

SOUTHWEST Connector

NEWS FOR EVERYONE, DELIVERED TO EVERYONE • JUNE 15, 2023 • VOL. 2 • NO. 11 • 24,000 CIRCULATION



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LEARNING STEM ON THE FLY



Washburn High School students experiment and problem solve while flying micro drones

By **Tesha M. Christensen**

Teens at Washburn High School are learning STEM on the fly.

At their after school meet-ups for the Tiny Whoops drone team, they are learning programming for robotics, electronics, aerodynamics, and more.

Flying the Tiny Whoops drones requires fine motor skills that take some time to hone. Drone pilots learn how electrical systems work and repair their own drones, pointed out Peter Gruhl, who teaches drones and engineering classes at Washburn High. They learn how to program and configure drones. They experiment and problem solve.

The micro brushless-motor quadcopters are under eight centimeters in width and length, and just five centimeters in height (not including the antenna). The drones have a camera with mount and video transmitter onboard, and a transmitter and video receiver/display unit at the pilot end.



Washburn Racing Drone Team member Alex Pasdo maneuvers his eight-centimeter-wide Tiny Whoops drone through a course after school, learning skills he can apply to real-world jobs. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)

E LINE WILL LINK SOUTHWEST TO 6 OTHER BRT ROUTES

Met Transit's goal for bus rapid transit line along Hennepin and France avenues is to upgrade a busy transit corridor

By **Cam Gordon**

The Metropolitan Council is finalizing design plans for their new E Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) line this summer. With construction planned to begin next spring and service starting in 2025, the focus this year is on the station designs and roadway improvements.

The new BRT line aims to provide faster, more reliable service along what is now mostly the route 6 bus line. The line will run from the Westgate Station in Prospect Park near the University of Minnesota to downtown Minneapolis and through southwest Minneapolis mostly on Henne-

pin and France avenues. It will end at the Southdale Transit Center near 66th St and York Ave in Edina.

"I am very excited about the continued build-out of our Bus Rapid Transit network, including the E Line," said District 5 Metropolitan Council Member Anjali Cameron. According to Cameron, the 6 is one of the city's busiest routes. Prior to the pandemic it typically had over 8,000 rides each weekday, and she expects ridership to grow with the opening of the E Line. "In BRT corridors, buses often carry 20-45% of the people traveling in vehicles, but make up less than 2-3% of vehicle traffic. As a result," she said, "transit serves as a more reliable and convenient option in these high-traffic corridors, both for riders and everyone else using these roadways."

The new E Line will be one of the Met Council's planned network of 12 BRT lines that they hope to have in operation by 2030. Currently there are five lines running, with two more (the B and E lines) set to begin operation in southwest Min-



About 44% of the people within a quarter mile of a BRT line identify as Black, Indigenous or People of Color, and about 13% of nearby households do not have access to a vehicle today."

Anjali Cameron

neapolis by 2025. (Read story on B Line along Lake St. in the May 18 Connector.) When the 165-mile-long network is fully built, a quarter of the region's residents (580,000 people) and 600,000 jobs will be within a quarter mile of a BRT line, according to a council report in February.

"About 44% of the people within a quarter mile of a BRT line identify as Black, Indigenous or People of Color, and about 13% of nearby households do not have access to a vehicle today," said Cameron.

SPEEDIER AND MORE RELIABLE

BRT lines usually have fewer stops than regular bus routes and



RISE & REMEMBER

3rd annual event brings joy, solidarity to GF Square

By **Jill Boogren**

Embracing the community-centered theme "Ubuntu," a term from South Africa that loosely means "I am because we are," family, friends and supporters gathered May 25-27, 2023 for the annual Rise & Remember celebration to honor George Floyd and uplift one another.

Floyd's murder at the hands of Minneapolis police continues to bring people together from across vast networks – and even oceans – to 38th and Chicago, and the same was true on the third anniversary of his death. The three-day celebration welcomed visitors, including Ndaba Mandela, grandson of South African President



STEM ON THE FLY

"There's a lot of stuff involved," said team captain Wesley Hearn, who flies as "Grandpa Stanley" in the Youth Drone Sports Championship (YSDC) league. Each pilot needs first-person view (FPV) goggles to see the flight path, a flight controller, a drone, motors, receiver, and batteries.

"A lot of what we do is wait for batteries to charge," said Hearn. They use a particular type of battery that shouldn't sit charged, and, once it is used, it is meant to be discharged quickly. This means they need a lot of batteries.

"In drone flying, you learn a lot about electronics and a little bit about flight mechanics," said Hearn. "Soldering is a big thing."

They start with the basics of the drone and how to take care of it. It can take some time to figure out how to get your drone in the air and keep it there. Unlike larger drones that are line of sight (meaning you look up at it, see where it is going, and control it from the ground), the 5-inch mini quads are first-person view (FPV) drones and a pilot needs to get used to controlling it remotely via a screen in their goggles or on a monitor. "You see what the drone sees in real time," explained Hearn.

"It's really hard to control at the start," said team member Anders Geye. Once they get the hang of getting it up, they begin to learn how to adjust the speed and height in order to make the turns and tricks needed to get through a course.

Every Wednesday during the school year from 3:15 to 5 p.m., the team practiced on a new Micro Track Smash course set up in room 120D at Washburn High School.

The Micro Track Smash courses offer real-life racing in a basement, school classroom, or any 10-foot by 20-foot space versus teams around the country and across the globe. Participants create an official YSDC-designed track using PVC pipe from a shopping list, and then use the YSDC mobile app to track lap times. After a Micro Track Smash session, the participant uploads a digital recording of their flights from their headset for verification, instantly posting their time to the national leader boards.

The tiny size of the micro drones make them ideal for flying indoors, through shelves, and under desks – and also work outdoors. They are known for their acrobatic performance, and are capable of flips, rolls and fast climbs due to their power to weight ratio. They are



Washburn Racing Drone Team members include (left to right) Wes Hearn, Sophia Gaylord, Declan Migely, Lyla White, Alex Pasdo, Anders Geye, Charlie Laughinghouse and teacher Peter Gruhl. The team recently earned the Minnesota State Teams championship (2 pilot group). Wes "Grandpa_Stanley" earned second and Alex "Spazdo7" took third place in individual racing. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)



Wes Hearn, aka "Grandpa_Stanley," works to repair his tiny whoops drone during a YSDC event at Sabathani Tech Center. He was assisted by other teams, who offered supplies and tips. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)



Marty Weatherall of the Youth Sports Drone Championship makes an announcement. Behind him, Aurora Pass and Gabriel Pass work to livestream the event. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)

efficient, with up to four minutes of flight from a tiny battery. They are inexpensive to purchase and repair, many on the market are ready to fly, and they're portable.

Washburn team members include Hearn, Alex Pasdo, Lyla White, Ben Olney, Sam Giebink, Samuel Jones, Carson Bulliford, Rosie Bernhardt, Elijah Cox, Anders

Geye, Charlie Laughhouse, Declan Migely, and Sophia Gaylord. Other local schools with teams include Apple Valley High



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FROM GYM TO SIM AND BACK AGAIN

After soaring from two teams to 20 teams in its first few months, YSDC quickly pivoted student pilots from building and racing real drones at school to racing virtual drones from home in VelociDrone due to COVID-19. Same kids. Same controllers. Just in a sim.

Drones can be assembled, flown, fixed, and flown again safely at school OR at home, and competitions could carry on remotely via the Micro Track Smashes (MTS) and first-person-view (FPV) simulators.

Kid Legends is the simulator-only level of the YDSC designed for grades 2-5.

The main level of the YDSC features high school and middle school students building drones and competing in real life (IRL) and in the simulator.

And middle schoolers absolutely belong at the same level as high schoolers. It's not unusual at all for younger pilots to outperform older ones.

There is also a Collegiate Drone Sports Championship group for college students, and an Elite Drone Sports Championship group.

The YDSC's new Scorching Summer 2023 season kicks off in mid-June with weekly Thursday Night Flights simulator races in VelociDrone and new Micro Track Smash national leader board competitions happening twice each month IRL (in real life). Form a Quad Club in your area to participate and learn to fly this summer in preparation for the YDSC Flying Fall Season next school year.

More at www.youthdronesports.org.



Washburn Drone team members (left to right) Wes Stearn, Charlie Lighthouse and Alex Pasdo practice after school on a Micro Track Smash course built of PVC pipes. The course changes each week. Pilots can also practice on the virtual platform, the VelociDrone. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)



Declan Migely supports other pilots as they hone their drone flying skills. Next year, Minneapolis Public Schools will add a new drone robotics course for this emerging field in a completely new facility with a two-story drone flying space. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)

'THESE DRONES CAN TAKE BEATINGS'

Hearn and Alex Pasdo know the most about drones on the team, and answer questions the newer and less experienced members have.

"These drones can take beatings," said Pasdo. "They can go right into walls at 20 miles per hour and be ok."

He estimates that half of their meet-ups is programming and the other half flying. There is an in-person competition about every three weeks, and the races are broken up into three seasons during the school year - fall, winter and spring.

"It's a nice thing to do," said Charlie Lighthouse. "You get to hang out with your friends."

"It's super relaxed," agreed Hearn. "We're all friends."

Declan Migely's mom wanted him to join a club, and he was glad to discover that this one wasn't a stressful activity.

Sophia Gaylord is one of the most recent additions to the Washburn Drone Team. "I think it's cool," she said. "I want to have the motor skills. It just seems like it will help with other things. I like competitions best. I'm not very good at physical sports."

"It's exciting when you learn how to do something with the drones because you feel smart," remarked Lyla White, who joined the team last year. "It's hard to do. It takes a lot of skill."

For new racers, she has one word of advice. "If you have long hair, tie it up." They've had a few mishaps where hair got caught in drone propellers.

At one race, Hearn was the only member of his team in attendance. His drone broke, and the pilots from other teams offered him various parts and advice to get it back up and running.

"We have kids that work well together but still want to win," observed Grul.

NEW DRONE COURSE COMING AT MPS

Next year, Minneapolis Public Schools (MPS) will add a new drone robotics course for this emerging field in a completely new facility with a two-story flying space.

"There is a lot of emerging demands for drones in industry like surveying and assessment for the energy industry, communications industry, roads and bridges construction," remarked Gabriel Pass, who will be teaching the new robotic course. "There are some fun facts like in the agriculture industry, the career that is in the intersection of highest paying/highest demand is a drone pilot."

▶ [MORE PHOTOS @ SWCONNECTOR.COM](https://www.swconnector.com)

▶ **STEM ON THE FLY**

School and Academy of Holy Angels. Tiny Turbines began as a homeschool team focused on empowering female pilots and grew with its members, which includes college sophomore and team captain Aurora Pass. As her skills have grown, Pass has started providing live-streams of the competitions, which are posted on the YSDC YouTube account.

The YSDC has grown considerably in the last few years, and pilots from across

the United States use an online simulator, the VelociDrone, to fly together.

FUN THROUGH HANDS-ON SKILLS

Hearn's older brother, Mac, was on the drone team before he was. It was during COVID-19, and Hearn said he was looking for something to do, so he joined, too. At the time, Youth Sports Drone Championships (YSDC) had rented a third-floor space at the Mall of America and held regular practices at the RdyTech-Go! space. "It was super cool there," recalled Hearn. "We had a lot of fun every

Saturday."

For the final race of the season that year, there were multiple courses set up throughout the mall, which was emptier than usual due to the various regulations around COVID-19. "We got to walk around the mall while flying," said Hearn.

A junior this year, Hearn is interested in aerodynamics and electrical engineering, and plans to pursue a career in that area after high school. He's glad for the chance to gain some hands-on skills now, while having fun doing it.



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Due June 19, Publishes July 6

Summer in the City

*Due June 19, Publishes July 6
Due July 24, Publishes Aug. 3*

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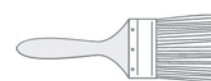


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MINNEAPOLIS CAN SHOCK THE WORLD

The city has an opportunity to make a great comeback.

Everyone loves a redemption story. After a few rough years, Minneapolis has a chance to write one. The city is in recovery mode and charting a new path forward, but not everyone is convinced we are on the right path.



By Eric Ortiz

There are a lot of doubters. Like a sports team facing a heavy favorite, Minneapolis is a big underdog with long odds and relentless questions.

Can Minneapolis solve its economic issues?

Can Minneapolis solve its social issues?

Can Minneapolis solve its political issues?

At this point, Minneapolis has a lot of parallels to the greatest underdog sports teams.

Remember the 2007 New York Giants? No one outside New York gave them a chance against the undefeated New England Patriots in Super Bowl XLI. Even some people in New York were resigned to a second-place finish.

The Giants were a 12-point underdog. The 18-0 Patriots had Tom Brady, Randy Moss, and Bill Belichick. They just needed 60 minutes to seal their fate as the best football team in NFL history.

But a funny thing happened on the way to Patriots immortality. Eli Manning, David Tyree and the Giants shocked the world and beat New England 17-14 to be-



A student sits for a video interview in a classroom at DeLaSalle High School in Minneapolis. (Photo by Alex Simpson/Unsplash)

come Super Bowl champions.

How about the 1983 North Carolina State men's basketball team? Everyone thought the Wolfpack had a nice team and a nice head coach (Jim Valvano). But after they reached the championship game in the 1983 NCAA tournament, all those people thought N.C. State would be no match for the stacked Houston Cougars, a team led by future NBA Hall of Famers Hakeem Olajuwon and Clyde Drexler.

All those people were wrong. N.C. State won 54-52 on a last-second Lorenzo Charles dunk, and pandemonium ensued. To this day, Jim Valvano running around the court looking for someone to hug remains one of the most iconic moments in sports history.

Closer to home, the Minnesota Twins weren't given much chance to win the 1991 World Series. After going 74-88 in 1990 and finishing last in the AL West, they were 100-1 shots to win the whole thing when World Series odds were first set at the end of the 1990 season. Those odds improved

to 75-1 to start the season after the team signed Jack Morris, Chili Davis and Mike Pagliarulo.

We all know what happened next. The Twins put together a magical year that culminated with Jack Morris pitching a 10-inning, 1-0 shutout to beat the Atlanta Braves in seven games in the 1991 World Series.

Five of the games were decided by one run, four were decided in the final at-bat, and three went into extra innings. In 2003, ESPN called that 1991 championship the "Greatest of All Time" in their "World Series 100th Anniversary" countdown. Many other outlets did the same.

Sports history is filled with many incredible underdog stories. But one underdog sports story stands above all the others — the U.S. men's hockey team at the 1980 Olympics in Lake Placid, New York.

That American hockey team was filled with amateurs and college players. They were going up against the best hockey team on the planet, the Soviet Union. The Russians had won four straight Olympic gold

medals, and their roster included some of the best players in the world.

It would have been easy for the U.S. to roll over. Instead, they delivered a 4-3 win in an amazing upset that produced one of the most famous calls in sports history as Al Michaels screamed: "Do you believe in miracles? Yes!"

U.S. coach Herb Brooks believed, and he got his team to believe with one of the most famous and inspiring pregame speeches.

"Great moments are born from great opportunity, and that's what you have here tonight, boys. That's what you've earned here tonight. One game. If we played them 10 times, they might win nine. But not this game, not tonight. Tonight, we skate with them. Tonight we stay with them, and we shut them down because we can. Tonight, we are the greatest hockey team in the world. You were born to be hockey players — every one of you. And you were meant to be here tonight. This is your time. Their time is done. It's over. I'm sick and tired of hearing about what a great hockey team the Soviets have. Screw 'em. This is your time. Now go out there and take it!"

The 1980 U.S. hockey team took it, then went on to beat Finland and take home the gold.

Today, it's time for Minneapolis to shine. We are the underdogs. We can prove the doubters wrong. We have an opportunity to shock the world with a great comeback.

It's up to us to make it happen. Do you believe in miracles? Yes.



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.

I SEE SIGNS OF SPRING IN MY LIFE

STORIES & JOURNEYS

Dear Reader: This column is about signs of spring showing up in my life experiences and awareness. So, buckle up! If you have read this far you have taken the plunge into the river (flow) of life experiences which is Stories and Journeys.



By Donald L. Hammen

A RABBIT AND A DREAM. ANIMALS AS TEACHERS IN MY LIFE.

This spring, a rabbit keeps appearing in the yard next to my house. One sign of spring. It appears to be the same rabbit. It keeps showing up in the same place. My neighbor and Messenger reader Julie thinks it is looking for a place to nest. I am experiencing feelings of kinship with this rabbit. I juxtapose this real life rabbit experience with a rabbit dream I experienced recently.

In the dream, I am in the kitchen of my house. I am standing at the sink

with the cutting board out. On the cutting board I am holding down a rabbit. I am about to cut off its head. Suddenly, I realize I can't do it. Something deep inside of me causes me to stop. I cannot take the life of this living being. I proceed to set the rabbit free. I have just been reminded of a core piece of my identity coming from my life experience with animals.

Lessons taught to me by animals showing up in my life as teachers. My first cat, Peepers, taught me that I am not the superior species only a different species. With Peepers I discovered the reality of the human-animal bond. Later at the U of M Center for Spirituality and Healing I would learn about the human-animal bond as an alternative healing modality.

While browsing in the book store as a volunteer back in the day at the Animal Humane Society, I discovered and was inspired by a book about St. Frances of Assisi, a friend to all creatures. And from the animals (cats) in my life, I experienced and learned unconditional love. I recently found a bookmark I had picked up one day at Lake Harriet Veterinary where I used to take my cats for treatment, including acupuncture. It contains the words,

"Until one has loved an animal, a part of one's soul remains unawakened." - Anatole France

The core lesson for me is the trust of an animal is sacred.

HILARITY AT THE STATE CAPITOL

Another sign of spring for me is the current Minnesota legislative session is came to a close May 22. I watched it on TPT week days. Now I have a reputation for being a source of levity/hilarity in people's lives. I have experienced hilarity in some of the floor speeches I have listened to coming from the Minnesota Senate. One, in particular, that stood out was delivered by Senator Steve Drazkowski. In a floor speech, he asserted, without evidence, that the Minnesota AFL-CIO and affiliated unions are guilty of money laundering. I found this assertion to be hilarious. I find many of his assertions to be hilarious.

I am a member of the Minneapolis Regional Retirees Council (AFL-CIO). I like to think we would know about any money laundering going on.

CELEBRATING FARMER'S MARKET OPENING

Midtown Farmers Market opened for 2023 on May 6. Another sign of spring. I'm celebrating the woman who came up to me as I was placing my omelet order

with Jonathan at the Kabomelette venue. She identified herself as someone who delivers Meals on Wheels to my house and she identified herself as a reader of Stories and Journeys in the Messenger.

I'm celebrating another woman who came up to me. She identified herself as a former front desk staff at Lake Harriet Veterinary. She recognized me. I remembered her. We did some carching up.

Catching up with folks at the market for me included what has happened in my life since last October. Spine surgery, COVID-19 and, most recently, emergency hospitalization to remove my gallbladder due to gallstones.

I'm celebrating the return of Havlicek Orchard. I was out of apples. I am celebrating the discovery of Urban Forage as new to the market this year. Finally I am celebrating the DJ playing music. For a brief moment, I broke out in a dance move.

I'm looking forward to future markets be they Midtown, Fulton, Kingsfield or Nokomis.

So, dear reader, what signs of spring as summer approaches have showed up in your life experiences and awareness? Tell yourself, tell others or tell me.



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

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.

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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.

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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, Uptown Association, and Southwest Business Association.

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6 KEY FACTS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT JUNETEENTH

Juneteenth is a celebration of freedom. This momentous occasion is an opportunity to pause, reflect, and grow, while renewing our commitment to the pursuit of liberty and justice for all.



By Artika Tyner

100,000 petitioners to achieve this goal. Over 1.5 million people joined with Ms. Lee and signed the petition.

Ms. Lee believes Juneteenth can unite others and inspire change. "I am hoping that Juneteenth will not just be about festivals, but it will be about uplifting each other," Lee said.

FACT #1: WHEN AND WHERE WAS JUNETEENTH FIRST CELEBRATED?

Juneteenth is a combination of the words "June" and "nineteenth." On June 19, 1865, Federal troops arrived in Galveston, Texas, to share with enslaved African Americans that they were free from the bondage of slavery. The Emancipation Proclamation granted them this freedom in 1863. U.S. General Gordon Granger announced, "The people of Texas are informed that, in accordance with a proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free." The dream of freedom was finally realized for 250,000 enslaved people. They began to rejoice, and this was the beginning of a celebration that we now call: Juneteenth.

Juneteenth is also a time to reflect on the past and learn lessons on how to build a brighter future. According to historian and author, Ngeri Azuewah: "Juneteenth is widely celebrated because it's a symbol of freedom and Black joy. It's an opportunity to reflect on the trials and tribulations of powerful people who persevered through the unthinkable. Today, we honor the hope and dreams of those who could only imagine days of freedom, free from unspeakable acts of violence, free from having their dreams deferred, and free from having their humanity feel unrecognized by a country that they gave their all to."

FACT #2: WHO IS KNOWN AS THE GRANDMOTHER OF JUNETEENTH?

Opal Lee is known as the grandmother of Juneteenth. At the age of 89 years old, she launched Opal's Walk 2 DC. Her goal was to walk from Fort Worth, Texas to Washington, D.C. in order to raise national awareness about making Juneteenth a national holiday. She initially set forth to garner the support of

FACT #3: WHEN DID JUNETEENTH BECOME A NATIONAL HOLIDAY?

Juneteenth was first recognized as a state holiday in Texas in 1980. Juneteenth was declared a national holiday in 2021. The legislation was passed by Congress on June 16, 2021, and signed into law by U.S. President Joe Biden. In President Biden's 2022 Juneteenth address, he stated: "Juneteenth marks both the long, hard night of slavery and subjugation and a promise of a brighter morning to come."

FACT #4: WHAT IS THE JUNETEENTH FLAG?

The original Juneteenth flag was created in 1997 by Ben Haith, the founder of the National Juneteenth Celebration Foundation (NJCF).

- The Arc: This marks the beginning of a new chapter in history for the Black community.
- The Star: The white star in the middle represents Texas, the Lone Star state, where Juneteenth was founded. It also celebrates the freedom of African Americans across the United States.
- The Burst: This burst outlines the star. It serves as a reminder of a new beginning and a promise of freedom for generations to come.

FACT #5: WHY IS JUNETEENTH ASSOCIATED WITH THE COLOR RED?

The color red honors the countless lives lost due to racial terrorism during the Transatlantic Slave Trade, Civil War, Jim Crow era, and still yet today. Juneteenth menus include red desserts like watermelon and red velvet cake. Red drinks made of hibiscus (or bissap) are also a favorite beverage. This drink has a connection to the African American community's Western African roots.



FACT #6: WHAT ARE WAYS TO CELEBRATE JUNETEENTH?

Start by learning more about Black History. You can begin by learning more about Black History Month. This short trivia can be used to begin the learning journey:

1) Who founded Black History Month?

During each of my Black History Month school visits, I start with this question. I have yet to hear a correct answer from students, parents, or teachers. I received a range of answers from Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to Rosa Parks. One student even shouted: St. Paul Mayor Melvin Carter. It is wonderful to see these remarkable heroes and sheroes highlighted. However, it demonstrates the need to learn about the origins of Black History Month and its significance. It was founded by Dr. Carter G. Woodson with the launch of Negro History Week in 1926. His goal was to celebrate and honor Black achievements and build a legacy of change.

2) Why is Black History Month celebrated in February?

Dr. Woodson selected the month of February since it is the birth month of two individuals whom he deeply admired. They were President Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass who both played a role in abolishing slavery. Historically, celebrations were held on their birthdays which are the 12th (Lincoln) and 14th (Douglass). Woodson wanted to create a bridge between this tradition and establish a practice of honoring the past contributions of the Black community.

Next, support local Black-owned businesses. Do you need new books for your summer reading list? Stop by Strive Bookstore and Babycake's Book Stack. Would you like a sweet treat? Visit Lutunji's Pal-

ate and enjoy her peach cobbler. Would you prefer a donut instead? Try The Donut Trap. With each purchase, you are helping to rebuild and bolster the Black ecosystem. This is vitally important when Black-owned businesses are under-resourced due to a lack of access to capital and funding. According to Pew Research, "Just 3% of U.S. businesses were identified as Black or African American-owned as of 2020. That's despite 12.4% of the overall population being Black adults."

Host a community barbecue and serve a red drink and red dessert. This is an opportunity to bring family and friends together to celebrate freedom's journey by learning about Juneteenth. Explore the question: "Why is Juneteenth known as the United States' second Independence Day?"

Inspire your co-workers, friends, and family to work toward racial justice. This is a daily commitment to realize the dreams of enslaved African Americans. They had an unwavering hope for the future that the next generations would be able to not only survive but thrive. How can you promote better educational outcomes for all children? How can you ensure pay equity and equal access to opportunities in your workplace? With a projected Racial Wealth Gap that will take over two centuries to bridge, how can you help to advance economic justice in the Black community?

My daily affirmation is I am the dream of my ancestors. I embody these words by writing for justice. I have written thirty-five books that focus on Black history and showcase the leadership profiles of Black heroes and sheroes. I am excited to announce the release of my latest books in the Black Achievements series that focus on Black leaders in STEM, activism, and politics (Lerner Publishing). You can find these books and my Juneteenth reading list at: <https://bookshop.org/lists/juneteenth-365>

▶ **Through her organization,** Planting People Growing Justice Leadership Institute, Dr. Artika Tyner seeks to plant seeds of social change through education, training, and community outreach. Reach her at dr.artikatyner@gmail.com.

REVOLUTIONARY CANNABIS BILL WILL BENEFIT CRAFT BREWERIES

Cannabis bill retains brewers' rights to produce THC-derived beverages, expands brewery supporters' choices and provides step to modernizing abilities of craft beverage producers

The Cannabis Legalization Bill, HF100/SF73, was passed in the Minnesota legislature and was signed into law by Governor Walz. This bill, a result of months of hard work, provides a boost to many local breweries and brewpubs throughout the state who choose to produce, package, and sell THC beverages.



By Bob Galligan

products that breweries and brewpubs produce.

- Provides much-needed statewide guidance on the regulations for small businesses that currently produce or who hope to produce these products.

These changes will positively impact the Minnesota economy in the long-term. Brewery owners will be able to generate new revenue and expand the choices that customers have been asking for, while the additional production and movement of locally-made craft beverages throughout the state will bolster all three tiers of Minnesota's liquor system as well as Minnesota's agriculture and tourism industries.

The bill passed with the help of authors and champions Rep. Zack Stephenson (35A), Rep. Jessica Hanson (55A), Rep. Nolan West (52A), Sen. Lindsey Port (55), Sen. Clare Oumou Verbeten (66), and Sen. Erin Murphy (64).

We are proud and thankful that this legislature recognized the need for specific language allowing THC-derived beverages, and how that change will benefit local small businesses. This wouldn't have happened without the tireless determination and camaraderie of fellow members of the MN is Ready Coalition, who worked to clarify the language and ensure the interests of multiple industries were represented. This bill, plus the omnibus liquor bill that was passed in 2022, collectively impact over 200 breweries and brewpubs throughout the state and provide fresh revenue into an industry that is still recovering from the pandemic.

Craft beverage consumers are encouraged to check out their local breweries and brewpubs for the beverage of their choice.

The law changes are revolutionary regarding hemp-derived THC beverages. Minnesota is truly doing something that no other state is in allowing these beverages to be sold through distribution and retail. Legalization of adult use cannabis is a huge deal for the state, but has also happened in 22 other states. Allowing these beverages

to be sold at my members taprooms, bars, restaurants and liquor stores is a first in the country, and we look forward to leading the way!

▶ **Bob Galligan** is the director of government and industry relations for the Minnesota Craft Brewers Guild (mncraftbrew.org), a not-for-profit organization that was founded in 2000 and is made up of more than 180 Minnesota brewery and brewpub members. The Guild showcases the talent of Minnesota's craft brewers and promotes Minnesota's brewing industry by sponsoring festivals and special events, including the MN Brewers Conference and MN Brewers Cup, the State Fair's Brewed in Minnesota exhibit, All Pints North, and Autumn Brew Review. The Minnesota Craft Brewers Guild's mission is to promote, protect, and grow a robust Minnesota craft brewing industry by building a healthy beer culture and community that allows for independent brewers, industry stakeholders, and craft beer fans to thrive.

The research is in. YOUR CUSTOMERS ARE LOOKING HERE.

57% of Consumers Turn to Print or Digital Advertising in Minnesota Newspapers when Deciding Which Brands, Products and Services to Buy. Source: 2021 Minnesota Market Study, by Coda Ventures)

51% TV/TV websites	43% Home delivered ads	30% Radio/radio websites
28% Social media	24% Magazines/magazine websites	18% Other websites

57% Local Newspapers/ Newspaper Websites

▶ 3RD ANNUAL RISE & REMEMBER BRINGS SOLIDARITY, JOY TO GFS

Nelson Mandela, to a candlelight vigil and festival at George Floyd Square, a conference and a gala at Paisley Park.

The vigil was a solemn occasion, its deep significance made apparent early in the evening when Minneapolis police, including Chief Brian O'Hara, paid a visit to the Square. In response, several hundred guests turned away from them and raised their fists in peaceful protest.

"If they was here for solidarity, why didn't they stay"? asked one community member.

Once the program was underway, the evening's emcee Rev. Jeanette Rupert encouraged people to come together in solidarity "to stand in the gaps so we don't have more names on the street" – a reference to the names of lives taken at the hands of police that are painted in block letters along Chicago Ave. known as the "Mourning Passage."

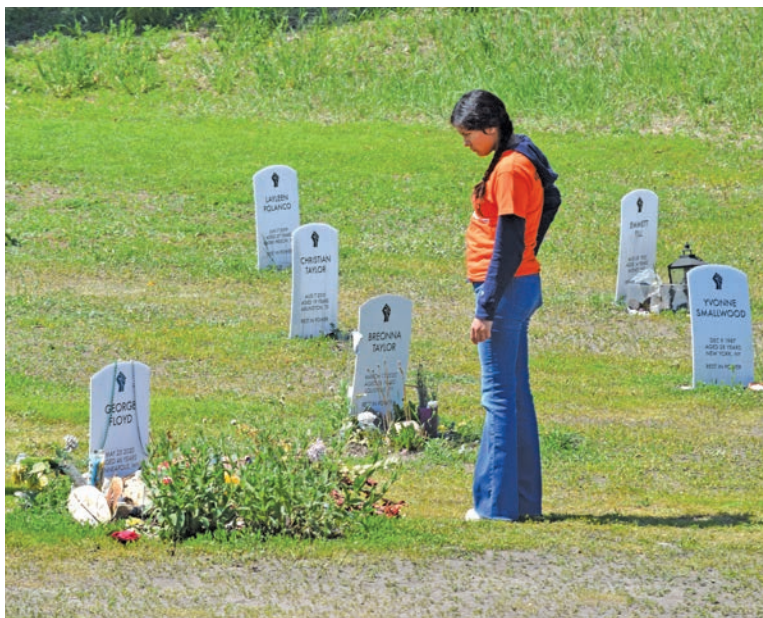
Music, including songs sung by Floyd's aunt Laura Stevens, his uncle Ike Floyd and other performers, sounded throughout the Square. Vine Raynell delivered a powerful spoken word piece, and guests were invited to lay rose petals and place candles throughout the memorial. At dusk, the Brass Solidarity band led a procession to Say Their Names cemetery, where the Minnesota Orchestra, Minnesota Chorale and 29:11 International Exchange choir delivered a soulful tribute to Floyd, the community caretakers and the ongoing movement for justice and Black liberation.

The following evening a gala was held at Paisley Park to support the conservation work of the George Floyd Global Memorial (GFGM). Music included riveting performances by 29:11, Buddy McLain (Amir Locke's dad), Ike Floyd, Julius Collins, Thomasina Petrus, Sounds of Blackness and Jamecia Bennett, and guests were treated to delicious hors d'oeuvres and desserts curated by Sean Sherman (the Sioux Chef) and Mecca Bos of the BIPOC Foodways Alliance.

As keynote speaker, Ndaba Mandela remarked on the United States' refusal to apply the term "apartheid" to ourselves, despite Jim Crow and other laws in this country that literally segregated people by the color of their skin. He likened the system of apartheid that imprisoned his grandfather in South Africa with the system that caused the murder of George Floyd here in Minnesota – two people from two continents, with two different backgrounds, both victims of the same system of oppression.

JOY AND HEALING

More than 100 volunteers helped with the celebration, which concluded on May 27 with a day-long festival at the Square that featured Black-owned businesses offering clothing, jewelry, plants, books and more.



A volunteer takes a quiet moment to reflect at the Say Their Names cemetery during the Rise & Remember Festival on Saturday, May 27. (Photo by Jill Boogren)



Candles and lanterns are lit during the candlelight vigil on May 25. (Photo by Jill Boogren)



Guests turn their backs and raise their fists in peaceful protest against police officers visiting George Floyd Square. People were gathering for a candlelight vigil on the third anniversary of George Floyd's murder by Minneapolis police. (Photo by Jill Boogren)

▶ MORE PHOTOS @ SWCONNECTOR.COM

On being part of the festival, Antoinette Mitchell of Splash of Royalty Designz said, "It's a great way to honor [George Floyd] and come be together."

The always-free clothing from the People's Closet was available for people to browse and take. Makers and healers shared their services and wares in the self-care fair, with massages given free of charge throughout the day. And a team from Sidewalk Talk was on hand for any-

one who wanted to talk.

"In this world we live in it's about making connection," said Sidewalk Talk's Harry Adler. "We're a group of listeners and we listen to whoever wants to share where they're at in their journey, whether a journey based off being here or a journey in life in general."

Art showed up in many forms. Some of the offerings preserved by GFGM were displayed on easels along the Mourning

Passage. Harvest Best Academy showcased student art projects created through its conflict resolution program. One, an identity project, had students look into themselves and talk about roots, where emotions come from, and the lived experiences that contribute to their identities – both visible and non-visible.

"By doing these projects we learned how to communicate with ourselves and let us know

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EVENT INFO

By **Susan Schaefer**
UNDER THE HOOD



FOND FAREWELL

Thirty-five years ago, at Thanksgiving, I moved to Minnesota from my Philadelphia home. I relocated back to my hometown in time for Passover and Easter. In November 1988, the Twin Cities were cold and snow-covered. During my big move home, in March 2023, the Twin Cities were cold and snow-covered, making fall and spring hard to distinguish.

YOUTHFUL OPTIMISM GIVES WAY TO THE WISDOM OF AGE

On the other hand, making such monumental life transitions in the springtime and autumn of my own life provides a contrast that is easy to distinguish.

I arrived in Minnesota in the optimism of my golden youth and have departed in the wisdom of my silver age.

In 1988, as a 38-year-old, my career and my vigor were in full bloom. The economy was thriving, and I had accepted a position as senior vice president of public affairs in a Minneapolis-based public relations firm. I was an active member in the national and regional activities of my professional association, the Public Relations Society of America, that provided me meaningful ways to fully integrate into Twin Cities civic and social life. Making workplace friends in one's 30s was easy. And my romantic partner from the area provided built-in family connections.

I look back at that move now with the insight gained by more than three decades of experience.

'MINNESOTA NICE' BUT OFTEN NOT INVITING

Even with all of the social and professional advantages of youth, Minnesota's culture was alien. My east coast friendliness and frankness were not readily appreciated. I found it all but impossible to translate my work friends into real ones.

There is a kernel of truth to the sense of exceptionalism that Garrison Keeler baked into Prairie Home Companion's famous tagline. While it's not entirely fair to generalize, Minnesota natives are a very insular group – whether it's due to the Scandinavian cultural influence or flat-out wariness of anyone who chooses to settle in the land of 10,000 lakes, mosquitoes and endless winters, one saying is relevant: "Minnesotans will gladly give you directions everywhere except to their home."

As an extrovert, who also happens to be an only child, I seek friendship and family everywhere I go. Sad to say, for the most part, my inner circle of friends in Minnesota are largely transplants themselves. And believe me, we talked a lot amongst ourselves about "Minnesota Nice" being a misnomer. Nice is as in polite, but not welcoming.

Native Minnesotan crime novelist, Catherine Dang, writes of the "dark un-

derbelly of all those polite, respectful interactions" saying, "Minnesotans might be labeled as shy for their reserved behavior, but that distance serves a purpose. Social circles are tight in Minnesota, and outsiders are excluded. People have already established their friends and family, so strangers at best are viewed with indifference. At worst, they're viewed with caution. It's why people new to the state will complain about the lack of meaningful friendships that they make here."

BUT YOU SEEMED SO HAPPY HERE

And, for the most part, I was.

As a minor public figure due to my many roles which include being a columnist here with TMC Publications CO., or before that my years as a columnist for the beloved Southwest Journal and Minnesota Good Age, or as past president of the Minnesota Public Relations Society, founder and chair of the Creative Class committee for the Greater Minneapolis Chamber of Commerce, Executive Board member of the Seward Neighborhood, volunteer for our regional ACLU, and more – overwhelmingly it has been my "transplant" friends who have embraced me as part of their social circle. It will surprise many of my acquaintances to learn how much not ever really belonging hurt. My close friends know this about me.

COVID-19 WAS A DECIDING FACTOR

Certainly, the factor of "aging" combined with the forced isolation of COVID-19 quarantine exaggerated my feeling of not belonging. During those years of pandemic loneliness and uncertainty, I grew increasingly drawn to my roots.

I formed a weekly zoom group populated with friends from childhood and my teenage years. All were high school chums, and I experienced that sense of



familiarity and belonging that had escaped me during my long tenure as a Twin Citian.

Even pre-Covid, I made an annual pilgrimage around the time of my April birthday to experience Philadelphia's glorious spring. Each time I made this trip, I grew more aware of how much I missed the historic brick and cobbled streets and the overwhelming greenery of the city.

Climate change certainly has reduced the weather rewards of any geographic location to a gamble, but the season of my birth, spring, still holds court in Philly. There are the astounding cherry blossoms and foliage lining our French-inspired Benjamin Franklin Parkway – the grand boulevard that defines our Center City. Philadelphia's diagonal Benjamin Franklin Parkway stretches one mile from just beyond City Hall to the Philadelphia Museum of Art at the edge of Fairmount Park, acting as the home of museums, cultural institutions and other attractions. And

surrounding the art museum, gracefully situated above the falls of the Schuylkill River and the historic Water Works, is the famous Azalea Garden.

Created in 1952, this thematic garden located between the Philadelphia Museum of Art and Boathouse Row was sponsored by the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society to honor its 125th anniversary. It was donated afterward to the Fairmount Park Commission, and now comprises a portion of the Schuylkill Recreation Path which parallels the Schuylkill River in the heart of downtown.

This year I moved in time to experience a glorious, prolonged spring in full bloom.

MINNESOTA AND THE TWIN CITIES WILL ALWAYS BE MY SECOND HOME

I am gratified for my combined quarter century as a Minnesotan. I marvel at the opportunities I've had to impact the very face of the Twin Cities, from my role in designing the Minneapolis Riverfront: Vision and Implementation project for my longtime and cherished client, Cunningham Group Architects, to creating a newspaper column and a committee for the business chamber that focused on the outstanding Creative Class at the heart of our metro area.

I have lived a full and satisfied life as a member of the Twin Cities community. I enjoy a deep and dear circle of friends and acquaintances whom I will greatly miss and will continue to stay in touch with. And while most of my innermost circle are transplants, I am sincerely appreciative to those Minnesota natives who fully have embraced me as a member of their family of choice.

It is indeed with a heavy heart that I bid farewell to these beautiful cities: to my amazing sunrise view over the majestic Mighty Mississippi River, and to my many colleagues, friends, and acquaintances.

I especially will miss the readers of this great group of community newspapers that provide a top-quality forum for the residents of Longfellow, Nokomis, Midway, Como, Frogtown and Southwest.

During my final year as a resident, it has been this role as contributing columnist that has allowed me to sample the very best of the humanity, culture and nature that the Twin Cities has to offer. Thank you for the privilege. I will be back to visit and hope you come to experience the Cradle of Liberty, this City of Brotherly Love and Sisterly Affection.

Drop me a note if you. I'd like to show you around!



Something under the hood is not immediately apparent or obvious. This column uncovers stories that span the neighborhoods covered by TMC Publications. Susan Schaefer is a widely published independent journalist, creative writer, and poet. Her articles appear in the Minneapolis *Star Tribune*, PBS' online magazine, *Next Avenue*, *Next Tribe*, and *Beyond*. She was columnist and features writer for Minneapolis' *Southwest Journal* and *Minnesota Good Age* magazine.



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The ice cream truck is the perfect timeless sign of summer. (Although maybe kids today have an app that tells them the exact location of the ice cream truck?)
(Illustration by WACSO)



OUTDOOR MUSIC AND 'MINNESOTA KIND'

TEAMING UP FOR GOOD

What is more lovely and fun than live vocals and guitars and horns and EVERYTHING on a mildly muggy Minnesota evening at Lake Harriet? Oh, my. If you were there – wasn't that fun? And if you were not there – dang! We missed you!



By Larry LaVercombe

The annual Belfast Cowboys Concert at the Lake Harriet Pavilion on June 4, 2023 was "standing room only" again, with beverages and blankets filling all the green space, the entire bench-seating section packed side by side, and all the usual suspects out on the dance floor.

"It's nice to be playing Lake Harriet, my most favorite place in the world," band leader Terry Walsh called out – before ripping into another dance number. It might have been "Domino" by Van Morrison. It could have been "Bike Ride on 35W." It wasn't "It Was All in My Head" (with guest-called-up-from-beside-the-stage Robert Wilkinson of Flamin' Ohs fame). That was later in the evening.

Earlier in the evening, this "band of do-gooders" called out for donations to their emergency-housing non-profit, Foothold Twin Cities, and word is they raised more \$4,000 that night. Enough to help two families "get a foothold" and not get evicted from their home!

And all the while, Twin Cities music-lovers and community-upholders got a jolt of what we love so much about this lovely place we live.

JAYHAWKS COMING AUG. 17 TO LAKE HARRIET

Jayhawks! Yep, even if you missed one of the coolest Lake Harriet Shows so far this year, you still have a chance to not miss one of the next ones.

The Jayhawks, coming off a spring



Gary Louris of The Jayhawks (above) will play the Lake Harriet Bandshell on Aug. 17. Terry Walsh (at right) of the Belfast Cowboys performs on June 4, 2023. (Photos by Paul Lundgren)

European tour, are coming back this summer to the Linden Hills Bandshell on Thursday, Aug 17. Sponsored again by Peter & Kordie at Linden Hills Dentistry (you may recall they

THIS WEEK'S PLAYLIST

- 1) "Look at the Moon, Betty," Belfast Cowboys
- 2) "Save it for a Rainy Day," Jayhawks
- 3) "Bike Ride on 35 W," Belfast Cowboys
- 4) "Blue," Jayhawks
- 5) "Northern Lights," Belfast Cowboys
- 6) "Waiting for the Sun," Jayhawks

sponsored the Jayhawks two years ago, and two years before that they sponsored that super-cool Suburbs show). This year's Jayhawks night will likely be another for the memory books – For all of us that will see each other and revel in this home of homes we have, this City of Lakes.

And while I'm waxing poetic about how much I love it here, here's another I love thing about The Jayhawks – When you Google them, the top link/official website shows up like this: The Jayhawks – A Band from Minnesota.

That's so... Minnesotan, isn't it? In a wonderful way. Am I right? Is it not our camaraderie that we are proud of? The musicians in this city and this state are good and generous to each other. So are the writers. We do pull together, for the good of all. It's a nice thing to see, and I see it more and more.

Check out our playlist for this week, and hear three favorites from The Belfast Cowboys with a couple classics from the Jayhawks.

And next time you're out seeing live music – think about sending twenty bucks to Foothold Twin Cities. Every dollar goes out to help a family in need. <http://www.fooholdtwincities.org/>

We're not just Minnesota Nice. We're Minnesota Kind.



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



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THE ART OF AGING BEAUTIFULLY

THE ART OF...

I love meeting new talented people who care about others and are also woman-owned small businesses.

Over the years, I've learned to see that "art" comes in many forms. Skin therapy and wellness can be an art and I've met a true artist in this craft.



By **Suzie Marty**

Introducing...Shelly Chaplin, the founder and advanced practice aesthetician of Michele Terese Beauty. Shelly offers advanced skin therapy solutions with a healing touch that help people glow from the inside out. I'm so excited she is now offering her services in Linden Hills. Located at 4302 Upton Avenue South Suite #2, the studio is a beautiful, serene, and private space designed to provide a healing environment for both your skin and soul.

With over 24 years of experience as a licensed aesthetician, Shelly has also taught at the Aveda Institute for six years, where she has shared her expertise and knowledge with students. Her passion for skin therapy and wellness has led to pursue certifications in several different modalities from ancient to high tech, including gua sha, cupping, microneedling, and dermaplaning. She is currently in the process of becoming a certified face yoga teacher, and already certified in Healing Touch and Reiki. As a lifelong learner, Shelly loves sharing her knowledge with her clients.

As a member of the Minnesota Holistic Nurses Association and the Association of Skin Care Professionals, Shelly holds herself to the highest standards of professionalism, ethics, and care. "My core values of compassion, empathy, integrity, and trust guide me in every interaction with my clients. I take pride in providing a personalized experience to help you achieve your skincare goals," she said.

Shelly is anti antiaging and embraces



Shelly Chaplin of Michele Terese Beauty

At Michele Terese Beauty, Shelly's belief is that true beauty comes from within. Her mission is to help you achieve healthy, radiant skin by providing advanced skin therapy solutions with a healing touch. Whether you're looking to reduce signs of aging, clear acne, or simply enhance your natural beauty, she is here to guide you on your journey to a glowing complexion. It is never too late, or too early to take care of your skin. Shelly creates a healing experience that goes beyond just a facial. I recently "melted" into Shelly's table and had the experience of the most amazing facial.

Shelly loves connecting with people, and helping them feel beautiful from the inside out. She is currently accepting new clients and is open by appointment only at www.micheleteresebeauty.com or shelly@micheleteresebeauty.com.

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

▶ 1 ELINE

include stations areas with more amenities that use the system of paying fares at the station before boarding a bus. Because of this, people can get on and off more quickly using either front or rear doors. According to a Met Transit report in February 2023, BRT routes now account for about 10% of regional rides.

"This will be another upgrade in service to a busy transit corridor using a proven model," said Eric Lind. He works at the Center for Transportation Studies at the University of Minnesota and is a former Met Transit manager. "By increasing the speed, reliability, frequency, and span of service to places where there is already proven transit demand, these rapid bus lines connect people more easily and more quickly to the destinations they need to reach."

"The E Line will significantly improve the experience for current customers and make transit more attractive to those not currently using public transit," Cameron said. "The E Line offers improved access to several important destinations, including the U of M, downtown Minneapolis, Uptown, Linden Hills and 50th & France, and the Southdale area."

One station location in Linden Hill, at the intersection where 43rd, Upton and Sheridan meet, was relocated last year after businesses expressed concerns. "Based on the feedback received," said Cameron. "Metro Transit did make changes to the proposed E Line Station at this location, shifting the southbound platform from the far side (southwest) corner of the intersection to the near side (northwest) corner of the intersection" This addressed some community concerns, including preserving more trees and more on-street parking spaces.

STATION LOCATIONS

The station locations were approved by the Met Council in 2022 when the route was also set. There will be more than 40 stations total along the 13.1-mile-long line. Each station includes a similar set of amenities including pylon markers, accessible boarding area, ticket machines with fare card readers, trash receptacle, lights, shelter with heat and security cameras, bicycle racks, and a tree, or sometimes two.

"The great amenities that come with arterial BRT service (real-time information screens, heated and lighted shelters) are the front door to the E Line, and should be where people want to be, where people already are," said Lind. "Residents who are steps from an E Line station will be able to be at Southdale, Uptown, Down-

town, or the U of M within minutes on a fast, comfortable ride. The benefit to retail businesses, in all these places, of a steady stream of pedestrian traffic in connection with the E Line cannot be understated."

On June 1, preliminary station plans were shared at an online meeting and staff said that they want to hear from riders, future station neighbors, and other members of the public about the placement of shelters, pylons, and other amenities within each station area.

Things that they consider when designing each station include bus operations and standard BRT station architecture and features; local and county street design standards and traffic engineering factors; station activity level and size; the amount of space available; accessibility and safety for all users; input from station neighbors; other street uses in the same area like trails and bike lanes; and geographic features.

ROAD WORK BEING DONE, TOO

The timing of the construction of the stations and opening of the line is being coordinated with both Hennepin County and the city of Minneapolis, who will be making roadway improvements at the same time. Hennepin Ave., in Uptown, is expected to be fully reconstructed next year by the city. The county is planning to make major improvements to

Eric Lind



France Ave. as well, including at station intersections.

This means that lane reconfigurations, better pedestrian crossings and medians at intersections may also be made. One, for example, is the proposed raised median and pedestrian flashing beacons on the pedestrian crosswalks to get to and from the station at 47th and France.

In June, staff will be gathering feedback and using it to make further modifications to designs. They have asked people to pay careful attending to concerns about safety and accessibility to and from the station, and also to and from nearby businesses and other buildings. They will also be reviewing drainage, lighting, utilities, sightlines, and cost estimates.

"Right now is a good time to learn more about the project and provide public comment on design elements," said Cameron. "Feedback on preliminary station designs is an important part of our process, and staff are actively working to address comments in the design phase."

Review plans and provide feedback by visiting <https://www.metrotransit.org/e-line-project>.

The lines and stations can also lead to other benefits. "Investments in new housing are already happening at or near several station areas," said Cameron. "The E Line also complements planned improvements to Hennepin and France avenues."

"Reliable, predictable operation of the

E Line will mean avoiding the traffic snarls that plague sections of Hennepin Ave between uptown and downtown," said Lind. "Single-occupancy autos can prevent the E Line from reaching its true potential, so it will be important to closely evaluate the combo bus lane-parking lanes currently proposed for that section."

"Overall, plans for the E Line have been well-received throughout the corridor," Cameron said, adding "and we look forward to continuing to work in close partnership with neighbors, business owners and our municipal partners to bring this vision to life in the coming years."

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PARK NEWS

WHITTIER PARK WORK

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) is asking community members to weigh in on two concepts for improvements in and around Whittier Park's play areas.

The concepts are based community input collected at summer camps, events, pop-ups, onsite visits and more - as well as the Whittier Park master plan, approved in 2020. Both concept plans prioritize playground improvements, seating areas, a multi-purpose sport court area for all ages, stormwater management, improved circulation and tree preservation. Check out the plans in detail online. Comments will help to guide the design process as the project moves forward.

TWIN LAKE SHORELINE RESTORATION

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board is planning a project that will restore the southeast shoreline of Twin Lake in Theodore Wirth Regional Park.

This fall, native vegetation will be planted along the damaged shoreline and eroded slope leading to it. Boulders will also be placed to help prevent further erosion along the slope.

Areas with new plants will be fenced off for up to three years beginning in spring 2024 to help the plants establish and grow in. These changes will provide better wildlife habitat, reduce erosion and help improve water quality and public safety at Twin Lake. When work is complete, a trail down to the lake will be maintained, along with a lake access point about 20 feet wide in place of the unauthorized beach currently at the site.

The project manager is Cliff Swenson: 612-230-6473, | cswenson@minneapolis-parks.org

PEOPLE FOR PARKS

Listen carefully this summer, and you'll almost certainly hear the sounds of joyful splashing or tiny gasps of youthful awe. Or, you'll surely see the whizz of a newly confident cyclist taking to the trails, or discover the bright taste of a freshly picked sugar snap pea. These are some of the experiences enjoyed by people of all ages in Minneapolis parks, made more accessible in 2023 thanks to 11 grants totaling \$57,570 through the Minneapolis Parks Foundation's People for Parks Fund. Eight organizations were selected from a pool of 44 applicants to receive support this year: Baztec Outdoors, Folwell Neighborhood Association, Huellas Latinas, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, Minneapolis Sailing Club, Minneapolis Southwest High School Performing Arts, Mississippi Park Connection, and Urban Strategies.

The People for Parks Fund was created through the Minneapolis Parks Foundation's 2020 consolidation with People for Parks, a nonprofit that for 42 years provided grass-roots support for activi-

ties in Minneapolis parks. This is the third year that grants have been made; in 2021 and 2022 combined, the Fund distributed more than \$83,000 to 12 organizations for 15 programs.

MINNEAPOLIS CLIMBS BACK TO 3RD

Trust for Public Land has announced that Saint Paul repeated its second-place finish on the annual ParkScore index. Minneapolis climbed to third, two spots ahead of 2022's fifth place ranking. Minneapolis' rise was based largely on improvements to park amenities.

Both cities finished just behind defending ParkScore champion Washington, DC, which retains the ParkScore title for the third consecutive year. The ParkScore index evaluates park systems in the 100 most populous U.S. cities.

Minneapolis and Saint Paul are among the national leaders working to promote community health at local parks. For example, Minneapolis waived youth fees at 17 recreation centers and increased investment in youth programming and services by \$2.6 million last year.

KINGFIELD ASSOCIATION DIRECTOR STEPS DOWN

Sarah Linnes-Robinson has announced that she will be stepping back from her work leading neighborhood associations, including the Kingfield Neighborhood Association where she has been director for over 25 years. "I am tremendously proud of the creative engagement work I have been able to develop, lead, and be a part of in the Kingfield neighborhood," she wrote in June. She also announced that she



will continue to work with neighborhood groups and has started a business called "Love Your Neighborhood MPLS." "I am excited to find ways to engage new communities is celebrating their role as artists and creators in the neighborhood so that they can feel a sense of belonging in Minneapolis, akin to what Kingfielders feel," she said.

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

LNA SUMMER SPECTACULAR JULY 10

The Lyndale Neighborhood Association Summer Spectacular is set for July 10 at Painter Park. The annual meeting and board elections will be from 5:30-6:30 p.m. Starting at 6 p.m., enjoy the food truck, bounce house, face painting and more. At dusk, the movie "School of Rock" will show.

WEDGE ADDS FOOD SHARE DAY

The Lowry Hill East Neighborhood Association neighborhood Food Share program is adding a second Saturday at the Greenway Building (2836 Lyndale Avenue South) for free groceries. They have been open on the second Saturday of the month, and are now also open on the fourth Saturday of the month from 10:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Anyone can come and pick up free groceries. Community members can pick up two bags of groceries. Guests are encouraged to pick out a bag of fresh vegetables and fruits and a second bag on pantry staples. The following is the schedule for the remainder of 2023.

BLACK PLASTIC TO GO CONTAINERS GOING AWAY

Black plastic containers are being phased out in the city. At the end of the year, black plastic containers will no longer be accepted under Green To Go rules. Black plastic containers are being phased out because they are problematic and are trash. They:

- Are not able to be sorted
- Do not have robust aftermarkets to make them into new materials

These problems result in recycling facilities not accepting black plastics. Black plastics end up being sent for incineration or to the landfill. For more information, contact Nate Kelly at Nathaniel.Kelly@minneapolisismn.gov or 612-369-8057.

CANINE FLU AFFECTING DOGS AND CATS

On May 5, the Minnesota Board of Animal Health alerted Minneapolis Animal Care & Control to several cases of canine influenza found in Minneapolis, particularly in the North Loop and Uptown areas. Canine influenza is a highly infectious virus spread among dogs. The virus is not believed to be a threat to humans, although it can infect cats. It is particularly concerning in areas where high concentrations of dogs gather. Most dogs experience mild to moderate symptoms and recover within two-three weeks. Some dogs will experience more serious infections that could result in secondary conditions such as pneumonia and possibly death. It's important to see a veterinarian for specific treatment plans.

WASHBURN FAIR OAKS WALKING TOUR JUNE 24

Hennepin History Museum's Christian family mansion is in what was once the most prominent Victorian neighborhood in Minneapolis. Learn about the houses that were once here - where they were located and who lived in them; about the mansions that survive today - and why; and how Washburn Fair Oaks Park got its name. Shade abounds on this tour. This summertime walking tour will be June 24, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. Reservations required; adults: \$14, seniors/students: \$12, HHM members \$10.

CITY BRIEFS

COUNTY EQUITY ADVISOR

Hennepin County District 3 Commissioner Marion Greene is looking for a volunteer to serve on the county's Equity Advisory Committee. This group advises the county board and administration on reducing racial disparities and advancing racial equity. Learn more by emailing District 3 staff, Elie Farhat, at elie.farhat@hennepin.us.

CITY FUNDS COMMUNITY PROJECTS

The City Council has approved funding several southwest community projects through the city's Partnership Engagement Fund that supports community-based organizations and recognized neighborhood organizations collaborating to engage historically under-engaged individuals and groups. The Whittier Alliance will be the neighborhood partner for three projects. Guitarra en el Barrio will receive \$20,000 to expand music education programming. The Somali Voter Outreach project will receive \$20,000 to increase voter participation, and Futsal Society's Coaching Education Program will use \$18,600. The Loring Park neighborhood will be part-

nering on the Strangers Meeting Strangers project, which received \$20,000 for facilitated conversations in front of audiences to help build understanding.

WARD 10 CAMPAIGNING

Ward 10 city council candidate, Nasri Warsame, has been banned by the Democratic Farmer Labor (DFL) party from seeking its endorsement, but has announced that he will continue running for the Ward 10 seat anyway. He was seeking the DFL endorsement at the convention that ended suddenly last month following the disruptive behavior of some participants. The DFL has announced that they will hold an online endorsement process; however, where members may still vote on endorsing incumbent Aisha Chughtai.

YOUNG LIBRARY ADVISORS WANTED

The Hennepin County Library is looking for young people to apply to serve on a Library Youth Advisory Committee. Two members from each district are appointed by the county commissioners. Members should live in the county, be 16 to 19 years of age, and be able to attend monthly meetings for the next one-year term that goes from September 2023 to August 2024. The committee advises the county

board and library staff about how libraries can serve youth better. Apply online by June 23.

SWLRT-RELATED CLOSURES

Cedar Lake Parkway will be closed between the tunnel construction area and Xerxes Avenue South starting June 12 for approximately one week for utility construction. There will be a two-month long closure of the Penn Ave/Wayzata Blvd. intersection starting late June. The Cedar Lake trail between Royalston Ave. and West River Parkway will also likely be closed this summer for work on retaining walls.

50TH STREET REPAVING

Hennepin County is repaving 50th Street between France and Lyndale avenues in Minneapolis this summer. Work on upgrading pedestrian ramps to improve accessibility will be followed by repaving and restriping the road. This will include narrower traffic lanes and wider shoulders to enhance safety. 50th will remain open during construction, but traffic will be shifted.

Briefs compiled by Cam Gordon.

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6 RISE & REMEMBER

what we're feeling and experiencing, because we can't really expect other people to if we don't know how to process ourselves," said Cassie Walker, the school's student family liaison who was serving as a conflict resolution teacher for part of the year. "We're learning how to process, we're learning how to communicate, how to identify feelings."

The Chicago Ave. Fire Arts Center (3749 Chicago Ave.) opened its doors for a GFGM rememory exhibit, Voices of the Unheard, which they are hosting through Aug. 19.

Two 24-foot expressionistic live public art pieces were also created outdoors throughout the day. Led by artist seangarrison, people were asked to recall their emotions and feelings the day George Floyd was killed and channel that emotion onto the canvas.

"The hope is to have younger kids come through and add the hope, the peace and the love, 'cause it'll be harder for them to process what they felt in that moment," he said. "We do this for them... We have [some people] paint that heaviness - and these younger kids to paint what tomorrow looks like."

Brass Solidarity and the Brooklyn Park Lions Drum & Dance team brought people together. So did speakers and musicians on the main stage, including Lewee Blaze and headliner Chubb Rock, who closed out the day by getting the crowd jumping with a medley of old-school hip hop classics.

GFGM hopes to create a permanent memorial and museum to house the more than 5,000 offerings that have been left by visitors to the Square. More information about GFGM is at georgefloydglobalmemorial.org.

MORE PHOTOS @ SWCONNECTOR.COM



Ndaba Mandela, grandson of South African President Nelson Mandela and keynote speaker at the Rise & Remember gala, gets into some old-school hip hop from Chubb Rock on May 27, 2023. (Photo by Jill Boogren)



Performances and opportunities to appreciate and create art abound at the Rise & Remember festival at George Floyd Square. (Photo by Jill Boogren)



Led by artist seangarrison, people at the festival were asked to recall their emotions and feelings the day George Floyd was killed and channel that emotion onto two 24-foot canvases. "The hope is to have younger kids come through and add the hope, the peace and the love, 'cause it'll be harder for them to process what they felt in that moment," he said. "We do this for them... We have [some people] paint that heaviness - and these younger kids to paint what tomorrow looks like." (Photo by Jill Boogren)

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