate goal of getting more people to come and spend a few hours shopping, dining, and just enjoying the neighborhood.

"People just honestly don't know that stuff is over here again," Stinson said.

### 'WE'RE HERE'

It's not all sunshine and busy weekend markets, though. Being a small business owner isn't easy, and selling sustainable fashion, whether new or vintage, comes with an extra set of challenges.



Les Sól co-owner Mikaela Harrod arranges clothes on a rack at her store. (Photo by Haley June)

Harrod said the items in her shop won't sell on sustainability alone. They also have to be stylish and feel good to make people willing to pay the slighter higher price. That's what she strives to curate at her store, and thanks to her background in apparel design, she's filled it with pieces made from materials like bamboo and similar fabrics.

Stinson added that while shopping online is often quick and easy, finding the right vintage piece can take more time, even if it's the same price. But, she promises it's worth it for the quality you'll get from the items she sources for her store.

The winter months can be really slow for retail stores, especially those that rely heavily on foot traffic. Both women say

they're happy to have each other to rely on as both friends and mutual business owners working towards similar goals.

"We're kind of going down the same path," Harrod said. "We always remind each other that we're building something and we're working for it and that, yeah it's slow, but it will pick up and that is worth all of the stress and the slow days or stressful days of figuring that out."

Harrod and Stinson are especially looking forward to this coming summer, as Uptown continues to undergo a revival of sorts. With Arts + Rec Uptown moving into the former Calhoun Square/7 Corners space, the reimagined Uptown Theater opening soon, and the new pavilion opening on Bde Maka Ska, they're both hoping that will attract more people to the area – and to their stores.

"I think this summer will be a really great shift in this whole neighborhood," Stinson said. "It feels like, to me, this is Uptown's first summer to be like 'We're here!'"

### VISIT

• Legacy is located at 1610 W. Lake St. It is open Tuesday-Sunday, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. <https://shopthelegacy.com/>

• Les Sól is located at 1614 W. Lake St. It is open Tuesday-Saturday, 11 a.m.-6 p.m. and Sundays from 12-5 p.m. <https://shoplessol.com/>



CITY BRIEFS

FRANKLIN AVENUE REDESIGN

Hennepin County will be reconstructing Franklin Ave. between Lyndale and Chicago avenues in 2025. They held a community meeting in March and posted materials online to gather community input. Options so far include reducing the current four lanes of undivided roadway (median in most areas) to two, adding medians or left turn lanes, as well as landscaping and improving bike and pedestrian areas. Construction is expected in 2026.

FRANCE AVENUE IMPROVEMENTS

As soon as the weather permits it, Hennepin County will begin repaving France Ave (County Road 17) between Excelsior Blvd and 44th St. Improvements will include narrower vehicle lanes, painted medians, and ground-in durable striping.

WASHBURN-FAIR OAKS HISTORIC DISTRICT

The city is updating the guidelines for the Washburn-Fair Oaks Historic District that is bounded by Franklin Ave., Fourth Ave. S., Interstate 35W, 26th St. and the alley between First Ave and Nicollet. Design guidelines affect what changes can be made to buildings and landscapes in the area. There will be a meeting about the guidelines on Saturday, April 29 at 11 a.m. Contact John Smoley for details at john.smoley@minneapolismn.gov.

PUBLIC SPACE AT LAKE AND FREMONT

CommonBond Communities is proposing to build public space as part of their project at the corner of Lake St. and Fremont Ave. They want community members to help design it. Find the survey at <https://pplengage.com/1301westlake>.

UPTOWN TRANSIT STATION

The bus stop shelter on the east side of Hennepin Ave above the Greenway was closed on March 16 in response to some behavior and drug use at the station. The Metropolitan Council has approved a contract with Allied Universal to provide unarmed security guards at the Franklin and Lake Street Blue Line stations, as well as at the Uptown and the Chicago-Lake stations. There will likely be two guards at each station from 12 to 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The space is expected to be reopened later in the year when security officers are in place.

TRANSIT PLAN

Metro Transit is drafting a new plan that will help guide their work for the next five years. They will be holding community workshops online from 5:30-7 p.m., Wednesday, April 26 and 12-1:30 p.m. Friday, April 28 and in-person from 5:30-7 p.m., Thursday, May 4 at the Brian Coyle Neighborhood Center in the Cedar Riverside neighborhood. Take a survey at [www.metrotransit.org/Network-Now](http://www.metrotransit.org/Network-Now).

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. Their more local, Senate District 63 convention was held on March 25 at Burroughs School.

DFL CAUCUSES AND CONVENTIONS

The Democratic Farmer Labor (DFL) will hold Ward conventions for each Ward 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 delegates met on April 1 at Armatage Park and voted to endorse incumbent council member Linea

Palmisano for reelection in 2023. See <https://minneapolisdf.org> for more information.

NEW HR DIRECTOR



Nikki Odom has been hired as chief human resources officer for the city of Minneapolis. She will oversee city employee recruitment, benefits, collective bargaining, labor contract administration, training and more. Prior to joining the city, Odom served as vice president of People & Culture at Minnesota Community Care health center. She received a bachelor's degree in business administration and a law degree from Marquette University.

THE HISTORY OF YOUR HOME

Washburn Library is offering a workshop in April for people to learn about resources that will help trace the history of homes, neighborhoods and properties using permit records, maps, city directories, and photos. People can register for a session that will be held Saturday, April 29, 10-11:30 a.m. at Washburn Library by visiting the Hennepin County Library website.

DIAMOND SPORTS STUDY

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board is studying diamond sports facilities like baseball and softball fields across the park system. The study will make recommendations on maintenance standards and programming for each type of facility programming, as well as access, use permits, distribution of facilities and funding.

Briefs compiled by Cam Gordon.

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

BDE MAKI SKA PAVILION

Construction on a new concessions pavilion area at Bde Maka Ska continued to progress throughout the winter with work on the building interiors. Starting Monday, April 3, exterior work resumed with utility connections, stormwater management installation and preparing the site for concrete flatwork. The pedestrian trail around the construction site will temporarily close to safely accommodate some of this work. All trail traffic will be combined onto the bike trail during the pedestrian trail closure. Bikers must yield to pedestrians in this area. The new Bde Maka Ska pavilion area is on track to open this summer.

LORING PARK LIGHTING PROJECT MEETING

On Thursday, April 13 from 10:30 a.m. to noon, the City of Minneapolis will host a meeting with the Nicollet/Loring Safety Coalition to give a project update on lighting in Loring Park and Stevens Square-Loring Heights. It will include details on property assessments, the removal of the petition process, project limits, timelines and time for answer questions. This is a virtual-only meeting and the Zoom link is to be announced.

VOLUNTEER WITH HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

The West Maka Ska Neighborhood Council is partnering with Habitat for Humanity-Twin Cities with a volunteer opportunity to work in the community, and is looking for neighbors to join us for an event in Minneapolis on Thursday, April 27 from 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

LYNDALE NEIGHBORHOOD HIRING

Lyndale Neighborhood Association is accepting applications for an open full-time executive director position. Devin Cuneen is the group's new organizer for LNA's community garden projects. They have been living in Minneapolis for almost a year and is excited to get to know the people of the community.

NO EAST ISLE FARMERS MARKET THIS YEAR

East Isles, East Bde Maka Ska, and Lowry Hill East Neighborhood Associations have decided to take a farmers market hiatus this summer in order to collaborate on a meaningful and realistic plan for an Uptown Farmers Market in 2024. If you have any questions, ideas, resources, or a personal interest in getting involved with this new planning collaborative, reach out to [info@eastisles.org](mailto:info@eastisles.org).

PORCHFEST COMING TO THE WEDGE AUG. 19

Porchfest, a neighborhood music festival that's free and fun for all ages, is being planned for the Wedge neighborhood on Aug. 19, 2023 from 1-5 p.m. Countless musicians have found their footing in this neighborhood. The Replacements got their start here, Rhymesayers was rooted here for decades, and musical shoutouts from Prince (and countless others) highlight the true fashion of Uptown as a place where anybody can be themselves and find support and community along the way.

SNEAK PEEK AT THE FUTURE OF BUSES

BETTER BUS ROUTES

Metro Transit has a little-known program called Better Bus Routes. The primary purpose of this program is to simplify bus routes by trimming branches (versions of a route with the same number but a different letter) and eliminating little-used stops. This also makes it possible to improve the stops that are left by having more shelters and benches, and putting a hard surface at more stops so you don't have to stand in the mud when waiting for the bus.

This treatment was already applied to Route 2 a couple of years ago. Several stops were abolished, making the route somewhat faster. Now, Route 17 is slated for a similar treatment in August 2023. In the Southwest Connector readership area, the following stops will be eliminated: Nicollet and 22nd, Pillsbury and Harriet on 24th, Lake and Thomas, and the eastbound stop at Lake and Drew. The



By John Wilson

stop at 24th and Nicollet by McDonald's will move around the corner to the Seventh-Day Adventist Church. The stop on Lagoon at Irving will be moved one block east to Humboldt.

A few minor changes to the route will be made outside the Southwest Connector area. On the northeast side, the route will be extended a few blocks east at the end to Central, enabling connection to Route 10. In Saint Louis Park, all trips will serve both the Knollwood Target and the area on the other side of Highway 7 in both directions. Currently, the Target is only served at certain times westbound, even though it is always served eastbound. The 17F branch will no longer serve Park Glen Apartments or 36th St. It will be only used for "reverse" commuters to the business area at Beltline Blvd. and Park Glen Rd.

These changes are scheduled to take effect in August 2023.

SECURITY GUARDS ADDED

In other news, Metro Transit is finally doing something about security issues at its transit centers and light rail stations.

The indoor portion of the Uptown Transit Center has been temporarily closed, awaiting the hiring of security guards. Security will also be added to the Brooklyn Center Transit Center, the Franklin Ave. and Lake St. light rail stations, the Chicago-Lake Transit Center, and the Central light rail station in downtown Saint Paul.

Hopefully, this will help bring back ridership that has given up on buses and trains since indecorous and nefarious behavior have been making travelers uncomfortable. Commuters don't want to have to smell pee and poop on the elevators to the light rail, or struggle to breathe through clouds of cigarette smoke, or worry about being attacked. On the other hand, I fervently hope the new security force doesn't go back to the old extremes of harassing people for falling asleep or acting a little strange. They really should focus on stuff that really scares or bothers other travelers.

State Senator Scott Dibble proposes making the Metropolitan Council an elected body. This is a very excellent idea.

John Wilson lives in south Minneapolis and pays attention to transit issues.

**AGING WELL**

Coming in June.

Contact us today.

[ads@swConnector.com](mailto:ads@swConnector.com)  
612-255-1180

**BOGO 40% OFF**

OFFER ENDS 4/30

**RENEWAL**  
by ANDERSEN  
FULL-SERVICE WINDOW & DOOR REPLACEMENT

**855-502-6514**

**TRUGREEN**  
Live life outside.

Get the most out of your lawn this spring.

Save now with **50% OFF\***  
Your First Application

**SCHEDULE YOUR APPOINTMENT TODAY! 1-833-912-3666**

\*Requires purchase of annual plan. Special price is for first Lawn application only. Requires purchase of annual plan, for new residential EasyPay or PrePay customers only. Valid at participating TruGreen locations. Availability of services may vary by geography. Not to be combined with or used in conjunction with any other offer or discount. Additional restrictions may apply. Consumer responsible for all sales tax. †Purchase of annual lawn plan required for TruGreen Lawn Assessment, which is performed at the first visit. \*Guarantee applies to annual plan customers only. BBB accredited since 07/01/2012. ©2023 TruGreen Limited Partnership. All rights reserved. In Connecticut, B-0153, B-1380, B-0127, B-0200, B-0151.



# 'MINNESOTA MEAN' TELLS STORY OF LOCAL ROLLER DERBY PLAYERS

By Jan Willms

Minnesota documentary filmmaker Dawn Mikkelson has managed to capture both the strength and the vulnerability of the roller derby skaters whose story she tells in her film "Minnesota Mean." The documentary feature will have its world premiere during the Minneapolis St. Paul International Film Festival (MSPIFF).

Mikkelson follows the team through its wins and losses as it prepares for championships in the rough and tumble sport.

Introduced to the Minnesota team by one of the roller derby participants, Mikkelson said the fact that she was a woman and close in age to her subjects made the filming somewhat easier.

"I started shooting the film in March 2017, and wrapped up the final interviews in December 2017," Mikkelson said. "But much like the roller derby players, I have to balance all the elements of my life. I finished the film but did not have the funding to complete it. I was working evenings and weekends and finally quit my day job in 2021. I finished this film and another one I was working on, 'Finding Her Beat,' a film about a female Taiko drum performer. These films were my Irish twins, so close to one another. I finished them by focusing on independent film exclusively."

Mikkelson said that being in the presence of the women she was filming on a constant basis made her a part of the room. "Clearly they are aware that I am there, but at some point it isn't a novelty. The further we got into the season, the clearer it was to me that the players were comfortable with me." She said trust was developed between her and her documentary subjects. The fact that her friend from the team introduced her and vouched for her character helped.

She worked with Jim Tittle, who was director of photography for the film. "Most of the camera work is his. He did a wonderful job," Mikkelson said. Tittle



Jim Tittle did most of the camera work for "Minnesota Mean." He died before the film was complete.

died of cancer before the film was completed, but he was able to see a rough cut before he passed.

The music for the film was provided by Dessa, a Minneapolis-based musician. "I was so excited when she said yes," Mikkelson said.

"My friend joined roller derby when she turned 40," Mikkelson said. "I remember asking her what she was doing. I told her she was going to break herself."

"But she became a part of this beautiful community of women. And it was different for me to see this level of community support between women. They become like a family."

Mikkelson follows several team members throughout the film. Each woman selects a team name for herself. There is



Dawn Mikkelson embedded herself with the Minnesota Roller Derby in 2017.

Kimberly Shivers, Brickyard, Smokahontas and Diamond Rough.

With her doc, Mikkelson is able to emphasize the toughness of these roller

derby players but still touch on their softer sides, their life experiences, dreams and fears. The one-on-one interviews in the film are impactful.

Although the focus of the film is on the female team, Mikkelson also films Chad, the husband of one of the players. He is seen cheering her on at every game. "Chad would cheer for her if she opened a bag of potato chips," Mikkelson said. "He is a model of a good spouse in my mind, and it was hard not to focus on him during filming."

Mikkelson said that making the documentary made her feel like she knew the women even more than she actually did. "I spent a very meaningful chunk of time with them, and then the filming is over and they go on with their lives. I am still marinating on their lives in 2017."

Mikkelson said she has spent over 20 years doing documentaries. "I started in high school editing as a hobbyist. I got a degree in political science and women's studies at the University of Minnesota-Duluth. From there, it was not a direct route to documentary filmmaking. I took a job with an ABC affiliate in Duluth as a news reporter for a year and fell in love with the longer version of storytelling."

"Minnesota Mean" is her seventh documentary feature. She also works as a freelancer producing for a PBS affiliate.

"Working on films is all I am doing now, and it has turned out to be a lot," Mikkelson said. She is simultaneously premiering "Minnesota Mean" and "Finding Her Beat." She said that when she is not touring she is doing the work of keeping them going.

"I am also producing and editing for Keri Pickett's film 'Ribbon Skirt Warriors,' that is in production. We are working to get that film ready for a fall premiere."

Mikkelson said she had never thought that what started out as a hobby would turn into a career. "I love the story telling, and making a documentary is where I feel most effective in my social justice work."

## 8 '40 BELOW'

ley, a competitor from California who was making his eighth try, and Leah Gruhn. She and her husband, both scientists, participated by bicycle. Bradley raced by foot.

On camera, Bradley talks about some of the trials he has endured in his life. He lost his business and his wife, and he eventually started running marathons. As

tough and grueling as they were, he considered them nothing compared to what he had gone through. So he has participated in extreme competitions all around the world, including races in the desert with temperatures of 135 degrees Fahrenheit. But he has not been able to finish the Arrowhead 135.

Overall, about a third of the competitors finish the race.

Throughout making the documenta-

ry, Anderson said he returned over and over to that question of why people do this. "And I found it is different for everyone," he stated. "Some come back year after year, and treat it as a family reunion. Someone like Bill has a very different reason. And the reasons are all interesting."

One racer's answer as to why he does it was simple. "It separates you from being normal," he said.

Anderson said he loves to watch doc-

umentaries, as well as make them. "It is very difficult oftentimes because people might act differently. My approach is to have a small film crew, sometimes just myself. There were so many moments when people forgot about me being there on this film, and that was great," said Anderson. "But he struggles with the Arrowhead 135."

► [Full story @ swConnector.com](http://Full story @ swConnector.com)

**Elevate Your Eyewear**  
Find hand-crafted quality from around the world, right in Linden Hills. Family owned and operated by eyewear fanatics since 2012.  
4318 Upton Av S, Minneapolis  
owloptical.com • 612-367-4106

**Quality Used Kid Gear**

We buy and sell cool used baby & kid stuff.

Declutter. Get paid. Spare the agony!

Schedule a free pickup at [www.kidmarketplace.com](http://www.kidmarketplace.com)

Or drop-off at 2313 W. 50th St. (50th and Penn)





**Chileen Painting**  
Serving Lakes Area Since 1952

*Family Owned for Over 60 Years*

Insured | References





*Free Estimates*

**greg@chileen.com**

Interior & Exterior Painting  
Insurance Claims • Patching  
Wood Finishing • Carpentry  
• Exterior Wood Restoration  
Water Damage Repair • Enameling

**612-850-0325**

Treating your house like a home.



Interior & Exterior Painting • Plaster / Sheetrock Repair  
• Wood Stripping & Refinishing • Ceiling Texturing / Repair  
• Wallpaper Stripping / Wall Repair / Skim Coating

**FREE ESTIMATES**

(612) 827-6140 or (651) 699-6140  
**WWW.PAINTINGBYJERRYWIND.COM**

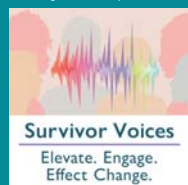
**TREE TRIMMING, REMOVAL & STUMP GRINDING**



Matthew Molinaro  
**FREE ESTIMATES**  
**612.239.2508**  
**MolinaroTree.com**

lic&Insured | certified arborist MN-4551A

National Crime Victims' Rights Week April 23-29, 2023



**SVC**  
**SEXUAL VIOLENCE CENTER**  
**24-HOUR HOTLINE: 612-871-5111**  
**SEXUALVIOLENCECENTER.ORG**

This project is supported by a National Crime Victims' Rights Week Community Awareness Project subgrant awarded by the National Association of VOCA Assistance Administrators under a Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) grant from the Office for Victims of Crime, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice.

**FUN CITY DOGS**

Where a dog can be a dog!

**Daycare & No cage boarding**

Webcams 24-hour supervision South Mpls 15,000 sq ft of indoor and outdoor space

**612-722-3647 • www.funcitydogs.com**



**DRAGONS WYND**  
Environmental Entomology

For hire: Presentations, parties, insect safaris, garden consult & more

[www.etsy.com/shop/DragonsWyndInsects](http://www.etsy.com/shop/DragonsWyndInsects)  
[jessica@dragonswynd.com](mailto:jessica@dragonswynd.com)

**HOME** **BOOK YOUR CLASSIFIED WORD AD AT \$1/WORD @ www.swconnector.com or call 612-345-9998.**

**CRISIS HOTLINE**  
Call the Minnesota Day One Crisis Hotline at 1-866-223-1111 if you or someone you know is seeking shelter due to a dangerous relationship or needs to create a safety plan.

**LAMPS**  
Retirement sale: Now offering up to 50% off stock lampshades, lighting fixtures - buy one, get one of equal or lesser value at 50% off. Lamp repairs still welcome. 9911 Lyndale Ave S Bloomington. Open 5 days 10-4pm Closed Mon. & Fri. [www.lampmender.com](http://www.lampmender.com)

**LAWN CARE**  
All your GREEN needs - Mowing/Lawn Care/Landscaping. 20+ years in Mpls. Call 612-781-3420. [SorensenLawnCare.com](http://SorensenLawnCare.com)

**PAINTING**  
Painting, wallpaper patch. Interior, exterior. Small jobs wanted. Jim. 612-202-5514.


**SERVICES**  
Neighborhood Concrete - Sidewalks, Driveways, Patios, Steps, NeighborhoodConcrete.com 612-930-7071.

**BE SEEN HERE, TOO. BOOK AN AD.**

**NEXT DEADLINE: Monday, April 10 | PUBLICATION: Thursday, April 20**

**Join The Linden Hills Bocce Ball Club This Summer!** The first eight-week session begins May 8. To learn more, email Marc Burgett: [marcburgett@msn.com](mailto:marcburgett@msn.com)

**WACSO** CANVAS PRINTS AVAILABLE EXCLUSIVELY THROUGH GALLERY 360.



3011 W 50th St. | 612-925-2400 | [gallery360mpls.com](http://gallery360mpls.com)

**MEET YOUR SALES REP**



**SUZIE MARTY**  
believes in buying local and shopping local. She is the owner of Everett & Charlie, a Linden Hills art gallery where art meets experience. It features only Minnesota artists. She is a TMC Publications marketing specialist, and can help you develop a comprehensive marketing plan that fits your budget and needs.

**CONTACT SUZIE TODAY!**  
**Ads@SWconnector.com**  
**612-255-1180**

**STEVE'S PAINTING 651-207-2249**

**Whole House Painting Specialists**  
Interior and Exterior - Repairs done also!  
Professional Preparation and Painting ♦ Ceilings ♦ Brush & Roller ♦ Windows Spraying ♦ Trim Work ♦ High Work ♦ Neat, Experienced Crews

**Steve Polta e-mail: [Stevepaintsmpl@gmail.com](mailto:Stevepaintsmpl@gmail.com)**

Create a personal & professional life you love



**Michele Rae**

Get started with a **FREE 20-minute consult.**



**the Center Within**

**TRANSFORMATIONAL COACHING**  
[Michele@CenterWithin.com](mailto:Michele@CenterWithin.com)  
**612-465-9775**  
**CenterWithin.com**

**MIDWEST CLASSIFIED NETWORK ADS**

**EMPLOYMENT/HELP WANTED**  
Worthing SD is hiring a full-time Utility Maintenance person with full benefits. Responsibilities include working in the city's water, sewer, streets, and park departments. Information can be found at [www.cityofworthing.com](http://www.cityofworthing.com). (mcn)

**MISCELLANEOUS**  
**DIAGNOSED WITH LUNG CANCER?** You may qualify for a substantial cash award - even with smoking history. NO obligation! We've recovered millions. Let us help!! Call 24/7, 1-888-490-8260. (mcn)

**BATH & SHOWER UPDATES** in as little as ONE DAY! Affordable prices - No payments for 18 months! Lifetime warranty & professional installs. Senior & Military Discounts available. Call 1-866-585-7073. (mcn)

**LONG DISTANCE MOVING:** Call today for a FREE QUOTE from America's Most Trusted Interstate Movers. Let us take the stress out of moving! Speak to a Relocation Specialist, call 877-327-0795. (mcn)

**BATHROOM RENOVATIONS.** EASY, ONE DAY updates! We specialize in safe bathing. Grab bars, no slip flooring & seated showers. Call for a free in-home consultation: 855-836-2250. (mcn)

**NEED NEW FLOORING?** Call Empire Today® to schedule a FREE in-home estimate on Carpeting & Flooring. Call Today! 844-785-0305 (mcn)

Never clean your gutters again! Affordable, professionally installed gutter guards protect your gutters and home from debris and leaves forever! For a FREE Quote call: 877-761-1449 (mcn)

The Generac PWRcell, a solar plus battery storage system. SAVE money, reduce your reliance on the grid, prepare for power outages and power your home. Full installation services available. \$0 Down Financing Option. Request a FREE, no obligation, quote today. Call 1-877-381-3059. (mcn)

Prepare for power outages today with a GENERAC home standby generator. \$0 Money Down + Low Monthly Payment Options. Request a FREE Quote. Call now before the next power outage: 1-877-228-5789 (mcn)

Eliminate gutter cleaning forever! LeafFilter, the most advanced debris-blocking gutter protection. Schedule a FREE LeafFilter estimate today. 20% off Entire Purchase. Plus 10% Senior & Military Discounts. Call 1-855-577-1268. (mcn)

Become a Published Author. We want to Read Your Book! Dorrance Publishing-Trusted by Authors Since 1920. Book manuscript submissions currently being reviewed. Comprehensive Services: Consultation, Production, Promotion and Distribution. Call for Your Free Author's Guide 1-877-516-0706 or visit [dorranceinfo.com/Midwest](http://dorranceinfo.com/Midwest) (mcn)

Wesley Financial Group, LLC Timeshare Cancellation Experts. Over \$50,000,000 in timeshare debt and fees cancelled in 2019. Get free informational package and learn how to get rid of your timeshare! Free consultations. Over 450 positive reviews. Call 877-326-1608. (mcn)

Trouble hearing your TV? Try TV EARS Voice Clarifying Wireless TV Speaker. Better than a soundbar and/or turning the TV volume way up. Special, limited time \$50 off offer. Call TV Ears. Use code MBSP50. Call 1-844-455-0505. (mcn)

**Safe Step.** North America's #1 Walk-In Tub. Comprehensive lifetime warranty. Top-of-the-line installation and service. Now featuring our FREE shower package and \$1600 Off for a limited time! Call today! Financing available. Call Safe Step 1-844-290-5083. (mcn)

Switch and save up to \$250/year on your talk, text and data. No contract and no hidden fees. Unlimited talk and text with flexible data plans. Premium nationwide coverage. 100% U.S. based customer service. Limited time offer! Get \$50 off on any new account. Use code GIFT50. For more information, call 1-888-909-7338. (mcn)

Are you a pet owner? Do you want to get up to 100% back on Vet Bills? Physicians Mutual Insurance Company has pet coverage that can help! Call 1-888-680-3016 to get a free quote or visit [mfcp.com](http://mfcp.com) (mcn)

**PETS/PUPPIES FOR SALE**  
AKC REG. COCKER SPANIEL PUPS. NEW Big Litters! 50% OFF!!! Shots & wormed. 920-563-3410 mornings. (#268588) (mcn)