

SOUTHWEST Connector

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6 HOME & GARDEN: No Mow May helps pollinators

5 What Eddie Glenn has learned about fasting after 10 years

8 Summertime Acoustic returns to downtown Linden Hills

9 End of an era at city hall as Lisa Goodman steps back

WARD 8 CANDIDATES: WHERE THEY STAND

Andrea Jenkins and Soren Stevenson share views on climate action, collaboration, safety, and rent control

By Jill Boogren

Dozens of neighbors attended a Ward 8 city council candidate forum at St. Peter's AME Church on April 25, 2023. Candidates included Andrea Jenkins, the current City Council president; and Soren Stevenson, a renter, policy advocate and survivor of police violence. They responded to questions on climate action, community partnerships, public safety and rent control that were prepared by representatives from Faith in Minnesota, MN350 and Home to Stay and given to candidates in advance.



CLIMATE ACTION

A 16-year resident of Ward 8, MN350 volunteer Mary Kosuth led the forum by addressing climate action.



Aaron Issacs, chairman of the board of the Minnesota Streetcar Museum, stands in front of car No. 322, stored and repaired in the historic car barn. See inside this building during Doors Open Minneapolis on May 13-14. More at trolleyride.org. (Photo by Allie Johnson)

MOVING MUSEUM

Historic streetcars return to rails in Linden Hills

By Allie Johnson

The Minnesota Streetcar Museum's fleet of historic streetcars returned to the rails in Linden Hills last month, giving people of all ages the chance to ride on a little piece of Minneapolis history.

The streetcars run along the what was Como-Harriet Streetcar Line, which took passengers all the way from Linden Hills to downtown St. Paul. Today, though, the streetcars only make a one-mile journey back and forth between Lake Harriet and Bde Maka Ska.

This season, the museum is hosting a number of special events, from free rides for moms on Mother's Day to Memorial Day rides to Lakewood Cemetery to a murder mystery-themed ride later in the summer.

For the first time this year, the museum will also host a pair of rides with American Sign Language interpreters on-board for hearing-impaired passengers. It will continue to offer several sensory-friendly events for neurodiverse individuals, as it has done for several seasons now.

"The idea is to make it accessible to an audience that ordinarily wouldn't be able to get it all," said Aaron Issacs, Minnesota Streetcar Museum Board chairman. He's been a part of the museum since it started operating in Linden Hills in the 1970s; his dad, George K. Issacs was one of the founders.

The streetcars are especial-



MINNEAPOLIS SPENDS \$5.5-\$7.5 MILLION CLOSING ENCAMPMENTS SINCE 2020

City staff present Homeless Encampment Closures Report, highlighting work at four encampments

By Cam Gordon

After public disagreements about how to manage tent communities last October, the Minneapolis City Council took up the issue again in April 2023. During a nearly three-hour long meeting, they reviewed a staff report about current practices and discussed recommendations about future changes.

"The Homeless Encampment Closures Report Presentation makes it clear that addressing the City of Minneapolis's home-

lessness crisis requires a cross-departmental, and multi-agency effort; and, that we all need to lean in, in order to move forward," said Ward 11 Council Member Emily Koski.

The opening and closing of tent communities, or encampments, has grown in recent years in Minneapolis.

In the summer of 2018, a tent community



That adds up to somewhere between \$5.5 and \$7.5 million we've spent on this practice alone. I want us to sit with that and I want us to think about how this approach has to change for the safety of our staff – if prioritized – and if the safety of our community is prioritized."

Alisha Chughtai

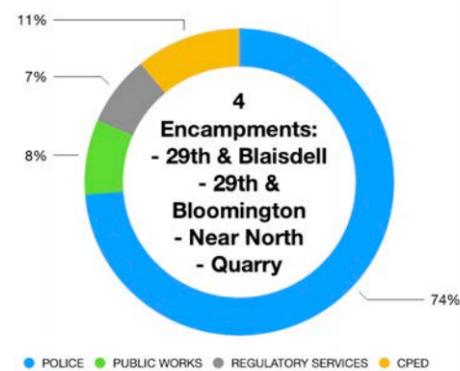


now known as the Wall of Forgotten Natives led to the establishment of a city-funded navigation center and shelter for the campers at Hiawatha Ave. and Cedar. The following year more tent communities were established.

In 2020, during the pandemic, closing them was prohibited and dozens were established on park and other publicly owned land, as well as on private property. During that time the Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board (MPRB) established a permit process for the camps. Some were forcibly closed with police involvement, and others were closed peacefully without police.

Following the election of 2021, city policymakers have not always agreed

Minneapolis encampment costs



about to manage the encampments.

Following two closures of tent communities that involved police action and the establishment of a small tent community outside city hall in October 2022, a motion was made by Ward 10 Council Member Alisha Chughtai. She proposed pausing the closures where police force people to move out with little or no notice or assistance. It was defeated on a 7 to 6 vote, with council members Michael Rainville, LaTrisha Vetaw, Jamal Osman, Lisa Goodman,



ENCAMPMENTS

Andrea Jenkins, Emily Koski, Andrew Johnson, and Linea Palmisano voting no.

Those council members also voted to stop proposals that would have required access to shelter and seven days notice before a forced closure. Motions that passed, directing staff to report on the impacts of camp closures and ways to minimize police involvement, were vetoed by mayor Jacob Frey and the veto was sustained.

Weeks later, however, Chughtai proposed a more modest directive with the support of the mayor and it passed.

'DANGERS OF NORMALIZING CAMPS'

Minneapolis Director of Regulatory Services Saray Garnett-Hochuli led the team presenting the subsequent report on April 11.

Using the 35-page report, she detailed information about four of the encampments that were closed this year. It graphically illustrated health and safety concerns, and what Garnett-Hochuli called "the dangers of normalizing encampments." It highlighted 911/311 call details, minors being in the camps, poor hygiene, drug use, violence, weapons, and fire hazards.

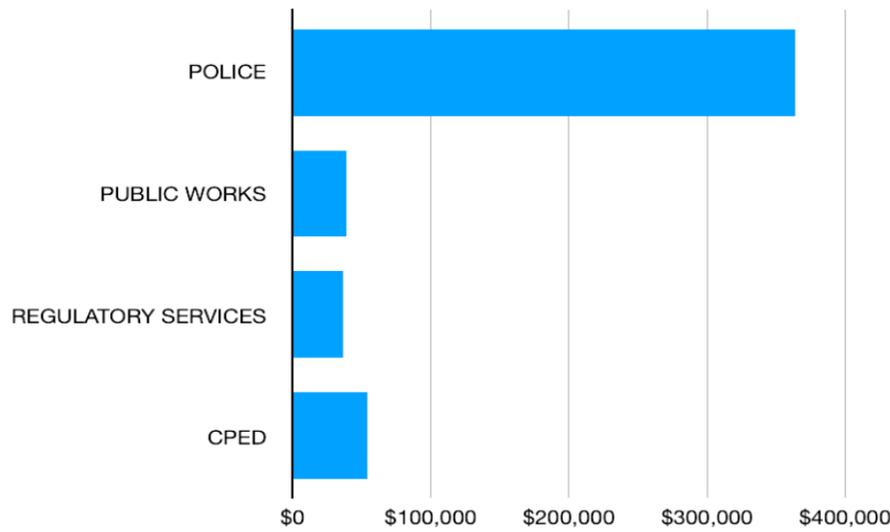
Living in tents has been illegal in Minneapolis since at least the 1970s, although since 2005, there have been provisions in ordinance that were not mentioned in the presentation that staff "may issue a permit to allow for temporary housing when a specified emergency creates the need to allow for such housing."

Garnett-Hochuli referred to that ordinance 244.60 when she said, "The city upholds this ordinance to maintain public safety for all people in Minneapolis. This means that the city does not provide handwashing stations or other sanitary services at encampment sites as doing so is indirectly in conflict with 244.60. More importantly, providing handwashing stations and sanitation services normalizes the presence of encampments throughout Minneapolis."

In the lengthy committee discussion after the presentation, Chughtai pointed out conflicts in the code between this and the section on maintaining public health.

"Hand washing stations are a critical part of keeping infections from happening and spreading," she said. "Why is the enforcement of 244.6 more important to us as an institution than our responsibility to public health? ... We are falling short of our obligations for maintaining public health."

Cost of 4 Homeless Encampment Closures

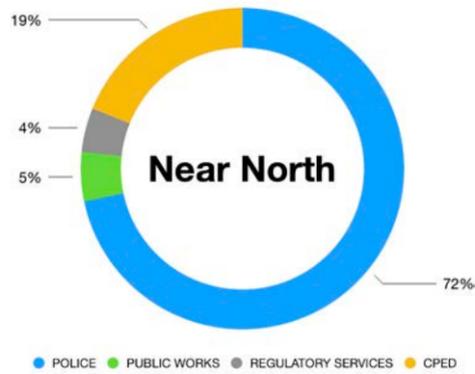


RESPECT AND DIGNITY?

Garnett-Hochuli explained that the city uses a cross-departmental team that meets weekly to review health, safety, and community impacts in advance of making any decisions about camp closures. For camps on city-owned property, they sometimes provide at least 72-hours notice and post notices of trespass and closure dates. They forcibly close a camp without notice if they determine it poses imminent community safety risks, if threats are made to city employees, if there has been an increase in violence or other illegal activities or if it is interfering with the normal operation of a business, school, daycare, or sober living facility, or they determine it "poses an imminent danger to human life or safety."

A set of guiding principles was also shared stating that the city is dedicated to "facilitating encampment closures where unsheltered individuals are treated with respect and dignity." During the discussion Chughtai confirmed that residents of the camp were not interviewed for, or quoted in, the report, and were not asked if they felt they were being treated with dignity or respect.

Near the conclusion, Garnett-Hochuli said that the city has moved through "the first phase of encampment work," and was now entering a second phase that would "expand on the public health crisis that addresses the root causes of homelessness, led by the health department." The next phase will also include behavioral crisis response teams, and the new commissioner of health Damon Chaplin will play a leadership role.



MINNEAPOLIS HOPE 1

Among the several pages of recommendations, one new program was outlined called "Minneapolis Hope 1" that would be part of the police department's community engagement bureau. As a "one-stop mobile unit that could have supplies on hand, including water, snacks, and winter gear," it could respond to encampment sites, as well as provide storage and services for several days prior to and during a closure. The mobile unit could include police in plain clothes, health care professionals, behavioral crisis responders, social workers, case managers, substance abuse specialists and nurses.

"I appreciate these recommendations," said Ward 13 Council Member Linea Palmisano. "I just want to recognize and commend the growing coordination all these departments have had here."

"There were recommendations and next steps given in the Homelessness Encampment Closures Report Presentation,

HIGHLIGHTS FROM REPORT

- Closure activities range between \$40,000 to \$265,000 in total cost depending on conditions, with factors requiring police presence being the clearest contributor to cost.
- The fiscal cost of an encampment closure ranged between \$42,000 to \$265,000 from May 2022 to present for the encampments analyzed, with an average cost of \$123,000.
- Assuming 8 encampments with comparable factors closed between May 2020 and present, the total cost of closures would be \$984,000.
- 1,785 calls made to 311 from Jan. 3, 2022 to March 7, 2023 reporting complaints from Minneapolis residents about encampments.

and I look forward to re-evaluating after the implementation of these recommendations and next steps," said Koski several days later. "And, I look forward to us continuing to open lines of communication across departments within the City of Minneapolis, and across agencies working with the City of Minneapolis, moving forward."

CLOSING FOUR CAMPS COSTS \$493,548

In the report the staff used the encampments closures at 29th and Blaisdell, 29th and Bloomington, Near North, and the Quarry as case studies. They determined that the community planning and economic department spent \$2,985, the police \$363,700, public works \$7,963, and regulatory services \$17,815 for a grand total \$392,464 just for the personnel for closing these four tent communities. When additional planning, equipment and contracting costs were included, the total cost was \$493,548.

Chughtai used these figures and identified between 45 and 60 tent encampments that were forcibly closed since 2020. "That adds up to somewhere between \$5.5 and \$7.5 million we've spent on this practice alone," she said. "I want us to sit with that and I want us to think about how this approach has to change for the safety of our staff - if prioritized - and if the safety of our community is prioritized."

"That's work that all of us have to do together," said Chughtai.

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1 WARD 8 CANDIDATES

"I am alarmed, and I am not alone," said Kosuth, who feels the changes needed are more than what individuals can provide and that she's desperate for leadership. Kosuth asked candidates what climate actions they support and how they would raise dedicated funds on a scale of tens of millions, beginning in neighborhoods most impacted by climate inequality.

Jenkins listed current city goals to weatherize 30,000 homes (5,000 of those in Green Zones), reduce fossil fuel use by 30%, train 1,000 residents in green jobs by 2030, and achieve 100% renewable energy citywide by using solar energy throughout the community. She called for a climate action funding plan that uses multiple revenue streams, including increasing franchising fees on utility companies to generate income and raising money through state and federal grants.

Stevenson acknowledged the city has "really good goals," but said it's hard to see where there was concrete action to make good on those goals. For Stevenson, concrete action means dedicating funds to back up the People's Climate and Equity Plan – such as by increasing the pollution control annual registration fee, and being aggressive in negotiations with utilities when contracts are renewed.

He also called for more biking and walking, and to convert Olson Memorial Highway, "a dangerous and redundant highway," back into a community street where "Black and immigrant businesses once thrived and could thrive again."

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Mary Slobig, a Ward 8 leader with Faith in Minnesota, described a positive partnership with Rep. Aisha Gomez that led to passage of Drivers Licenses for All, that enables Minnesotans to obtain a driver's license regardless of immigration status. This drew cheers and applause from many in the room. Slobig asked candidates how they will work with community members.

Stevenson said it's the role of community organizations to be deeply rooted in the community, and the role of elected officials to listen to those organizations. He vowed to be present and accessible, and said anyone who calls or emails will get a response back.

Jenkins holds office hours on Fridays by appointment, and said she will continue to meet with organizations and attend block gatherings when invited.

HOLISTIC PUBLIC SAFETY

Mike Rollin, also a Ward 8 leader with Faith in Minnesota, spoke of the Minneapolis Police Department (MPD) as targeting, detaining and killing Black, Brown and Indigenous neighbors and – along with the leaders who support them – leveraging their power to shield themselves



Facing the audience, Ward 8 Faith in Minnesota team leader John Saxhaug (right) moderates a forum with Ward 8 city council candidates Soren Stevenson (left) and Andrea Jenkins (center). The forum was held at St. Peter's AME Church (401 E. 41st St.) on April 25, 2023. (Photo by Jill Boogren)

from responsibility.

"It has become hard to imagine a situation where I would see a benefit to calling the police. Not impossible, but really, really hard," said Rollin. He reminded people that Derek Chauvin, found guilty in George Floyd's murder, continued on the force despite having had multiple complaints against him – and was even a lead trainer of new recruits. Rollin asked candidates how they will increase transparency and accountability for the MPD, as well as their plans to expand the city's efforts at violence prevention, mental health crisis response and other approaches to public safety outside of traditional policing.

Jenkins said the city hired a commissioner of public safety, integrated the public safety response to include MPD, the fire department and 911 services, implemented a violence interrupters program and launched the Behavioral Crisis Response (BCR) team. Jenkins mentioned being sued by the Minnesota Human Rights Department (whose investigation found that the city of Minneapolis and the MPD engage in a pattern or practice of race discrimination in violation of the Minnesota Human Rights Act), and the subsequent agreement which she believes will help hold the MPD accountable.

This question hit close to home for Stevenson, who while protesting the murder of George Floyd, was shot in the face by an MPD officer in broad daylight and lost his left eye. He knows what it's like to be defined by Minneapolis police violence, and said Minneapolis is defined internationally by police violence.

"It doesn't have to be that way," he said, and suggested the city could instead be defined by how it changes and creates a lasting justice for everyone.

Stevenson called for violence prevention to be funded with parity to the city's response to violence (violence prevention is allocated a fraction of funding compared to over \$190 million for MPD). Stevenson also wants to scale up the BCR to operate 24/7 to meet the city's needs (a BCR team was not deployed in the case of Tekle Sundberg, who was fatally shot by Minneapolis police in July 2022 while he was in the midst of a mental health crisis; critics suggest the BCR co-respond in these situations).

Stevenson said current leadership has refused to stand up to the police federation, and waited for the state to step in and force them to comply with the law. According to Stevenson, the officer who shot him is still on the force, and another officer present at the time of his injury, Mark Hanneman, went on to kill Amir Locke.

"We need real transformational change to how we approach our public safety system in Minneapolis, not just minor changes from a lawsuit," said Stevenson. His remarks drew applause from attendees.

RENT STABILIZATION

Anain Lozano, with the coalition Home to Stay Mpls, has been a resident for more than 10 years.

"Something I am not willing to do is be forced to go away from my house because of the lack of control of the rent," she said. "I believe that it doesn't matter what color we are, where we come from, what is our immigration status. I think we all deserve to have a home that is clean, that is livable."

Candidates were asked if they would support rent stabilization with a 3% percent annual cap on rent increases with

no vacancy decontrol (where rent is controlled only while the existing tenant is in the unit).

Stevenson said this was the policy they expected the city council to pass this year after residents voted to put rent controls in place, but that current leadership has "consistently attempted to undermine, water down rent stabilization." He also supports rent-to-purchase measures, and a just-cause eviction ordinance.

Jenkins cited a similar rent stabilization policy in St. Paul that had to be amended due to dwindling housing production. She said rents are now going up in St. Paul.

"I think we need to create more affordable housing. We need to subsidize rent through universal basic income... as well as hold accountable those nefarious and egregious landlords who are preying on our community members," said Jenkins. She said there's a need to invest in the Affordable Housing Trust Fund and continue the 4d Affordable Housing Incentive program. Jenkins also supports a tenant's opportunity to purchase.

Asked by Lozano to clarify whether she supports the version of rent stabilization outlined earlier, Jenkins said, "I do not support that policy as stated. I think there are other policies that can achieve some of the same goals."

In a brief conversation afterwards, the evening's moderator John Saxhaug, Ward 8 team leader with Faith in Minnesota, was pleased to bring community together for the forum. "You can feel the energy," said Saxhaug.

Both Jenkins and Stevenson are seeking the DFL endorsement. The Ward 8 convention is May 20 and will be held virtually.

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WE ARE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER

Whether we focus on the problems or the solutions is up to us.

Tony Robbins must be doing something right. After 45 years of life coaching, the 63-year-old motivational speaker is still motivating. That's no easy feat in today's world.

But it's one reason why Robbins has made a successful career. Take this recent LinkedIn post from Robbins:

"We can get better results with ourselves and others by asking better questions. One proven strategy is to use an OUTCOME FRAME. If you ask someone, 'What's bothering you?' or 'What's wrong?' you'll usually get a lengthy dissertation on just that, THE PROBLEM.

"But if you ask them, 'What do you want?' or 'How do you want to change things?' you've redirected the conversation FROM THE PROBLEM, TO THE SOLUTION.

"In any situation, no matter how dismal, there's a desirable outcome to be achieved.

"Your goal should be to change direction TOWARD THE DESIRED SOLUTION and AWAY FROM THE PROBLEM. Do this by asking the right questions.

"Here's one more important frame... Don't ask your kid WHY they're having trouble with their algebra. Ask them WHAT THEY NEED TO DO to perform better.

"Why' questions can get us explanations, justifications, and excuses. Good communicators aren't interested in rationalizing why something is going WRONG. They want to find out how to do it RIGHT.

"Asking better questions will always



By **Eric Ortiz**



A teacher with students having fun at Ella Baker School in Minneapolis. (Courtesy of Ella Baker)

lead us in the right direction."

Learning to focus on the solution and not the problem can change lives. What we focus on expands. When we focus on problems, we get more problems. When we focus on solutions, we get more solutions.

Some people don't have an optimistic view of the world or their futures after a tough few years. Poor mental health has skyrocketed and created a pessimistic generation that expects negative outcomes and sees many problems as unsolvable.

We can't control the uncertain future. But we can control how we respond to it.

Some people are responding in inspiring ways and working to create solutions every day. They are teachers. All teachers are not created equal, but one school with teachers focused on solutions is Ella Baker Global Studies and Humanities Magnet School in Uptown Minneapolis. I have been getting to know the Ella Baker com-

munity over the past few months, and their community keeps growing stronger.

At Ella Baker, they support their students with real, tangible skills that they can use to become active and thriving members of our community. As a magnet school within Minneapolis Public Schools, Ella Baker focuses on global competency and humanities. With their global competencies, they are teaching students how to solve problems, collaborate, think critically, empathize with others, and more.

They are also creating changemakers. Ella Baker wants their students to "Think Global, Act Local" by identifying problems and actively seeking solutions in their local communities.

May is community action month, and May 1-5 is teacher appreciation week. Now would be a good time to take action – any action – to show gratitude.

We are all in this together. It takes

community to build community, and we are in a new era where showing up is the first step to connection.

Whether we focus on the problems or the solutions is up to us.

Hope is not a strategy, but like better questions, hope points us in the right direction.

Every time you show up (anywhere, anytime), you can give hope to someone. You might not even realize it. The hope you give is connection. We all have a fire inside us, and we can give that fire to each other. That fire is hope, and it can inspire people. Just like Tony Robbins.

Early in Robbins' career, he learned to walk on fire and incorporated walking on hot coals into his seminars to symbolize overcoming fear and unleashing the power within us. "Once you start doing what you thought was impossible, you'll conquer the other fires of your life with ease."

It doesn't always go as planned, and a few years ago, some feet got burned. Robbins claimed it was a misunderstanding, and no one really got hurt. After that, Bill Nye, the "Science Guy," had a Netflix series called "Bill Nye Saves the World" and looked at the practice of fire walking in one of the episodes. He determined you didn't need to pay \$5000 for a spiritual journey. You could fire walk for free.

Whatever your position on fire walking, we all have a fire inside us. It's what keeps us going. When that fire goes out, people lose hope. How we get that hope is by connecting with one another. That connection is how we create solutions.

Remember, love is an action. But love is also a lens. It's how we look at things.

Let's look at things different. It could be just the spark we need.



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.

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WHAT I'VE LEARNED ABOUT FASTING AFTER 10 YEARS

I've been fasting for 19 days per year towards the end of winter every year for over 10 years. As long as the sun is up, I don't eat or drink anything. This practice is surprising to most of the people I meet in Minnesota, but I have been doing it for so long that I can no longer relate to the foreignness that they see in it.

"What? For 19 days? Really?... You can drink water, though, right? No? Oh my gosh, for 19 how long? ..." And so it goes when people offer me coffee or lunch in early March. And soon after that, the conversation shifts or someone has to go on with their day. We almost never get a chance to talk about the good part.



By **Eddie Glenn**

During my early years participating in the fast, I was similarly preoccupied with survival. Will I get sick? What if I start coughing? What should I eat in the morning to stave off hunger all day? How many cups of water can I drink before the sun rises above the horizon? Now that I have done this for so many years, I have lost interest in those questions. There are some important physical changes in how I manage and use my energy level during the fast, and I take care to cover the basic food groups in each meal. But, I feel like food is not the point. Eating with intention can be delicious, exciting, and eye-opening. Intentionally not eating is just a means to an end, a mechanism. For me, one of the interesting goals is detachment.

Hunger is so elemental. What we do with food can be habitual and instinctive.

Most of the practice of eating is subconscious. How many times have you found yourself standing in front of an open fridge, sitting in front of an empty plate or holding an empty bag of chips? How many of those steps, those bites, those chews and swallows, were a decision that you made? Could you have waited a bit? Sometimes, if you'd slow down enough, you'll realize you actually aren't that hungry. You are actually bored, or distracted, or rushing, or addicted. If you break that instinct down, you may find a better experience on the other end. Or, if you find that you really are hungry, than take another bite! It'll taste even better!

I think this principle of detachment is so beneficial and universal that you should join – even just for a day. If abstaining from food and drink isn't right for you, reflect on what else you might

want to create a little distance from. Take a break from sugar or watching TV or alcohol or driving when you could bike or whatever it is you think you "need." Test that assumption for a day or a month or however long it takes to feel difficult.

And, most importantly, don't just think about the physical changes. As I said before, thinking of fasting as a physical challenge can put limits on how well we understand it. It can open your eyes to how principles like restraint, detachment, patience, and discipline can better your life. After you've surpassed the difficult part, tell me how it went (hello@eddieglenn.com). Or, if you'd prefer, don't tell me. Maybe don't tell anybody. Detach yourself from something to prove to you that you can.



Eddie Glenn is a East Harriet resident.

SOUTHWEST Connector

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MOVING MUSEUM

ly popular among children, an age group that tends to be particularly obsessed with planes, trains, and automobiles.

"They think [the streetcar] is a train," said Bill Arends, the Linden Hills stationmaster. "They say, 'Let's go ride the choo-choo.' Well, an electric streetcar does not go 'choo-choo,' but it runs on rails so to kids, it's a train."

That's a boon for business, too. While the Minnesota Streetcar Museum gets funding from donations, member dues, grants, and merchandise sales, their main source of revenue remains fares. It costs \$3 a ride, more for some of the special events.

"If it's big and mechanical and moves, they're crazy for it," Issacs said. "We get all of these little kids dragging their parents down over and over."

The museum hosts weeklong summer camps each year to teach children about the history of streetcars in Minnesota and hopefully get them excited about preserving these historic artifacts for future generations.

Keeping these streetcars running year after year is no small feat. The entire museum is volunteer-run from the streetcar operators to the crews that maintain the buildings, grounds, overhead wire, and track.

The streetcars themselves need a lot of maintenance. The museum has two streetcars currently in operation on the Como-Harriet Streetcar Line, each representing a different era in Minneapolis's public transportation history. Twin Cities Line streetcar No. 1300, built in 1908, is the oldest of the pair, while the other, No. 322, was built in 1946. It ran on the rails until streetcar service in the Twin Cities ended in 1954.

"This is machinery that had a finite life, a 30 to 40-year lifespan," Issacs said. "Well, here we are running it 100 years



Interior and exterior of car No. 1300. Built in 1908, it is the oldest of the pair of street cars traveling the Bde Maka Ska to Lake Harriet route in the summer months. (Photo by Allie Johnson)



Streetcar parts are made by volunteers inside the car barn. (Photo by Allie Johnson)

after it was built."

Every Tuesday and Saturday, a small but dedicated group of volunteers gathers in the car barn, a garage tucked away beneath the bridge at the intersection of Queen Avenue S. and Linden Hills Blvd. Here, they perform the necessary repairs on the streetcars, including replacing worn-out parts.

It's not as easy as going to the store and buying a new one, though. These streetcars are old, and many of the parts aren't interchangeable because they were



Interior and exterior of car No. 322, built in 1946. It ran on the rails until streetcar service in the Twin Cities ended in 1954. (Photo by Allie Johnson)

COMO-HARRIET STREETCAR LINE SCHEDULE

- Saturday, Sunday and holidays, 12:30 - 8:30 p.m., started April 29
- Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m., starting May 26
- Wednesday and Friday, 1- 4 p.m., starting May 31

If you're interested in seeing inside the historic car barn, your best chance will be during Doors Open Minneapolis on May 13-14. More information on the museum and events can be found at trolleyride.org.

made to fit that particular streetcar. That means volunteers like Dennis Stephens and Jim Willmore have to design and make the parts themselves, right in the car barn workshop, relying on old drawings from the museum's library and vintage parts as a reference.

The museum counts many retirees among its members, but even they were only children when the streetcars stopped running. So, how do they know how to do all this?

"We don't," Stephens laughed. "A lot

of us, we're pretty much self-taught. We watch a lot of YouTube videos."

The museum also relies on around 100 volunteers to work as streetcar operators, also known as motormen. It can take up to two months of training to learn how to drive one of these streetcars, and it's much more difficult than it looks.

Just ask Jerry Betz. He started volunteering as a motorman last summer after his wife saw an article about the museum in another local paper and encouraged him to get involved.

"It's not as straightforward as a gas pedal and a steering wheel on a car," Betz said. "I said, 'Oh, it rides on rails so you don't really have to worry about steering, but it's stopping on target and stopping smoothly [that's the challenge]."

Some volunteers, like Ben Franske, started out riding the streetcars as a young kid. Now 40, he has been volunteering at the museum as both a motorman and the museum's technology manager since moving back to Minneapolis years ago.

"Being a college professor, I have summers off. So I can drive [the streetcars] a lot. The first couple of years I was here I would be down three or four times a week driving. If you do that, they start giving you more things to do," he said.

When the pandemic put a brief pause on the streetcar rides, it prompted the Minnesota Streetcar Museum to finally lean into technology, including digitizing its library and starting a YouTube channel where people can watch videos about how streetcars work and see some of the behind-the-scenes restoration work.

Issacs said they're continually trying to expand the reach of the museum and educate more people about the days when people got around Minneapolis by electric trolley.

"We get people all the time that are like, 'Oh, I didn't know this was here.' We get that a lot," he said.

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NO MOW MAY HELPS POLLINATORS

Stumbling over bicycles and skateboards in the back of the garage, your fall is broken by the lawn mower handle. Wrestling your new turf terrorizer out of its winter hold, a vague memory forms of the electric mower sales person having said something about sharpening the blade a few times per year. An hour later with the battery mostly charged, the whirring blade makes its first seasonal spins, ready to start chopping away.



By Russ Henry

The electric mower signaling environmental credentials to supervising neighbors gives you confidence as you set out in your old tennis shoes and tall socks to start chopping through that thick May turf. But what is this? What is this trendy new sign hanging out in your neighbor's lawn proudly proclaiming a fashion statement heretofore unmentionable in dignified communities, "No-Mow May."

Suddenly you're buzzing with a stinging awareness. As you look down at the lawn about to perform what was going to be your first amazing landscaping feat of the season, questions root themselves deep into your subconscious. What do the neighbors know that I don't? Is it possible to be proud of a shaggy lawn? What is that little flower near my shoe? Why don't my socks match? Then the ultimate question hits you like a soft breeze; why continue to chop away, if we could all no-mow May?

With the cities of Edina, Mendota Heights, New Brighton, Roseville, Vadnais Heights, and West St. Paul, all now encour-

aging residents to participate in no-mow May, the trend in the Twin Cities appears to be a hardy perennial event. Originating in the U.K., this wholesome habit hopped the pond when a group of Appleton, Wis. residents lobbied their city council to pass a no-mow May resolution in an effort to protect pollinators.

April showers bring May flowers, and May flowers bring in the bees. Even the lowly dandelion, while not a perfect nutritional source, is an important portion of the diet of many Minnesota pollinators including bees and painted lady butterflies. White clover, another early blooming lawn weed was shown to feed over 56 species of bees, according to a scientific study conducted in Minneapolis parks by James Wolfin, a U of M researcher. Allowing yourself and your mower to rest for the months of April and May will give the pollinators a chance to feed on these common lawn weeds that flower all around us.

Lawns are the largest irrigated crop in America covering approximately 2% of all U.S. land. Barren as a desert, offering no habitat or sustenance for wildlife, manicured lawns without weeds are being recognized as a blight on local ecosystems.

Maintaining the American lawn is a past time with participation rivaled only by sports and religions. Ted Steinberg, author of "American Green: The Obsessive Quest for the Perfect Lawn," informs us that the average homeowner will spend 150 hours per year maintaining the lawn. According to Beyond Pesticides, a national organic advocacy organization, lawns receive up to seven pounds more pesticides per acre annually than agricultural crops and herbicides account for the highest usage of pesticides in



April showers bring May flowers, and May flowers bring in the bees. This bee is feasting on creeping Charlie. (Photo submitted)

the home and garden sector with over 90 million pounds applied on lawns and gardens per year. Herbicides like Roundup® have been shown to cause several harms to bees including disrupting their gut microbiomes, disrupting bumblebees' ability to regulate the temperature of their colonies, and interfering with the growth and survival of honeybee larvae.

Recovering from no-mow May is something that has been little covered in all the excitement from people extolling the virtues of mowing reduction. Some people choose to no-mow for the full season, waiting till all the blooming activity is finished and mowing only one time after the middle of September. The no-mow till September strategy mimics what happens in a natural meadow where grazing might occur in sunny areas after the high heat of the season has passed. For that first mow whether it is in June or at the end of the summer season,

you'll want to raise your lawn mower to its highest possible setting so that you don't hurt the lawn by chopping off more than 1/3 of the turf height at a time. Remember what the mower sales person said and sharpen the mower blade before hacking away at the lawn – a sharp blade makes a clean-cut that will reduce recovery time for your turf.

No-mow-May is not a new concept to cutting edge Minneapolis residents. A healthy percentage of Minneapolis households have been practicing no-mow May long before it was popular. As a landscape designer, I am often asked to remove as much lawn as possible from people's landscapes. With landscapes like no-mow bee lawns, pollinator pocket gardens, prairie meadows, and food forests taking over yard after yard, block after block, the desire for standard turf as a ground cover is quickly wan-





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▶6 NO MOW MAY

ing. Replacing as much of your lawn with native plants as you are comfortable with will ultimately serve pollinators a more robust, productive habitat to call home in your landscape. Instead of restarting your mowing habits in June, consider replacing lawns with native plantings.

No-mow May is a huge time saver and a small step toward a more productive local ecosystem. Allowing grass and weeds to grow out and ultimately replacing lawn with native plantings will turn your turf into habitat for bees, butterflies, birds, and more.

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

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CATCH THE BUZZ

75% of the world's plants and about 30% of human food crops depend on bees and other pollinators to reproduce, but bees are facing extinction here at home and around the



You can BEE a HERO at home! Here are some tips for transitioning to a bee-friendly landscape:

- Choose native perennials, trees, and shrubs that bloom throughout the season.
- Over-seed your existing lawn with bee lawn mix - early spring, late summer and early fall.
- Eliminate pesticides and synthetic fertilizers.
- Turn off your irrigation system. Native plants do better without pampering.
- Reduce mowing. Mow just once at the end of the season, late August is best.
- Schedule a consultation with our designers. Begin your transition to a bee friendly landscape today!

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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.



duck hunting, Lake Harriet style. (Illustration by WACSO)

'SUMMERTIME ACOUSTIC' RETURNS TO LINDEN HILLS

TEAMING UP FOR GOOD

In the spring of 2020, when the social distancing mandate was putting restaurants and shops out of business and driving the rest of us nuts, a team of friends pulled together to create a wonderful thing for the neighborhood.



By **Larry LaVercombe**

Everett & Charlie Art Gallery owner Suzie Marty, Harriet Brasserie owners Fernando Silvo and Kalinka Mazurkevich, and building owner/climate activist Felicity Britton figured out a way to help the businesses in Linden Hills while also providing a public space for neighbors to safely socialize in a comfortable and inviting outdoor setting.

The Brasserie is next door to Felicity's building that houses the art gallery, as well as the Wild Rumpus Bookstore. It already had a lovely outdoor patio – but it only seats on a few tables. So, during COVID-19, people started to congregate outside on the benches near the sidewalk. As those benches began to overflow every night, Felicity decided to open her entire driveway to the cause.

Suzie Marty stepped up to decorate the brick alley wall with paintings from her gallery, and then – the icing on the cake – she started inviting her friends to play music at the driveway curb cut to entertain all of us desperate for connection and live music.

Linden Hills Summertime Acoustic was born.

Every Thursday, Friday, and Saturday evening, and Sunday brunch, shoppers



HEAR MUSIC IN LINDEN HILLS

Thursday, Friday, or Saturday evening from 5:30-7:30 p.m., or any Sunday brunch from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. between May 4 and Oct. 1 outside Everett & Charlie Art Gallery, 2720 W. 43rd St.

Find the full schedule online at www.swConnector.com

ing-quality classical and modern finger-picking from Greg Herriges and Elgin Foster. Django Reinhardt-style guitar work from Ryan Picone, and Latin guitar from Mike Salovich. Cello music from Michelle Kinney. You might hear accordion or washboard.

Singing? Do you like singing? Clouds So Swift be playing and singing acoustic versions of American music from early Appalachia though 40s and 50s jazz standards – and everything in between. And beloved Linden Hills House of Music owner and friend-to-rockers-of-all-ages Brad McLemore will sing and play acoustic guitar on both cover and originals.

And, that's just in the first month!

On Sundays, violinist RayCurt Johnson will play every other Sunday brunch; while Dave Dvorak, Peter Ruddy, Vittorio Raimondi will perform on Sundays in between.

And on Thursdays, the Team Larry House Band (two guitars, harmonica and fiddle) will welcome special guests all summer long. Drop by to see local singers roll out a song or two, or to hear musicians sitting in or and getting backup from the House Band.

All summer long... Whether you are shopping for art or jewelry or clothing or gifts, you can stroll through and listen to a tune or two. And if you don't want to buy a thing but just want to meet neighbors and listen to music – all are welcome to stop by.



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.

and diners heading toward Tilia, Martina, Naviya, Zumbro, Sebastian Joe's or the Brasserie will be treated to a slice of what

music lovers know and love about Minneapolis.

This summer, you will hear record-

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END OF ERA AT CITY HALL

By **Iric Nathanson**

Lisa Goodman is not ready to relax and coast through her last year at City Hall now that she has decided to give up her 7th Ward council seat.

"That's not my style," said Goodman, the council's longest serving member. "I don't feel as if a great burden has been lifted off my shoulders. I going to continue to give this job 110% of my energy, just as I have always done, until my very last hour in office."

Goodman was first elected in 1998 as a self-described Wellstone Democrat, representing a district that now covers the upscale Lake District and a large section of downtown.

"Back then, I was the lefty that people in my neighborhood were afraid of," Goodman told the Star Tribune. "Some viewed me as too left-leaning when I first ran." Now a City Hall veteran, Goodman is considered part of the Council's more conservative or moderate faction. "Although I probably have become a bit more moderate over the years, I feel like I have stood still and the world has changed around me," she said.

During her 26 years in office, Goodman has gained a reputation as a tireless worker who looks after the interests of her 7th Ward constituents. "Lisa Goodman has shown amazing stamina and enthusiasm in her years on the Minneapolis City Council," said one long-time supporter, Don Ostrom. "She never lost interest while attending an endless number of council sessions, committee meetings, neighborhood gatherings, and other events."

Goodman may have maintained good relations with her constituents but her relations with her City Hall colleagues have, at times, been contentious. "(Lisa's) greatest show of respect is her willingness to debate with you, exchange a few strong words, and arrive at a better conclusion — one that has been enhanced by the spirit-



Lisa Goodman (right) introduces Minneapolis Police Chief Brian O'Hara during a Lunch with Lisa event. These monthly events have featured a range of topics and speakers. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)

ed discourse," said Mayor Jacob Frey.

Recently the Connector engaged in "spirited discourse" with Lisa Goodman. Here are excerpts from that conversation.

Q. During your years on the council, you have played a major role in shaping Minneapolis's development policies and programs as chair of the Community Development Committee. How has the city's approach to development changed during that time?

A. I think the city has made real strides in how we approach community development. When I first got on the Council, we were spending more public money on parking ramps than we were on affordable housing. And we were not doing enough to hold developers accountable when we made city subsidies available to them. When we included a housing affordability requirement in a development agreement, too often it only required a very minimum effort which didn't reach people with the greatest need. Now that has changed with more stringent affordability requirements. Over the last 20 years, we have used the city's Affordable Housing Trust Fund to leverage a billion dollars of housing investments in the city.

On the commercial front, our efforts to rescue and restore downtown's historic theaters have been a great success. Since the theaters have been restored, their economic impact is well over \$1 billion.

And this year, we were able to reach an important milestone. Working with our non-profit partner, the Hennepin Theater Trust, the city bonds used to finance the restoration were paid off 15 years early.

Q. This year Minneapolis City government has undergone two major

structural changes. As a result of the 2021 charter amendment, the roles and responsibilities of the mayor and the council have been clarified. In addition, the council and the mayor have established a new Office of Community Safety to oversee the city's various public safety functions including the Police Department. What is your assessment of these structural changes?

A. The charter amendment strengthening the role of the mayor was an important step forward. Our previous hybrid system, with overlapping authority between the mayor and the council led to lack of accountability in City Hall. We saw that problem play out in the aftermath of George Floyd's murder. Now the division of responsibility between the mayor and the council is more clear cut. The mayor has operational authority over for city government while the council's role primarily involves policy making. But there are kinks that need to be worked out with the new system. One of those involves constituent service. As a council member, I see constituent service as a key responsibility, but not all my colleagues view their job the same way. Some want 311 to handle all their constituents calls. But 311 doesn't actually solve problems. All they can do is refer calls to the appropriate department. But those of us on the council have no way of knowing whether our constituents problems actually get solved.

That needs to change.

The new Office of Community Safety will make a real difference in City Hall if it can break down the silos in our current public safety agencies. But if the new office becomes just an oversight group that reviews the works of the police department and the other public safety agencies, the new structure will not live up to the expect-

tations we have set for it.

Q. Crime continues to be a front-page issue in Minneapolis, particularly crime perpetrated by young people. Does the city need a new approach to combating juvenile crime?

A. The city is facing a serious crime problem, but the city's role in combating that problem is only one piece of a very complicated problem. The real issue is with the juvenile justice system in Hennepin County.

Our police officers can keep arresting the young people who are doing the carjacking and stealing the Hyundais and Kias. But then they are released into a juvenile justice system that does little to deter future criminal actions. Fourteen- and 15-year-olds know they can keep committing these crimes because they only receive a slap on the wrist when they are caught. Carjacking is defined as a property crime so the penalties are less. That should change. Carjacking needs to be placed in the same category as armed robbery.

Right now, the victim does not get much consideration when these crimes are prosecuted. That's not right. It is not just upper income people who have their cars stolen. Low-income people are also victims. Losing their means of transportation can be very disruptive for them. They need their cars to get to work and get their children to daycare. We don't consider their needs when we prosecute these types of crimes.

Q. The pandemic and the civil unrest in 2020 have delivered a double blow to downtown Minneapolis. Is there a way forward for restoring downtown's economic and social vitality?

A. Downtown has received a lot of negative press. Too often media reports make it sound as if downtown is dying, but that is not the case. Office occupancy is a 62% of pre-COVID-19 levels — which is substantially better than the most central city business district where the return rate is only about 40%.

Downtown is no longer what it once was when department stores lined the Nicollet Mall, but it is serving a new role now. Fifty thousand people live downtown. They have daily service needs and downtown businesses are starting to meet those needs. When I first came to City Hall, there were no grocery stores downtown. Now there are five of them.

It is true that downtown is facing some difficult challenges, but those challenges are providing an opportunity to think about downtown and its needs in new ways. Transit is one area where we need a new approach. I think we should take busses off the Nicollet Mall, and make it a true pedestrian mall.

Downtown still has a lot of strengths. It is resilient.

LISTEN

STOP | THINK | FEEL

We could talk about the opposing sides... Those in favor of gun control and those who are not. Those who are quick to the draw and those who wouldn't dream of owning the "g" word. Those who condemn



By **Abha Karnick**

racist behavior and those who ignore it.

We could talk about bylaws and politics... When the Constitution and rights to own arms was first written and signed, it was giving permission for Americans to own muskets.

Muskets.

Muskets that take over a minute to load, several seconds to fire, and weigh approximately 20 pounds.

We could talk about the shift in revolutionary weaponry, what "arming yourself" means to citizens today, what shifting these laws to better align with the modern world's weapons could look like, what it will look like if we do not do this.

We could even talk about the statistics... The clear, factual statement that gun violence disproportionately and over-

whelmingly hurts communities of color. It is undeniable and irrefutable. While Black Americans made up 12.5 percent of the U.S. population in 2022, they were the victims in 61 percent of all gun homicides nation-wide, according to the Center for American Progress. Economic struggles, poverty, housing issues, job insecurity, the justice system, and so many additional factors play into why this statistic slaps us in the face time and time again.

But in the moment following the decision to take a life or attempt to, we should beckon our ears to hear only the gunshot's echoes. Only the family's cries and the mother's grief, a hollow chamber that will forever sit inside of her. We should feel the sting of righteous anger and continue to listen for songs of re-

demption and truth, justice and mercy. The bullet that leaves each gun, carrying with it the loss of possibility, justice, and a life, keeps on going long after it hits someone. It travels through the family's forever-changed lives, the community, and every other Black man who daily fears it is his. turn. next.

So, talk as much as you'd like. But only until we, as a nation, truly hear one another's grief and pain, then and only then will a society arrive at change.

Abha Karnick is a south Minneapolis resident with East Indian roots who graduated from Hamline University in 2019. Her passion lies in storytelling and finding moments to capture.

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LINDEN HILLS

NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

BY Becky Allen executive director



LINDEN HILLS NEIGHBORHOOD GARAGE SALE MAY 20

Every year, Linden Hills hosts one of the city's largest garage sales with 40-50 residents participating. This year, treasure seekers should mark their calendar for Saturday, May 20 from 8 a.m. - 3 p.m. After May 8, find a garage sale map at lindenhills.org/garage-sale. Hope to see you there!

LHINC AND LINDEN HILLS RESTAURANTS TEAM UP TO BENEFIT COMMUNITY

Linden Hills Neighborhood Council (LHiNC) is excited to announce the return

SPRING EVENTS IN LINDEN HILLS

of its Taste of Linden Hills fundraiser on Tuesday, May 23, 6:30-9 p.m. at St. Thomas the Apostle Gymnasium, 2914 W 44th St. This fun, upscale evening celebrates the amazing food and restaurants of Linden Hills and raises money for the Linden Hills Neighborhood Grants program.

Guests will experience tastes from the diverse and delicious local restaurants that make Linden Hills a food lover's destination - including Martina, Tilia, Rosalia, Harriet Brasserie, Naviya's, Bread & Pickle, Cafe Ceres, Old Southern BBQ, the Linden Hills Co-op, Great Harvest and Coffee & Tea, Ltd. Guests will also enjoy beer from Wooden Ship Brewing Company, wine and entertainment by local musicians.

Tickets are \$65, include a taste from all participating restaurants and are now available at www.lindenhills.org/tasteofLH.

All proceeds from the event support

LHiNC grants, which are available to organizations or projects that make Linden Hills a better place to live and work. In past years, the event raised between \$7,000-\$9,000 and funded projects including: scholarships for Southwest High School students, Minneapolis Pops Orchestra concerts at the bandshell, ASL interpreters for Minnesota Streetcar Museum events, diverse book collections for neighborhood schools, the Linden Hills Chamber Orchestra, bocce courts at Linden Hills Park, Southwest High School music and theater programs, community bike racks and more.

Interested in volunteering? Volunteer shifts are two hours; volunteers can then enjoy the rest of the event for free. Sign up today at lindenhills.org/TasteofLH.

Contact LHiNC at 612-926-2906 or becky.allen.lhinc@gmail.com.

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

NEIGHBORHOOD DAY MAY 13

Minneapolis residents can picture the neighborhood they want to live in and then help make that vision a reality. Many of Minneapolis' 70 neighborhood organizations are holding board member elections or other activities for their neighbors May 13.

GARDEN TOOL SWAP MAY 13

Bring the garden tools you don't use to the garden tool swap event May 13, or take something useful home with you. A free Backyard Composting Workshop will be held the same day at Powderhorn Park from 10-11 a.m. RSVPs requested. Garden Tool Swap 9 a.m.-noon Saturday, May 13. Seven participating parks: Folwell, North Commons, Logan, Longfellow, Powderhorn, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Armatage.

5TH POLICE PRECINCT OPEN HOUSE MAY 17

The 5th Police Precinct Open House is Wednesday, May 17, 2023 from 4-6 p.m. at the 5th Police Precinct Building (3101 Nicollet Ave S.). Attend to learn more about the police department, and enjoy free food.

COLORWHEEL GALLERY SUMMER EXHIBIT

"30 years Reflect Back/30 Years Inspired Forward" will feature the work of ColorWheel Gallery owner Tammy Ortegon May 20 to July 8. Despite owning ColorWheel Gallery (319 W 46th St.), this is Ortegon's first solo exhibit there. In the last 30 years, the gallery has featured the work of 800 other local artists. Now in her 50s, Ortegon will be exploring various materials, techniques and styles that have influenced and inspired her through the years. An opening reception is set for Saturday, May 20 from 2-8 p.m. An artist talk will be on Wednesday, May 31, 4-8 p.m. with an Exhibit Closing Party with community art making and fun surprises on Saturday, July 8, 2-7 p.m.

RAIN TAXI 25TH ANNIVERSARY

Rain Taxi turned 25 in 2020. They couldn't celebrate at the time, but will honor their silver anniversary in style on Wednesday, May 10, 7 p.m. at Granada Theater (3022 Hennepin Ave.). Attendees will be treated to a showcase of short musical performances and literary readings by a diverse array of local artists - plus the return of the Raintini, its signature cocktail, and other food and drink at the Granada Theater, a venue passionate about bringing life back to the beloved Uptown neighborhood in Minneapolis.

BUNGALOW CLUB HOME TOUR

The Twin Cities Bungalow Club's annual celebration of early 20th century houses will take place Saturday, May 20, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. There are five homes on this year's self-guided tour - two in St. Paul, two in Minneapolis and one in Maplewood. They range from snug bungalows to larger Arts & Crafts style houses. Pick up a tour map with addresses any time after 10 a.m. on May 20, at the first house, located at 1036 Goodrich Avenue in St. Paul. Bungalow Club members free; non-members \$10.

MEET NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF OUR STREETS MINNEAPOLIS



José Antonio Zayas Cabán has been named the new executive director for Our Streets Minneapolis. OSM works to make streets places where people can easily and comfortably walk, bike, roll, and use public transit in the Twin Cities. Zayas Cabán, who has been with the organization since 2021 and resides in North Minneapolis, previously served as advocacy director for the nonprofit, building campaigns for transportation changes that address the unjust transportation planning decisions of the past and the current harms of car-centric transportation planning. An example of this work is Twin Cities Boulevard, a campaign proposal for a highway-to-boulevard conversion in the 7.5-mile stretch of the I-94 corridor between downtown Minneapolis and Saint Paul. Zayas Cabán also serves as a board member at Streets.mn and The Alliance. He is a current Mapping Prejudice Project Community Fellow and resident at the University of Minnesota Liberal Arts Engagement Hub. Outside of the transportation space, Zayas Cabán is a GRAMMY® Nominated Artist. He is also on faculty at St. Joseph's School of Music and was awarded the 2021 McKnight Artist Fellowship for his work on producing albums with music focused on present-day social issues and the relationship between his home country Puerto Rico and the United States Empire.

CITY BRIEFS

WILLIAM BERRY PARKWAY

William Berry Parkway closed to all motorized vehicle traffic on April 24 for road resurfacing and utility work. It is not expected to open again until at least May 26. The bike/walk trail is expected to remain open during construction.

BRYN MAWR PARK

Construction resumed at Bryn Mawr Meadows Park in late April, and is expected to be complete by the end of June. The three fields in the southwest area, the exterior perimeter trail and cricket practice area, will remain open for the duration of the project. Some athletic fields and other areas are fenced off so that the grass and plants get a good start and grow through summer. Work will also be done to connect the newly constructed water quality ponds to storm sewer pipes under Laurel Avenue, and put in four new pedestrian ramps for improved access to the park and along Morgan Avenue.

LAND USE PLAN AMENDMENTS

On April 24, the city's planning commission held a public hearing on the proposed land use plan that will further implement the Mpls 2040 plan. After tak-

ing testimony, commissioners approved amendments to allow small scale corner stores and offices into more residential areas of the city provided they are on corner lots in urban neighborhood 2 and 3 (UN2 and UN3) districts. They also voted to allow commercial uses to be 20,000 square feet in more areas to make it more likely grocery stores could locate there. The plan now goes to the council for final approval after additional amendments can be made.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS CONFERENCE AND GREEN ZONE SUMMIT

People can sign up now for the 2023 Community Connections Conference that will run concurrently with the Green Zone Summit from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturday, June 10 at the Minneapolis Convention Center, Hall A, Lower Level. The Community Connections Conference is a free annual event that offers workshops on a variety of subjects including renters' rights, responsible development, building relationships with youths, recycling and organics, climate action and more, as well as an exhibit hall with more than 100 organizations participating. Pre-registration is available on the city website.

PARKLETS AND STREET CAFES

The city is seeking applications for

parklets and street cafés for the 2023 season. Neighborhood organizations, businesses, nonprofits, community organizations, and special service districts are invited to apply. Street-level businesses can apply for a street café where you can seat and serve your customers. The deadline to apply to host one of the three city-owned parklets is May 7. All other applications can be applied for any time.

WARD 7 CANDIDATE FORUM ON ENERGY

There will be a Ward 7 city council candidate forum on energy and climate justice hosted by the group, Community Power, on Tuesday, May 9, 6 to 7:30 p.m. at the Loring Community Arts Center 1382 Willow St. The candidates who are expected to attend include Katie Cashman, Kenneth Foxworth, Mark Globus, and Scott Graham.

DFL CAUCUSES AND CONVENTIONS

The upcoming Democratic Farmer Labor (DFL) Ward conventions for May will be held 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; and Ward 11 on May 21, online. See <https://minneapolisdf.org> for more information.

Briefs compiled by Cam Gordon.

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believes in buying local and shopping local. She has held various positions over the years that promote local artists and tourism, including as an art buyer for Love for Minnesota Company, artisan manager at St. Croix Promotions and Retail, and docent at MIA. She is the owner

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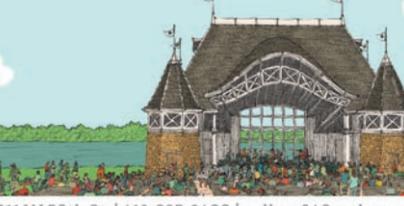
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