



New council member >> 3

Community considers benefits agreement for police

Community Benefits Agreement is a way for residents to define what they'd like in 3rd Precinct site at 2633 Minnehaha

By CAM GORDON

After the Minneapolis city council and mayor approved putting a new po-

lice headquarters at 2633 Minnehaha Ave., the Longfellow Community Council (LCC) started working on a community benefits agreement (CBA) to influence its operation.

The creation of a CBA was announced at a meeting hosted by the LCC and attended by more than 80 people, including three city council members, and held on Nov. 16, 2023 at Matthews Park.

It followed the city council 8-5 vote on Nov. 2 to approve buying the one-story industrial building in Seward for a future Community Safety Center/Third Po-

lice Precinct facility. The property at 2633 Minnehaha Ave sits on a 3.39-acre site that contains a building of approximately 78,500 square feet. This is the same building that the city explored leasing in 2020 to rehouse the precinct's police department staff. The mayor asked the city council to approve the 2633 site in late October after supporting the site at 2600 Minnehaha earlier that month. (See story on 2600 site discussion in the November Messenger.)

BENEFITS AGREEMENT >> 3



Three council members spoke with citizens about the Third Precinct station on Nov. 16, 2023. (Photo by Cam Gordon)

MURALS TRANSFORM RAILROAD/GREENWAY BRIDGE OVER 36TH AVENUE SOUTH



36th ART (Avenue Revitalization & Transformation), a resident-led coalition of Seward and Longfellow community stakeholders in partnership with SPRAYFiNGER® and Hiawatha Collegiate High School, have transformed the railroad/Greenway bridge over 36th Avenue South with the production of two 80-foot wall murals. The aging bridge, built in 1908, is part of the final stretch of rail before it crosses the Mississippi River. "The goal was to reimagine the bridge as an interpretive landmark and a connecting point for our two neighborhoods. The vision expanded and we now seek to partner on more public art along the blocks north and south of the bridge," said Jack Becker, 36th ART Project Manager. The mural was dedicated on Nov. 11, 2023. (Photo submitted) >> More on page 9

Nedahness Rose Greene photos showing at Listen 2 Us Studio

By JILL BOOGREN

Through the end of November 2023, visitors can view the photography of Nedahness Rose Greene alongside King-Demetrius Pendleton's work at his new place, Listen 2 Us Studio (3730 Chicago Ave.).

A member of the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, Greene is best known for her photographs of Indigenous people, especially women. She has documented them in exquisite detail taking part in pow wows, participating in demonstrations, and in daily life - often wearing cultural attire. Her portraits have been featured in the New York Times, USA Today, People, Cosmopolitan and other national newspapers and magazines, and some of her images are part of a mural installation on the Springboard for the Arts building in St. Paul.

LISTEN TO US STUDIO >> 2

Community rallies to save Cooper School playground

PlayMPLS forms, meeting on Nov. 28 to talk about options

By CAM GORDON

The community objection to the Minneapolis Public School (MPS) district's announcement to demolish the playground at the now-closed Cooper school convinced the district to delay the demolition until spring. Now residents are working to

save it for the long term.

At a meeting on Nov. 2, 2023 at Howe Elementary School, Interim Superintendent Rochelle Cox, School Board Commissioner Lori Norvelle and Assistant Superintendent Ryan Strack shared their perspectives and listened to concerns of an estimated 100 people. Also attending were Park Board Commissioner Becky Alper, Ward 12 Council Member Andrew Johnson, State Representative Samantha Sencer-Mura, and Ward 12 Council Member-elect Aurin Chowdhury.

The district announced their plans to

remove the playground on Oct. 3 via an email from Strack.

"Following complaints about the condition of the equipment," wrote Strack in an email sent to the Longfellow Community Council (LCC) Executive Director Rachel Boeke, and others, "Minneapolis Public Schools conducted an inspection of the playground at the unused Cooper School at 32nd St. and 45th Ave. To prevent any accidents or injury for the public using the equipment, it has been determined that

WARD 12 CANDIDATES >> 10



KingDemetrius Pendleton (left) brought in the artwork of Nedahness Rose Greene to Listen 2 Us Studio at 38th and Chicago. (Photo by Jill Boogren)



Trusted and reliable, newspapers matter to their communities

PAGE 4



COPAL: The power of community in Puerto Rico delegation

PAGE 5



LIVING 50+ 'Inside Senior Living' docu-series explores aging

PAGE 7

LISTEN TO US >> from 1

She draws meaning in her work from learning about her culture. Her father was half Native American and half African American, although she knows little about his side of the family. Her mother is Native American, and was raised by her grandparents who went through the boarding school system. Because their families were split up, they lost some of her grandmother's side of the family.

"Diving into all of that and learning all of that helps me connect to my culture, to everything that was lost," said Greene. "It also helps me learn and teach other people, including my children."

Passionate about standing for justice and protecting the earth, Greene most often takes photos at rallies and other large events – as Pendleton says, she's "boots on the ground." She has photographed water protectors against the Line 3 pipeline. She witnessed a dozen women pull down the Christopher Columbus statue at the Minnesota State Capitol. She's traveled to South Dakota, New Mexico, Mississippi, Louisiana, Washington D.C. – basically wherever she's needed.

Touched by tragic loss herself, Greene began doing Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women photographs as a way of healing. The subjects are advocates, survivors and families who have been affected and often paint a red handprint across their mouth and face as a symbol of solidarity.

"We were never noticed before," she said. "I believe a lot of my photos have made a difference with that." According to Greene, one of her photos got 14,000 shares within 15 minutes of being posted on social media – in contrast to a couple dozen shares from a posting of the same missing person by the Bemidji Police Department. With assistance from Hennepin County Library, they created a QR code



Nedahness Rose Greene (right) speaks with KingDemetrius Pendleton (second from left) at Listen 2 Us Studio at 38th and Chicago. "To have my work that I've done here, it's powerful. Because it happened here, and to be showcasing it right here, it means a lot," Greene said. (Photo by Jill Boogren)

to provide information on advocates and available resources.

Greene came down to Minneapolis from Leech Lake during the 2020 Uprising and has been back 20 times or so to document George Floyd Square. Although seeing the video of George Floyd's murder at the hands of Minneapolis police was heartbreaking, Greene felt that what happened needed to be seen; the fact that the world was at home with nothing to do during COVID-19 ensured that it was.

"It was just like, wake up everybody, it's time for change, this is what's happening. It's happening everywhere, not just... here," she said. She wanted to be in Minneapolis to document the moment for her young boys, in part because she fears for their lives growing up to be African American men. "I always figure images can be powerful and change lives and change minds and... create emotions, so that's one reason I felt I

needed to be here," she said.

It is a selection of these images – Black men standing together in the Square, the headstones at Say Their Names Cemetery, a crowd during a rally – that are currently displayed on one of the walls inside Listen 2 Us Studio.

"To have my work that I've done here, it's powerful. Because it happened here, and to be showcasing it right here, it means a lot," she said.

PAYING IT FORWARD

Pendleton, whose work was previously exhibited in Wing Young Huie's studio on Chicago Ave., has now opened Listen 2 Us Studio in the space next door and is already paying it forward.

He, too, has experienced tragic loss. Nov. 3 was the 10-year anniversary of when his daughter Brandy Ann Banks Sutta lost her life to a drunk driver.

"When she was killed, they really didn't say too much about her," said Pendleton. "I went in front of politicians, I reached out to a lot of people, and a lot of people just basically, bluntly slammed the door in my face. Or, didn't wanna talk about it."

(According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 32 people in the United States are killed every day involving an alcohol-impaired driver. The Minnesota Department of Health reports that about 1 in 7 Minnesotans has at least one DWI. And Mothers Against Drunk Driving states that two out of three people will be impacted by drunk driving in their lifetime.)

Experiencing this created a paradigm shift for Pendleton. He chose to go back to school after 28 years to train in photography and earn a degree.

"I wanted to give a voice to the voiceless," he said.

It's humbling for Pendleton to showcase another photographer, something he feels lets him know how much he's grown.

"This is about giving back, right? The only way we can keep what we have is by giving it away," he said. "I wanna make sure that I'm able to give as many things away as possible, 'cause I know I can't take 'em to the grave with me."

The name of his space, Listen 2 Us (which opened Sept. 1), conveys that the work isn't about Pendleton alone.

"I wanted it to be about 'us' because so many of us were out here documenting what was goin' on in Minneapolis," he said. Alluding to the saying, "If you wanna go fast, go alone. But if you wanna go far, go together," Pendleton added, "I wanna go together with some people."

While most of the time Greene photographs Black and Indigenous people, she will work with people of all backgrounds. She can be found at Nedahness.Greene on Facebook and nedahnessgreene on Instagram. Pendleton is at listenmedia.org

Prepare FOR A GLOBAL FUTURE

Kindergarten Info Session
on Dec. 5 from 6:30-8 p.m.

To learn more or schedule a tour, contact Claire Little,
claire.little@yinghuaacademy.org

MANDARIN CHINESE IMMERSION SCHOOL
K-8 PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL
TUITION-FREE, IN NE MINNEAPOLIS
OPENED IN 2006
FREE BUSING IN MINNEAPOLIS

Named a Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education in 2015

YINGHUA ACADEMY

1616 Buchanan St NE | Minneapolis, MN 55413 | www.yinghuaacademy.org

THANK YOU

Seward Co-op Shoppers & Staff

for your commitment
to supporting small,
local businesses.

**JOIN US IN 2024
FOR MORE GROWTH
AND COMMUNITY**

Seward
COMMUNITY CO-OP

2823 E. Franklin Ave., MPLS
& 317 E. 38th St., MPLS
www.seward.coop

Election results in south Minneapolis

Ward 12's Aurin Chowdhury one of two new faces on council

By CAM GORDON

The Longfellow-Nokomis area will see few changes in city council representation following the Nov. 7, 2023 election where all 13 Minneapolis City Council seats were on the ballot and all the incumbents were reelected.

Ward 12, where incumbent Andrew Johnson did not seek reelection is the only ward in the area where there will be a new council member. Aurin Chowdhury was elected over Luther Ranheim and Nancy Ford with 6,525 votes to Ranheim's 4,431 and Ford's 1,161. Chowdhury will be sworn in soon as Johnson

is resigning early. Ward 12, that includes Cooper, Ericsson, Hiawatha part of Howe, Keewaydin, Minnehaha, Morris Park and Standish, had the highest voter turnout in the city with 48.2% of registered voters voting.

Ward 2, that includes parts of the Cedar Riverside and Seward neighborhoods, had the lowest voter turnout of any ward in the city where 17.1% of the ward's registered voters reelected Robin Wonsley who got 1,381 of the 2,075 votes cast. She ran unopposed.

In Ward 6, that includes some of Cedar Riverside, Phillips West, Seward and Ventura Village, Jamal Osman was reelect-



Aurin Chowdhury will replace Ward 12's Andrew Johnson soon.

ed with 2,500 votes in the final round. Ward 6 had 15,644 voters which is 31.5% of the ward's registered voters.

In ward 8, that includes Bancroft, Bryant, Central, Field, Northrop and Regina, there was a 42.4% voter turnout, and Andrea Jenkins won by only 38 votes over Soren Stevenson with 3,894 to 3,856 votes.

In ward 9, that includes Central, Corcoran, East Phillips, Howe, Longfellow and Powderhorn Park, there was a 29.5% voter turnout. Jason Chavez defeated Daniel Orban 3,407 to 881.

In ward 11, that includes Diamond Lake, Field, Hale, Keewaydin, Northrop, Page, and Wenonah, there was a 28.1% voter turnout. Emily Koski was elected over Gabrielle M. Prosser with 5,259 out of the 5,972 votes cast.

BENEFIT AGREEMENT FOR POLICE >> from 1

The meeting was facilitated by LCC Executive Director Rachel Boeke, who led a discussion with three of the six council members who represent people who live within the 3rd precinct area: Jamal Osman, Jason Chavez, and Robin Wonsley.

Ward 6 Council Member Osman was among the eight who voted to approve buying the building. Chavez of Ward 9, and Wonsley of Ward 2 voted against acquiring the building. Chavez and Wonsley voted in favor of entering into a purchase agreement and doing preliminary investigations and design work for a Community Safety Center at 3716 Cheatham Ave. That proposal, however, was voted down by the council.

CONCERNS AND HOPES

Early in the meeting, council members were asked to share the history of the decision, as well as their concerns and hope for the facility.

Wonsley expressed her concerns that the center may open first with just police working there with other services being phased in later. All three said they preferred it not opening until after there was more community engagement. They also supported a more comprehensive set of safety services being incorporated into the facility when it opens.

Osman recalled receiving a commitment from the mayor that it would not open without a full range of services. That was one reason he voted in favor of buying the building.

"It has to be different. It can't be the third precinct we know," said Chavez. He asked the group, "What do you want it to include?"

Boeke asked about the resolution that the council passed requesting a comprehensive overview by the end of January 2024 on how the center will contribute to the implementation of the safe and thriving communities service model they have endorsed, as well as a list of safety functions, besides police, that might be co-



The creation of a Community Benefits Agreement for the Third Precinct Police Station was announced at a meeting hosted by the Longfellow Community Council, and attended by more than 80 people, including three city council members. It was held on Nov. 16, 2023 at Matthews Park. (Photo by Cam Gordon)

cated there.

When asked about what those might be, council members pointed to the behavioral crisis response teams that the city has contracted with. Currently, Canopy Roots provides an alternative response to 911 calls.

The resolution also calls for details about community outreach and using participatory frameworks such as a memorandum of understanding (MOU), community benefits agreement or similar evaluation methods.

NO EVIDENCE THAT MPD IS LESS VIOLENT, RACIST AND BRUTAL

The questions and responses from the audience were varied.

"Why is it called a Community Safety Center?" someone asked. "We don't know what there will be at the time of opening," said another. One person said that she did not support having "social service co-located with police."

Robert Rees, from Seward, called on the council members to do more research and "study the neighborhood and see

what the residents want."

A Ward 9 resident asked, "What evidence, or data or clear outcomes have you seen that lead you to be sure MPD is now less violent, racist, and brutal?" All three council members responded that they had none.

FUNDING AND ZONING

So far, the city has identified \$10 million in funding but are estimating it will cost over \$14 million. They anticipate closing on the purchase next June. According to the staff report, the "city's obligation to purchase the property is contingent on the appropriation of sufficient funding in the 2024 budget," and the "determination of conformance of the city's comprehensive plan by the city planning commission."

At their meeting on Nov. 13, the planning commission found that the project was in compliance with the city's plan but that it would require a conditional use permit that would be evaluated by the city planning commission once a completed land use application is filed.

A conditional use permit allows the city to review uses, which because of their unique characteristics, cannot be permitted as of right in a particular zoning district, but which may be allowed upon showing that such use in a specified location will comply with all of the conditions and standards of this zoning ordinance. This could be an opportunity for the commission or the council to place conditions on the project.

WORTHWHILE BUT MAYBE NOT ENFORCEABLE

As the meeting was ending, Boeke invited people to contact LCC to get more information and be kept informed of future meetings about the CBA.

It is hard to know how much weight an agreement between the city and a community organization, or organizations might have. Wonsley was clearly interested in using a CBA, but warned that it would not be considered a legally binding document. Chavez and Osman expressed interest, as well.

For reference, the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) defines a CBA as "a contract between a developer and community-based organizations representing residents' interests. The agreement spells out the benefits the community will receive in return for supporting the developer's project in their neighborhood."

There appears to be a difference of opinion about how legally enforceable they can or should be.

PolicyLink defines a CBA as a "legally enforceable contract between a coalition of community-based organizations and the developer of a proposed project. In exchange for the coalition's public support of the project in the approval process, the developer agrees to contribute benefits to the local community if the project moves forward. In this way, the coalition has a hand in shaping the project, while the developer builds community support and strengthens local partnerships."

Even if the city, LCC and other neighborhood organizations signed on to a benefits agreement that could not be enforced in court, Wonsley, Boeke and others appear to be convinced it would be worthwhile.

Your money should be working as hard as you do. Maybe harder.

At Thrivent, we offer advice, investments, insurance, banking, and generosity programs to help you live a life that's rich beyond money.

Connect with us today to see how your money can do more.

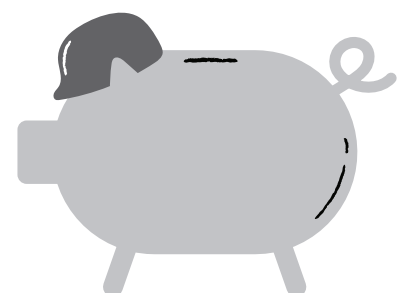


Marcia Alexander
Financial Associate
marcia.alexander@thrivent.com



Aaron Jones
Financial Associate
aaron.jones@thrivent.com

3001 Broadway St. NE Suite #610
Minneapolis, MN 55413
612-702-9631



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

Trusted and reliable, local newspapers matter to their communities

By DEAN RIDINGS, CEO
AMERICA'S NEWSPAPERS

A recent Gallup study showed that America's confidence in the national mass media has reached a near record low. While that's disturbing, it's not unexpected. The digital age has brought a barrage of national news sources that are focused on sound bites, opinions, partisan views and a race to push out breaking news, even if it hasn't been properly fact-checked or vetted. The problem has been exacerbated by social media channels that allow disinformation to be distributed virtually unchecked.

AMERICANS TRUST LOCAL NEWSPAPERS

However, Americans feel differently when it comes to their local newspaper. According to a 2023 national survey of 5,000 adults, local newspapers are the most relied on and trusted media source of original reporting: more than television and radio, and significantly more than social media. Trust in local newspapers extends across age groups and demographics, as adults of all segments recognize the value of reliable local reporting that newspapers deliver.

And, beyond just trusting the reporting local newspapers provide, Americans recognize how important it is to have a healthy local newspaper in their community. In fact, 74% of all Americans stated that having a newspaper in their community is important for providing them with much needed local news and information.

It's hard to get Americans to agree on anything, but they agree that local newspapers are important.

LOCAL NEWSPAPERS SHINE A LIGHT ON ISSUES

American's trust in their local newspaper is not surprising. A local newspaper's commitment to reporting the news is different than the national mass media. Local newspapers are just that, local, and are staffed with dedicated professional journalists who live and work in the communities they cover. The issues that are important to the community are also important to local reporters, and that creates a deep accountability to delivering trusted, unbiased news.

Readers and non-readers alike rely on their local newspaper to shine a spotlight on the issues that matter most to them. From holding local institutions accountable, to reporting on local schools, sports or entertainment for the weekend, local journalists often uncover stories that might otherwise go unnoticed. That local connection instills confidence that the information being delivered is coming from a source that is invested in the health of the community and committed to high standards of journalistic integrity.

A TRUSTED ADVERTISING SOURCE

The trust in local newspapers goes beyond just traditional news. It applies to local advertising, as well. The same national study of 5,000 adults found that 60% of Americans use newspaper advertising to help them decide what brands,



products and local services to buy. That's about the same as local television and much higher than radio, direct mail and social media ads.

SUPPORTING PAPERS MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Despite the high levels of trust in local newspapers, the business model continues to face challenges. The way people consume news has changed, but Big Tech's continued use of local newspapers' content without paying for it puts even more strain on the newspaper business model.

There are easy ways for you to support your local newspaper – and ensure that quality local journalism remains in your community. In addition to subscribing or advertising, ask your congressional rep-

resentatives to support the Community News and Small Business Support Act (HR 4756) that has recently been introduced in Congress. This bipartisan bill provides much-needed support to local newspapers that invest in their journalists. For every local journalist who is employed to work on local news, the newspaper will receive a tax credit. The act is a cost-effective way for local newspapers to keep professional journalists covering their communities. It's a win for everyone. Visit www.support-communitynews.com for more info, and thanks for reading this newspaper!

On behalf of its approximately 1,700 newspaper and Solutions Partner companies, America's Newspapers is committed to explaining, defending and advancing the vital role of newspapers in democracy and civil life.

I'm still pondering Medicare, Medigap and Advantage Plans

Stories and Journeys

BY DONALD L. HAMMEN



MORE ON MEDICARE DURING OPEN ENROLLMENT

This is more about what I am thinking, learning experiencing in my life as an elder. In the interest of full disclosure, as I write I am wearing my Medicare for All t-shirt. I also believe that healthcare is a right not a privilege. I am saying yes to what I call actual Medicare plus supplement and no to advantage plans that use the name Medicare to market themselves. This year I'm asking myself how my need for supplement came about. For an answer I turn to "The Hidden History of American Healthcare: Why Sickness Bankrupts You and Makes Others Insanely Rich" by Thom Hartmann. If you have read this far you have taken the plunge into the river(-flow) of life experiences that is Stories and Journeys.

MEDIGAP INSURANCE AS A THREAT TO ACTUAL MEDICARE

It's 1965. Robert Ball, Social Security

commissioner, along with President Lyndon Johnson designed what I choose to call actual Medicare. They set it up so that it could be changed over from a focus on elderly people over 65 to a universal healthcare system. Sadly, it turns out that Republicans and southern Democrats in the U.S. Congress had a different idea about how to set up Medicare. In 1965, when Medicare was passed into law, they stuck in a 20 percent gap in coverage that people like you and me would have pay out of pocket.

Who gains and who loses as a result of this gap? Who gains? According to Thom Hartmann: ".....that gap represented a multibillion-dollar profit opportunity for insurance companies to expand into; and expand they did, with Medigap policies....." Who loses? The cost of Medigap policies is unaffordable for many seniors leaving them on the hook for that 20 percent gap in coverage. Who else loses? People like me wearing their Medicare for All t-shirts literally or figuratively. I am grateful that there is a Medicare program, but it will never realize its full potential as long as the gap is allowed to exist. Scrap the gap so Medicare for All can be more than words on a t-shirt.

MEDICARE ADVANTAGE INSURANCE PLANS AS A THREAT TO ACTUAL MEDICARE

For me Thom Hartmann gets to the heart of the matter when he writes: "Nearly from its beginning, Medicare has allowed private companies to offer plans that essentially compete with it, but they were an obscure corner of the market and didn't really take off until the Bush Administration rolled out the Medicare Modernization Act of 2003. This was the big chance for the GOP (and a few corporatist Democrats) to finally privatize Medicare, abeit on bite at a time."

For me this is when so called Medicare Advantage Plans became a threat to actual Medicare and continue to be today. Advantage plans are draining the Medicare Trust Fund.

MEDICARE REACH AS A THREAT TO ACTUAL MEDICARE

REACH is a rebranded program by the Biden Administration known as Medicare Direct Contracting, which originated under the Trump Administration's Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation. To learn about REACH, go to www.protectmedicare.net. Here is a salient quote from the website: "This under-the-radar program invited third-party middlemen to 'manage' the care of Traditional Medicare beneficiaries. It also created financial incentive for these middlemen to frustrate patients and deny medically necessary

care." This includes moving patients from Traditional Medicare into Advantage Plans without their knowledge

U.S. HOUSE DEBT COMMISSION AS A THREAT TO MEDICARE AND SOCIAL SECURITY

The Republicans in the U.S. House of Representatives have just elected a new Speaker. His name is Mike Johnson. As an elder who relies on my earned benefits (not entitlements), I am finding Mike Johnson to seem more and more like an modern-day Scrooge.

According to an email I have received from Michael Phelen of Social Security Works on Oct. 25 on the subject, 'Who is Mike Johnson?': "Speaker Johnson wants to create a 'debt commission.' It would create a fast-tracked closed door process to destroy Social Security and Medicare. This debt commission could turn out to be a lump of coal in my Christmas stocking and that of other elders. As far as I know Social Security and Medicare contribute nothing to the national debt."

So, dear reader, what, if any, are your perceptions of threats to traditional/actual Medicare? Tell your self, tell others or tell me via Tesha@longfellownokomisemessenger.com

As always, in gratitude.

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

Messenger

5139 34th Ave. S. #17097
Minneapolis, MN 55417

612-345-9998

longfellownokomisemessenger.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/LongfellowNokomisMessenger/>

Instagram: [LongfellowNokomisMessenger](https://www.instagram.com/LongfellowNokomisMessenger)

News for you!

The *Longfellow Nokomis Messenger* is a monthly community publication in the Longfellow and Nokomis areas of Minneapolis, owned and operated by TMC Publications CO. Sister publications: *Midway Como Frogtown Monitor* and *Southwest Connector*. Visit our website for calendar and publication dates.

Story ideas always welcome.

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

Owner & Editor:

Tesha M. Christensen, 612-345-9998,
tesha@longfellownokomisemessenger.com

Advertising & Marketing:

Denis Woulfe, 651-917-4183
denis@longfellownokomisemessenger.com
Sandra Mikulsky, 612-260-7967
sandra.tmcpub@gmail.com

Design & Layout:

Tesha M. Christensen

Printing by: ECM/Adams Publishing Group

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

TMC
PUBLICATIONS CO



Delivery:

612-235-7197, delivery@TMCpub.com
Mail subscriptions are available at \$40 a year.

Contributing Writers & Photographers:

Jan Willms, Jill Boogren, Cam Gordon, Donald Hammen, Terry Faust, Eric Nathanson, Talia McWright, Jane St. Anthony, Aamira Redd

The *Messenger* is for profit and for a purpose – and we don't sacrifice one for the other. We consider ourselves a zebra company, one that is both black and white. As a media company, we work to highlight issues, solve real, meaningful problems, and repair existing social systems. We are working with our readers and advertisers to create a more just and responsible soci-

ety that hears, helps and heals the customers and communities we serve.

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

Member of Minnesota Newspaper Association, Midwest Community Free Papers, Longfellow Business Association, Seward Civic and Commerce Association, and Nokomis East Business Association.



THE 'POWER' OF COMMUNITY IN PUERTO RICO

guest
column



BY RYAN PEREZ
ryanp@copalmn.org

Power is generated: electric power, community power, people power. This past August, a delegation of fifteen Minnesotans visited the island of Puerto Rico to learn from communities on the frontlines of battles for many kinds of power.

Communities are fighting for a reliable power grid, for example, to supply energy across the island. Following an ongoing series of natural disasters such as Hurricane Maria that resulted in months without electric power, as well as the human disaster of failed government relief efforts through FEMA, people across the island are challenging a now privatized electric monopoly. They are fighting back against corruption that has profited greatly from an unstable infrastructure, which results in the loss of human life when insulin can't be refrigerated, or when a dialysis machine can't be sustained.

When efforts to pressure the highest levels of government and private economy fail to provoke change, communities in Puerto Rico take their electrical future into their own hands, seeking local solar and other alternative energy solutions. When their purchasing power is insufficient, leaders build access to wealth through the solidarity of the Puerto Rican diaspora. This is the kind of people power that builds movement amidst a system that resists vital public policy change.

We firmly believe that in the struggle to build healthier communities in Minneapolis and across Minnesota, we can learn a lot from the resilient and adaptable organizing of the Puerto Rican people on the island. For this reason, our South Minneapolis-based organization COPAL launched a Minnesota to Puerto Rico delegation this year. Our cohort included elected officials such as Senate Majority Leader Bobby Champion and partners such as the Minnesota Environmental Partnership and the Latino Economic Development Center.

During the visit, our group visited a nonprofit organization in the mountain town of Adjuntas, Puerto Rico, called Casa Pueblo. Casa Pueblo is a people's organization dedicated to protecting natural, cultural, and human resources, within their town and across Puerto Rico. One of their founders, Alexis Massol González, spoke to our group about their solar resiliency project. Casa Pueblo is doing profound work creating an infrastructure designed to thrive regardless of the condition of the larger island grid, and despite the incompetencies and corruption of government institutions. They have developed



The South Minneapolis-based organization COPAL launched a Minnesota to Puerto Rico delegation this year. The cohort included elected officials such as Senate Majority Leader Bobby Champion and partners such as the Minnesota Environmental Partnership and the Latino Economic Development Center. (Photos submitted)

a solar-powered theater, barbershop, and market; they have also built a sustainable coffee operation and rainforest school. When they are faced with environmental catastrophes, they have a high level of preparedness that serves their entire municipality by providing critical independent power.

This critical and independent power supply was developed through the critical and independent organizing of the people of Adjuntas. Leaders who started the organization over 40 years ago built a democratic governing institution whose name translates to the "People's House." Casa Pueblo is not dependent on government or corporations for its power; in fact, external state actors including the U.S. Department of Energy negotiate directly with Casa Pueblo as an organization with autonomy and the mandate of their members. Those members, who make decisions impacting the future of the municipality, grew in their leadership in battles against extractive mining projects and for the protection of Puerto Rican forests. They are solar-powered, community-powered, and people-powered.

To learn and replicate the transformative work of Casa Pueblo, we must first realize that we are in a place with a lot of wealth. Earlier this year, Minnesota held a budget surplus of over \$19 billion. Imagine what a community like theirs could do with our resources! So, what we are lacking is not dollars, but political will, which



can be created by organizing together and developing new leadership. So, let's harness together the core philosophy of Casa Pueblo: creative democratic organizing for a resilient and regenerative future.

Right now, COPAL is working to address environmental injustices at a systemic level by supporting public policy change and grassroots action across the state. COPAL and our partners organize to hold accountability for the systems that should be curtailing the worst impacts of pollution, all while we envision a future with clean heat, electrified transportation, and community-based agricultural systems.

Join COPAL and our partners as we seek to bring about a just environmental future for all. If you are interested in getting connected, send an email to info@copalmn.org. Siempre pa'lante!

Ryan Perez is the organizing director of COPAL at 3702 E. Lake St.

DRIVER'S LICENSES FOR ALL

Communities Organizing Latine Power and Action (COPAL) celebrated the implementation of Driver's Licenses for All on Oct. 1.

Minnesota, which is home to over 80,000 undocumented immigrants, now joins 18 states and Washington, D.C. in authorizing driver's licenses for undocumented immigrants, marking a historic step towards inclusivity. This law represents a significant step towards enhancing the safety and security of all Minnesotans. It ensures that undocumented individuals can legally drive, receive proper training, and obtain essential insurance coverage, making Minnesota roads safer for everyone.

But at the core of this victory is the dignity in the lives of our communities. COPAL is proud to have been part of that fight and recognizes the pressing need to ensure access to driver's licenses for all residents, including those who are undocumented. For many, driving is not a luxury but a necessity. This law will expand community members' access to cultural, religious, work, and school activities, as well as vital services like medical appointments, leading to a healthier and more engaged community.

"Oct. 1 represents a shift towards a more dignified life in Minnesota. This isn't just a change for the eligible adults who can drive now – it's a celebration for all the kids who won't miss their opportunity to play on a soccer team or visit a state park," said Ryan Pérez, Leadership and Organizing Director of COPAL. "We are restoring social lives and beginning to address a 20-year debt to immigrant families in Minnesota."

"In celebrating the implementation of Driver's Licenses for All, we recognize that this victory is not just about driver's licenses; it's about dignity, safety, and inclusion. It is a testament to the power of unity, community, and resilience," said Francisco Segovia, Executive Director of COPAL. "We are proud to have played a part in this historic moment, but our work is far from over. Our commitment to our communities continues as we pave the way for a more inclusive Minnesota where everyone can thrive."

To prepare the community to obtain their licenses, COPAL has offered Spanish-language road safety classes online and in the Twin Cities, as well as the towns of Austin, Rochester, and Winona. In addition, COPAL continues to connect community members with information about obtaining driver's licenses and assist community members with appointments through our bilingual website, navigator line, social media platforms, in-person outreach, and Workers' Center. COPAL is also in the process of making our Workers' Center into a third-party testing site in collaboration with the Minnesota Driver & Vehicle Services (DVS).

LETTERS

HOW ABOUT A SHOVELING CONTEST?

Last winter may have been the worst winter for ice that I'd seen in all my 63 years. I often found it challenging to walk on the sidewalks, even when homeowners tried to keep up with the shoveling. My "drop-toe" disability on my right side didn't help. But one day, I had an experience that got me thinking.

I was walking down Lake St., from 31st Ave. to 37th Ave. I stepped carefully around the icy spots and clambered over piles of snow at the intersections. When I got to Soderberg's at 33rd Ave....Ahhhhh!!! (angels singing). There was no snow or ice anywhere on their sidewalk. It was totally clear. Not a

flake. Someone had put forth a lot of effort to clear that sidewalk and keep it clear. What a boon to their customers, employees and neighbors.

Seeing what the people at Soderberg's had done got me thinking about how the City Council has been discussing having the city workers shovel our sidewalks. My comment to them is, thank you for your consideration, but we don't need you. Go ahead and set up a program to help disabled and elderly people, that would be very beneficial, but most of us can take care of our sidewalks ourselves.

I've noticed that some of us good Minneapolitans have gotten a little slack in our dedication to keeping our sidewalks clear, so I would like to challenge our various neighborhood groups (LCC, NENA, etc.) to start sidewalk shoveling contests in their neigh-

borhoods.

Each neighborhood can set up their contest the way that they want, but here's what I suggest. The neighborhood group would set up an email address for the contest. Whenever anyone notices that someone has shoveled their sidewalk really well, that person would send an email to the "shoveling" email address telling the street address of the nicely shoveled sidewalk. At the end of each week, there would be a random drawing of all the entrants for the week and the winner would receive a \$25 gift card to one of the neighborhood businesses and a window sticker. At the end of the winter, all the entrants would be entered in a random drawing where the winner would receive a \$250 VISA gift card and the Golden Shovel Award (metal sign celebrating their achievement) to display in their yard. The prizes

need to be enough to incentivize people to shovel and using gift cards from neighborhood businesses would encourage businesses to donate to the cause.

One extension of this idea could be that businesses have a separate contest. Another idea might be for entire blocks to work together for a prize. There could also be a "Shovel for Our Neighbor in Need" program.

Getting something like this up and running can take some effort and money, but I'm sure it would be less than the cost for the city to take over all the shoveling. Also, I believe this is just the type of community involvement for which neighborhood councils were designed. What do you think community councils? Are you up for it?

Thank you,
Nancy Schauff

GUARANTEED INCOME FOR ARTISTS

Springboard for the Art program provides financial stability to Minnesota artists

By TALIA MCWRIGHT

Arnée Martin wanted 100 rejections. "The worst they can say is no," Martin said.

As an artist applying for grants and scholarships, the TikTok trend of getting rejected 100 times inspired Martin to attempt just that. What they didn't expect was that they'd be selected for the Springboard for the Arts (262 University Ave. W.) Guaranteed Artist Income program without even applying.

WONE VANG

Wone Vang has been the economic opportunity director at Springboard for the Arts since September of 2022. She, like all of the staff at Springboard, is an artist. Vang and her sister, Youa, own a nontraditional cross stitching business called, "Third Daughter, Restless Daughter." Growing up, the sisters would do traditional Hmong cross stitching, "Paj Ntaub," with their mother and grandmother. The two have put their own twist on the traditional art, by including humor and pop culture references in their work.

In her role as the economic opportunity director, Vang builds relationships and creates partnerships with other businesses and organizations to support artists. Her team works on connecting local artists to resources, professional development programming and more.

In 2021, Springboard created an emergency relief fund that provided \$500 a month to artists who'd lost commission due to COVID-19. Twenty-five artists from the Rondo and Frogtown neighborhoods were supported through the emergency relief fund, which then inspired the Guaranteed Artist Income (GAI) program.

Through GAI, artists receive \$500 a month for 18 months, free of requirements. In total there are 75 GAI artists, 25 in Springboard's Fergus Falls location (201 W. Lincoln Ave.) and 50 in the Rondo/Frogtown location, 25 of whom rolled over from the initial emergency relief fund. In 2023, Springboard is in its second phase of GAI.

"We wanted to make it as easy as possible for individuals so they did not have to go through so many steps to be a part of this program," Vang said.

Vang expressed that the \$500 monthly amount does not replace a social safety net, but supplements the artist's income. The program is in its second year, and there are plans to add more components to the program. After the first year, Springboard staff noticed that there was a need for artists to be connected to more resources and support. Vang has been working to build relationships with home ownership organizations, studio spaces and financial planning.

"We want to make sure that we have the right partnerships and connections so we can give them [the artists] information and they have individuals to reach out to as needed," Vang said.

Vang said that before working at Springboard, she worked a full-time job on top of connecting with other artists and running her cross stitching business. Springboard has allowed her to work a



Arnée Martin credits the guaranteed income program for giving her more confidence to pursue her art. (Photo by Talia McWright)

"I've always loved working with other artists and collaborating," Vang said.

The money given to GAI program recipients is meant to be used how they see fit – whether it is to purchase art equipment, buy groceries or go towards rent. Vang said that some artists share how they used part of the money they received to do a fun activity, like watch a movie, but weren't sure if that was okay.

"It's up to them," Vang said. "In the end it's about their mental wellbeing because that's going to help them create, and they don't have to worry about other things that might be impacting what they do."

RICARDO BEAIRD

Uptown resident Ricardo Beaird is a devised theater artist, and started his role as the community development director at Springboard in 2021. Beaird works with artists to help address community needs. Beaird facilitates the narrative change component, partnering with artists in sharing their stories of the impact of the program on them and their families. Through narrative change, a cohort of five commissioned artists called, "Artist's Respond: People Place and Prosperity," emerged. A second cohort of four artists from St. Paul, and four artists from Otter Tail County will be launched in 2023.

"This cohort learns together," Beaird said. "They learn about what narrative change is. They learn about the state of guaranteed income locally in Frogtown and Rondo, and what the national movement looks like. From there they're inspired to create public projects, and we help them do that."

Beaird said that being an artist is a lot of trial and error, sometimes at the expense of oneself, causing cycles of burnout. He thinks Springboard is special as it is a home and hub for artists to gather and share knowledge, wisdom and their personal pathways of navigating trial and error. He expressed that it feels good to know that there's an organization that looks out for Twin Cities artists locally, and shares their stories and work nationally.

"As someone who works within artist communities, I think that because artists are receiving the support and safety net, they're able to experiment in ways they weren't able to before," Beaird said.

Beaird explained that many have the mindset that poverty is the fault of the impoverished. He hopes that programs like GAI will become normalized and reshape people's perception of deservedness. He expressed that if people can get on board with these kinds of ideas and programs, there could be a systemic shift that will benefit everyone.

KALYN FLYNN

Kalyn Flynn of Philadelphia started working at Springboard in 2021 during the launch of the GAI program. Flynn is a qualitative data scientist at the Center for

a quarter to build relationships with the artists and gather research.

"I count them each [artists] as extended friends and family," Flynn said.

Flynn expressed that because of the qualitative research she conducts on the artists, she is able to directly see the impact of the GAI program on their lives. She said that when artists are not full-time, it can cause the person to doubt that they are an artist. She feels that the GAI program makes these artists feel seen in their work.

"I think it is incredibly powerful for people to receive guaranteed income on the sole basis that they are an artist," Flynn said. "It's a validation of an identity."

Some of the ways Flynn has seen the program impact artists is in home security. She's witnessed the program help

“

I think it is incredible powerful for people to receive guaranteed income on the sole basis that they are an artist. It's a validation of an identity."

Kalyn Flynn

people save to buy a home, and remain in communities that are important to them. Flynn said one artist told her that "financial stress is the ruler of all other stress," and the GAI program helps relieve people of this burden. She's seen it help people get out of debt, travel and connect with other artists, and create art for their community to consume.

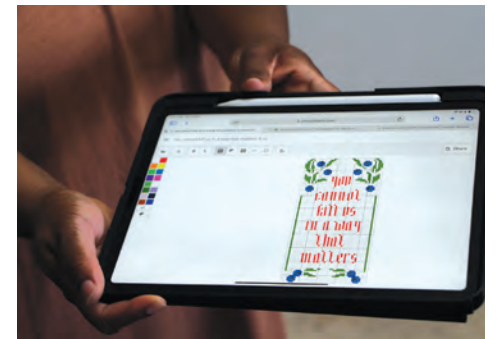
"This allows artists to create what's important for them, to not feel like their trauma is constantly being minded by others," Flynn said, "and to create work that is meaningful that they want to share within their communities in different ways."

Flynn explained that art is not only for the artist, but for the consumers, as well. She thinks that the work of these artists can inspire others to be artists. She said that guaranteed income acknowledges the agency of the artists, by affirming that they know best what to do with their money.

"I truly believe that art is central to our humanity, and I think it's overlooked because people don't see all of the labor that goes into the creation of a piece of art," Flynn said.

ARNÉE MARTIN

Martin is an art elementary school teacher with St. Paul public schools, and a recipient of the Springboard GAI program. She is a multidisciplinary artist, focusing currently on cross stitching. Martin is originally from Charleston, S.C., and moved in part to Minnesota in 2018 because the state has allowed them to better balance their work as a teacher with their work as an artist. Martin is non binary and uses



Arnée Martin said that as a Black, queer artist that their art is for everyone, but does not tailor towards a White audience. (Photo by Talia McWright)

she/ they pronouns interchangeably.

"I'm a good art teacher because I'm an artist, and I'm a good artist because I'm a teacher," Martin said. "They work in tandem."

Besides drawing, cross stitching was the first art form Martin did. She also does photography, makes stickers and does printmaking. Martin wants to create art that is financially accessible, and printmaking allows her to do so. They share their art in galleries, like one they were involved in over the summer called "Embodied Material" at Fresheye Gallery in Minneapolis (4238 Nicollet Ave.). The gallery displayed work of their cross stitching, representing their queer and Black identity.

Martin took a class at Springboard called, "Selling Your Art," which is how they got introduced to the organization. Through receiving guaranteed income through Springboard, Martin has gained more confidence to pursue their artistry. At one point in their life, Martin's bedroom was also her studio. She was juggling paying rent and creating art in a small space. The program has alleviated stress, allowing her to pay her rent without fear. She has also been able to push herself to do art in new ways, like creating mass installments of her cross stitching. They also now have a studio in the Northrup King Building (1500 Jackson St. NE, Minneapolis) with PF Studios.

"It's just allowed me to be a practitioner of my art," Martin said.

Martin said that as a non-Minnesota native, she feels she has some privilege as a Black person living in the state. They want to acknowledge that being able to move to Minnesota is an experience of privilege. She grew up in a two-parent household with military and government background, and expressed that in Minnesota many Black and Brown people are disenfranchised, and she wants to be aware of her privileges.

"If it's been this helpful to me as a person who's already having these privileges, I can't even imagine how it's been helpful for someone who grew up in this state that is not friendly," Martin said. "They're Minnesota nice to Black and Brown people, which I've learned is just downright a lack of communication."

Martin expressed that as a Black, queer artist, their art is for everyone, but does not tailor towards a White audience. Minnesota has been a culture shock for them, and said they've seen White people have disgusted facial expressions while looking at Martin's work. She's created pieces with sayings like, "Okay colonizer," and "Okay gentrifier." Martin creates art that highlights these parts of their identity. She also has Indigenous roots, and is exploring how to express this in her work. They use humor in their work as well, which can get their messages across in a playful way.

"If I have to look at it for multiple days, I want to enjoy it," Martin said.

Martin described their art as a way to live more authentically. She processes information and experiences through her art, and imagines that it will be ever changing. Having the space, finances, and time in her schedule has allowed Martin to keep going with their art, and GAI has helped her to do so and be excited about her work.

'Inside Senior Living' docu-series explores aging

Linden Hills creator hopes this series will spark important conversations

In an exciting development for the local television landscape, "Inside Senior Living," a groundbreaking docu-series, has announced its partnership with PBS North. The series, set to premiere in 2024, delves into the lives of seniors and their families as they navigate the complexities of aging and make crucial decisions about their living arrangements.

Behind the lens of this innovative project is Melissa Fritz, a former senior living consultant, and daughter of a father diagnosed with early-onset Alzheimer's dementia. After over a year of persistent pitching, Fritz successfully secured a deal with PBS North, bringing her vision to life. The series aims to demystify the senior living process, providing viewers with genuine insights into the lives of older adults and their caregivers.

"I am thrilled that my vision has now materialized, and I am eagerly awaiting the start of production for this series with our co-production partner and Upper Midwest Emmy-Award winner, PBS North," expressed Fritz. "My hope is that 'Inside Senior Living' will spark important conversations that resonate widely, especially among adult children."

UNIQUE PERSPECTIVE

"Inside Senior Living" is not just a television show; it's a heartfelt exploration of the challenges and triumphs experienced by seniors and their families. The series goes beyond the conventional narratives surrounding senior living communities, immersing itself in the diverse experiences of families. Through thought-provoking interviews, expert insights, and real-life examples, the show aims to create a platform for dialogue around the opportunities and challenges faced by older adults today.

Patty Mester, General Manager of PBS North, stated, "We believe 'Inside Senior Living' is the perfect addition to our station and audience. It aligns seamlessly with our mission to inspire and enrich lives for a more vibrant and connected community, and we are confident that this series will uphold our core values of integrity, excellence, and education."

PBS North has been the region's storyteller since 1964, harnessing the power of well-told stories to provide educational and entertaining shows to the region and share the stories of the people living throughout Northern Minnesota and Wisconsin. PBS North believes in the power of storytelling, offering multimedia platforms and creating programming with communities, providing opportunities to learn, connect, and engage. More at <https://pbsnorth.org>



Collaborating together on the "Inside Senior Living" docu-series are (left to right): Steve Ash, Upper-Midwest Emmy Award winning videographer and editor; Melissa Fritz, creator and host; Nina Fredrickson, PBS North production manager; and Bill Cooper, executive producer and director. (Photo submitted)

CALL FOR FAMILIES: BE A PART OF THE JOURNEY

As part of the production process, the team behind "Inside Senior Living" is inviting Minnesota-based families to share their stories and be featured on the show. The series is on the lookout for engaging and diverse families willing to open their lives to the cameras and provide an authentic glimpse into the challenges and joys of aging.

To get a taste of what's in store, viewers can watch the sizzle reel and join the conversation at <https://insideseniorliving.tv/>.

The reel offers a sneak peek into the compelling narratives that will unfold in the series, showcasing the emotional depth and authenticity viewers can expect.

A LOOK AHEAD: PREMIERE AND BEYOND

Production for the eight-episode first season of "Inside Senior Living" is scheduled to commence early 2024, with filming taking place exclusively in Minnesota. The series is slated to premiere on PBS North in November 2024, promising viewers a unique perspective on the journey of seniors and their families as they navigate the path of aging and senior living.

"Inside Senior Living" aims to be more than just a television show. It's a

movement to change the way Americans approach aging and powerful testament to the resilience, love, and unity that bind families together, even in the face of challenges posed by aging.

MEET MELISSA & DR. STUART FRITZ

Melissa Fritz, the mastermind behind the groundbreaking series "Inside Senior Living," hails from the picturesque neighborhood of Linden Hills in Minneapolis. With a heartfelt dedication to illuminating the lives of seniors and their families, Melissa, a former senior living consultant, drew inspiration from her personal experiences, particularly her father's battle with early-onset Alzheimer's dementia. She spent seven-years outside of Minnesota, having led a chamber of commerce and economic development agency in Montana, launched a community-wide wellness program for cancer prevention in Georgia, and came back to her home state where she returned to her work in marketing and senior living consulting.

Dr. Stuart Fritz, Melissa's husband, and an executive producer of the project, is a retired emergency physician turned potter whose artistry comes to life in his pottery studio, Lake Country Potteries, nestled in the historic Foundry Building in the Como area of Minneapolis. He is deeply rooted in causes close to the community such as education and community service, having lived in the heart of Linden Hills for over 35 years. Both Melissa and Stuart are proud alumni of Hamline University.

The Fritz Family Scholarship at Hamline University is a testament to their commitment to education. This scholarship, established in honor of Stuart's parents, who were esteemed school teachers and Hamline graduates, supports minority students majoring in education. The Fritz family's legacy of promoting education and inclusivity continues through this scholarship, empowering future educators and making a lasting impact on the community.

HENRY W. ANDERSON
MORTUARY

(612) 729-2331 + www.HenryWAnderson.com



FUNERAL, CREMATION & PREPLANNING

Show them you **CARE.**

Help a friend cope with loss.

- 1) Offer to notify his/her family and friends about funeral arrangements.
- 2) Keep a record of everyone who calls, visits or has been contacted.
- 3) Help him/her keep the house clean.
- 4) Prepare or provide dinner every week for two to three months.
- 5) Offer to help with yard chores, or feed and exercise the pets.
- 6) Write notes of encouragement and support, and help with "thank you" notes.
- 7) Offer to drive him/her to the cemetery.
- 8) Make a weekly run to the grocery store, laundry or cleaners.
- 9) Anticipate difficult periods such as birthday, anniversaries and holidays.
- 10) Always mention the deceased by name and encourage reminiscing.

Ample parking + Catered lunch options + Family owned since 1931

Pre-planning is a gift of love.

Make your funeral arrangements today so when you've passed on, your family will know everything has been planned to the last detail. In a time of loss, it's a gift of love that lets everyone focus on what matters most.



VISIT US AT OUR NOKOMIS PARK CHAPEL

1838 E. Minnehaha Parkway
(612) 721-1651

Washburn - McReavy

Funeral Chapels, Cemeteries,
& Cremation Services

Community Co-Creation Team partners to conduct independent survey on George Floyd Square

The 38th and Chicago Community Co-Creation Team (the CCT) has partnered with the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA) at the University of Minnesota and the McKnight Foundation to design and fund an independent survey that will provide a clearer picture of how people feel about George Floyd Square and imagine its future.

The CCT will publish a summary of the results after the survey is concluded. Anyone can access the survey at <https://bit.ly/cct-gfs-survey>.

In October of 2022, the CCT was organized by the Public Policy Project and NEOO Partners in efforts to enhance community feedback on the intersection infrastructure project of George Floyd Square. They sought out 15-20 representatives from residents, business owners, neighborhood organizations, and nonprofit organizations affiliated with the intersection of 38th Street E and Chicago Ave. S to serve on this team and provide community feedback for the project team hired by the city of Minneapolis (the city). The project team would then be responsible for presenting a final recommendation to the city council for the street infrastructure of E 38th St. and Chicago Ave. S – George Floyd Square.

The CCT reviewed the data provided by the project team and the city.

“We felt we needed more informa-

tion that reflects a vision for the whole of George Floyd Square—the streets, the People’s Way, and the memorial,” commented Marika Reese, elected co-chair of the CCT and a homeowner at George Floyd Square.

The survey is being conducted independently. However, the city has chosen to support the community by distributing mailers about the survey to Wards 8 and 9 and providing accessibility accommodations. The data will also be available for the city to guide its decision-making processes.

“Our objective as representatives of our community at George Floyd Square is to create a foundation from which a more crystalized vision can emerge that we as diverse neighbors can collectively endorse,” says Jeanelle Austin, the other co-chair of the CCT and executive director of the George Floyd Global Memorial.

This survey is open and available to all through Dec. 31. There are no demographic restrictions on who can complete the survey. It is currently available online in English and will be available in paper form and in additional languages (Spanish, Somali, and Hmong) shortly.

For questions about this press release and survey or to access additional accommodations, please contact the CCT by emailing, Mikki VanEps, at cct.georgefloydssquare@gmail.com.



Photo Credit: Chasing Joy Photography

WHAT SHOULD GEORGE FLOYD SQUARE LOOK LIKE?

[TAKE THE SURVEY](https://bit.ly/cct-gfs-survey)



<https://bit.ly/cct-gfs-survey>

Health & Wellness

Coming in January

CONTACT US TODAY

Denis@LongfellowNokomisMessenger.com | 651-917-4183
sandra.tmcpub@gmail.com | 612-260-7967
ads@swConnector.com | 612-255-1180

Home ownership is within reach.



Let us show you the possibilities.

The team at CorTrust Mortgage is ready to explore available loan programs that can make purchasing a home possible. We'll work to uncover down payment and closing cost assistance programs in your area.



CorTrust Mortgage




Stop by or scan to learn more.
We would love to see you!

CorTrustMortgage.com
Member FDIC • Bank ID 405612
NMLS 458038



OVERLOOK RENAMED ALONG WEST RIVER PARKWAY



On Wednesday, Oct. 18, 2023, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) Commissioners voted to name a previously unnamed overlook near the intersection of West River Parkway and East 44th Street the “Horace W. S. Cleveland Overlook.” The following Wednesday, Oct. 25, 2023, MPRB trades staff installed new signage bearing the overlook name.

Horace William Shaler Cleveland was a landscape architect hired in April 1883 to advise the newly created Minneapolis Park Board on the development of a park system for Minneapolis. On June 2, 1883, Cleveland read a document to the Board of Commissioners that would provide the framework for today’s Minneapolis park and recreation system.

In the ensuing decades, the Minneapolis Park Board persistently pursued and expanded on Cleveland’s initial vision for a network of public parkland and parkways connecting Minneapolis’ beautiful riverfront, lakes, creeks and forest. Today the Grand Rounds National Scenic Byway contains more than 50 miles of continuous, parallel parkway and trail running throughout the Minneapolis park system. It was designated as a National Scenic Byway by the Federal Highway Administration in 1998.

The Horace W. S. Cleveland Overlook is near the parking lot just north of the intersection of West River Parkway and East 44th Street. It offers a view of the river bluffs in Mississippi Gorge Regional Park and is near access to Winchell Trail, a five-mile hiking route along the riverfront and bluff areas in the park.

“Recognition for Cleveland and his vision for our amazing park system has been long in the making,” said Meg Forney, President of the MPRB. “I’m grateful for the work of the visionaries like Cleveland and the park stewards who came before me so that our most valuable land and waterfront was acquired and maintained for all.”

Steffanie Musich, MPRB Commissioner for District 5, which includes the area of South Minneapolis where the overlook is located, said, “As a river advocate and Commissioner who greatly treasures and appreciates the one true gorge on the great Mississippi River, we all owe a great debt to Cleveland.”

The overlook is part of a section of riverfront acquired by the MPRB in 1901 after nearly two decades of planning and advocacy in the wake of Cleveland’s plan. Cleveland called it “a continuous park of such picturesque character as no art could create and no other city can possess.”

Murals transform railroad/ Greenway bridge over 36th

>> from 1

The goal of the project was to transform the bridge into an attractive, valued gateway between the Seward and Longfellow neighborhoods and to artistically engage high school youth in an initiative to turn an eyesore in the community into a place of meaning and pride.

The group sought out a partnership with nearby Hiawatha Collegiate High School, which had already established an after-school public art club. In response to this mural opportunity, HCHS established what Jack Becker of 36th ART believes is the first high school-level public art class in the state. Under the leadership of teachers Derek Davidson and Bryan Daly, Dean of College and Community at HCHS, 15 students signed up for the class. 36th ART members sought Peyton Scott Russell and his SPRAYFiNGER® team to partner on the project and bring the mural to life.

Peyton, founder of SPRAYFiNGER®, is a pioneering teaching artist who has helped hundreds of youths to learn mural-making techniques and participate in the process. SPRAYFiNGER® artists Simone Alexa and Reggie LeFlore oversaw the bridge project and mentored the students on all aspects of ideation, design, execution, production, and installation.

"We are extremely grateful for this partnership with 36th ART. The creativity and collaboration at play is inspiring and it reminds our young people that they belong and that this community is ours together," said HCHS Principal Nicole Cooley.

Through daily one-hour public art classes and a series of six three-hour workshops, 36th ART and SPRAYFiNGER® engaged HCHS students in the research and context of the bridge site, including the history of the neighborhood, its indigenous roots, and its local landmarks. Students decided on images of youth and elder generations, the Mississippi River, housing and architecture in the neighborhood, native plants, sunrise and sunset themes, poems, maps of the neighborhood, and the Brackett Park rocket sculpture. All images are compiled in a collage-like manner to create a story and overall theme of the neighborhood.

"We are hopeful this mural will positively engage all who pass by. The many elements of storytelling and themes to be found within these two murals will be discovered and rediscovered each time the



Community members check out the murals dedicated on Nov. 11, 2023. They were created in one month in a collaboration between students at Hiawatha Collegiate High School, SPRAYFiNGER®, and 36th ART. Next up: more public art along the blocks north and south of the bridge. Last year, 36th ART created a pop-up art display at the Elsa's House of Sleep building at 36th and E. Lake St. (Photos submitted)



mural is viewed," stated SPRAYFiNGER®.

A community celebration and dedication of the mural was held on Saturday, Nov. 11 from 1-4 p.m. on the HCHS campus at 3500 E. 28th St., and within walking distance to the bridge.

"I am so impressed by the hard work you have put in over the months to make this vision a reality. Your leadership is improving our neighborhood in concrete ways and building relationships that will impact the city for years to come," said Ward 2 Council Member Robin Wonsley.

Funding came from Lake Street Council's Placemaking & Vibrancy Grant pro-

gram, Seward Neighborhood Group, Xcel Energy, TruStone Financial, the Longfellow Community Council, anonymous donors, and in-kind support from One Simple Plan.

"The kids were stars of the day and many people are now envisioning just how they'd like the bridge to be finished," remarked Terry Barnes of 36th ART. "I think we've sparked 36th Ave. revitalization and transformation."

"For me, one of the great things about the event was the bringing together of the school community and the two neighborhood residents who rarely share any activ-



"If you look at it closely you can see a little blue guy holding a SIGN not a hammer. Nonetheless, I first sketched that little dude just a few years ago and to see it now on a mural it means so much more than just paint," said Hego Centeno, a sophomore at Hiawatha Collegiate High School (HCHS). "You might also be wondering what the little dude means or is called. I called him 'The kid' and to me he represents the youth in someone. The strength, bravery, hunger, pride and more in someone. It might mean something else to you who knows. I don't think this mural needs anything else other than the people's ideas and thoughts to be heard and thought of. May this mural bring peace and harmony between two communities and really show the meaning behind what we call home."

ities together," said Becker. "It was a real bridging moment, and the start of a long term relationship that has tremendous potential!"

"The mural turned out more intricate and beautiful than I could have imagined, especially given the two 80-foot artworks were designed, developed and completed within a month! The students' ideas were brought to life in collaboration with Sprayfingert artists, who have a technique that encourages and inspires – even the most timid ones.

"I'm thrilled that teacher Derek Davidson plans to keep offering the public art class – the only one in a Minnesota high school! I plan to help raise more funds to allow us to finish transforming the bridge next year."

PAWS & CLAWS

Tubman raising funds to add pet shelter

Tubman, an innovative organization dedicated to providing support and resources to individuals and families affected by domestic violence and trauma, is raising funds to add a pet shelter.

Tubman's CEO is Jennifer Polzin, who lives near Lake Nokomis.

This initiative will provide a safe haven for individuals experiencing domestic violence, allowing them to bring their pets with them. Recognizing the crucial link between pet safety and domestic violence, this new on-site shelter will further reduce barriers for people to get the support they need.

The Great Dreams Campaign fundraising effort is set to enhance the universal accessibility, safety, and utility of the Harriet Tubman Center East. In addition to the pet shelter, other key infrastructure improvements include accessible restrooms, an elevator for public and non-residential areas, electrical upgrades, new windows, partial



Jennifer Polzin

roof replacement, fire suppression system, and more.

Tubman aims to transform its kitchen into a hub for community development, offering options such as partnering with nonprofits focused on food insecurity, workforce development, or a space for local entrepreneurs in the food industry. With added investment in security measures for domestic violence survivors, coupled with advancements in technology and an expansion in staff, Tubman seeks to strengthen its program delivery and access to better serve those in need.

For over 45 years, Tubman has aided individuals of all ages, genders, and backgrounds facing relationship violence, substance abuse, mental health issues, and trauma. Serving the Twin Cities, Tubman offers safe shelter, legal support, counseling, youth programs, and community education. In 2022, Tubman assisted approximately 17,700 people in the Minneapolis area with a mission to advance opportunities for change so that every person can experience safety, hope, and healing.



**Second Chance
Animal Rescue™**

A nonprofit 501(c)(3) all volunteer
dog and cat rescue organization

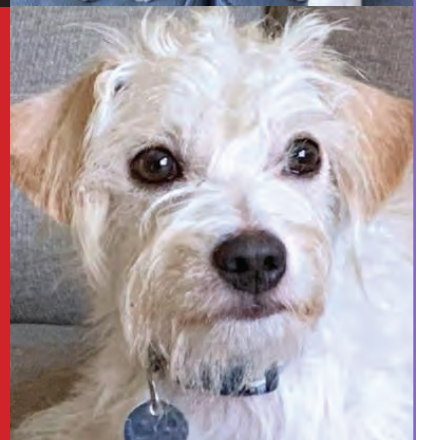
secondchancerescue.org

P.O. Box 10533
White Bear Lake, MN 55110

651-771-5662

Help Save a Life

ADOPT ~ FOSTER ~ DONATE





Lisa Priest (left) and Bill Baldus chat about the future of the playground at the closed Cooper school. Priest lives within two blocks of the school and her children play there regularly. She started PlayMPLS to save the playground and has lots of ideas on how that could happen. (Photos by Cam Gordon)

COOPER PLAYGROUND

>> from 1

the equipment should be removed as soon as possible, and this process will occur in the coming weeks."

Those inspections, conducted in May and September of 2023, found that the playground's overall condition was poor. The 26-year-old equipment, the inspections report said, was "showing signs of aging." It noted deteriorating paint and protective coatings, a rusting and "dangerous" hanging walkway bridge, and sand that does not meet industry standards for fall protection. "Based on age and condition," it said, the "playground equipment should be taken out of service."

"Since the school is not being used, there are no plans at this time to install a new playground and due to the age of the playground, repair was not a feasible option. Beyond those who shared safety concerns about the condition of the playground, MPS is not entirely aware of the usage and any impact this may have on the neighborhood, but having unsafe equipment is not an option," added Strack.

SURPRISED NEIGHBORS FORM PLAYMPLS

"I was very surprised to hear that MPS was suddenly removing the playground," said Lisa Priest. "Sure, it's a bit old, but by no means in such disrepair that we felt uncomfortable playing on it."

Priest and her family live within two blocks of the playground. Her children

attend the Bethlehem Child Care Center at 3141 43rd Ave. S and they use the playground often. She is also one of the volunteers leading the work to save the park. "I think the way that MPS made the announcement - that it was to be completely removed in 1-2 weeks - was not the way to go and they had to walk that back a bit, clearly," she said.

Priest appreciates that the district is giving the community time to explore alternatives. "I want to not make it out to be MPS versus the community," said Priest. "They're in a tough spot with funding and the situation, and I want to be able to continue to work with them as partners."

Bill Baldus lives across from the playground and recalls when equipment was installed in 1996. He agrees that it could use some repairs, but does not want to see it removed. "It's a real gem," said Baldus. "It would be tragic if they tore it down."

Priest and others have formed a group called PlayMPLS dedicated to saving the playground. On their website, they describe themselves as "a small grassroots group of parents thinking about the future of the Cooper Elementary playground and surrounding fields, as well as the future of all Minneapolis Public Schools outdoor play areas. Preservation through rehabilitation, or well-considered replacement if needed, can help keep the Cooper playground a community gathering place for kids, teens, and parents for years to come."

NEXT MEETING NOV. 28

Priest is working with LCC in planning the next meeting that will be held at

7 p.m. Nov. 28 at Bethlehem Covenant Church. There will also be an online option for people to use to join. This meeting will be hosted by LCC for all community members who want to help preserve the park. There Priest expects to discuss fundraising, forming work groups and creating both short- and long-term strategies for saving and improving the playground.

The district has indicated a willingness to lease the land to another group but not to pay for the repair or replacement of the play equipment. Boeke said that LCC is open to being a fiscal agent for another nonprofit organization set up to preserve and improve the playground, and that they may be open to leasing the property. They currently lease a small "community hops garden," providing liability insurance through a memorandum of understanding with a nonprofit group who manages the garden. Although it is a smaller space and not open to the public, it offers a potential model that could be considered.

WILL MPS MAKE SMALL FIXES?

Priest isn't ruling that option out. For the short term, she advocates appealing to the school district to address safety issues. In the inspection reports, the district noted three high priority items that needed repair. "The hanging walkway should be removed, and access boarded up," she said. The other two high priorities are adding sand and fixing the chains on the swings. "If MPS could replace these tiny items, it would give the community enough time to work on a new solution," she said.

"Our tax dollars already pay for MPS and parks. Why should we have to pay for it?"

Priest also thinks that funding strategies need to be developed for long-term. "We have two ways to go," she said. "Either look to the state and city for funding for our playground as well as the other playgrounds in danger or already removed, or look to just focus on Cooper using community resources and fundraising."

MPS CLOSING OTHER PARKS

Becky Alper, one of the MPRB commissioners representing the area, sees this as part of a bigger problem and bigger opportunity. She supports efforts to preserve playground access across the city and believes that allowing school playgrounds to close is antithetical to the city's aspirations to attract and retain young families.

She said that the removal of the playground at Tuttle school in the Southeast Como neighborhood and potential removal of other school playgrounds at Lincoln and Hamilton schools on the northside indicate this is a bigger problem.

"I think we are moving in the wrong direction," Alper said. "The park board should work with a coalition of jurisdictions - with our partners at the county, city and state to save these parks."

At the Oct. 18 Park Board meeting, Alper tried to amend a resolution that grants a permanent easement so that the city could use park property for a storm

COOPER PLAYGROUND >> 11

Double
YOUR IMPACT
with Print
& Digital
ADVERTISING!

HOME | FOOD | CULTURE

1601 EAST LAKE ST MPLS, MN
ingebretsens.com

CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Sunday, December 17
10:30 a.m. Children's Christmas Program

December 24
10:30 a.m. Worship Service
10:00 p.m. Candlelight Service

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
of MINNEHAHA FALLS

5212 41st Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN
612.724.3691 TRINITYFALLS.ORG

ADVERTISE WITH THE
TRUSTED SOURCE
YOUR LOCAL
NEWSPAPER

Had enough of Facebook? So have more than 500 national brands that don't want their ads placed next to hateful, divisive or fake content.

These respected businesses have had an alternative all along:
The local newspaper.

Local newspapers are focused on delivering the news fairly and accurately and have a proven track record of delivering results for advertisers. It's why they are trusted in their communities.

News for you

COOPER PLAYGROUND

>> from 10

water management project. As part of the agreement with the city, they would pay fees that would go into a land acquisition fund. Alper moved to amend the proposal to use the fee revenues to establish "a new fund specifically to be held as matching funds for city, county, regional, philanthropic, and state funds to address the issue of loss of MPS playgrounds and fields."

The amendment outlined several reasons why the park board should create the new fund. "Minneapolis Public Schools is seeing declining enrollment and related financials issues, leading to the closure of school facilities throughout Minneapolis," it said. "Many of these closed MPS facilities have park-like features including playgrounds and fields." It went on to note that "in 2023 MPRB was ranked #3 park system in the country by Trust for Public Land based on the inclusion of many of these at-risk facilities in the calculation of MPRB's Park Score;" that Minneapolis is seeking to become a candidate for UNICEF's Child Friendly Cities Initiative;



"Come join the meeting. Join a committee," said Longfellow resident Lisa Priest of Play-MPS. "We need so much help." (Photo by Cam Gordon)

and that a "net loss of playgrounds and fields across the city would make Minneapolis less child-friendly."

"I think there is a storm brewing across the city with places that are not official MPRB property but with properties we

have used in our calculations of our park score and that the people, basic citizens of Minneapolis, use and consider to be parks," said Alper.

While the amendment didn't pass, it generated discussion and clarified that

even without the amendment the land acquisition fund could be used to acquire properties such as Cooper's playground and field.

If and how MPRB might assist with the effort to save the Cooper playground is yet to be determined.

'WHAT'S OUR MESSAGE TO FAMILIES?'

According to Boeke, Priest, Baldus and Alper, no one has come forward voicing opposition to saving the playground, but without someone coming forward to insure and maintain it, that may be impossible.

"What's our message to families?" asked Alper. "If we want them to stay and if we want to attract new young families to our city, removing playgrounds is not what we should be doing."

"Being able to have the space accessible, especially to families with young children is important," said Boeke, adding that she is open to considering "anything LCC can do to save the playground."

Who shows up and what happens on the 28th will help determine the playground's future.

"Come join the meeting. Join a committee," said Priest. "We need so much help."

CITY BRIEFS

38TH/HIAWATHA INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS

On Nov. 14, a Minneapolis Bicycle Advisory subcommittee received a report from Minneapolis Public Works and Metro Transit staff about a plan to make improvements to the intersection at 38th St. and Hiawatha Ave. These will include corner curb bump outs, accessible ramps, median refuge areas and an overall reduction in crossing distances. They are also planning an on-street extension of west-bound bike lane through Hiawatha and green bicycle crossing pavement markings.

NEIGHBORHOOD PROGRAM POLICY BOARD CHANGE

On Nov. 29, there will be a public hearing on proposed amendments to the Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP) policy board ordinance. If approved, they would double, from four to eight, the number of neighborhood repre-

sentatives on the board and require elections of representatives on even years at the city's Community Connections Conference. If approved each city-recognized neighborhood organization could send a delegate to vote on behalf of their neighborhood organization for one district representative and two at-large representatives. There would be six new NRP districts. The district geographical boundaries would be determined by the NRP policy board.

PUBLIC SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

On Nov. 2, the federal Department of Justice (DOJ) announced that Minneapolis would be joining more than 50 other jurisdictions who are part of the department's National Public Safety Partnership, which they report "has a proven track record of helping partner sites reduce crime, improve homicide clearance rates, and enhance the quality of life for community members." Beatrice Grimala, an assistant chief with the Los Angeles Police Department, was identified as the "strategic site liaison" to Minneapolis' police

department. The three-year commitment, according to the DOJ website, allows participating cities to consult with and receive expedited, coordinated training and technical assistance and "an array of resources from DOJ to enhance local public safety strategies."

COMMUNITY PURCHASE OF ROOF DEPOT SITE MOVES FORWARD

The city of has accepted a \$3.7 million personal guaranty as proof of the East Phillips Neighborhood Institute's ability to pay its share of the \$11.4 million purchase price of the Roof Depot site. This guaranty met the Nov. 8 deadline set in the purchase agreement approved by the city council on Sept. 7. The city, however, has indicated that the sale of the site to EPNI is not yet final and that the State of Minnesota still must satisfy its commitment to provide \$2 million to the city as a good-faith deposit, which was due in July. Additionally, they said that the legislature must provide another \$5.7 million to the project in 2024 to meet the \$11.4 million purchase price. If all terms of the purchase

agreement are satisfied, the sale of the site is scheduled to close by July 15, 2024.

CITY 2024 BUDGET

City council members are now finalizing their amendments to the 2024 budget proposed last August by Mayor Jacob Frey. A packet of proposed amendments is expected to be published on Nov. 27. On Nov. 30 and Dec. 1, the budget committee is scheduled to meet to consider amendments to the budget. There is still time to weigh in on the budget. You can email city council members individually or write to CouncilComment@minneapolismn.gov, as well as submit comments online at <https://fluence-media.co/3Q0ovfp>, and make them in person at the final public hearing on Tuesday, Dec. 5 starting at 6:05 p.m. Following that hearing the city council may consider additional amendments before voting on a final budget to submit to the mayor for approval.

~ Briefs compiled by Cam Gordon

Reliable.

Delivered responsibly.

Relevant.

Informative.

You can count on your community newspaper.

The stories and moments in the life of our community that matter to you can be found here each edition, delivered free of charge right to your home and at www.LongfellowNokomisMessenger.com.

Our donation program helps ensure that we not only continue to deliver the best local news and information, but to also continuously improve upon the service we offer our readers and business partners.



DONATE & SUPPORT THE MESSENGER

Support your neighborhood newspaper. Not something you can do right now? That's ok. We'll still deliver to your door. You can also rest assured that we won't share your contact info with anyone. Mail 5139 34th Ave. S. #17097, Minneapolis, MN 55417.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____ EMAIL: _____

Please write your check out to TMC Publications or donate online at www.LongfellowNokomisMessenger.com

○\$25 ○\$50 ○\$100 ○\$250 ○\$500 ○\$1000

I'M INTERESTED IN READING:

- Green Living
- Arts & Entertainment
- Food & Drink
- 55+ plus lifestyle
- Health & Wellness
- Home & Garden
- Business & Development
- School news
- Historical tidbits
- Kids Corner
- Sports
- Finance & Money
- Pets
- Bicycling
- Employment
- Neighborhood news

in Household: _____

Age/s: 0-19 20-99 30-44 45-64 65+



Jay Anderson
Real Estate since 1993
612-819-7555
jay@CBBurnet.com



Volunteer In Your Community

Lutheran Social Service of MN is seeking volunteers age 55+ in your area to provide companionship to older adults or mentor school-age children. Volunteers commit to regular weekly hours for a tax-free stipend and mileage reimbursement. Please contact Tina at 651-310-9425 or Tina.Voss@lssmn.org for more information and to make an impact in your community.




NOKOMIS EAST NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

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



Free Book Buggie organizer looking for volunteers

Debbie Beck created a book swap for her kids' school years ago when her two kids were only in kindergarten and first grade. "We knew there were children who didn't have books, and we knew there were books that were being thrown away because we rescued them from the dumpster behind the library," said Debbie. The program ended up lasting 11 years. She helped hundreds of books get into children's eager hands during that time.

When Debbie and her daughter traveled to Brazil, they saw a Volkswagen filled with books. "I grabbed my daughter's arm and said 'I know what I'm doing as soon as I get home.'" She and her daughter spent the remainder of their time in Brazil figuring out the next steps and deciding on the name of their organization. They settled on The Free Book Buggie. The simple name was created to state how they help families overcome financial and transportation barriers to help achieve higher literacy rates and children's interest in reading. Within a week and a half of getting home, she registered her idea with Minnesota.

"I had a minivan and I had a garage, and I went to two garage sales," said Debbie. "We pretty much just hit the ground running... our board was made up of our daughters and a couple of their friends."

She put a large magnet on her minivan and filled it with books. They kept and sorted books in their own garage, but then quickly outgrew it and had to use a friend's garage, as well. The first year, they gave out 20,000 books. They then grew large enough to need to rent an outdoor storage unit where volunteers had to work through both heat and cold to sort books. Finally, two years ago, they moved to a classroom in Burnsville. This strategic connection links students who need volunteer hours while helping some students become more interested in books. "I had a teacher come to me and say 'I've never seen her interested in books before,'" Debbie said, discussing how some student volunteers started hunting for books for themselves while sorting books for other children and young adults.

As of Aug. 1, 2023, The Free Book Buggie has given out over 347,000 books. Currently, The Free Book Buggie has over 350 partnerships that consists of communities, schools, police departments, food distributions, and nonprofits. This nonprofit works so well because it provides students with both access and choice of books. It is one of the few nonprofits in the area that provides books for people from birth through high school. Debbie fervently believes that a person can learn to love to read at any age. "A lot of students don't even know you can read a book for fun," Debbie said when discussing high schoolers who finally discovered a book they can read just for fun.

Debbie emphasized that anyone can help. "I did this on my own, but this is



Debbie Beck holds up books in The Free Book Buggie. They've given out over 347,000 books. (Photo submitted)

something you can do on your own, too. You can take some of your old books and put them out in a little free library. It doesn't cost any money; it doesn't take a lot of skills to do it... It takes all of us working together to create change," she said.

She purposefully researched book deserts in Minnesota and said we still have a lot of places where people do not have access to books. She is also constantly looking for

volunteers and is on the lookout for a second van. "My legs aren't quite long enough. I'm only five feet tall," Debbie joked about being able to drive two cars at once.

If you are interested in volunteering with The Free Book Buggie or have access to a donatable car, please go to their website at <https://www.thefreebookbuggie.org/>.

Families of people killed suing BCA

Five families of people killed by law enforcement are filing suit against the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension. The families are represented by Paul Bosman, Chief Counsel of the CUAPB Litigation Unit.

The Bureau of Criminal Apprehension investigated the deadly force incidents that led to the deaths of their loved ones but has failed to provide the investigatory data to the families. Under the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act (Minn. Stat. § 13), families of the deceased are the subjects of the data. Once the investigation is over and a prosecutor has decided not to bring charges against the officers involved, the data must be made available

to the families within 10 days of their request. However, families have waited several months to over two years for a response to their data requests. The withholding of these data threatens the ability of families to seek wrongful death lawsuits because the statute of limitations for such suits is three years.

- The families suing the BCA are:
- Bayle Gelle, father of Dolal Idd, who was killed by Minneapolis police.
 - Jim Shogren, father of Zachary Shogren, who was killed by members of the Lake Superior Violent Offender Task Force.
 - Ovid Sims, father of Okwan Sims, who was killed by Stillwater police.
 - Mark and Cindy Sundberg, parents of Tekle Sundberg, who was killed by Minneapolis police.
 - Tara Sykes, mother of Brent Alsleben, who was killed by Hutchinson police.

Lake Street Loyalty Challenge rewards local holiday shopping

The Lake Street Council announces the return of its annual Lake Street Loyalty Challenge. Originally launched in 2021, the program rewards people for supporting small businesses on Lake Street. Shoppers who spend at least \$15 at a Lake Street-area business will receive a \$15 gift card to another local business along the corridor. Participants are also entered to win a grand prize valued at more than \$500.

"This holiday season, we are challenging people to shop local right here on Lake Street," said Allison Sharkey, executive director of the Lake Street Council. "Lake Street has hundreds of businesses to explore, including gift shops, bookstores,

clothing boutiques and restaurants. This annual program is a fun way to encourage more Minnesotans to shop small and discover a new favorite business."

To participate, people who spend \$15 or more at any Lake Street business between now and Dec. 15 can upload their receipt at visitlakestreet.com/lake-street-loyalty and automatically receive a \$15 gift card to another select Lake Street business at random. They will also be entered to win a grand prize pack of gift certificates to local businesses, valued at more than \$500. Each entry to the Lake Street Loyalty Challenge is limited to one per person.

"We are proud to call the Lake Street area home," said Garth Blomberg, co-owner of Arbeiter Brewing, one of the businesses where people can receive free \$15 gift cards. "This challenge is a great opportunity to support Minnesota businesses and get rewarded – possibly with free beer at our taproom!"

Nokomis East Neighborhood Association
KEEWAYDEN • MINNEHAHA • MORRIS PARK • WENONAH

Holiday Lights Competition

Get your home on the map!
Registration ends December 8th, 2023
Proceeds will benefit our Renter Support Fund
Scan the QR Code for more information

Scan me!

Buy LCC swag Get a free book with purchase!

Buy online!

Love Longfellow? Shop our new merch during the month of December and get a free Longfellow 365 look book with your purchase. Pick up & drop off locally; shipping available at additional cost.

info@longfellow.org 612-722-4529 | longfellow.org

Nokomis East: they live here and operate businesses

Nokomis East BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

By BOB ALBRECHT
www.nokomiseastba.com



Did you know that a number of members of the Nokomis East Business Association (NEBA) both live and operate their businesses within the Nokomis community?

NEIL OXENDALE

Neil Oxendale, along with his brother Adam, owns Oxendale's Market on 34th Avenue as well as four other grocery stores in St. Paul, West St. Paul and Bloomington. He is a lifelong resident of Nokomis East and nearby neighborhoods. Having been born and raised in the community and having attended local schools gives Neil a unique perspective on what it means to be a resident and a business owner in the area.

In 1993, at age 15, Neil began working for a grocery store under different ownership at the same 34th Avenue location as Oxendale's. By 2007, he had purchased the business, seeing the opportunity as a means to fulfilling his dream of reinvesting in the neighborhood and bringing what he felt were the right products to market.

Likening Nokomis East to a small town within a big city, Neil cites both the people and the natural amenities of the neighborhood as contributing to the appealing feeling of the area. Because he is a resident, he sees himself as more familiar to his customers and certainly more accessible.

"I am more likely to receive feedback from our customers because they know me and they know our team," said Neil. "Absolutely it's an advantage that I both live and work here - especially as convenience of our location drives much of our business and the majority of customers live in the immediate area."

DENNIS AND MARY KLOEK

Dennis and Mary Kloek, longtime owners of Nokomis Beach Coffee and Café at 50th Street and 28th, and Dori Johnson, owner of Noko Strength (a strength gym formerly known as Paddlesculpt) - like Neil - all live in nearby neighborhoods and feel that as business owners who are area residents, they are especially vested in the community.

Dennis, upbeat by nature, loves his work at the coffee shop and estimates he knows the "usual" coffee drink orders of 85% of his regular customers.

"Our shop reflects what the neighbor-



Dori Johnson of NokoStrength (formerly Paddlesculpt).



Dennis and Mary Kloek are longtime owners of Nokomis Beach Coffee.

hood is and who the humble residents are," Dennis said. "We're happy the shop has never lost its familiar vibe. I think because my family lives nearby I am more in tune with what our customers are seeking. They love our building and its location, as do Mary and I. People like to shop locally and that's why many enjoy living in small towns."

Dennis also noted he believes there are more and more diverse offerings by the neighborhood businesses, and that the community of business owners is very professional. "The level of professionalism here has grown considerably in the last decade," Dennis said. "It has all been for the better."

DORI JOHNSON

Dori points out that living near her place of business, especially with children at home, allows for great efficiency in her days due to her short commute. She has lived in her current home for 21 years, and has operated her gym on 34th Avenue since 2015. Paddlesculpt rebranded last January and became Noko Strength after Dori saw signs that the paddle boarding craze had diminished. She believes many of her customers feel very connected to the neighborhood, and chose to patronize Noko Strength because it is conveniently located near their homes.

"People can come here in fewer than five minutes," Dori said.

DEVOTED TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Changes Neil has observed over



Neil Oxendale of Oxendale's Market

the years as both a resident and business owner that he feels have uplifted Nokomis East as a place to live and conduct business include the strengthening of schools, the investment in parks such as Keewaydin, and very notably the enhanced environment around Lake Nokomis. Additionally, Neil remarked about the cohesiveness among business owners here which he sees as evolving to meet the needs of the community.

"Nokomis Days and Small Business Saturday are two examples of how our businesses serve and keep us visible," said Neil.

Dennis added the familiar tree-lighting event on 34th Avenue is among what attracts customers to the area. Dori remarked she has retained a number of attendees of these business-backed events and festivals around Lake Nokomis as customers of Noko Strength, pointing out that many have been women as we are in a time when women's training and women's health have become such a priority.

It is clear all three area business owners and residents feel devoted to the Nokomis East neighborhoods. All spoke about the feeling of community that one feels patronizing area businesses, and the "little downtown ambiance," as Dori described it, that one senses as a patron of Nokomis East businesses.

Neither Neil, Dennis nor Dori can imagine living in any other part of town or relocating their businesses away from the area.

"People just feel so connected to this neighborhood," Dori said. "We have the best of the Minneapolis lakes nearby and I love operating a business that's part of the neighborhood where I live. There is such tremendous support among business owners here. We all look out for each other. We're certainly a community of risk-takers."

NEBA board member Bob Albrecht owns Bob Albrecht Real Estate, LLC. He lives and works in the former Strom family home on Shoreview Avenue in Keewaydin.

Air Condition your shelter

with **Ray N. WELTER**

Since 1912 • Family Owned & Operated

HEATING • COOLING • AIR PURIFICATION

www.welterheating.com **612-825-6867** 4637 Chicago Ave. S.

\$99

Clean and Safety Check

With this coupon. Offer expires 12/31/23. Cannot be combined with any other offer. LNM53122

Thank you so much for your time and expertise on the installation of my furnace on Sept. 22. Everyone who participated in the project was professional and courteous. I was treated kindly and fairly, and want you to know how much I value that kind of customer service. I look forward to working with you again.

~ Emily, Minneapolis

Consider hydroponic gardening

The city gardener



By LAUREN BETHKE, Master Gardener



Although it's been a mild fall so far, winter is rapidly approaching. Something that has always helped me maintain a good attitude despite Minnesota's cold, snow, and short days, is indoor gardening. Houseplants are great, but if you want a fun winter project with lots of other benefits, you might consider hydroponic gardening! There are a range of options with different costs, levels of complexity, and time commitments required. And there's nothing like picking some fresh homegrown herbs or veggies when the snow is blowing outside.

Hydroponics is a method of growing plants directly in water, without soil. It is efficient, using less space and (perhaps surprisingly) less water than gardening in soil. There are no weeds to deal with, and although there are some possible pests and diseases, the risk is lower than with traditional gardening. An added benefit, in my opinion, is that a hydroponic system can help humidify indoor air, making your house more comfortable during the winter months.

Essentially, in a hydroponic system, plant leaves are exposed to light (generally from a grow light or other artificial lighting, when indoors) and plant roots are exposed to water and air through various methods. Nutrients are mixed into the water, including phosphorus, nitrogen, and calcium. Generally, plants grow in a substance like coconut coir, vermiculite, or LECA, which do not provide nutrients but are used to support the plant roots and help the roots absorb water more effectively.

There are a number of options for hydroponic systems, but I'll start with the easiest. One option is to simply purchase a pre-designed home hydroponic system. This can be more expensive than DIY, but it is an easy way to dip your toes into the world of hydroponics. You can purchase pre-designed hydroponic kits that include everything you need to get started, including seeds, grow lights, nutrients, and more, in a convenient package. Personally, I have grown herbs in a small Aerogarden for many years and really appreciate how simple it is.

Another easy option is a "wick" system, where water moves into a plant's roots zone via a wick made of rope or felt. Essentially, the plants are grown in a growing medium that transports water well, like coconut coir or vermiculite. Nearby, there is a container of water and nutrients. One end of the wick is placed in the water, and the other end in the bottom of the plant pot.

There are a number of options for hydroponic systems – ways to grow plants directly in water, without soil. (Photo submitted)

As the growing medium dries out, more water is naturally pulled up the wick to keep the roots moist. This is a type of passive hydroponics, meaning that no pumps are needed and it does not use electricity. It works best for smaller plants like leafy greens or herbs. If you search for "2-liter bottle hydroponic garden" you can find instructions for a very small and simple wicking hydroponic system using only a few simple materials (this is also a great project for kids!).

Moving up the scale of complexity, you could also try a type of system called "Deep Water Culture." In this method, plants are suspended above a container of water and nutrients, and the roots hang down into the container. This is a relatively simple and inexpensive DIY project – you could take a 5-gallon bucket or plastic tote, cut holes in the top and insert plastic net pots, and grow your plants in the pots using a growing medium. To increase the amount of oxygen in the water, you can add a small air pump designed for hydroponics.

"Ebb and flow" is another type of hydroponic system that is somewhat more complicated, but is highly customizable and can be a fun project for a committed home gardener. In this method, plants are grown in a tray filled with growing medium. The tray is periodically flooded with water and nutrients, which then drain out of the tray. This is generally accomplished with a water reservoir, a pump to flood the tray, and a timer to schedule the flooding cycle. Water then drains back into the reservoir using gravity.

If you want to know more, there are tons of tips online for these and other types of DIY hydroponic systems, including an excellent and comprehensive article on the University of Minnesota Extension website. Additionally, a book I personally like that has detailed plans and instructions is "DIY Hydroponic Gardens" by Tyler Baras. If you're looking for a fun winter gardening project and a way to grow food at home throughout the year, I hope you'll give hydroponics a try!

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!

Faith

Neighborhood churches welcome you.

Bethlehem Covenant Church
3141 43rd Ave. S. • 612-721-5768
www.bethlehemcov.org
Pastor Colleen Nelson
(Handicapped Accessible)
Traditional Service – 9 AM
Contemporary Service – 10:45 AM
Lucia Fest - Dec. 9, 9&10:30AM
All sermons can be found online

Epworth United Methodist
3207 37th Ave. • 612-722-0232
www.epworthmpls.org
A Congregation-Led Community
Sundays 8:45am - Faith Formation for All Ages; 10am - Worship In-person & Live-streaming on Our FB Page - @EpworthUMCMPLS
12/3 - Advent Workshop - 11:15am
12/10 - Christmas Chili & Football - 11:15am
12/24 - 10 am - Christmas Eve Worship, and 5pm Candlelight Service

Faith Ev. Lutheran Church
3430 East 51st St. • 612-729-5463
www.faithlutheranmpls.org
Vacancy Pastor: Rev. Dr. Jared Yogerst
Sundays – Service times on website (Communion 1st and 3rd)
Mondays: Exercise Class, 10 am AA, 6:30 pm
Wednesdays: NA group, 7:30 pm
9/10 - Rally Sunday, Ice Cream and Music, 10:15 am
9/30 - 10 am-2 pm Blind Ministry

Minnehaha Communion Lutheran
4101 37th Ave. S. • 612-722-9527
www.minnehahacommunion.org
Interim Pastor Matthew Johnson
(Handicapped Accessible)
9:45 am Sunday Worship in person & online. Info on church website
12-step groups Tuesday thru Friday evenings

Park Avenue United Methodist Church
3400 Park Ave. • 612-825-6863
www.parkavechurch.org
Senior Pastor Gregg Taylor, Minister of Preaching Steven Belton
Reaching & rebuilding in the Central Neighborhood. 100+ years of lively worship and diverse congregation.
Open for in-person worship – 10am Sundays

St. Albert the Great Catholic
E. 29th St. at 32nd Ave. S.
612-724-3643
www.saintalbertthegreat.org
Fr. DePorres Durham, O.P.
Saturday mass 5:00 pm
Sunday mass 9:30 am (also live-streamed on Facebook), 12 pm
Sacrament of Reconciliation 4-4:40 pm Saturdays; Sunday 11:30-11:50 am; Or by appointment
Weekday masses at 8:15 am, M, T, Th, F in the chapel
Christmas Eve 5 and 10 pm, and Christmas Day 10 am

Trinity Lutheran Church of Minnehaha Falls
5212 41st Ave. S. • 612-724-3697
www.trinityfalls.org
Pastor Matt Oxendale
Centennial Year
Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m.
Sunday School for all ages 9:30 a.m.
AA Sun & Tues 7:00 p.m.
Kids' Program in Service Dec. 17
Christmas Eve. 10:30 a.m. & 10p.m.

Faith classified ads must be received by the Messenger by Dec. 11 for the Dec. 21 issue. Call 651-917-4183, email or place the order online.

NEIGHBORHOOD CHURCHES OFFER

- ✦ **Minnehaha Food Shelf**, Tuesdays, 10:30 am - 3 pm
Minnehaha United Methodist • 3701 E. 50th St. • 612-721-6231
- ✦ **Nokomis East Food Shelf**, 2nd & 4th Wednesdays, 2-4 pm
Crosstown Covenant • 5540 30th Ave. S • 612-724-3601

HIRING: CARRIERS FOR WALKING ROUTES



Get exercise.

Work flexible hours.

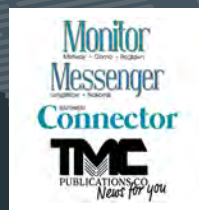
Save up for that trip. Support democracy. Say hi to your neighbors.

TMC Publications is looking for newspaper delivery carriers for walking routes in Longfellow and Nokomis. Reliable car needed to pick up papers, or we can drop off to you. Routes available every week.

Email Delivery@tmcpub.com or call/text 612-235-7197.

Deliver newspapers. Earn \$15/hr

Word of mouth begins here



PASS IT ON

PREGNANT?

Get a flu shot.

If you are pregnant a flu shot can protect your baby and the moments that matter most.



Learn more at Pregnant? Get a Flu Shot. health.state.mn.us/diseases/flu/basics/flu-pregnant.html

HIGATE

URGENT CARE FOR CHILDREN

2911 26th Ave S,
Minneapolis, MN 55124

Pediatric Urgent Care Clinic
for children of all ages

Conveniently located at Everlake near Lake St./Minnehaha intersection
• easy access • parking

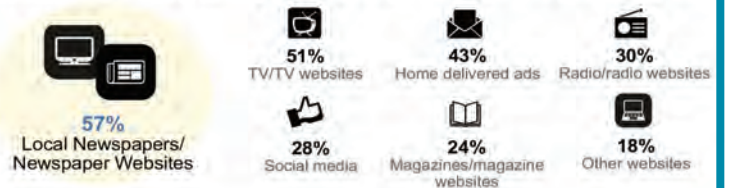


Hours: Monday and Friday 9am-6pm,
Tuesday and Thursday 9am-7pm,
Saturday and Sunday 9am-3pm,
closed Wednesday

CALL 612-886-3626
VISIT higateclinic.com

**The research is in.
YOUR CUSTOMERS ARE LOOKING
HERE.**

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



Buying

Free Appraisals

Memorabilia
**Sports Card
Collections**

Consignment Available

Info@minnieandpaul.com
612-208-6405

Treating your house like a home.

Painting by Jerry Wind

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

FREE ESTIMATES

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

domestic abuse project
D A P

First Call 612-874-7063

T. SCHAUB PAINTING

SERVING SOUTH MINNEAPOLIS SINCE 1997

INTERIOR / EXTERIOR | FREE ESTIMATES

Contact Tim @ 651-270-1742

**TREE TRIMMING,
REMOVAL & STUMP
GRINDING**

CERTIFIED ARBORIST
ISA

Matthew Molinaro
FREE ESTIMATES
612.239.2508
MolinaroTree.com

lic&Insured | certified arborist MN-4551A

Leap

Pediatric and Adolescent Care

Primary care for 0-26 year olds
CALL 651-350-3580
EMAIL Main@leapcaremn.com

450 Syndicate St. N., Suite 250
St. Paul, MN 55104-4107
Hours: 10AM - 6PM M-F

Dr. Julia, Pediatrician

**WANT TO REACH 44,000+ PEOPLE IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD?
YOU CAN - WITH EACH EDITION OF THE MESSENGER.**

Home

CRISIS HOTLINE

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

JUST \$1 A WORD.

HANDYMAN

Dr. House does it all: From a leaky faucet to a new addition. I can save you money on electrical and plumbing. Call John at 651-231-5652.

PAINTING

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

Kevin's Painting. Interior/Exterior. Wood frame, stucco. Pressure washing, staining, gutter cleaning. Insured. 651-699-2832.

ROOFING

30 years experience hail and wind damage specialist. Replace or repair. Free estimate. Licensed/insured. 612-724-3934

SERVICES

Snow removal - sidewalks, driveways, roof tops. Gutter cleaning. 651-699-2832.

SPACE FOR RENT.

Wellness or therapy space for rent: On bus route. Easy access to light rail.

Located at Minnehaha Ave S. and 42nd St. 2nd floor space avail. Approx. 144 sq. ft. Call Jim between 8 a.m. and 2 p.m. 612-490-1457 or email: KRZ@NELSONELECTRICINC.COM.

STORAGE

MPLS Storage located in the Longfellow neighborhood has units for rent at low rates. Locally owned and family operated. 1/2 block from Lake and Hiawatha. 612-333-7525.

Pets

DOG WALKING

John's Dog Walking - Daily dog walks, boarding and in home pet visits. 15 years experience, Insured and Bonded. 612-825-9019. www.facebook.com/john-petservice.

Health

MEN'S WALKING GROUP

Early mornings from near Riverview Theater, https://ogwalking.wordpress.com, ogwalking612@gmail.com

**LET THEM KNOW YOU SAW IT
IN THE MESSENGER.**

DRAGONS WYND
Environmental Entomology

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

www.etsy.com/shop/DragonsWyndInsects
jessica@dragonswynd.com

612.729.7608 • www.buck-bros.com

BUCK BROTHERS CONSTRUCTION
MN license #4593

We design & build in your neighborhood
Kitchens, Baths, Additions Restorations

BUY LOCAL
LONGFELLOW/NOKOMIS

Support your neighbors, live a more sustainable life, and build community.

Tell them you saw it in the Messenger.

MB'S CLEANING SERVICES

- Green cleaning
- Toxin-free disinfecting
- For home and business
- Woman-owned, local
- Since 1994

651-225-1960
MBScleaning.com

6 of 10

readers say they frequently purchase products and services from ads that they see in the Messenger.

DO THE MATH!

For only **14¢/piece** you can have a 4-color flyer PRINTED AND DELIVERED with the Messenger!

It costs 50¢ /piece to mail a promotional flyer to local residents letting them know about your business, organization or upcoming event. That does not include design, production, and printing charges.

Contact Denis Woulfe for details
Denis@LongfellowNokomisMessenger.com
(651) 917-4183

GET THE WORD OUT. GET A CLASSIFIED. JUST \$1 A WORD.

Word ads must be received by the Messenger by Monday, Dec. 11 for the Dec. 21 issue. Call 651-917-4183 for more information. Your classified ad will also be automatically placed on the Messenger's website at www.LongfellowNokomisMessenger.com

HD COIN LAUNDRY

3225 East Lake St. Minneapolis, MN 55406
Phone: 612-644-7010 E-mail: cleanwash@hdlaundry.com



Ozone is an extremely effective sanitizing and disinfecting agent. Each wash cycle sanitizes and disinfects every time when you use our washers.

**OPEN DAILY
6:00 AM-10:00PM**

Wash, Dry & Fold Service Available!
Under New Management
Save time & money using our Giant Washers & Dryers!




John Njoes
REALTOR®
612.419.4576
john.njoes@lakesmn.com

Lakes | Sotheby's
INTERNATIONAL REALTY

Your Neighbor since 1984

NELSON

ELECTRIC INC.
EST 1963

Service is Our Specialty

- Residential
- Industrial
- Restaurant
- Lighting Retrofits
- Commercial
- Solar

FREE - estimates

Call today for an appointment

Office Space for Lease

Robert Nelson - Owner
www.nelsonelectricinc.com
612-724-9500 or 763-444-1523



Contractor's Lic. #20636575
Electric Lic. #EA001304

HAYES WINDOW RESTORATION



Storm Windows

Sash Cord Repair & Weatherstripping

Full Restoration

Contact us today to schedule your free, in-person window assessment.



612-259-7855
Hayeswindows.com

MN Lic. BC750502



Winter Promotion!

••••• Mention this ad for \$100 •••••
••••• off your first project of •••••
••••• \$1,000 or more, now •••••
••••• through Feb. 2024. •••••



Create ♦ Collaborate ♦ Communicate



HANSON

REMODELING
design ▪ build

(612) 655-4961

hansonremodeling.com

Lic #BC633225

Your "Deck the Halls"

Holiday Headquarters





NICOLLET HARDWARE

3805 NICOLLET AVENUE | MPLS, MN 55409 | 612.822.3121