



STEPPING UP

Business slow at Curry in a Hurry, but owner Ruhel Islam still hopes to rebuild at Gandhi Mahal site

By JAN WILMS

It has been over three years since Gandhi Mahal, a well-known and popular restaurant at 3009 27th Ave. S. in Minneapolis, was burned down during the social uprising following the death of George Floyd.

Immediately after the loss of his business, owner Ruhel Islam made a statement that soon went viral: "Let my building burn. Justice needs to be served. Put those officers in jail."

Islam quickly put together a smaller restaurant, Curry in a Hurry, at 3025 E. Franklin Ave. The restaurant is managed by his daughter Hafsa. "It has been hard," Islam said. "We have had a lot of break-ins and business has been slow."

Since Islam said he does not directly operate the new location but serves as a consultant, he has been able to take some time away to think. "Sometimes you need to take a break to think about the future," he said. "This is what I am doing."

He has been spending some time working on projects in his native Bangladesh, in the village where his grandparents

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(Left to right) Mahmoud Rahman, Jack Thoresen, Aurora Quinn, Asmat Ali, and Hafsa Islam of Curry in a Hurry. (Photo by Terry Faust)

DOMESTIC ABUSE VICTIM JAILED

Caught between two states, a woman is jailed for not dropping an order for protection granted by Iowa for child



By **Tesha M. Christensen**

During Domestic Violence Awareness Month, a Minnesota judge ordered a victim to jail for not forcing her daughter to see her father.

Dani* was ordered to serve 30 days in jail on Oct. 2, 2023 or immediately pay \$5,000 to her ex-boyfriend. (See previous article on the family court case titled, "Caught Between" at www.LongfellowNokomisMessenger.com.) She is the third person in Minnesota history to be jailed on such a charge in family court.

"I couldn't stop thinking about how my daughter would take the news that her mom wasn't coming home for a month," said Dani.

Dani qualifies for food stamps and medical assistance in Iowa, where she is a long-time resident, and also qualified for

in forma pauperis (IFP) status in Minnesota courts – but she was jailed because she can't pay about \$300,000 to her ex-boyfriend.

Tenth Judicial Court Judge Kristi Stanislowski found Dani in contempt of court for not paying her ex-boyfriend's legal fees and a daily fine for every day her 11-year-old daughter has not gone on visits with the father, who works in Hennepin County and lives in Ramsey County. (The family court case remains in Sherburne County because that is where the father lived when he filed for custody prior to the daughter being born in Iowa.)

Dani was also held in contempt for not dropping an order for protection that was granted by an Iowa judge. The father is currently being investigated by Iowa child protection for sexual abuse. He testified in court that he has not spoken to investigators there, but has directed them to his attorney, Katie Jendro.

Domestic violence advocates point

VICTIM JAILED >> 3

City looking again at 2600 Minnehaha for police station

Council members postpone vote, ask for more details on newly introduced 'community safety center' and alternative locations

By CAM GORDON

Attention has refocused on the city-owned lot at 2600 Minnehaha Ave. as the future workplace for the police assigned to the southside's 3rd Precinct.

On Oct. 17, 2023, after being asked to approve starting work on a "community safety center" at the empty lot in Seward, the city council opted to postpone a decision until after they get a more detailed report on Oct. 31, one week before an election where all the city council members are on the ballot. The mayor's current term ends on Jan. 2, 2026.

The motion to postpone was authored by five of the six council members who represent the people living within the 3rd police precinct, which includes the area of the city south of 194, east of I35W and west of the Mississippi river.



What this is really about is the relationship that MPD has with the community. The biggest impediment to moving forward is the lack of demonstrable reform within MPD."

Elliott Payne

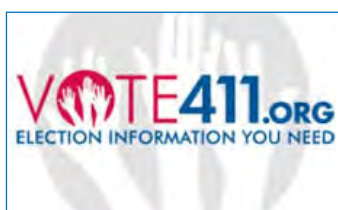
"committee of the whole" on Oct. 17. 2600 MINNEHAHA >> 6

"The 3rd Precinct Council Members who co-authored this motion, and the corresponding legislative directive, feel that there is still outstanding information that we need in order to make informed decisions," said Ward 11 Council Member Emily Koski before the vote was taken at the council's



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Creating connections
through Latin Dance

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LCC's annual meeting
creates delicious
connections over pizza

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Local fire captain's memoir 'Trauma Sponges' explores life as a firefighter and EMT

Scarred and serving

By JANE ST. ANTHONY

The distinctive wail of a fire truck rarely means what it did two decades ago. Author Jeremy Norton, fire captain and emergency medical technician (EMT) at Minneapolis Fire Station 17, makes that abundantly clear in "Trauma Sponges: Dispatches from the Scarred Heart of Emergency Response."

In a bygone era, Norton notes: "Children glimpsed the heroism of fire fighters in books like 'Clifford the Firehouse Dog,' 'Curious George and the Firefighters' and 'Busiest Firefighters Ever!'"

But fires are fewer now. With the advent of smoke detectors and sprinklers, 911 calls are more frequent. He has saved more lives as an EMT than he ever saved in fires.

Every call is treated as an emergency. Why? It's an emergency because someone called 911, the emergency line.

"Our normal workday," Norton writes, "includes death and dying, the dead, suffering visceral trauma, emotion and psychological anguish, multiple forms of self-inflicted wounds, economic and social injustice, race and class issues. These are facts."

"We are trauma sponges. Call after call, shift by shift, week by month by year, we absorb the boundless sadness and fear, the abuse, the blood and viscera, the sights and sounds and smells of tragedy and loss."

The worst times may be carrying limp, lifeless children from shootings or wrecks or, sometimes, fires. Or when someone cries repeatedly, "Do something!" when a loved one is beyond resuscitation. Or a father turns on the TV for his young son in



Jeremy Norton is a fire captain and emergency medical technician (EMT) at Minneapolis Fire Station 17 (330 E 38th St.). He details experiences as a firefighter in "Trauma Sponges: Dispatches from the Scarred Heart of Emergency Response." (Photo submitted)

order to muffle sobs because his wife has died in the next room.

Yet in spite of what he faces, Norton goes to work, by choice.

"I don't think about what's to come; I have a band of brothers and sisters at the firehouse. We don't know what we're going to get on any day. But we have coping skills. We support each other. We stay grounded; we have families, children, dogs, gardens, lives. I never dread going

to work; most of us don't. I don't think about what's to come.

"The challenge, which no one explains in training, is that we must find a way toward grace, healthy acceptance and compassion while not losing ourselves in the world's suffering."

As for the culture: "The gruff old-school guys are gone from the station," he said. "Although their legacy has seeped into the culture, it has diminished. We

need grit and hustle, but we need brains and heart too. There's positive change in the climate."

What continues to stun him: how little the city leaders understand what's going on in each of the city's departments.

"There's a comprehensive failure to investigate," he writes. "What is happening in our society: so many acute emergencies and a frayed safety net for citizens."

What should a mayor and others in office know about this and other disasters?

"I will say that it stuns me how little the city leaders understand what's happening in all of the departments," Norton said. "There's a failure to investigate. That's how cities operate. It's a failed system."

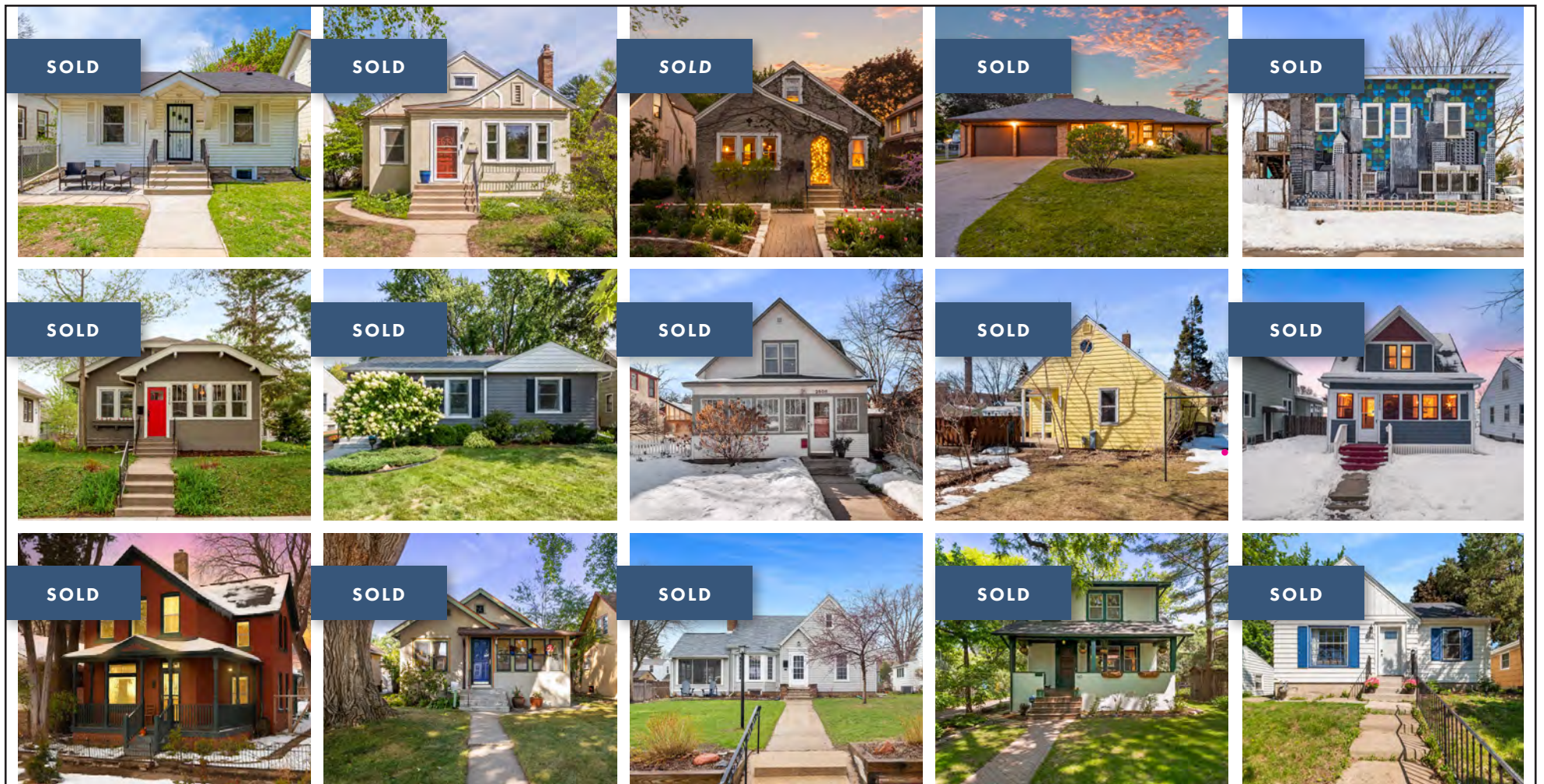
Then came COVID-19 which made the job harder in so many respects. How can a person administer CPR while masked?

"The challenge with CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) during the heart of the COVID-19 pandemic was the aerosolizing of COVID germs due to compressions and ventilation," Norton said. "Our face shields were intended to protect us. But there was no testing or guarantee that a mask hadn't slipped or wasn't porous."

"The emergency rooms were so crowded with COVID-19 patients that a triage decision - necessary and calculated - meant that someone found dead who didn't revive within 15 minutes of ministrations on scene, he or she would be called deceased and not transported."

Lives go on. On one of his birthdays during the pandemic, Norton failed three times to blow out the candles on his birthday cake. After those three tries, he realized why everyone at the celebration was laughing. Norton was wearing a mask. He joined in the laughter.

The 354-pages of text in "Trauma Sponges" are heartfelt, brutal, timely, raw and fueled by the author's insights into those he aims to save, which includes himself.



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had land. He is focused on growing food there.

"I also took a course in human rights and civil rights training in Washington. All around the world, we are happy to be a part of that," Islam said. "I also have permission to participate in Ukraine, and there is the possibility in being a part of that."

Islam said he is finding more opportunities to spend time with his children, a luxury he did not have when he was running Gandhi Mahal full time. But he also misses the connections he had with the community, giving food and being a part of a thriving business where he raised fish and his own herbs and vegetables to serve fresh in his restaurant. "I still try, and I hope my daughter will continue," he noted.

For the most part right now, however, Islam wants to take the time to think about what comes next.

"I don't know what to say about what all is going on," he said. Although he had originally planned to rebuild Gandhi Mahal, Islam said he does not think the restaurant operation as it was will be able to come back. "It is too much, it is too costly, and we cannot afford it," he stated.

Islam said he did receive some grants when he lost his business, and he has worked with the Minneapolis City Coun-



Asmat Ali and Mahmoud Rahman cook chana masala and chicken tikka masala at Curry in a Hurry at 3025 E. Franklin Ave. (Photo by Terry Faust)

cil. "Right now the Minneapolis Foundation is trying to help out, and I was thinking about all the businesses on the corner at our old location. So, we are looking at a project."

The Minneapolis Foundation is helping with funding, and Islam said he loves and respects the team he is working with. "I can only hope something will come up,

and the foundation and the city and community will support it," he said.

He said the project would involve different vendors and all flavors of food. There would be curry and Japanese, Somali and Mexican food. "We would have a Halal butcher shop and a coffee shop. One building with all these different cuisines. And above the shops would be

apartments. People could live upstairs and work downstairs."

According to Islam, a wonderful team is putting the plan together. "But it is not easy," he added. "Hopefully we can work together. When you build something, you must make it last. You do it so it makes sense for it to last for hundreds of years."

Reflecting on the past few years, Islam said that when his building burned down he said it was okay. He wanted racial justice to prevail. "We also need safety and security; that is very important," he said. How can we do business if we have problems?"

He talked about the importance of a democratic world. "We must do things that make it better for everyone, not just to impress some people."

Islam said he just wants to have his freedom, and he came from a country where that is sometimes hard. But he said he is confused about the leadership we have.

"Climate change, for example, is caused by the western nations but can affect Bangladesh. We have a democratic system here, and need to set an example for the whole world."

In this small corner of the globe, Islam wants to do his part. If his project is successful, it would take place within the next couple of years.

"We are hoping we can build it," he said. "We are trying to step up and invest in the community."

VICTIM JAILED >> from 1

out that Dani was effectively ordered into "debtor's prison," an issue that the ACLU has written about. From "Ending Modern-Day Debtors' Prisons": "Nearly two centuries ago, the United States formally abolished the incarceration of people who failed to pay off debts. Yet, recent years have witnessed the rise of modern-day debtors' prisons – the arrest and jailing of poor people for failure to pay legal debts they can never hope to afford, through criminal justice procedures that violate their most basic rights."

"It's National Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Let's talk about how women leave, find themselves in family court, go broke and lose their children," wrote advocates on the Instagram account my_family_court_story. The advocates have opted to remain anonymous fearing retaliation and punishment from Minnesota family courts – in addition to retribution from their exes.

BACK AND FORTH

After being booked and held in the Sherburne County jail, Dani was released after an emergency writ was issued later that day by the state appeals court. Judge Stanislawski was ordered to issue her written report on the contempt findings, which she did on Oct. 3. In it, she ordered Dani back to jail by Nov. 1.

Judge Stanislawski told the crowded courtroom on Oct. 2 that she didn't find Dani's testimony to be credible (family court judges are given wide berth to label a witness credible or not credible and don't need to include their evidence

in their orders). Judge Stanislawski had questioned Dani on the stand in addition to allowing the two attorneys present to question her, and did not provide the required legal notice prior to the two-hour hearing that Dani would be put on the stand.

Dani's attorney pointed out that she would lose her job if incarcerated and wouldn't be able to pay the fees levied against her.

"It makes no sense to me. I don't understand," said Leigh Olson-Block following the court hearing. Her daughter, Mikayla, was murdered by father John Tester during an unsupervised visitation despite Olson-Block's statements to the court that he was dangerous.

"That was 20 years ago. Nothing has changed in family court. We're overdue."

Olson-Block asked, "What is in the child's best interest about jailing mom? I don't see how this courtroom is putting the child's best interests first. They are adding an ACE score to her life by jailing a parent."

At least 11 children have died in Minnesota during active family court cases, according to the Center for Judicial Excellence, which has been keeping track since 2008 of the number of children murdered by a parent when divorce, separation, custody, visitation or child support was mentioned in news coverage. In the U.S. overall, that number is at 966 as of press time.

There is no specific age in Minnesota family courts where a child can state that they don't want to see one parent. "Courts prioritize a child seeing their dad even if dad has engaged in domestic violence that affects mom and the children," observed advocates. In some cases, children

in the United States have been ordered to have no contact with their protective parent for years and placed in "reunification camps" with the parent they say has been abusive to them. Recently there have been high-profile cases reported on by ProPublica, including ones in which teens barricaded themselves in bedrooms. California officially banned reunification camps in September (SB-331), stating that there was no research to back up their use except by those who profit financially from them.

Olson-Block said: "There is no oversight involving judges who handle family court cases. They are allowed to make decisions that are often detrimental to families. Children are being abused and/or murdered, and there is no accountability within the system."

JUDGES DON'T FOLLOW THE LAWS'

Judge Stanislawski approved the IFP for Dani, but stated that it doesn't apply to her transcript fees, which can reach \$5,000 for court hearings and trials. Transcripts are necessary in order to file appeals. In Minnesota, an appeals court of three judges may make rulings, and then the case typically returns to the same courtroom, where that judge (who may now be angered by the new ruling against her) will follow the order to make changes to the initial ruling. The judge isn't precluded from ordering additional items – which may include ordering the payment of legal fees to the other side or other retaliatory items, pointed out Minnesota family court reform advocates. "Most people don't realize this about appeals," said advocate Bonnie Roy. "They take a long time, are expensive, and they typically put you back

in front of the same judge whom you appealed in the first place."

There is a procedure for filing a complaint against a judge in Minnesota, but the number of those censured is quite low.

Judge Stanislawski was approved by a nominating committee and appointed to her role in January 2023. After appointment, judges are then on the ballot but almost always run unopposed. There is little information available on a judge's record for voters to easily access, and most leave that part of the ballot empty.

There is not currently a law requiring judges to be trained in domestic violence, coercive control, and child abuse dynamics, although federal funding is available through Kayden's Law (section XV of the Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization Act) if Minnesota were to pass such legislation. The law is named after a girl who was murdered by her father.

"We stand with many protective parents across the United States just to be their voice. For anyone that really can't understand the level of confusion that goes in cases like this is another one of the reasons we're here," said Roy.

"Judges don't follow the laws. They don't follow the statutes. And women and children suffer at the hands of those judges that make those decisions."

**Editor's note: In writing these articles, I have reviewed dozens of court documents, and reports by professionals. In recognition of the sensitive nature of this article, we have opted to refer to people by their first names or aliases. We have named the professionals working on this case as their work affects other families, and the advocates who have said yes to being named.*

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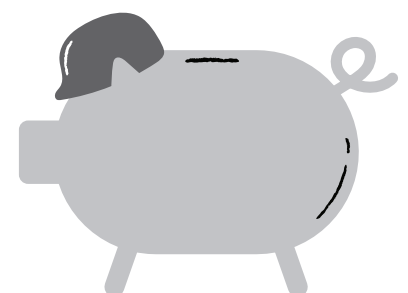


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Join the conversation, and let us know your diverse thoughts on the issues that affect your neighborhood. Send letters and guest commentaries to news@LongfellowNokomisMessenger.com.

By CHARLES UNDERWOOD

The Minneapolis city council election is upon us, with early in-person and mail-in voting already begun. The following is an analysis of the campaign finance reports of the three candidates running for the open seat in Ward 12, combining the three reports required so far of the candidates: Aurin Chowdhury, Luther Ranheim and Nancy Ford. By law all donors giving over \$100 must divulge their names, addresses and employers. The Minnesota Campaign Finance Board requires end-of-the-year reports, January reports and what they call pre-primary reports at the end of July (even though Minneapolis has no primary). (Reports viewed at vote.minneapolismn.gov under "campaign finance reports".)

Based on his background in finance and philanthropy from the uber-rich, I expected Luther Ranheim to get most support from the very wealthiest, many of whom lived far from Minnesota. This was partly wrong. Ranheim pulled in \$69,000, with little from outside Minnesota. He had donations from bankers (Wells Fargo, Bremer, U.S. Bank, Marquette, etc.) and huge numbers of developers and property managers (Ryan, Hall Sweeny, Diversified Equities, Lupe, Phoenix, Bader, Doran, JLL, Mortenson, etc.). What really surprised me from the Ranheim donors were the number of lawyers, litigators, and lobbyists for big construction and management projects (Stoel Rives, Larkin Hoffman, Stauber Legal, Caplan-Tamburino, Briol-Benson, Fabian Hoffner, etc.). One lawyer confines his entire practice to appeals and litigation of business tax assessments. Even more surprising were the registered lobbyists donating to Ranheim, with work involv-

In Ward 12 race: who gave money to candidates?

ing creditors' rights, wine and spirits, Flint Hills Refinery (Koch industries owned), CenterPoint, big builders and developers. Four conservative former city council members were also among Ranheim donors. The only political action committee to donate to Ranheim was the Downtown Council, although their president Steve Cramer also donated individually as well as Cramer's predecessor. Ranheim listed 207 individual donations over \$100.

Nancy Ford raised almost nothing additional for this campaign, with only five donations over \$100, one of which she gave to the campaign herself. The lawn signs you see were probably paid from funds left over from her 2021 campaign. (Note: that was the year she donated to and endorsed Republican Minnesota Senate candidate Sean Holzer.)

A little surprising was that Aurin Chowdhury had nearly as much in total donations as Ranheim, just under \$58,000. However, there weren't many surprises who they were: labor organizers (SEIU, AFSCME), current city council members, current state House and Senate members, teachers and professors (Minneapolis, St. Paul and the U.), DFL staff, immigration advocates and lawyers, musicians and music teachers, employees of energy conservation and alternative energy concerns (Bright Power, Atta Planning), employees of progressive advocacy groups (MoveOn, Minnesota Voice, Jewish Community Action, Civic

Eagle, Tending the Soil), writers and bookstore owners (Moon Palace), musicians and music teachers. Of 128 individual donations over \$100, only one came from a political action committee: Women Winning PAC.

In terms of finding out how local these donors were, I analyzed city of residence and zip codes indicating Ward 12 homes. Of his 207 entries, Ranheim had about a fifth from Ward 12 (38), half from all of Minneapolis (136) and a third from other parts of Minnesota. Of her 12 identifying entries, Ford had all five from Minneapolis in Ward 12 and three entries from other Minnesota locations. Of her 128 entries, Chaudhury had 24 from Ward 12, 89 from all of Minneapolis and 39 from other Minnesota locations. None of the candidates had significant donors from outside of Minnesota.

What do I conclude from who backs each candidate?

The sample of donations to Nancy Ford was simply too small to draw conclusions, in either number or amount of donations. We can still know that she is a local business owner, of course, but cannot really gauge her support from other business owners or associations.

Ranheim is clearly the more conservative of the two candidates remaining. Though the city council has no control over the hiring or funding of the police, Ranheim would likely support Mayor Jacob

Frey's record or his promises on public safety. Beyond that, Ranheim has no experience concerning unarmed solutions to lessening crime. Unlike Ford, Ranheim has no experience with businesses ownership. He has no record on equitable climate resilience, rather has accepted contributions from fossil-fuel advocates. The biggest Ranheim contrast, however, is with housing; he has massive support from developers who argue that they need generous contracts and subsidies to build a lot of projects, so housing inflation slows. This has been a longstanding argument. If you favor that approach, those developers would be Ranheim's first constituents.

Aurin Chowdhury, on the other hand, is much more likely to devote attention and money to the root causes of our public safety problems. Like Ranheim, Chowdhury also has no experience in business ownership. She is a renter herself and favors public policies and investments to address homelessness and reduce housing inflation costs. From her years in organizing and working with the city council, she has developed a network of strong relationships with individuals and organizations to address climate, food, safety, housing and other survival issues. People who work in those areas overwhelmingly donate to her campaign.

There you have it. Make a plan to vote, whether early in-person, by mail or at your local precinct on Nov. 7. It's our democracy and we get to decide. But only if we inform ourselves and if we show up.

Charles Underwood is a 25-year resident of Howe. He has door-knocked for candidate Aurin Chowdhury in the community and is a member of the DFL party.

LETTERS

OUTGOING COUNCIL MEMBER'S THOUGHTS ON CANDIDATES

As we approach Election Day, I am often asked what I think about the candidates running to fill this open seat given the insight I have into the role and dynamics at city hall. I am happy to share my perspective and an endorsement knowing that it may be helpful to some. After getting to know each candidate, Aurin Chowdhury stands out to me as the best choice to be our next council member for several reasons:

She is the only candidate that has experience working at city hall and with the city council doing policymaking and constituent work, so she's ready to go on day one. That's important because this election is for a special two-year term and most council members acknowledge that it takes a couple years to get their feet under them. This also makes her proven, helping alleviate the common concern with any candidate that they might be good at campaigning but not effective once they arrive at city hall.

She is uniquely positioned to help bridge the factions at city hall which have led to fighting and impasses. This results from Aurin's strong working relationships, especially with the leftmost council members, while maintaining a pragmatic and independent focus on getting things done

for the people of Ward 12 and the city. It's also seen in her calm and collected demeanor, thoughtfulness on the details, and open-minded approach towards problem-solving and compromise.

Her close intergovernmental relationships will pay dividends for our city. Minneapolis cannot solve all the world's problems, our core services need more investment, and property taxes can only be raised so high; that makes it necessary to secure solutions and funding in partnership with other government levels. But how? Like much of politics, it's in leveraging relationships, and Aurin is the clear winner here. She's endorsed by key legislative leaders and will be able to immediately put those relationships to work for our city.

Ultimately the decision of which candidate to support is up to you as a voter, and I am committed to ensuring a smooth transition and the success of whomever is elected. Thank you for the opportunity to serve our community over the past 10 years as your council member, it has been an honor and I am proud of the many great things we have accomplished together.

Andrew Johnson
Ward 12 council member

WITHOUT NURSES, WHO WILL CARE FOR YOU?

Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey declared Sept. 14, 2023, "Abbott Northwestern Hospital Day," as hospital management broke

ground on a new building that same day.

What the public doesn't know is that Abbott Northwestern is spending thousands of dollars on outside consultants to compare our staffing levels to those in other states and municipalities and implement a plan to gut nurse staffing levels. The current proposals increase workload and patient care assignments by 20% or more. There is a large amount of research that shows cutting hospital nurse staffing increases patient complications, morbidity, and mortality and even more research that shows already unsafe staffing levels are the predominant factor in why nurses are leaving or not coming back to hospitals.

Frey's declaration is profoundly out of touch and appears to be a cover-up for what is happening inside the walls of the largest hospital in the Twin Cities. Our patients – the residents of Minneapolis and its surrounding communities – deserve high-quality, safe patient care provided by experienced nurses. Minnesota's reputation as a leader in healthcare is once again being threatened by highly paid corporate bullies who are prioritizing their own pocketbooks over patient care and driving nurses away. Without nurses, who will care for you?

Rebekah Nelson, RN
Abbott Northwestern employee/
elected labor leader

I'M USING NEMATODES AND A BEE LAWN

I'd like to provide this information to the neighbors who want an effective bee-safe alternative. Nematodes are microorganisms that kill grubs. They are mixed with water and applied to the lawn in August-September, or in June, when the grubs are underground but not deep.

I've lived in Longfellow for just a year, near the Coliseum, and am a first-time homeowner. The lawn was severely damaged by Japanese beetle larvae last year, and I happened to find out about nematodes when I stopped in at a local garden shop.

After shopping around, I found an affordable quantity of nematodes big enough for me and my next door neighbors to treat both of our oversized yards. It seems to have worked great!

To replace the destroyed lawn, instead of regular grass, I'm going to plant "bee lawn" seeds and clover seeds which have little flowers that bees can eat, but which Japanese beetle larvae do not favor as food. By using nematodes and replacing damaged traditional lawn with a different kind of lawn, we can steward the land better for our neighborhood and its bees.

Loyola Colebeck
Longfellow

WHAT DO YOU THINK? EMAIL LETTERS, GUEST COMMENTARIES, PRESS RELEASES AND NOTES TO TESHA@LONGFELLOWNOKOMISMESSANGER.COM

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Story ideas always welcome.

Letters to the editor under 200 words and news releases for publication can be e-mailed to tesha@longfellownokomisessenger.com. Unsigned letters will not run.

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Minneapolis perpetuates poverty through camp eviction policy

guest column



BY DANIEL SCHMIDT

The City of Minneapolis is perpetuating a humanitarian crisis against our neighbors who cannot afford housing. We are all witnesses to the tragedy. Instead of enacting common sense programs to support our neighbors, the City— led by Mayor Jacob Frey— is bullishly enforcing fiscally irresponsible and downright inhumane policies.

On Sept. 30, the Star Tribune published an opinion piece written by former Minneapolis Planning Commissioner Nick Magrino who advocated that “a significant portion of the chronically homeless need to be institutionalized.” Magrino appears to be horrifyingly ignorant of the genocide that State-sponsored institutions have perpetuated in Minnesota for more than 200 years. Stunningly, the piece was published on the Minnesota-wide Day of Remembrance for The Children Who Died While Attending United States Indian Boarding Schools in the State of Minnesota.

This is significant because these boarding schools were genocidal institutions. What began as a military fort on the most sacred land of the Dakota people in 1806, became the Federally-mandated expulsion of all Native people from Minnesota in

1863 (an exile that remains legal in American law-books). But this wasn't enough for the colonial settlers, and soon they enacted the policy of forced assimilation, using Catholic-run boarding schools with the explicit mission to “Kill the Indian, Save the Man.” These institutions were disgusting places where physical and sexual abuse was common, and the cold-blooded murder of Native children occurred frequently. These boarding schools were in operation until 1969; many who survived the trauma are alive today.

Magrino's opinion, which is ignorant of history and focuses on such an ambiguous scape goat as “social media,” puts on full display how government officials enforce colonial policies.

Nicole Mason, a resident of Little Earth, and member of the Red Lake Nation who is a leader of the peaceful, community-oriented and health-focused Camp Nenookaasi in South Minneapolis, said in response, “Magrino wrote about institutionalizing our people, and that is the cycle of boarding schools all over again. He wants to forcefully lock our people up when all we're asking for is our lives back, our culture back, music back, and our language back. Magrino wants to steal that from us and lock us up.”

Magrino's piece tries to appear empathetic; the subtitle reads “we need to help people” and the cover image shows a sign in front of a camp that boldly states, “SHELTER RESOURCES.” But anyone who lives or volunteers at a camp knows that there are not enough shelters and resources for all of our neighbors without hous-

ing.

Vinny Dion, a camp outreach worker with the American Indian Community Development Corporation and Little Earth Defender, said in an interview with the Red Nation Podcast, “When they evict [our relatives] out, [the City is] throwing everything away. If they have IDs, medications, any kind of food, clothing, then they have to start over... If there is a camp, we know where [our relatives] are at. We can go check on them every day, we can do a housing assessment with them, and... I can get them on the list [for housing]... Sometimes it takes 3 to 4 months.” Encampments offer a level of stability that supports people getting housing, staying sober, and working together to remain safe.

In fact, while the City offers absolutely no resources directly to folks without housing, the City has spent roughly \$500,000 on camp evictions between May 2022 and April 2023— a majority of costs coming from Police presence. (Source: Legislative Directive Response on Homeless Encampment Closures) This money could be used to help our neighbors rather than throw their hard-won progress in the trash. As a point of reference, through community-based donations, Camp Nenookaasi spends \$1,000 a day to feed and house 175 people on a plot smaller than one acre. From the perspective of the Camp, the City is the main perpetrator of violence and disruptor of security.

The most important question we have to ask is, What does the City expect people to do once they're evicted from

the camps? Every time the City bulldozes a camp, it is destroying their protection against the elements and predators like drug pushers and pimps. The City's eviction policy actively perpetuates conditions in which people end up living in the shadow of civilization where drugs and crime run rampant. Through their ignorance, and prejudice, City officials like Magrino and Frey use tax dollars to build the infrastructure that imprisons and institutionalizes our neighbors.

What afflicts the Native unhoused citizens of Minneapolis is not widespread and inherent mental health crises or drug addictions (such that Magrino writes in his Star Tribune article). The problem is the State-sponsored systematic theft of land, languages, and families; the criminalization of cultural practices, food systems, and right to Life; and the pillaging and destruction of clean soil, air, and water that has been sacred and pristine for over ten thousand years prior to Christian year 1492. Overlooking history is a classic conservative tactic, and a favorite of Mayor Frey and his conservative allies, like Nick Magrino.

Any solution that will truly improve the conditions of life for our houseless relatives will not occur quickly. We need to support the basic blocks of Life— shelter, food, water, education— and take a holistic and direct approach to City services. Our “Strong Mayor” is taking a destructive, expensive, and illogical approach to housing policy.

Daniel Schmidt is a south Minneapolis resident.

FALL HAS ARRIVED ALONG WITH MEDICARE OPEN ENROLLMENT

Stories and Journeys



BY DONALD L. HAMMEN

HERE'S MY MEDICARE STORY. WHAT'S YOURS?

This is a time during fall to make changes in one's Medicare plan. I am making my way through my seventh year of retirement and enrolled in Medicare. In this column, I am telling my Medicare story and sharing my journey. What I'm thinking, learning, experiencing. I'm inviting you, dear reader, to do the same. Tell yourself, tell others or tell me via Tesha@longfellownokomisessenger.com.

It's Dec. 26, 2016. My last day as an employee of M Health Fairview University of Minnesota Medical Center after 21 years. My career as a nursing assistant has come to an end. My body has told me I can no longer do the work due to my lum-

bar spine stenosis. Work that I had discovered to be a calling. The next day I became officially a retiree/senior/elder. I said good bye to my Preferred One health insurance plan. I had about one week to find a Medicare plan that would work for me.

My search for a Medicare plan took me to Epworth United Methodist Church in south Minneapolis where I was an active member at the time. It was suggested to me that I talk to Nan Rice, a retired public school teacher. It was through Nan that I got connected to Leslie Gold, owner of Minnesota Medicare Consultants. Within a week she got me enrolled in a Blue Cross/Blue Shield hybrid plan which she recommended along with Silver Script for drugs Part D. My Medicare journey was underway.

At the time I did not know the difference between a Medicare Advantage Plan and what I now call actual Medicare. For the first year or two that Blue Cross/Blue Shield hybrid plan plus Silver Script met my needs until Blue Cross/Blue Shield dropped it. My most direct path to continue coverage was to enroll in another Blue Cross/Blue Shield plan which includ-

ed Part D. I proceeded to enroll. That plan met my needs such as they were for about a year or two. Nonetheless I was becoming increasingly aware of how Medicare Advantage plans are not what I call actual Medicare.

About three years ago I received a letter from Leslie Gold. She suggested that if I was inclined to switch to 'actual' Medicare the time to do it would be while I was in relatively good health. Long story short, today I am now enrolled in 'actual' Medicare with an Aetna supplement and I am back with Silver Script. So far so good. Now I am more focused on the fact that Medicare Advantage is not Medicare. If you have read this far you have taken the plunge into the river (flow) of life experiences that is Stories and Journeys.

MEDICARE ADVANTAGE IS NOT MEDICARE

While I was with Blue Cross/Blue Shield I was in the Advantage Plan world. So what sets Medicare Advantage Part C apart and more important what makes Advantage Plans a threat to the future of 'actual' Medicare also known as traditional or original Medicare. On Oct. 9, I received

one of the regular e-mails I get from Ken McInnes, President of Minnesota State Retiree Council, AFL-CIO addressed to retirees. Attached to this email was a Letter-to-the-Editor slated to appear in the Red Wing Republican Eagle, Weekend Edition, on Oct. 7 and Oct. 8, 2023. It was signed by Bruce Yernberg from Red Wing, MN.

In the first part of the letter he writes: "What seniors need to understand is that Medicare Advantage is not Medicare."

Here is a salient quote from the letter: "Remember, traditional Medicare was passed in 1965 because corporate insurance companies didn't want to cover seniors. They were eager to shift that responsibility to the government. But today, they have found a way to cover seniors and also make huge profits, which is destroying a program that was supposed to be publicly funded and publicly administered health security for seniors."

More to come next month.

In gratitude always.

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

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~ Emily, Minneapolis

2600 MINNEHAHA

>> from 1

Koski and council members Robin Wonsley (ward 2) Jamal Osman (ward 6), Jason Chavez (ward 9), and Andrew Johnson (ward 12) all authored the motion to postpone and get more information about the proposed safety center, as well as all the other sites considered.

Ward 8 Council Member Andrea Jenkins was the only council member from the area who did not author the motion that was written in response to the request made by Finance & Property Services and Office of Community Safety staffs, Barbara O'Brien and Jared Jeffries, for authorization "to pursue preliminary investigation, due diligence, and preliminary design work for a Community Safety Center at the city-owned property located at 2600 Minnehaha Ave S."

The idea of refocusing on 2600 Minnehaha comes from Mayor Jacob Frey. Even though he did not veto the council's previous decision to start the process for selling the land, in early October he asked them to reverse course and allocate funding to build a new safety headquarters there.

RUSHING DECISION OR TAKING TOO LONG?

The vote to put the property up for sale followed a 3rd Precinct engagement report the council received in July that showed divided opinions about a facility at 2600 Minnehaha, as well as the council's rejection of an alternative downtown location in September.

At the meeting on the 17th, disagreements about the timing were evident.

"I have no interest in delaying this decision," said Koski. "But just because I understand and share the sense of urgency around making a decision, does not mean I am willing to forgo my oversight responsibility in order to do so."

"My position is clear that the community deserves a decision, and my administration will do whatever it takes to get to seven votes to get to that decision," said Frey. "I ask that the council make a decision by Oct. 31."

"The council and public need more information to ensure that we are making decisions that are fiscally responsible and aligned with the goals of our city's new citywide public safety system," said Wonsley, who represents the ward where the proposed new facility would be located.

"I think we've let this go on far too long," said Ward 13 Council Member Linea Palmisano. "I am expecting action and a decision by Oct. 31."

"Our obligation isn't to rush decisions or commit to an Oct. 31 deadline," said Ward 10 Council member Aisha Chughtai. "Due diligence is not indecision or inaction. Thoughtfulness is not indecision or inaction and consensus building is not indecision or inaction. All three of those things are actually good governance."

IS COMMUNITY LEADING PROCESS?

Concerns were also raised about community and council member involvement in the process.

"Having a conversation and actually talking to the council members from the districts and talking to the residents from the district about the effect it will have is the best way to go," said Osman.



Mayor Jacob Frey has asked council members to approve building a new structure at the city-owned site at 2600 Minnehaha to house the police from the 3rd precinct. (Photo submitted)

"I look forward to seeing the administration's presentation on each of the site options so that council and the public can have a serious conversation about how those various options compare to one another," said Wonsley. "Also, during the two-week delay I really hope that Mayor Frey can meet with the 3rd precinct residents and hear from them directly."

"Any decision regarding the 3rd Precinct Police Station should be led by the community," wrote Chavez. "We need to finish our truth and reconciliation process. Our residents should have the ability to decide what functions a future site will house, what community assets will be available, the design, and where."

Those concerns were not limited to elected officials.

MAYOR ASKED TO MEET WITH LOCAL LEADERS, DOESN'T ATTEND MEETING

Prior the meeting on the 17th, neighborhood organizations impacted by the future site and services of a 3rd precinct police station sent a letter to the mayor requesting a meeting to have "a meaningful and intentional dialogue about the necessary steps of engagement to create a community safety plan that includes the location and development concepts of the future 3rd precinct facility that will respect and meet community needs."

"We are aware that you have asked the council to place that facility at 2600 Minnehaha," they wrote in the invitation. "However, given that you didn't attend any of the community conversation sessions back in April where hundreds of residents came together to discuss that exact location, we ask you to now come to the table with community to have a long overdue dialogue."

The mayor, however, declined the meeting. "We are disappointed that the mayor hasn't made time to sit down and talk directly with those most impacted by the placement and services of the future 3rd precinct location," wrote Longfellow Community Council Executive Director Rachel Boeke.

MORE THAN TRADITIONAL POLICE STATION?

Unlike previous proposals, this time

it appears that the mayor is proposing that the new facility be more than just a traditional police station.

A memo to the council from Interim Community Safety Commissioner Lee Sheehy and Interim City Operations Officer Heather Johnston, dated Oct. 13, describes a facility that could provide "residents with a spectrum of community safety services."

It lists police, violence interrupters, social workers, street outreach workers, community navigators, community attorneys, and crime prevention specialists as city staff who might be there. It says, that "a Community Safety Center is a place to house an ecosystem of services needed to bridge the gap between the role of the police and alternative strategies to community safety." It also says that the design of the center could involve "internal and external partners in how the future of safety looks in communities while creating a continuum of services to support community health and well-being."

"This memo is one of the first times we are seeing a shift to talking about it as a safety center," said Chughtai. "That shift I think is in alignment with where I think this council wants to go and where residents want to go, and how we approach public safety and the physical infrastructure that goes along with it."

TWO OTHER SITES IDENTIFIED

The memo also identified two new sites that the city reviewed, one at 3716 Cheatham Ave and the other at 2520 26th Ave S.

LARGER CONCERNS LINGER

Larger concerns about improving policing and community trust could influence any decisions about new facilities and it is unclear what progress will be made by the end of the month deadline.

"As we work towards a vision and with a community safety center it is imperative that we receive this information, that we collaborate on a vision that goes beyond just policing and ensure that we are making an informed decision," said Chavez.

"What this is really about is the relationship that MPD has with the community," said Ward 1 Council Member Elliott Payne, who supported the delay. "The biggest impediment to moving forward is the lack of demonstrable reform within MPD."

Chughtai is looking to the council members from the ward for leadership. "I trust them to process the information and build consensus about how we are going to move forward," she said. "We need to make good decisions and thoughtful decisions that are going to outlast all of us and it is okay if that takes time."

"The decisions we make now regarding the future Community Safety Center, 3rd Precinct Facility," said Koski, "are long-term, permanent decisions, decisions which will last to the next century - we cannot take this lightly."

TIMELINE

July 17 – City report concludes that there is not clear community support for locating police station at either old 3rd Precinct 3000 Minnehaha Ave. site or 2600 Minnehaha Ave.

July 20 – Council unanimously votes to eliminate 3000 Minnehaha from consideration.

Aug. 4 – Council authorizes, and mayor declines to veto, request for proposals to sell the 2600 site.

Sept. 7 – Council and mayor support co-locating the 3rd and 1st precinct offices 1101 3rd Ave.

Sept. 19 – Council rejects the co-location in response to projected costs.

Oct. 4 – Mayor asks council to fund new safety center at 2600 Minnehaha.

Oct. 9 – Public Health and Safety Chair LaTrisha Vetaw (ward 4) declares preference for 3000 site.

Oct. 13 – City staff send memo supporting "community safety center" at 2600 and sharing two new potential locations.

Oct. 17 – Council committee postpones decision on 2600 and requests more information.

Oct. 19 – Council affirms committee decision.

Oct. 31 – Council committee expected to receive report and reconsider funding for 2600.

LOCAL LEADERS ASKED TO TALK TO MAYOR, HE DIDN'T ATTEND MEETING

The neighborhood organizations of the communities most impacted by the future site and services of a 3rd precinct police station invited Mayor Jacob Frey "to a meaningful and intentional dialogue about the necessary steps of engagement to create a community safety plan that includes the location and development concepts of the future 3rd precinct facility that will respect and meet community needs," stated the written invitation. "We are aware that you have asked council to place that facility at 2600 Minnehaha. However, given that you didn't attend any of the community conversation sessions back in April where hundreds of residents came together to discuss that exact location, we ask you to now come to the table with community to have a long overdue dialogue."

The meeting scheduled for Oct. 16 was canceled.

According to the Longfellow Community Council Executive Director Rachel Boeke: "The Mayor has declined the opportunity to meet with community stakeholders from across the 3rd precinct this evening. We are disappointed that the mayor hasn't made time to sit down and talk directly with those most impacted by the placement and services of the future 3rd precinct location.

"We remain hopeful that council will act on behalf of the community and push forward the necessary action steps to create a meaningful, intentional and honest engagement process that respects and meets community needs not just for a physical location of a 3rd precinct station but also an encompassing community safety plan."

"We remain hopeful that council will act on behalf of the community and push forward the necessary action steps to create a meaningful, intentional and honest engagement process that respects and meets community needs," said Boeke, "not just for a physical location of a 3rd Precinct station but also an encompassing community safety plan."

“



The decisions we make now regarding the future Community Safety Center, 3rd Precinct Facility are long-term, permanent decisions, decisions which will last to the next century - we cannot take this lightly."

Emily Koski

“



We remain hopeful that council will act on behalf of the community and push forward the necessary action steps to create a meaningful, intentional and honest engagement process that respects and meets community needs, not just for a physical location of a 3rd precinct station but also an encompassing community safety plan."

Rachel Boeke

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By JILL BOOGREN

Yirí Studio: Creating connections through Latin dance

More than a dozen dancers took their show on the road, literally, Oct. 8, 2023, by bringing a flashmob to Open Streets Lyndale.

In celebration of National Hispanic Heritage Month, performers from three studios – Yirí Dance Studio, Evolución Latina Dance Company and Keri Simonson Dance – rehearsed together at Yirí earlier in the day before heading over to Lyndale at 29th Ave. With music cranked up on a portable speaker, they delighted passersby with the rhythm and sway of Salsa and Bachata dances.

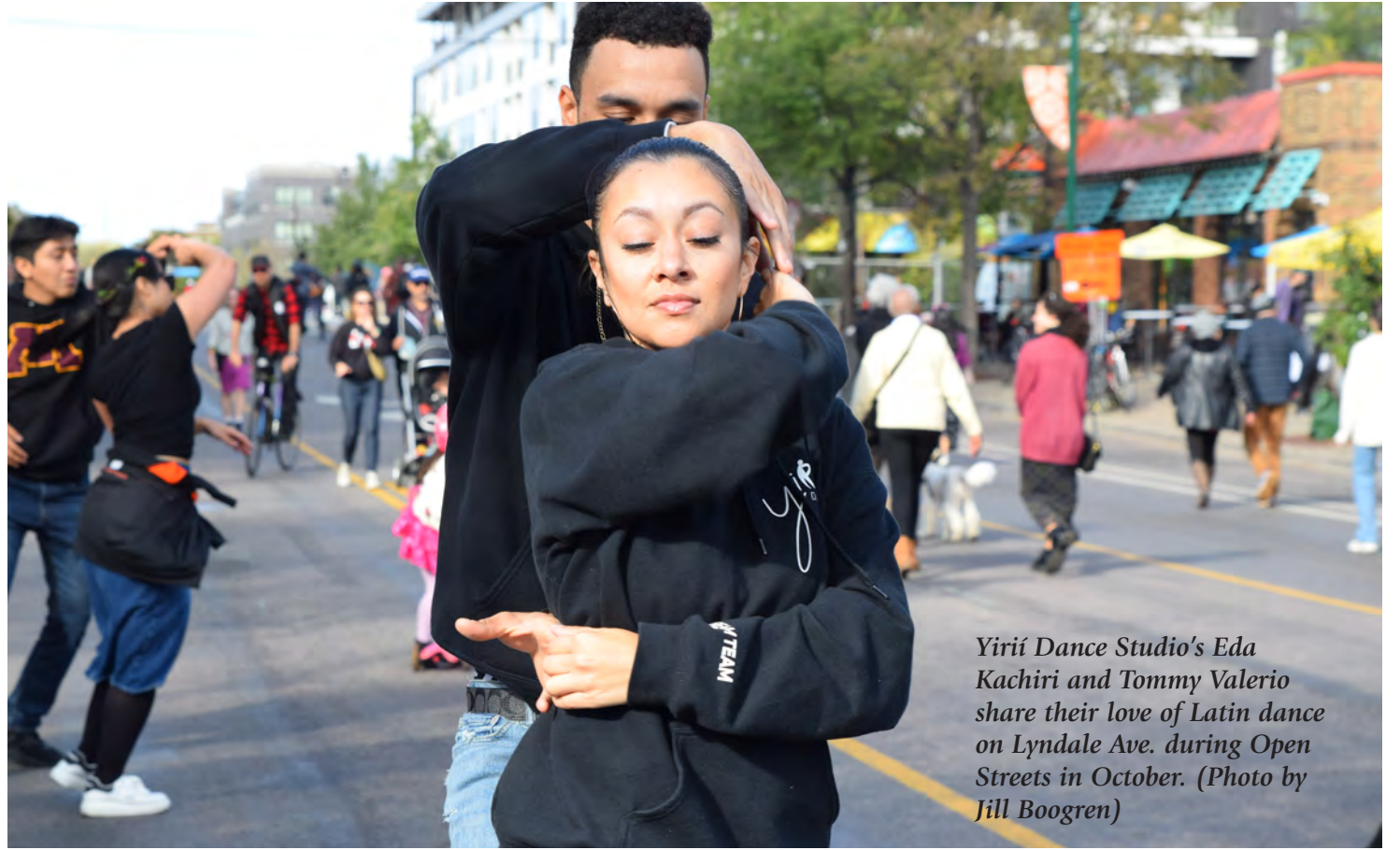
“It was a great opportunity to interact with other studios who have been very influential here in the [Latin dance] scene,” said event organizer and Yirí instructor Tommy Valerio, who wanted to showcase the dynamics of Hispanic culture through these dances. “It was just a great time here to share this moment with everyone.”

Making connections and growing the Latin dance community is one of the core values of Yirí, whose website proclaims, “Community. We are always, always stronger together.”

One student, Lyton Guallpa-Naula, who is the director of the Ecuadorian folkloric dance group Away Runakuna and is taking a Bachata (from the Dominican Republic) course at Yirí, appreciates learning different dance styles. And Yirí has supported his work to provide opportunities for the Ecuadorian community to learn traditional folk styles of Ecuador.

“The environment is just such an awesome place to be at... to learn the etiquette of what it is to be part of a social dance group but also to have fun,” he said. “It’s just been an amazing collaboration to keep the arts alive here in the Twin Cities. Folkloric arts and Latin arts, as well.”

Sofia Arisian, another student and lifelong dancer, just started taking Latin dance classes at the studio this year and



Yirí Dance Studio's Eda Kachiri and Tommy Valerio share their love of Latin dance on Lyndale Ave. during Open Streets in October. (Photo by Jill Boogren)

has begun helping out with the kids teams. She appreciates the connections she’s made through Yirí, including two of her best friends.

“The connections are really meaningful, and it’s nice to just go out in the Latin dance community and have my Yirí family wherever I go,” said Arisian. She likes that dance is taught authentically, with traditional music.

“It’s about the feeling when you’re dancing and the connection with your

partner and the music. It’s not about ‘Can I get the steps – Can I do this combination – Can I do this turn?’ None of that. It’s just connection, listening to the music and having a good time in social dancing. So that’s why I come,” she said.

Yirí, which means “movement” in the dialect of owner/instructor Eda Kachiri’s Indigenous tribe in Costa Rica, opened in the Seward neighborhood in 2021 – during the height of the COVID-19 shutdown. Kachiri was the only instructor and

offered two footwork classes and a kids team (no partner classes due to COVID-19). Now the studio has seven instructors and more than a dozen weekly classes geared to all experience levels. There are group classes for those who want a hobby or to learn the basics, as well as teams for dancers who really want to train.

“Everyone’s a fit,” said Kachiri, including beginners.

LATIN DANCE >> 9

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LATIN DANCE >> from 8

THAT'S MY 'WHY'

Born in New York and raised in Costa Rica and Minnesota, Kachiri began dancing in high school and explored different styles of dance before finding her way to Latin dance. She earned her teacher training at Social Dance Studio in Minneapolis in 2010, and has been teaching and performing ever since.

Creating a welcoming culture is deeply important to her. About six years ago while Kachiri was teaching at another studio, a friend told her, "You never know why someone's walking through that door." This friend had been in an abusive relationship, and her words changed Kachiri's outlook on teaching. Whether people come to work on their confidence or to meet people or because they want a challenge, they need to feel safe, happy and comfortable in the space.

Often within 30-45 minutes of working with someone, Kachiri knows what they struggle with in their personal life, because it reflects in their dancing.

"They work through it through dance. I watch them transform," she said. "I always tell people, 'That's my why. That's why I do it.'" Kachiri performs, social dances and teaches, but if she had to choose, teaching is what she would do because as she put it, it's "amazing" to watch somebody transform.

Kachiri also wants her studio to be as accessible as possible, especially for her kids teams – whom she calls her "Littles" (ages 7-12) and "Bigs" (ages 13-17) – for whom these opportunities aren't always available. She gears the kids toward performance, to give them an end goal. Five of her seven current "Littles" have been on the team before and love performing, so she tries to give them more opportunities to do so.

"Because they believe that they are fa-

mous dancers now," Kachiri said.

Two kids teams and three adult teams who have spent months learning choreography will now be performing around the city. Their debut will be at the Bailame Festival Minneapolis at the end of the month (Oct. 26-30). They'll also perform in the studio and likely do a night at La Doña Cerveceria brewery (241 Fremont Ave. N.).



The idea is just come as you are.

Eda Kachiri

Kachiri and Valerio teach and perform at other festivals. In August, they took their Salsa and Bachata teams to Arkansas so students got to perform somewhere else.

This is not the aim for everyone who joins the studio, though. Their partner work classes are geared toward social dance, not performance.

"We have people that just want to be able to go out and dance, so we have students who do that," said Kachiri.

Above all, Kachiri strives to maintain a culture of being very relaxed, laid back, a place where anybody can come and feel comfortable – and find whatever they need through movement. Students don't have to have years of experience or speak English (all but one of the instructors are Latino, and all speak Spanish) or dress a certain way or look a certain way.

"The idea is just come as you are," said Kachiri.

Yirií Dance Studio (2621 28th Ave. S.) in Seward offers drop-in and cumulative classes. They also host monthly socials and Wine Down events, which include a one-hour lesson followed by a social hour with wine and appetizers. More information is at yiriidance.com.

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The Messenger partnered with the League of Women Voters this year, and we're reprinting items from www.vote411.org. Here are the responses of the candidates who responded by our print deadline.

WARD 11

Vying for this position are Emily Koski and Gabrielle Prosser.

EMILY KOSKI

www.emilykoskiformpls.com

Please introduce yourself.

I'm Emily Koski, the current Ward 11 City Council Member in Minneapolis, seeking re-election this November. I'm a mother of 2, a wife, and a lifelong resident of Minneapolis. My foremost priority is and will remain public safety, focusing on the concerning rise in youth crime and auto thefts in our city. I am proud of my work to tackle this issue so far. I recently organized a public safety meeting where residents could engage with our county attorney. Establishing connections with the county to collaborate and seek solutions is a step forward. Addressing this challenge remains a goal in my second term.



As a council member, you are responsible to both your ward specifically and the city as a whole. How will you manage priorities that may be competing at times?

As a Council Member, it's crucial to balance the needs of Ward 11 & the broader city. I've taken a proactive approach by creating a strategic plan for Ward 11 upon taking office. This plan serves as a guide to navigate the competing priorities that arise. I con-

sistently engage with Ward 11 residents in regular meetings which have been instrumental in reviewing our progress and refining our strategic plan. By actively engaging the community, we can adjust priorities to accommodate evolving needs and preferences. The plan isn't static; it's a dynamic document reflecting the voices of Ward 11 residents. By staying committed to this inclusive approach, we can ensure that the interests of my ward and the city are thoughtfully addressed.

The city council approved the court-enforceable MPD consent decree. What is the role of the city council in overseeing the implementation and compliance with the decree and what are 2-3 initiatives that you will support to improve public safety and affect police misconduct?

The City Council places a vital role in overseeing the MPD Consent Decree's implementation, ensuring positive changes in public safety and police conduct. Communication is key; we must keep the community informed, fostering trust through transparency and open dialogue. Additionally, the Council must actively support essential funding to effectively execute the decree's requirements. This includes funding

for reforms, law enforcement training, and community policing initiatives. Adequate funding is fundamental for achieving the intended improvements in public safety and addressing misconduct.

What are specific strategies for housing people who are currently unhoused and creating affordable, sustainable housing opportunities for the future?

To effectively address homelessness, we need tailored solutions recognizing each person's unique situation. Initiatives like Avivo Village South and low barrier shelters provide immediate relief. However, sporadic encampment sweeps are ineffective and create unsafe conditions. A new Director of Regulatory Services is dedicated to solving the homelessness crisis, and I fully support their efforts. We need coordinated, compassionate approaches, transitioning individuals to stable housing and providing necessary services. We need to prioritize human dignity and foster healthier, inclusive communities through strategic partnerships and thoughtful policies.

GABRIELLE PROSSER

No website listed

EARLY VOTING

Early voting is underway for the Nov. 7 city election of all 13 city council members.

People can vote by mail or in person at the Early Vote Center at 980 E. Hennepin Ave. The Early Vote Center's hours are 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday. The center will extend its hours for the final two weeks of voting, including Saturdays and Sundays.

Find more information at <https://vote.minneapolismn.gov/voters/>.

WARD 2

Robin Wonsley is running unopposed. robinformpls.com

WARD 9

JASON CHAVEZ

www.jasonchavez.org

DANIEL ORBAN

No website listed

WARD 12

Vying for this position are Luther Ranheim, Aurin Chowdhury and Nancy Ward.

AURIN CHOWHURT

www.aurinchowdhury.org

Please introduce yourself.

My name is Aurin, I live in the Hiawatha neighborhood near Minnehaha Falls. I am a first-generation Bengali American, the eldest child of working-class Muslim immigrants. I spent my earliest years in Ward 12, where I learned English in Minneapolis public schools. I am a renter, a community organizer in our City for the last eight years, and an experienced policy aide at City Hall. I have served as a policy aide at the height of the COVID-19 Pandemic & continue to serve to pass policies that center the needs of everyday people in our City. I am the only candidate running who has experience in working to build out a comprehensive public safety system, that includes policing, prevention strategies, alternatives, & stronger policy accountability.



As a council member, you are responsible to both your ward specifically and the city as a whole. How will you manage priorities that may be competing at times?

The intersection of policymaking & community building is the place where I shine. I have taken on challenging problems such as unhoused homelessness, and safety on our buses and trains, & brought together community members to engage in a dialogue with each other and City officials. This has developed community-centered solutions that become the compass for policymaking decisions in the Council offices

I have served. I will do this in Ward 12 so our priorities are derived from the community and when there are competing priorities I will come back to the community with transparency, active communication, and honesty so we can come to a sound decision. My charge is to ensure what we decide to do as Ward 12 ensures the health and safety of all.

The city council approved the court-enforceable MPD consent decree. What is the role of the city council in overseeing the implementation and compliance with the decree and what are 2-3 initiatives that you will support to improve public safety and affect police misconduct?

The implementation of the dual consent decrees is crucial to building the deep reforms necessary to put an end to unaccountable, racist, ableist, and unconstitutional policing in Minneapolis. We need a Council Member on day one who has the experience and the values necessary to help shepherd this process. As a Council member, I will push the City Council to use the full weight of our audit power in conjunction with funding an independent monitor to spot-check the work of the MPD to ensure compliance, push for unrestricted access to all data collected by the monitor, require a regular status report on implementation. The initiatives I support and my platform on police accountability can be found in further detail on my website.

What are specific strategies for housing people who are currently unhoused and creating affordable, sustainable housing opportunities for the future?

Everyone in our City deserves a safe, affordable, and accessible place to live. Unfortunately, the City's current response to homelessness has not helped unhoused residents get to housing, it is setting us back. I have been working to change this as a policy aide and I know we reduce homelessness if

we have the political will. As the 12th Ward Council Member, I will use my experience on this issue to create a humane and dignified process to justly move people out of encampments, instead of doing harmful surprise sweeps that only shift people around. Also, we need investments in deeply affordable and mixed-income housing, and increased renters' protections that prevent displacement. Please view my platform on my website to see my full plan.

NANCY FORD

www.nancyforward12.com



LUTHER RANHEIM

lutherforward12.com

Please introduce yourself.

I'm Luther Ranheim. I'm a lifelong resident of South Minneapolis and a 22-year resident of Howe. I've worked for 27 years in financial services and the nonprofit industry. My top priority in office will be to create a comprehensive and accountable public safety system that serves everyone. We have increased crime levels compared to 2019, and a police force in need of deep, structural reform and wholesale culture change. I will help to build a holistic and transparent public safety system.



As a council member, you are responsible to both your ward specifically and the city as a whole. How will you manage priorities that may be competing at times?

My top priority will always be the needs of Ward 12 residents. At the same time, Council Members serve the entire city. Where competing interests exist between the Ward and the City, I will vote according to

the wishes of the majority of Ward 12 residents. When citywide action is needed, I will carefully consider and communicate my decisions to residents of Ward 12 through regular newsletter communications and at public office hours. I will engage with residents who agree and disagree with me.

The city council approved the court-enforceable MPD consent decree. What is the role of the city council in overseeing the implementation and compliance with the decree and what are 2-3 initiatives that you will support to improve public safety and affect police misconduct?

We know that MPD requires wholesale culture change and to rebuild the community's trust. Three initiatives that I support are: Ensure that misconduct, brutality & excessive force claims are reviewed by the Precinct Inspector. Advocate for a change in state law to strengthen the CCPO to have binding rulings. Establish community safety hubs in the 3rd precinct geography. We can't rebuild trust with MPD without opportunities for residents to engage with officers in positive environments.

What are specific strategies for housing people who are currently unhoused and creating affordable, sustainable housing opportunities for the future?

We must center the humanity of residents. We must take a double approach: housing-first and addiction treatment. We must set up safe, city-sanctioned sites for sober residents. We must also provide adequate funding for opioid treatment programs. Homelessness is a complex issue that we must address at the combined city, county, state, federal levels & the nonprofit and private sectors. I will use my relationships in social service and private sector organizations to invest in housing solutions.

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- ✓ Only candidate endorsed by climate action organizations
- ✓ Only candidate endorsed by Minneapolis public educators

AURIN CHOWDHURY
FOR MINNEAPOLIS WARD 12

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LITTLE MEKONG THROUGH EYES OF ARTIST KATIE KA VANG

Mixed Blood Theater hosts an interactive walking tour along University Avenue

By TALIA MCWRIGHT

Community members smiled as they tasted different dishes and snacks from local businesses of the Little Mekong cultural district on University Avenue on Sunday, July 2, 2023. The event was artist Katie Ka Vang's portion of Mixed Blood Theatre's 12x12 series. Businesses like 88 Oriental Foods offered pork bites and Mogu Mogu during the interactive walking tour.

"I didn't know there was a name for this area, and like an identity for the community," said Minneapolis resident Siana Goodwin. "I'm really happy to know that, and the food was awesome."

The event began at XIA Gallery & Café (422 University Ave. W.), where artist Vang and Mixed Blood Theatre artistic director Mark Valdez introduced themselves and their shared work. Valdez is the theater's second artistic director in its 47-year history. Growing up in Texas, Valdez noticed a lack of representation and accessibility in the art world. A writer and director, Valdez wanted to make art accessible across different communities. His goal for Mixed Blood's 12x12 series is to connect people to community and identity. The Little Mekong tour was the sixth event in the 12-part series.

"Katie is so deeply connected to the community," Valdez said. "It was fun to watch her re-experiencing, relearning and reengaging."

The theme of Vang's event was alien butterflies. Actors dressed in colorful



On Sunday, July 2, 2023, community members explored the area of Little Mekong along University with artist Katie Ka Vang. The walking tour was part of Mixed Blood Theatre's 12x12 series. (Photo by Talia McWright)

clothing and butterfly wings pretended to be from another planet. The two actors, called one and two, guided the group of attendees through the tour, starting from Xia Cafe & Gallery and ending at the Springboard for the Arts (262 University Ave. W.).

THE ARTIST

Born in Santana, Calif., Vang moved to Minnesota at the age of 18. She now lives in Woodbury and calls the state her "home base." Vang is a playwright with a background in art community organizing. Her artistic path began during her time as an arts administrator for the Center for Hmong Arts and Talent (995 Universi-

ty Ave. W.). After managing the Hmong band, Shattered Echos, Vang began to realize that her passion for art was not solely based on experiencing but creating too. Vang has now been an artist for 18 years.

"I was a closeted artist and didn't know it," Vang said. "I wanted to be around art all the time."

During her initial move to Minnesota, Vang felt out of place despite being a part of the large Hmong community in the state. After a few years, she began to gain pride in her Hmong heritage and felt more connected to the community. Over time Vang has cultivated relationships with vendors and businesses in Little Mekong. Many of the businesses Vang highlighted

12x12 SERIES

The 12x12 series organized by Mixed Blood culminated in the 12x12 Festival on Aug. 19-20. The series included 12 communities, three acts, and one venue.

NEXT UP

Playing next at Mixed Blood is "Mariology," which deconstructs deep-seated learning to inspire imagination about the Virgin Mary's roles in systems of gender, power, and faith, to open possibilities for liberation. The 2023/24 season opener runs Oct. 27 - Nov. 12, 2023

during the walking tour were businesses that she felt contributed to the community during the George Floyd movement.

"I want to be a patron of these places," Vang said. "And the best way to do that is to support their work."

Along with others, Vang has created plays based on her personal experiences as a Hmong woman, including a one-woman show called "Final Round" about her battle with stage four non-Hodgkin's lymphoma cancer and the associated stigmas. Her first musical, "Again," with Theatre Mu (755 Prior Ave. N.), took place on March 29, 2023 at Mixed Blood Theater. The show lasted three weeks, and was sold out.

"When I was going through cancer, I was very public about it," Vang said. "And it was actually the community that showed up for me."

Vang plans to create more musicals in the future, and is working on a play set for October about the Hmong communities relationship with volleyball, as well as a Narrative Change Theatre project for next July. More at www.katiekavang.com.

By JAN WILLMS

With a whirlwind of color, choreography and music, the South Asian Arts & Theater House (SAATH) brought the stage to life with a recent performance at the Cowles Center (528 Hennepin Ave.) to celebrate trans joy.

SAATH presented the dance drama Acceptance, Kindness, Support (AKS), a story told primarily in dance about the challenges facing members of the LGBTQ community. Performed in four acts, a cast of over 70 engaged in dance and acting to tell the audience about the day-to-day rejections from family and others when they try to be themselves.

"This is especially a topic that South Asians particularly shy away from, and we want to make sure it's a comfortable space for everyone to learn and grow," stated SAATH Board Member Vandana Sharma.

Act 1 focuses on the dancer, a person who was born male but strives to live as a woman. The mother thinks it is a phase her child may be going through but the father wants the child out of the house.

The warrior is the title of Act 2. Powerful dance sequences reflect the struggle to be who you are.

Act 3, the dreamer, shows how acceptance can make one feel. The importance of connecting with others is emphasized in this act.

The final act points out the morality and rules imposed on everyone, allowing no one to march to a different drummer. But a mirror, present in each act, serves to provide a sense of freedom and confidence to the individuals who look at it, and in the end acceptance, kindness and support prevail.

The show's superb technical work, with lighting and backgrounds, complemented the dancers' movements.

The presentation of AKS is a reflection of SAATH, an organization that offers acceptance, kindness and support to all who participate in its classes and programs.

ACCEPTANCE, KINDNESS AND SUPPORT



Over 70 cast members perform in "Acceptance, Kindness, Support" at the Cowles Center as part of a production by the South Asian Arts & Theater House. (Photo submitted)

"SAATH's core mission is to celebrate diversity and foster social harmony through the joyful mediums of dance, performing arts and South Asian cultural heritage," said Sharma. "At SAATH, we are dedicated to achieving artistic excellence and making a positive impact within our community."

SAATH, which in Hindi and other Indian languages means togetherness, was founded in 2012 by three dancers. At that time it was known as Bollywood Dance Scene and classes were taught at Tapestry Folkdance Center (3748 Minnehaha Ave.). In 2014, they produced a 50+ member cast show called "Hi! Hello! Namaste?". It was the first Bollywood dance drama ever performed at the Minnesota Fringe Festival and became the highest selling show of

the festival.

"We originally started the program with the art form of dance," Sharma said. "We began with our weekly dance classes. We then expanded to include acting, improv shows and fashion shows allowing local designers to create clothes while incorporating Bollywood music and dance along with a runway walk."

"We also hosted dance competitions with the twist that competitors had to dance to South Asian music. And we have produced story-telling shows," Sharma said. "Our dances are primarily South Asian, but we do infuse a fusion element if the music is Western."

Sharma explained that promoting dance as a way for folks from different backgrounds to connect is a fantastic

SAATH celebrates South Asian cultural traditions, trans joy in recent production

idea. "Dance is like a universal language that brings people together, and at SAATH we are about being inclusive," she stated. "Many of our members join us because they are looking to make new friends and be part of a community and dance, especially Bollywood dance, is a fun and easy way to connect."

Sharma said it has been an incredible experience watching the evolution of SAATH's performers. "There is a reason why we refer to our group as the SAATH family," she said, "as it has truly become a close-knit community. Many of our members are immigrants who have found a family here. Some have even found life partners within the group, and a few have started families of their own." She added that SAATH has also provided a platform for its community members to take on leadership roles.

"This is a 100 percent volunteer-run organization, so we depend on the support of our community to continue the important work we do."

She encouraged people of any race, age, gender identity or sexual preference to join SAATH.

In-person drop-in classes are every Thursday from 7-8:30 p.m. at Studio Time Out (6001 Lyndale Ave. S.).

SAATH is led by Executive Director Divya Maiya and board members: President Jinal Vakil, Vice President Narasimhamurthy Kulgod, Treasurer Madhu Bangalore, Secretary Srivani Harish, Stephanie Alexander, Nikita Basandra, Jeanette Chalgren, Jarrod Downy-Beard, Gopal Haregopappa, Darshan Maiya, Gautham Raja, Niyotha Reddy, Prachi Sansare, Vandana Sharma, Arun Velliangiri, and Allison Verma.

More at www.saathmn.org.

NOKOMIS EAST NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

By Sarah Friedman
communications manager
sarah.friedman@nokomiseast.org



Relax and create something perfectly imperfect

"Part of why I like being a teacher is because I have more ideas than I could possibly do myself. I love being able to say 'Here are a bunch of ideas!' and watch others bring them to life," Heather Tourville said when describing her pottery classes.

She opened The Cracked Pot Studio on 54th Street in April 2023. Offering small class sizes for adults, teens, children (aged 3-11), and events such as birthdays and date nights, this little studio is ready to teach anyone at any level how to create their own masterpieces. "I personally think clay is super therapeutic... I can't meditate, but I can meditate through the clay. You can zone out - forget what day it is, what time it is and what's going on in the world," Heather said with pure joy in her voice. She discussed living with depression and anxiety, and finding self in the process of creating something beautiful. Even their website points to studies showing how simply touching clay can make a person relax.

"I've been doing pottery ever since high school, but it was always just a hobby," she said. "I wasn't one of the best potters - I wasn't great at first - so I thought it wasn't my thing." She told me her friends were always the talented ones. She would go with

them to create pots just because she loved the sense of community she found in the clay room. Her drive was obvious when she openly said pottery didn't come naturally to her, but "if you keep doing it, you will get good."

While this is not Heather's first clay teaching studio, it is the first studio she started from scratch. She took over a studio in Lake Hiawatha, N.J. and ran it for five years before moving back home to Minnesota. "I really miss my pottery family! I still return to New Jersey to visit them and many of us have kept in touch, even doing some Zoom sessions."

After COVID-19, she tried to find pottery classes to attend, but they were either full or closing. Ever ambitious, she originally tried to turn all of her friends into potters. "I really want to hang out with potters. If I can't find potters, I'll just make my friends into potters," she chuckled. She then realized maybe this was her time to start her own community. "We realized during the pandemic how important it is to have that community, and we lost some of the practice." She decided to take the plunge. She rented a space that she thought was perfect. She and a former coworker and friend, Madison, fixed it themselves, which included learning how to scrape the ceiling, paint the floor and walls, set up shelving and spackling, and put cement down in the basement. They even repaired holes in the ceiling. "For two months, we just felt like

'repair people,'" she shrugged as if it wasn't a big deal that she and her friend taught themselves how to do basic construction work to create an entirely new place for business. "I'm sure the landlord appreciated it," she laughed. She said it is nice being her own boss. "It's nice to sink or swim yourself, too."

I asked her about the name of her studio. She told me it is inspired by a beautiful story about embracing imperfections. The Cracked Pot is named after a story where a water-bearer fills two pots of water every day at the local stream to bring to their home. One pot is cracked and leaks half of the water on the way to the house. The pot one day apologizes to the water-bearer. The water-bearer then points out that they planted wildflower seeds along the trail; because the pot is cracked, it waters the seeds daily. The water bearer then thanked the pot for its imperfections, because that is how it creates its own beauty. Heather feels the same way - it's our imperfections that create us, and they should be embraced - especially in pottery. "Mistakes in clay are often a blessing. Many of my favorite creations started as a mistake and that allowed me the mental freedom to play without worrying about ruining my creation. Then I do something entirely new and love it." She discussed how she loves to help students create their own one-of-a-kind art and turn perceived mistakes into something even more beautiful than they originally imagined.



Heather Tourville opened The Cracked Pot Studio on 54th Street in April 2023.

Heather is proud that The Cracked Pot Studio offers so much. Upcoming events include Halloween Mini Monster Making on Sunday, Oct. 29 from 12-3 p.m., Sip 'N Spin (21+) on Friday, Nov. 3 from 5-9 p.m. and Holiday Ornament Making on Sunday, Dec. 3 from 12-3 p.m. Learn more and sign up at thecrackedpotstudio.com.

Heather cannot wait to share her studio with the local community. It is really a soothing space to learn more about clay and how to create the most imperfect art.

EVENTS

COOPER PLAYGROUND REMOVAL MEETING

Minneapolis Public Schools is considering removing the Cooper school playground (3239 44th Ave. S.) used by hundreds of neighborhood families. They're going to have a community meeting on Nov. 2 at 6 p.m. at Howe Elementary.

MAHJONG FOR SENIORS AT HIAWATHA

A free seniors group for mahjong meets at Hiawatha School Park (305 E. 42nd St.) every Tuesday from 10 a.m. to noon. Coffee and tea is provided. Bring a mahjong card if you have one. There are also cards for canasta, pinochle, and other games. Register online at www.minneapolisparksonline.org/activities-events or call 612-370-4952.

LEARN ABOUT UPCOMING MINNEHAHA PARK PROJECT ON NOV. 7

The Friends of Minnehaha Park will be hosting Carol HejlStone, Design Project Manager from MPRB, at a meeting on Tuesday, Nov. 7, 6 p.m. at Squirrel Haus Arts in the Longfellow neighborhood about the \$1.8 million infrastructure improvement project at Minnehaha Park. She will provide information about the project timeline, budget, scope and construction timeframe. Hear important information and to ask questions. The meeting is free and open to the public. Refreshments will be available.

The Friends of Minnehaha Park is an all-volunteer organization dedicated to supporting and preserving the natural environment and history of Minnehaha Park and Falls through advocacy, education and engagement. It was founded in April 2023, has a stewardship agreement with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB), hosted three Buckthorn Removal Events and offers numerous other in-

formational events to inform and engage people who love Minnehaha Park.

ANNUAL BAZAAR NOV. 18

Join Minnehaha Communion Lutheran Church (4101 37th Ave. S.), Saturday, Nov. 18, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., for their Annual Bazaar. They've got it all - craft tables, silent auction, raffles, bake sale, grandma's attic. They'll also have Flotegrot and ham sandwiches available for purchase.

ELDER VOICES MEETS NOV. 24

On Friday, Nov. 24, Elder Voices will be at Turtle Bread, 4205 E.34th St., 10-11:30 a.m.

'A CHRISTMAS CAROL CAROL KRAMPUS OR IT'S A PRETTY OK LIFE' COMING

Classics Lost 'N' Found Theater Company is pleased to announce that "A Christmas Carol Krampus or It's a Pretty OK Life" is returning this holiday season. Performances are Dec. 8, 9, 15 and 16 at 7pm. Written and directed by Lisa



M. W. Phelps, "A Christmas Carol Krampus or It's a Pretty OK Life" is an irreverent Christmas mash-up that examines traditions and considers how, even at the North Pole, times are changing. Geared toward adults (language and themes), heroes, villains and Three Stooges impersonators invade this North Pole adventure.

Performances are at Lake Nokomis Presbyterian Church, 1620 E. 46th Street.

Remove the Racial Covenant from your deed

Do you have a racial covenant on your property? Want to remove it?

The City of Minneapolis offers the Just Deeds Project to help Minneapolis homeowners discharge the Racial Covenants recorded against their homes. This is a FREE SERVICE.

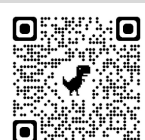
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Learn about Free the Deeds or donate to create an African American Community Land Trust at freethedeeds.org

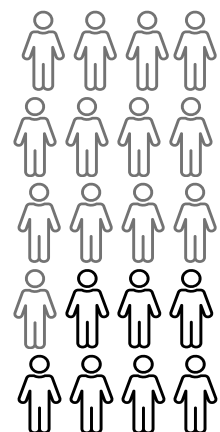
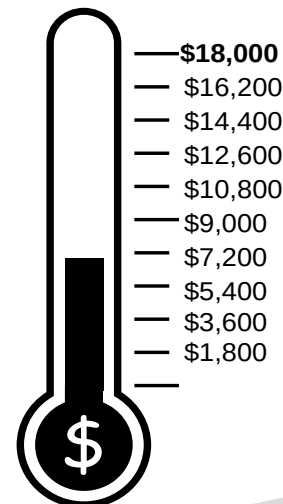
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LCC's annual meeting creates delicious connections

LONGFELLOW COMMUNITY COUNCIL

By **ANDREA TRITSCHLER**,
communications
andrea@longfellow.org



Calling all pizza lovers! Last month Longfellow Community Council hosted our first-ever pizza party, and it won't be our last. Thanks to the 100+ neighbors who came out to the Toolbox Collective last month and ate pizza with us and the community, talked with organizations, and voted on their favorite pizza place.

There were five pizza places to sample: Boludo, Parkway Pizza, Pizza Hut, Chicago Taste Authority and Pizza Luce. There were also so many varieties – classics like cheese and supreme and creative combinations like a Greek pizza or barbecue jackfruit pizza. We tallied the votes, and Boludo and Pizza Luce tied for favorite pizza with 35 percent of the vote for each. Let us know if you agree or if you have a favorite pizza place not included in the night's sampling spread.

While we spend a lot of time creating programming like our shoveling program or home improvement program, bringing neighbors together is an important part of our work. Communities are stronger when they are connected. It was wonderful to see so many of you meeting your neighbors and talking about neighborhood issues, joys and the pizza you loved the most. It can be easy to feel isolated, especially, if like me, you are a renter or recently moved into the neighborhood. It's easy to feel that way even if you've lived in the neighborhood for years. Communing over a good meal is special and helps us all feel a little more supported.

One of the things I love most about this work is getting to know you all and connect with organizations and businesses, that feeling of being embedded in the place I live and work. My hope is that we can help facilitate that sense of belonging for everyone who lives and works in the



Neighbors gathered for pizza and conversation at the Longfellow Community Council annual meeting held at the Toolbox Collective. This year's event presented a new take on the traditional "pie" theme by serving pizza pie instead of dessert pie. (Photo submitted)



LCC staff include (left to right) Andrea Tritschler (communications), community organizer Ben Howery and executive director Rachel Boeke. (Photo submitted)

Greater Longfellow Neighborhood.

So many of you were able to talk with some of the amazing people and organizations that are working to make our communities stronger. All seven of these organizations do amazing work:

- Longfellow Healthy Seniors hosts helpful and fun events for our seniors and helps us break down those generational barriers;

- LifeSource works to save lives through organ and tissue donation;
- Redesign is helping rebuild our community with care after we lost so much with projects like the Coliseum;
- AllSquare not only makes delicious grilled cheese sandwiches, but invests in those who are impacted by mass incarceration;
- Seward Longfellow Restorative Jus-



tice helps to find alternative solutions to punitive legal outcomes for youth;

- East Phillips Neighborhood Institute has been fighting for community needs and environmental justice with the East Phillips Urban Farm;
- Mapping Prejudice researches and maps racial covenants and housing discrimination histories.

We are so grateful to these organizations for participating in the pizza party and serving up hot and fresh information to our community members. If you missed talking to someone and want to connect, send us an email and we'll put you in touch, or check out their websites.

We were overwhelmed with the amount of support – we ran out of pizza at 7 p.m.! Thanks to all our volunteers for helping throughout the night. Next year, we'll be ready with more pizza. We appreciate your patience with us as we grow and host new events. Apologies to those who came later in the night to no pizza! We've done this event every year, but in the past we were serving up dessert pie. The need for cheese is much greater!

We were able to give five bags of food to Community Aid Network MN thanks to all your generous donations. They are a mutual aid organization serving all of Minneapolis with food, supplies, and more. You can learn more about them on their website or Instagram.

Thanks for sharing a meal with us and your neighbors. We hope to see you all again next year!

CITY BRIEFS



Among the proposed improvements to trails is a new pedestrian-only bridge crossing Minnehaha Creek along Lake Hiawatha.

NOKOMIS-HIAWATHA TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS

On Oct. 18, a proposal for several trail connection improvements in Nokomis-Hiawatha Regional Park was presented to the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB). These upgrades were approved as part of the Nokomis-Hiawatha Regional Park Master Plan in 2015. More recently, after funding became available, MPRB held three open houses and used an online tool to get feedback on potential upgrades. The proposed short-term projects include: a connection at Triangle Park and 54th Street; a pedestrian-only loop around

Lake Nokomis lagoon; revised walk/bike trails to the Cedar Ave. Bridge; an enhanced crossing at Cedar Avenue and 52nd St.; revised trails at 22nd Ave. and Lake Nokomis Parkway; and a new pedestrian-only bridge over Minnehaha Creek next to Lake Hiawatha. Visit the park board website to see the concept drawings of the improvements.

CEDAR AVE./EDGEWATER/NOKOMIS PKWY. INTERSECTION SURVEY

The city, county, and park and recreation board have started a pilot project to improve the Cedar Ave. intersection with Lake Nokomis Pkwy. and Edgewater Blvd. This includes preventing left turns at Edgewater by closing the median for six weeks, restriping one northbound lane on Cedar only allowing left-turns, creating a pedestrian refuge island and improving existing traffic signals. People may provide feedback by taking a survey at www.surveymonkey.com/r/CedarTrafficPilot

YARD WASTE COLLECTION ENDS

Garbage days on the week of Nov. 27-Dec. 1 will be the last pickup day of leaves, brush and other yard trimmings for Minneapolis residents this year. The yard waste collection season is permanently extended through the end of November to accommodate late-dropping leaves. People may set yard waste out in reusable containers, compostable bags or bundled with string or twine by their waste carts by 6 a.m. on their pickup day. Reusable containers must be 32-38 gallons in size and at least 26 inches high with sturdy handles. Any container or bundle must weigh less than 40 pounds. Branches must be less than 3 inches in diameter and less than 3 feet long.

FALL STREET SWEEPING

The city began fall street cleaning on Oct 17. "No Parking" signs should be posted at least 24 hours before a street is cleaned. Anyone who parks on the street will need to follow posted parking rules or their cars may be ticketed and towed. People can use the city's online Street Sweeping Schedule Map to find out when their street is scheduled to be cleaned. On the weekend before each of the four weeks, the schedule for the upcoming week will show which day of the week streets are scheduled to be swept. The street sweeping is expected to be completed within 4 weeks.

CITY BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Through the end of October the city is accepting applications for more than 50 volunteer-based boards, commissions and advisory committees that help shape policy, and provide a community perspective to city programs and services. Find more information about the openings on the city website - <https://lims.minneapolismn.gov/Boards/CurrentOpenings>.

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION HOUSING ORDINANCE

The city has announced that the housing discrimination amendments to the civil rights ordinance, approved by the City Council in March 2017, that prohibits property owners from refusing to rent to people because they use public assistance, is now in effect and enforceable. This followed years of court challenges and means that landlords cannot discriminate against people using Section 8 housing choice vouchers. Renters who believe they have faced discrimination may contact the city Civil Rights Department at 311 or 612-673-3012.

NEW DIRECTOR OF REGULATORY SERVICES

The Minneapolis city council has unanimously confirmed Mayor Jacob Frey's nominee, Enrique Velazquez, as the city's new Director of Regulatory Services which oversees animal care and control, parking enforcement, housing and building code enforcement, and encampment response.

CLOSING THE DOWNTOWN GARBAGE BURNER

Hennepin County Commissioners are proposing a resolution to plan for the closure of the Hennepin Energy Recovery Center (HERC). Each day the HERC burns roughly 1,000 tons of garbage downtown that is collected from throughout Hennepin County. It is the only remaining garbage burner operating in the county. The resolution would set the closure for some time between 2028 and 2040, and is expected to be voted on at the Oct. 24 board meeting.

~ Briefs compiled by Cam Gordon



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Plants with berries (such as winterberry above) and those with unique bark and stem colors (such as dogwood, above right) add color during winter months. Add winter interest by leaving stems and flowers intact rather than cutting them down in the fall. (Photo submitted)

Planting for winter interest

The city gardener



By LAUREN BETHKE, Master Gardener

The days are getting shorter and it's almost time to wrap up the gardening season. When planning garden spaces, we often think about staggering bloom times so we can enjoy beautiful flowers from early spring to late fall – and we assume that the garden will inevitably be bare and boring all winter. However, there are a number of plants that grow well in our northern climate that become even lovelier when the temperatures drop. Read on for tips on choosing plants for winter interest in your yard and garden!

Essentially, there are three main ways to add outdoor interest during winter months: by using colors, textures, or structures to break up the monotonous landscape. Evergreen shrubs and trees, plants with colorful berries, plants with interesting bark or stem colors, and plants with interesting shapes can all fit the bill. To maximize winter interest, consider the view when you look out the window. Make sure your most exciting winter plants will be visible from indoors so you can enjoy them even during freezing temperatures.

There are many large evergreen trees, but in our south Minneapolis yards, smaller varieties are usually the way to go. "Sea Green" is a small juniper variety that features bright green foliage year-round and has an upright growth pattern with distinctive arching branches. There are also several smaller varieties of yew, such as Taunton spreading yew or Japanese dwarf yew, which grow slowly and will stay green all year. Finally, boxwood shrubs are a good evergreen choice and can be used in hedges (or sheared into topiary shapes if you are ambitious).

Plants with berries that persist throughout the winter are another good choice, both to add color and to provide a food source for wildlife. Winterberry is a popular shrub that loses its leaves in the fall but keeps its striking red berries for several months. Be sure to plant both a male and female winterberry plant so fruit can be produced. Smaller varieties to look for include Goldfinch (female), Red Sprite (female), and Jim Dandy (male). Viburnum is another excellent choice for year-round interest, featuring flowers in the summer and berries in the winter. The viburnum variety called American high-bush cranberry (also known as American cranberrybush) is a large shrub that produces clusters of white flowers in June and then round red fruits in August and September. The fruits are edible to humans and wildlife and are similar to cranberries, although they are not techni-

cally related.

Unusual bark and stem colors or shapes can also contribute to an interesting winter landscape. One great option is dogwood, which has striking red stems. Try cutting a few dogwood branches and placing them in a pot to create an outdoor decorative arrangement that will look great all winter. River birch, with its white bark, also looks beautiful throughout the winter. Some varieties of river birch are very large, but Fox Valley and Summer Cascade are two smaller options, reaching a mature height of 8-10 feet. You could also consider the corkscrew willow, which features wavy, twisted branches that lend an interesting texture to the winter landscape and can be shaped as a tree or large shrub. The main drawback to corkscrew willows is that they are relatively short-lived compared to other trees, generally lasting 15 to 20 years.

No matter what plants you have in your yard, you can add winter interest by leaving stems and flowers intact rather than cutting them down in the fall. Seed heads, grasses, pinecones, and other organic material can provide texture to the landscape and also serve as a source of food and shelter for overwintering birds. Black-eyed Susan, little bluestem, and switchgrass are popular perennials for winter interest. In the spring, wait until April or even May to clear garden debris, to ensure that any hiding pollinators are protected until the weather warms up.

For more information, check out the University of Minnesota Extension Yard and Garden website. Extension resources are written by experts, and contain the latest and most reliable research-based information. Happy gardening!

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Centennial Year
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November is Global Missions Month

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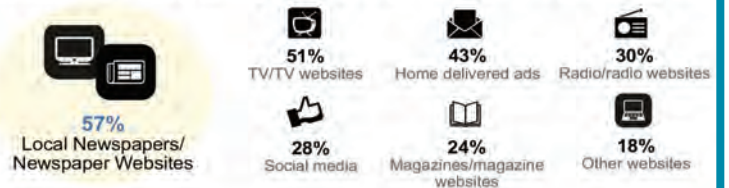
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- Steve, Nokomis Neighborhood



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Ward 12 Leaders and Community Groups Endorse Aurin Chowdhury:



Current Ward 12 City Council Member Andrew Johnson



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