

SOUTHWEST Connector

NEWS FOR EVERYONE, DELIVERED TO EVERYONE • MARCH 2024 • VOL. 3 • NO. 4 • 25,000 CIRCULATION



10 LIVING 50+: She appreciates meditative act of creating

4 COLUMN: Engaging the next generation of news consumers

5 New Ward 7 council member, staff have set their priorities

6 Debate: complete Nicollet Ave. or make it a mall



VIEWPOINTS ON LYNDALE AVE. RECONSTRUCTION

Livable Lyndale and Vibrant Lyndale rally on same day along S. Lyndale. Both believe in a street that is a destination, but differ on how to achieve it.

By **Cam Gordon**

Move Minnesota hosted a rally for a bike/pedestrian-friendly Lyndale Ave. reconstruction on Saturday, March 2, 2024 at 27th St. and Lyndale Ave S. It was part of the Livable Lyndale project and promoted “to show Hennepin County our strong support for bus and bike lanes on Lyndale Avenue.”

Move Minnesota’s Director Sam Rockwell joined the group of supporters. “There is a big opportunity here with the planned reconstruction of Lyndale that will last 50 to 70 years,” said Rockwell,

who lives a few blocks from the avenue. “We want to make sure it is not just somewhere to move through but to go to.”

Livable Lyndale is a project of Move Minnesota’s Minneapolis Volunteer Team, advocating for a street where neighbors and visitors can linger, businesses can thrive, and that works for all modes of travel. They advocate for a reconstruction that includes wider sidewalks, curb-level bike lanes, and full-day bus lanes.

At the rally, they were joined by members of another group, called Vibrant Lyn-

dale. They are advocating for making the pilot 3-lane design permanent. According to their website, “The removal of on-street parking would be detrimental to Lyndale’s eclectic and one-of-a-kind business community.” They say that the Bryant bikeway “has already proven to be the safest option when biking near Lyndale.”

At the March 2 rally, they were distributing cards to drivers and had a large banner there that said, “Remove Lyndale parking. Kill Lyndale business.”



DISRUPTING EDUCATION WITH SKATEBOARDS, ART, AND EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

It’s not easy to connect with youth today. Mark Rivard has found a way.

By **Eric Ortiz**

Mark Rivard is not your typical educator. He never went to college. He was not that good a student in high school. And he calls himself “uneducated.”

But he has found a way to connect with young people through art and skateboards, and he is disrupting the education system just the way he disrupted the art world.

Rivard, a Longfellow resident, began his art career drawing on skateboards with Sharpie markers in the early 2000s. That led to an international endorsement campaign with Sharpie in 2011. A year later, he launched Do Rad Things, an active lifestyle brand, educational platform, and way of life. He has been inspiring others and doing rad things ever since.



Mark Rivard, at right, holds up the first skateboard art he drew with a sharpie. Next to him, his mom, Lorelli Byrne, holds up an iconic piece he did on another skateboard. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)



2023 Minnesota law, “The CROWN Act,” protects people from hair-based discrimination. Stylists from Curl Power (above) share personal experiences.

By **Talie McWright**

Rosie Jablonsky brushed out the curly hair of a young girl, as stylists in the Mall of America salon gathered around. “She looks like a lion,” one stylist said. “She hates her hair,” the girl’s parents told Jablonsky. With the little girl in tears, Jablonsky knew that this would be one of her last times



▶1 MARK RIVARD

▶ ENTIRE INTERVIEW @ SWCONNECTOR.COM

"The journey," Rivard explained during a "Let's Connect" event in February, "goes from initially just drawing on skateboards and doing art shows and learning about the art world to eventually getting into some galleries and things like that. And then eventually endorsement deals with companies like Sharpie. And then ultimately starting a skateboard company in 2007. I actually started the company Rivard Art LLC and then inadvertently landed myself in schools.

"And now I'm running a kind of full-time art education business."

Rivard Art LLC is the parent company of Rivard Art Education, an arts educational program that offers experiential learning opportunities for young people around the world. That business has become Rivard's passion.

It's funny the way life works. After Sharpie helped put Rivard on the map



Mark Rivard offers experiential learning opportunities at schools through Rivard Art Education, which he began doing in Minneapolis schools and now does around the world. The art work spins off into experience with marketing, running a business, graphic design and more. (Photo submitted)

as an artist, he got invited to speak at schools. He never much cared for school when he was growing up, but when he visited elementary schools and high schools, locally in Minneapolis at first and then

around the world, Rivard realized that talking to students in schools was really interesting.

"I just saw myself in a lot of these kids," said Rivard. "I wasn't the best stu-



I often tell a lot of educators as I am bringing my programs around, that art is sort of the entry point. This is a conversation to figure things. This is a conversation to entrepreneurship."

Mark Rivard

dent. School didn't come naturally to me. And seeing myself and a lot of those students was pretty inspiring for me. So I just started to really kind of gravitate that route. It felt good."

Rivard found that art was a great way to break the ice with youth: "I think of my art as storytelling more

than anything. To sit down and draw a skateboard, these are all a story. All of my paintings, pictures, whatever the case may be, I tell kids all the time this is storytelling, and you all have a story to tell. It kind of breaks down the idea that art is just a strictly sort of solo thing that you do and only certain kids



At MCAD, kids and teens get to color outside the lines. Explore a variety of art mediums and new ideas.

MINNEAPOLIS COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN


Experiment with Art this Summer

Art classes for ages 6-18. Sign up now! mcad.edu/ce




M CAD


WE KNOW CARS



Over 50 Years of Experience!

Repairs | Maintenance
Restorations | Custom Work

All Makes and Models



CONTACT YOUR AUTO REPAIR EXPERTS TODAY

20 W 38th St | Minneapolis
(612) 824-4155 | quality-coaches.com

HARMONY VALLEY FARM

COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE

- ♥ Certified Organic Vegetables, Beef & Pork
- ♥ Thursday Delivery to 14 Twin Cities Sites
- ♥ Friday Delivery to Lunds & Byerlys Stores




SIGN UP AT HARMONYVALLEYFARM.COM




TAKE ONE FOR A SPIN

BUY, SELL, TRADE

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

LET'S Connect COFFEE TIME

▶ 2 MARK RIVARD

do. Because when you get a lot of these kids to start telling stories, it gets pretty interesting."

Education, unlike the solitary nature of studio art, is a collaborative process. Rivard recognizes that an artist can spend a lot of time in their own head and their own thoughts. While he values "that selfish time in the studio," he appreciates the unselfishness of teaching.

"I felt that power right away when I started visiting schools. I got the education bug, started writing curriculum, and realizing there were so many components to a skateboard, to a pop culture item, to an athletic item, to an art canvas. It was just a million directions I could take it, and it really blended well with curriculum. Before I knew it, I was almost full-time working education."

The biggest challenge for educating youth is money and getting the budgets to fund schools and fund creative programming.

"Every single kid can benefit from these programs, from the art kid to the skate kid to the athletic kid. There is no shortage of interest. There is a shortage of budget," Rivard pointed out. "Money is the biggest thing. It's funding these schools. Making sure schools have the budgets to create engaging and intriguing, I call it experiential learning programming. When you can do something that a kid automatically understands, whether they skateboard or not is pretty irrelevant, they know this item as a pop culture icon. So whether you are a skateboarder or not, you put that on your arm, you're fairly empowered. And that's experiential learning. You're learning something more than just the arts."



The Let's Connect series is hosted by the Southwest Connector with the goal of bringing people together. Left to right: Southwest Connector owner Tesha M. Christensen, Eric Ortiz, Mark Rivard and Suzie Marty.

The hard part is getting kids to engage. Once you find a way to do that, the possibilities are limitless.

DO RAD THINGS

"I often tell a lot of educators as I am bringing my programs around, that art is sort of the entry point," Rivard underscored. "This is a conversation to figure things. This is a conversation to entrepreneurship. This is a conversation to so many self-promoting and marketing and empowering things that happen through simply drawing on a skateboard. But the biggest challenges are not that it's not too much of a challenge to create the curriculum. It's a challenge to find the budget for it. We just don't fund the schools well enough."

Rivard recommends society gets creative to fund schools and creative programming. Like the time he took students on a field trip to a screen print shop and printed T-shirts that said "Do Rad Things," then had kids sell them after coining the phrase during a learning session.

"I just said, at the end of the day, you just got to do rad things. And the phrase came out, and it became the classroom model. Just do rad things," Rivard re-

called. "It doesn't necessarily matter where it's gonna lead. We'll figure that out when we get there. As long as it's awesome, whatever we're doing right now, as long as we're doing rad things, we're gonna find a good route to wherever we need to go."

"So I bought all the shirts, I paid for the screen printing, and then I said it's your job to go and sell these at school. I need to make my money back, and you guys can keep the profit. I ended up paying the kids the profits, and they went out and sold all the shirts. That becomes an entrepreneurship lesson. It becomes a lot of things. And so do rad things was universal, and it felt right. It just felt very authentic to what I do, who I am, and how I grew up."

Kids are still wearing those "Do Rad Things" shirts around town. But even more than that, they are living the mantra.

That is education, believes Rivard. And that is how to reach and teach more kids today.

"I'm big on, same way I wish schools were investing more into our students, I put my money where my mouth is," Rivard summed up. "Those kids, my own personal dollars went to go make this happen. I'm big on investing in the kids not

WATCH THE WHOLE INTERVIEW

You can watch the "Let's Connect" conversation with Mark Rivard on the Southwest Connector website, www.swConnector.com.

WHAT'S NEXT:

Our y "Let's Connect" is with Lee Syndergaard on Friday, May 3, 11 a.m. to noon at The Eloise at Wirth on the Woods, our presenting sponsor. He'll be sharing tips on simplifying your life, starting with your home. Does the thought of downsizing and moving overwhelm you? Then you'll want to attend this event. Let us know if you want to sponsor an upcoming event or have ideas for speakers.

only in an emotional support way but in a very real-life financial way. There's so much more to an art class. One thing you're not going to learn in art is marketing, finance, these types of things. If you can find a way that you hook them with skateboards and with art, then the lesson really becomes all of the other business side of it.

"All of those little aspects that come in, and that creates the real value in the programming. Investment in the students, not just talking about it, but being about it. You know, truly spend the money and invest in these kids."

Count on Rivard to keep inspiring students and the world to do rad things.

▶ ENTIRE INTERVIEW @ SWCONNECTOR.COM

FEB. 9 SPONSORS:



The Harriet Brasserie



Meet great local people in Minneapolis doing great things.

LET'S Connect COFFEE TIME

11am to noon @ The Eloise at Wirth on the Woods
2850 N Wayzata Blvd, Mpls 55405

Does the Thought of Downsizing and Moving Overwhelm You?

Speaker: Lee Syndergaard

Lee is with Gentle Transitions and will share tips on simplifying your life, starting with your home.



Sponsored by



WANT TO BE AN EVENT SPONSOR?

Email EricOrtiz@gmail.com

Call 860-751-9771

SOUTHWEST Connector

www.swConnector.com

ENGAGING THE NEXT GENERATION OF NEWS CONSUMERS

Social media and the internet have fundamentally disrupted how news is consumed and how that news is monetized. News consumers are increasingly reading their news on social sites, enabling social platforms to reap the benefits while leaving traditional media organizations to fend for themselves.

As a result, we've witnessed recent layoffs and major cutbacks at traditional media organizations, such as the LA Times, Vice Media, Sports Illustrated, and BuzzFeed, to name a few. This is not an aberration, but a consequence of a decade-long change in news consumption habits.

Traditional media organizations have tried to adapt. More newspapers offer subscriptions and put their content behind a paywall. Others have tried increasing the power of their digital ads. Some media companies, such as BuzzFeed, leaned into social media, centering their business model around redirecting traffic from social media to their website to monetize using their own digital ads. This worked for a time, but ultimately failed when social media platforms reconfigured their algorithms to deprioritize news.

To make matters worse, a recent Pew Research article found that Americans are not following the news as intently as in previous years. Only 38% of Americans say they follow the news closely, compared to 52% in 2018.

How do we solve this problem? More specifically, how do we ensure the long-term viability of the media industry by



By **Chuck Peters**

reengaging the next generation of news consumers so they can be contributing members of our community?

Steve Jobs, the cofounder of Apple and one of the best to understand customer experience, said the following at the 1997 Apple Developers Conference: "One of the things I've always found is that you've got to start with the customer experience and work backwards for the technology. You can't start with the technology and try to figure out where you're going to try to sell it."

This mentality has helped propel leading tech companies forward, but can be applied in other industries as well, as Eric Ortiz argued in a recent Southwest Connector opinion piece. (Read it yourself at www.swconnector.com/eric-ortiz/.)

Traditional media has been asking the question, "How can we get more people to read our product?" However, to engage the next generation of news consumers, we need to ask the question, "What type of a product can we design that news consumers will want to use?"

We should not expect the next generation of news consumers to pick up the morning paper or turn on the 11 o'clock news as previous generations have.

Instead, the next generation has shown they prefer to consume their news in a format similar to social media. Although it wasn't designed to be a news source, social media is the second most common source for Americans to find their news, ahead of newspapers, local TV, and network TV.

Social media users prefer the convenience, speed, and social aspects of consuming news on social platforms. As a result, 32% of TikTok users under the age of 30 now use it as a primary source of news,

a 23% increase from 2020.

While social media has undeniably played a role in reshaping news consumption, it presents serious challenges. A Pew study found users' number one dislike about consuming news on social media is the inaccuracy of information. Pew also found those who depend on social media for political news have less political knowledge than most other groups. This is no surprise given anyone can build an audience on social media platforms regardless of their credentials.

The prevalence of misinformation and disinformation on social media is a serious concern, as is the negative impact it can have on polarization, radicalization, and mental health concerns, to name a few.

However, as Frances Haugen, the former Facebook Product Manager, said in her 2021 testimony to Congress, "These problems are solvable. A safer, free-speech respecting, more enjoyable social media is possible."

I agree. It's possible to design a platform for news content using a consumer-focused approach, as Jobs calls for, benefiting both the consumer and the news organization without sacrificing the quality of the information or the safety of the users.

In fact, Ambit Media Company is a new tech startup I've launched for Minnesotans to connect with local content from trustworthy sources, including the Southwest Connector, while implementing safeguards to protect against online harms common on social media.

Ambit uses the tools of social media to bridge the gap between traditional media and the next generation of news consumers while compensating journalists

AMBIT & TMC PUBLICATIONS CO

TMC Publications CO and its three newspapers – the Southwest Connector, Longfellow Nokomis Messenger and Midway Como Frogtown Monitor – are partnering with Ambit. Aiming to build a better online dialogue, Ambit connects Minnesotans to local information from trusted sources.

This new social media platform has verified posts from sources that include Streets.mn, Lived Experience Advocacy Network, Frogtown Tuned In, MinnPost, and Better Minneapolis.

Discussion groups include Housing & Homelessness, Multimodal Transportation, Big Money in Politics, Minnesota Climate Initiatives, Minnesota's Cannabis Industry, Elections 2024, Roads & Infrastructure, and Revitalizing Downtown Minneapolis.

Sign up and be sure to follow our channels on <https://ambit.community/>

for the posts shared on our platform.

Social media has fundamentally disrupted how news is consumed, but the news industry can not only survive, but thrive, if we take a consumer-focused approach to redesigning local news.



Prior to starting Ambit, Chuck was a Big Four Consulting Manager in the Data & Digital Trust practice advising the Big Tech industry through the dynamic internet regulatory landscape to create safer digital experiences for everyone.

STORIES & JOURNEYS

Dear Reader, you have continued to tell me your Medicare stories via tesha@tmcpub.com.

A Southwest Connector reader, Judy M., has written to tell me her Medicare Advantage story and her Medicare story. She tells me that Medicare Advantage plans are all different, and that she and her husband have had nothing but positive experiences with their plan. She disputes the assertion that Mayo no longer accepts Advantage Plans. She reports that her Advantage Plan makes things easy compared to traditional Medicare. She goes on to explain why. She ends up stating that seniors are faced with multiple options where Medicare is concerned, and that it is unfair to disparage all Medicare Advantage Plans.

During the recently completed Medicare Open Enrollment period I wrote three Stories and Journeys columns. Now I'm going to circle back to read them to determine if I would write anything different. Stay tuned. I am not a Medicare expert. I am an expert with respect to my own story as I assume you to be also. If other readers choose to tell me their Medicare stories and journeys, my intent is to incorporate



By **Donald L. Hammen**

WEIGHING IN ON LEGISLATION

their essence in whatever column I happen to be writing.

HERE ARE THREE OF MY SOURCES FOR SOCIAL SECURITY AND MEDICARE ADVOCACY

Among the sources I rely on for information and advocacy, three stand out. They are Social Security Works (www.socialsecurityworks.org), Alliance for Retired Americans (www.retiredamericans.org), the Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare (www.ncpsm.org)

So, if you have read this far you have taken the plunge into the river(flow) of life experiences that is Stories and Journeys.

SAVE MEDICARE ACT. H.R. 732 – WEIGHING IN WITH REPRESENTATIVE ILHAN OMAR

Being my own version of an introvert, this is not something I do naturally or on a regular basis. Here goes nothing. I call the Capitol switchboard at 1-202-224-3121 to get connected to Rep. Omar's office. Prior to this, I clear my mind as to how I will manage my call. I will identify myself as Donald Hammen, a constituent senior citizen living in south Minneapolis. The purpose of my call is to weigh in on the Save Medicare Act. H.R. 732. I explain that this bill has been introduced by Rep. Mark Pocan. It is important to me because

it will make it illegal for Medicare Advantage Plans to market themselves using the name Medicare. It would re-name Medicare Advantage to Alternative Private Health Plan Program. Civil penalties would be applied to Medicare Advantage Plans with the word Medicare in their ads.

My understanding is that H.R. 732 has 21 co-sponsors, but as of yet not Rep. Omar. I am requesting that Rep. Omar sign on as a co-sponsor if she hasn't already. And if not, I would like to know why not. Thank you for hearing me on this important matter. I proceed to make the call.

THE SOCIAL SECURITY EXPANSION ACT. S.393/H.R. 1046 – WEIGHING IN WITH SENATORS KLOBUCHAR AND SMITH, AS WELL AS REPRESENTATIVE OMAR

According to a petition I received and signed from Retired Americans of America this act "... will increase Social Security benefits by \$2,400 a year an ensure Social Security is fully funded for the next 75 years – all without raising taxes by one penny on over 93% of American households that make \$250,000 or less. The legislation expands Social Security and its solvency by making the wealthy pay their fair share, so everyone can retire with dignity."

"For far too long, Social Security's

Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) has not reflected the spending patterns of older Americans, and the fact that a higher percentage of their expenses is for health care costs. The Social Security Expansion Act(S.393/H.R.1046) updates the COLA calculation to more accurately measure the effect of inflation on the price of goods and services."

I follow the same process on weighing in as I did initially with Representative Omar.

So, dear reader, do you weigh in on legislation? What is your process? What are your resources for doing advocacy? Tell others or tell me via tesha@tmcpub.com.

ELDER VOICES (TELLING OUR STORIES, SHARING OUR JOURNEYS)

Victoria, a Connector reader, visited the Elder Voices table in January. She lives in Ireland, but happened to be in town to visit her mother.

Elder Voices continues to meet the last Friday of each month., 10 to 11 a.m. at Turtle Bread, 4205 E.34th Street. Look for the table with the sign that says Elder Voices.

In gratitude. Happy Lunar New Year to all.



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

SOUTHWEST Connector

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

Owner & Publisher:

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

Story ideas always welcome.

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

Advertising & Marketing:

Suzie Marty, 612-255-1180, ads@swconnector.com
Denis Woulfe, 651-917-4183, denis@LongfellowNokomisMessenger.com
Sandra Mikulsky, 612-260-7967, sandra.tmcpub@gmail.com

Design & Layout: Tesha M. Christensen
Billing: billing@swconnector.com

Printing by: ECM/Adams Publishing Group

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

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

Mail subscriptions available at \$80/year.
Contributing Writers & Photographers:
Allie Johnson, Jan Willms, Jill Boogren, Cam Gordon, Eric Ortiz, J.D. Fratzke, Terry Faust, Suzie Marty, Larry LaVercombe, Donald Hammen, Michele Rae, Talia McWright, Aamira Redd, Evan Vezmar, and WACSO.

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

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

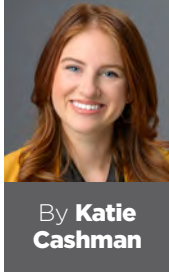
All rights reserved. The contents of the Connector cannot be reproduced without express written permission of the publisher. Copyright © 2024. Sister publications: Midway Como Frogtown Monitor and Longfellow Nokomis Messenger.



5139 34th Ave. S. #17097, Minneapolis, MN 55417 • 612-345-9998
SWconnector.com
www.facebook.com/swconnector/
Instagram: southwest_connector



I am thrilled to be writing in after my first two months in office, a period during which my new team has come together and jumped right into the work, learning the ins and outs of the city enterprise and how best to support our constituents. I have been a public servant my entire career, but it wasn't until our 26-year council member announced she wasn't running for re-election that I saw an opportunity to run and represent our Ward 7 community in a new way. I felt compelled to step up and help move our city forward and represent the future of Minneapolis, bringing more people into the conversation.



By **Katie Cashman**

Our community is eager for meaningful changes to our public safety model, to revitalize our local economy, and to invest in climate resiliency. We've had a challenging few years in Minneapolis, and I've already seen firsthand during my first two months that meeting this moment requires energetic and collaborative public leaders to get work done.

In my first few months in office, my team and I have been working hard to establish new systems for tracking and providing high quality constituent services, including a transition to a new system designed to process support requests and identify issue trends in our neighborhoods more effectively. It's important to me to build trust and deeply understand the housing, public safety, and public works issues that families and individuals face at the neighborhood level. Being in consistent communication with community will help me advance meaningful policy that addresses needs.

At the city we are in the early stages of implementing a powerful 2024 budget, and I have been looking for opportunities to help build its capacity to equitably deliver on the many initiatives that were funded. It includes additional community safety resources, funding to support small business and commercial corridor

WE'VE SET OUR PRIORITIES IN WARD 7 OFFICE

investment through the Great Streets program, clean energy investments through the green cost share program, municipal snow and ice clearing pilot projects, and so much more.

I am proud to be chairing the Climate & Infrastructure Committee, as well as serving as a member on Business, Housing, & Zoning; Administration & Enterprise Oversight; Intergovernmental Relations; Budget; Audit; and Committee of the Whole. I am also serving in appointed positions for 10 appointed boards and commissions. For the first time this term, each committee is utilizing a work plan to guide and structure large bodies of work throughout the two-year term.

Though there are many things I am interested in working on during this two-year council term, my strongest focus will be in three major areas of work:

MAKING STRIDES TOWARD REDUCING OUR CITY'S COLLECTIVE CARBON FOOTPRINT THROUGH:

- Expanding waste diversion strategies with a focus on commercial organics recycling
- Working with community and partners to deploy the \$10 million in Climate Legacy Initiative funds into programs, such as block-by-block weatherization
- Supporting strategies for increasing transit ridership, such as the implementation of two newly created city positions focused on ensuring transit safety and fare free rides
- Incorporating green technologies into routine infrastructure investments, such as solar-powered street lighting and geothermal in street reconstruction projects

SUPPORTING THE CONTINUED DEVELOPMENT OF A COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY SAFETY STRATEGIES THAT:

- Leverage community partnerships for violence prevention and complementary crisis response to free up MPD officers to focus on violent crime

KALEY BROWN WARD 7 SENIOR POLICY AIDE

Kaley brings 14 years of experience in arts engagement, community development, and communications to the Ward 7 team, including six years most recently as the Executive Director of the Whittier Alliance neighborhood organization.
kaley.brown@minneapolismn.gov



MJ CARPIO WARD 7 POLICY AIDE

MJ brings her experience in climate, public transit, and community safety advocacy to the policy aide role. She enjoys exploring and sharing food with people.
MJ.carpio@minneapolismn.gov



- Support data-driven hiring and retention approaches to meet the minimum number of MPD officers mandated by the city charter

- Restore community trust in the Minneapolis Police Department
- Expand successful placemaking and public space activations such as the Warehouse District Live series

SPARKING ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION IN DOWNTOWN, UPTOWN, AND ALONG KEY COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS BY:

- Creating a Labor Standards Board to ensure the many low-wage workers who keep Ward 7 businesses running are benefiting equitably from revitalization efforts
- Crafting legislation in partnership with the state to support the conversion of underutilized buildings for new uses, such as commercial space to affordable housing
- Removing barriers for small businesses and entrepreneurs to open and operate
- Expanding successful incubator programs such as Downtown's Chameleon Shoppes, which provides technical assistance to property owners looking to fill vacant spaces
- Expanding access and visibility for

small businesses operating in the skyway by extending hours, improving wayfinding, and loosening advertising and signage restrictions

I will be continually engaging with my constituents to ensure that their ideas and concerns are reflected in our work. We have a biweekly newsletter to provide info on key policy work underway and are hosting monthly coffee office hours at a different Ward 7 small business each month. All constituents are welcome to attend; no pre-registration is required. We also invite Ward 7 residents to engage with their respective neighborhood organizations, as a great way to get involved, meet their neighbors, and connect with our Ward 7 team at ward7@minneapolismn.gov



Katie Cashman is a life-long public servant currently serving her first term on the Minneapolis City Council representing the 7th Ward. She brings a decade of experience, both local and global, in climate policy advocacy, nonprofit work, organizing, and sustainable urban planning. Cashman grew up in Minneapolis, and currently lives in the Loring Heights neighborhood.

WE LIKE UCARE MEDICARE ADVANTAGE PLAN

Read your column in the Southwest Connector on Medicare Advantage plans. Would like to point out the following:



Medicare Advantage plans are all different. You can't lump them together. My husband and I have had UCare Medicare Advantage plans for many years and have been very happy. The comment that Mayo Clinic does not accept Medicare Advantage plans is incorrect. It may be that they don't accept all, and it also may be that some MA plans don't include the Mayo in their coverage. But my husband has had multiple surgeries and cancer treatment (including radiation and chemotherapy) at the Mayo Clinic and his UCare Medicare Advantage plan coverage was accepted and offered exceptionally good coverage.

My experience has only been with UCare MA plans, but they make things very easy. Only one insurer to deal with. In comparison, my mother had traditional Medicare and supplemental private coverage through my late dad's employer. That meant two sets of paperwork to deal with (and for some people, there's also a separate Part D coverage). When she went on Medicaid after exhausting her assets, I was then dealing with paperwork for Medicare, Medicaid, her private insurance and a separate group that covered medications. A ridiculous amount of time was spent figuring out who would pay for what. What is unfortunate is that it is so confusing to choose a Medicare plan. Seniors are faced with multiple options and even have to figure out which of their medications will be covered. But I believe it's unfair to disparage all Medicare Advantage plans.

Thanks, **Judy Matysik**

THANKS FOR THE 'SMALL' HUMAN INTEREST STORIES

I just want to mention how much I appreciate the Southwest Connector, and to especially compliment the paper on the recent article by Jill Boogren regarding the two students from the Yinghua Academy.

The recent article was both uplifting and satisfying - its great to expose a wider audience to the existence of immersion schools such as this one, and to show the impact they can have on children's lives. Global travel is an awesome way to broaden horizons and get to know how much we all have in common with people of other cultures and languages, and the two young girls described in the article both sound amazing. Well done girls, and well done Jill Boogren for her really outstanding article about their experience.

This is the type of "small" story that will never make the main newspaper yet can be so meaningful, especially in today's partisan climate. It was feel good, but also educational and made me proud of Minneapolis, for supporting schools such as this one and also of the Southwest Connector, for seeing the value in writing about it.

Thank you for providing a balance between hard, factual, neighborhood news and interesting human interest stories. Keep up the good work!!

Cindy Mertens, Southwest Minneapolis

LET'S TALK ABOUT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

According to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, "33.9% of Minnesota women and 25.1% of Minnesota men experience intimate partner physical

violence, intimate partner rape and/or intimate partner stalking in their lifetime". That means that around one-third of the woman in Minnesota, and one-fourth of the men in Minnesota have experienced some form of domestic abuse in their life.

The topic of domestic abuse isn't ever talked about because it can be a hard thing to discuss, but without acknowledging what's happening nothing is going to change. A lot of time the response to domestic violence is very reactive, but not necessarily proactive. There needs to be a very significant investment in funding for organizations. According to The National Network to End Domestic Violence, "Tens of thousands of adults and children receive desperately needed services from local domestic violence programs. Tragically, thousands more are turned away because programs simply do not have the resources to meet their needs." Many people experience homelessness and other issues because of the affects of domestic abuse. To work towards ending domestic violence people across Minnesota need to advocate for change by contacting their elected officials and pay attention to legislation surrounding domestic violence. Another way to show support is to go to memorials, protests, or donate to local organizations that support domestic abuse victims. Contributing will create a safer environment for everyone in Minnesota.

Pheobe Abbs, Lynnhurst

MEDICAL AID IN DYING PERSONAL FOR ME

For eight years, Minnesotans have pleaded with our lawmakers to allow terminally ill adults with six months or less to live the option of medical aid in dying. Last year, it became personal for me, so I joined the fight. At

the end of 2021, I started experiencing trouble speaking and swallowing. Once, while trying to yell to an ice hockey teammate, I realized I just couldn't push out the breath to speak to him. That cemented for me that there was something seriously wrong. Through a series of various tests and meetings with multiple doctors at different hospitals, almost a full year later, I received a diagnosis of bulbar amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS). The bulbar variant of ALS means that my speech, swallowing, and lungs are first affected, then my limbs.

I'm not afraid of death, but of the painful process of dying in slow motion from ALS. As I face the years ahead with this fatal, progressive disease, I want to avoid the unnecessary suffering that I know is coming. I would rather spend quality time with my family, peacefully moving on to whatever is next before I completely lose the capacity to speak, then swallow, then breathe. I want to be able to say goodbye to my loved ones while I still have my autonomy and in a way that provides them with good, not painful, memories of our last days together.

Minnesota lawmakers, rightly, have made bodily autonomy a priority by protecting reproductive and gender-affirming medical care. The right to make decisions about our own bodies should apply at the end of life, too. If you agree, please contact the elected officials who represent you in St. Paul. Ask them to pass the End-of-Life Options Act this year. I, and people like me, can't wait.

Paul Albin, Minneapolis

We want to hear from you.
Email news@SWconnector.com
Send us letters, press releases, events listings, and notes.

▶ 1 LIVABLE LYNDALE

"It was great to have other voices out there," said Rockwell. "Having healthy disagreement, rather than vitriol is wonderful."

Hennepin County is leading the reconstruction plans for Lyndale Ave. S (County Road 22) between Franklin Ave. and 31st St. with input from the city of Minneapolis, and Metro Transit. They are planning to share the preferred design alternative this spring to gather final input and begin construction 2026.

Supporters of the Move Minnesota Livable Lyndale project rally on March 2, 2024 at 27th St. and Lyndale Ave. S. "There is a big opportunity here with the planned reconstruction of Lyndale that will last 50 to 70 years," said Sam Rockwell of Move Minnesota. (Photo by Cam Gordon)



NICOLLET CONVERSATIONS CONTINUE

People debate about putting traffic through former Kmart site, or making it like Nicollet Mall downtown and continuing to circulate vehicles around site.

By **Cam Gordon**

At-large Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board Commissioner, Tom Olsen, is a vocal supporter of the car-free option along Nicollet Ave. through the former Kmart site. "If the public works plan goes through, it'll turn Eat Street into just another car sewer that hurts the community, business, and the environment," he said. "Ultimately, we shouldn't be creating streets which will encourage more car traffic, while we are in the middle of a climate crisis."

The city has released a new set of recommendations for the redevelopment at Lake and Nicollet between Lake St. and Cecil Newman Lane. The city council is expected to review and approve a design later this month. The street was closed in the 1970s after the city of Minneapolis sold the 10-acre site to real estate investors, and it was converted into a shopping mall that was repurchased by the city and demolished last year.

The preferred street design, known as concept 1, has met with the most criticism. It dedicates space for two lanes of automobile traffic, as well as bus stopping and merging, parking, sidewalks, and green space. It does not have dedicated bike lanes. It was chosen over an option known as concept four that did not include car or truck traffic and would be open to transit and emergency vehicles only, similar to the Nicollet Mall downtown. Other vehicles, including passenger and freight vehicles would have continued to circulate around the site as they do now.

The street design follows the evaluation of four design concepts for the roadway that were presented last fall, and a series of events, interviews, and a survey. Both concept one and four were rated highly. The car-free concept four rated highest in the online surveys, but concept one was favored at in person meetings.

Recommended concept one has wide sidewalks, green space to manage treat stormwater, room for sidewalk cafes, parking or loading areas, a new accessible ramp to the Midtown Greenway, crossing improvements on Cecil Newman Lane

and 29th St, and rerouted transit service to Nicollet.

The public space framework has met with less criticism. It calls for a new park located along the Midtown Greenway between Nicollet and 1st Ave. that would be owned and operated by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) and provide space for gathering and recreation. The framework also includes a walking and biking connection through the site from Lake St. and Blaisdell Ave. to the park and to a relocated Midtown Greenway ramp entrance on 1st Ave. It also identifies a location for a "storefront" indoor recreation space in a mixed-use building on the site that MPRB would rent.

CITIZEN INPUT VARIES

Natalie Wagner, a South Uptown resident, and member of the city's bicycle advisory committee (BAC) attended a New Nicollet Redevelopment Project Open House on March 7 at the Abyssinia Cultural Center, at 322 W. Lake St.

"I was really hoping for the public space concept C, which was selected," she said, speaking as a nearby neighbor and not representing the BAC which has reviewed but not taken a position on the recommendations. "However, I was very disappointed to learn that street concept one, which includes private vehicle thru traffic and street parking, along with transit and emergency vehicles, was selected over street concept four."

Wagner is also concerned about traffic on Nicollet north of the site in the area known as Eat Street. "One of the reasons I have appreciated visiting Eat Street, as someone who drives infrequently, is because not having thru private vehicle traffic has meant lower speeds and has made biking on-street feel that little bit safer," she said. "I am very concerned that allowing private vehicles and parking on-street, once Nicollet is opened across the Greenway, will make it much more dangerous to bike in the area because of increased vehicle speeds, will slow bus transportation and make it less reliable because of congestion caused by private vehicles passing through and visiting the area."

"The impact of this project on the Eat Street corridor was a concern that came up frequently during community engagement," said city staff. "The recommended concept preserves the feel of the Eat Street corridor while also encouraging traffic calming through the elimination of the center turn lane, addition of a mid-block crossing with a median island and widened pedestrian spaces."

While Cecil Newman Lane and the route around the former Kmart site has

been in place for many years, the staff also reported, "Eat Street business owners shared that many customers often have difficulty finding their businesses."

BETTER BICYCLE CONNECTION TO GREENWAY

According to the staff report "the project team heard that people want the narrow trail section on the Midtown Greenway from Blaisdell Ave. to Nicollet Ave. widened. People also want a better bicycle connection to the Midtown Greenway via the city's existing protected bike network on Blaisdell Ave. or 1st Ave.," and so the new Greenway ramp will be moved one block east and will connect to 1st Ave. "to provide access between the trail and the project area."

Kingfield resident, Aaron Shaffer, reviewed the staff report as another member of the BAC. "I think from the BAC perspective, people are really excited to see the 1st Ave. and Blaisdell dedicated bike-ways," he said. "I am very excited about the new ramp that will solve the accessibility problem and address the pinch point on the greenway."

City staff also identified the ramp change as one reason for including car and truck traffic on the new stretch of Nicollet. "With concept four," they concluded, "Cecil Newman Lane and 29th St. will carry higher volumes of traffic and be designed to accommodate large trucks turning across the new two-way bikeway at 1st Ave. immediately adjacent to the new Midtown Greenway ramp entrance."

They also stated that if trucks continue to be routed around the site, it would require "larger intersections at 1st Ave., Cecil Newman, Nicollet Ave., 29th St. and Blaisdell Ave. to allow trucks to make the turns around the site," and "pose a safety concern" for people walking and biking.

No curbside access for cars and trucks, longer trip lengths for people driving to access the area, maintaining a "confusing street network disconnecting a primary commercial corridor," and longer queues with transit delays, were additional reasons given for why the car-free concept four was not chosen.

A city traffic study concluded that with a street open to all vehicles "operations for transit along Nicollet are expected to work much better, reducing delay for transit on Nicollet Ave. while supporting transit speed and reliability on Lake St. for the METRO B Line bus rapid transit line."

Although Schaffer was pleased with parts of the recommendation, he was "super disappointed but not surprised that the preferred option included automobiles."

He said, "This was a once in a lifetime opportunity to make transit faster



The concepts for Nicollet Ave. were reviewed during an open house on March 7 at the Abyssinia Cultural Center. (Photo by Cam Gordon)

than driving and make that a preferred option." Instead, he worries that this will turn Nicollet into a commuter route. He "feels unsafe crossing Nicollet now" and with a straight connection from downtown to and from the streets connecting to the 35W freeway, like 31st, 35th and 46th, along the way, he expects it to get more frightening to use. "If it is open," he added, "they need to do more traffic calming."

"The city has multiple policies in place that are structured to prioritize walking, rolling, biking, and public transportation over infrastructure built to prioritize personal vehicles," said Wagner. "It feels confusing and disingenuous that the city has selected a street concept that reintroduces thru car traffic and would bring higher volumes of private vehicle traffic through the area, to the detriment of safety and climate-conscious design goals."

"We should not," she added, "first establish policies prioritizing walking/rolling, biking, public transit, and freight and then subsequently make design choices that prioritize the default convenience of cars."

Planning and community engagement for the larger development project will continue in the months ahead with construction of the new roadway and bridge over the greenway expected to begin in 2025.

HIRING: CARRIERS FOR WALKING ROUTES

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

TEAM LARRY... Thirty years in Southwest!



We bring these to Linden Hills!



Diane & Larry
Realtors®

Linden Hills Summertime Acoustic
Aug/Sept/Oct

FREE!! ON THE SIDEWALK!

Thursday	Aug 3	Dave Dvorak	
Friday	Aug 4	Team Larry House Band	5:30-7:30
Saturday	Aug 5	Matt Yetter	5:30-7:30
Sunday	Aug 6	Peter Ruddy	5:30-7:30
			11-1
Thursday	Aug 10	RayCurt Johnson	
Friday	Aug 11	Vittorio & The Bridges	5:30-7:30
Saturday	Aug 12	Greg Herriges	5:30-7:30
Sunday	Aug 13	Dave Dvorak	5:30-7:30
			11-1
Thursday	Aug 17	Team Larry House Band	5:30-7:30
Friday	Aug 18	The Walker Brothers Band	5:30-7:30
Saturday	Aug 19	Elgin Foster	5:30-7:30
Sunday	Aug 20	RayCurt Johnson	5:30-7:30
			11-1
Thursday	Aug 24	Peter Ruddy	
Friday	Aug 25	Clouds So Swift	5:30-7:30
Saturday	Aug 26	Greg Herriges	5:30-7:30
Sunday	Aug 27	RayCurt Johnson	5:30-7:30
			11-1
Thursday	Aug 31	Clouds So Swift	
Friday	Sept 1	David Stockard	5:30-7:30
Saturday	Sept 2	Team Larry House Band	5:30-7:30
Sunday	Sept 3	Vittorio & The Bridges	5:30-7:30
			11-1
Thursday	Sept 7	Clouds So Swift	
Friday	Sept 8	Greg Herriges	5:30-7:30
Saturday	Sept 9	Belvedere Oasis	5:30-7:30
Sunday	Sept 10	RayCurt Johnson	5:30-7:30
			11-1
Thursday	Sept 14	RayCurt Johnson	
Friday	Sept 15	Team Larry House Band	5:30-7:30
Saturday	Sept 16	Elgin Foster	5:30-7:30
Sunday	Sept 17	RayCurt Johnson	5:30-7:30
			11-1
Thursday	Sept 21	Clouds So Swift	
Friday	Sept 22	Rob Stokes	5:30-7:30
Saturday	Sept 23	Greg Herriges	5:30-7:30
Sunday	Sept 24	RayCurt Johnson	5:30-7:30
			11-1
Thursday	Sept 28	Team Larry House Band	
Friday	Sept 29	Vittorio & The Bridges	5:30-7:30
Saturday	Sept 30	Clouds So Swift	5:30-7:30
Sunday	Oct 1	Peter Ruddy	5:30-7:30
			11-1

EVERETT & CHARLIE
...where art meets experience
A MINNESOTA ONLY ART GALLERY

« BROUGHT TO YOU BY »

DIANE & LARRY!
LAKES AREA REALTY



LINDEN HILLS
WOOFSTOCK
Peace, Love, & Pups

Coming soon!
NEW 15-UNIT LUXURY CONDO PROJECT

LARRY LAVERCOMBE & DIANE MACH
612.845.5273 | TeamLarry.net

Call us!



LAKES AREA
REALTY™

YOUR FRIENDS IN LOCAL REAL ESTATE

Locally owned.
Community Focused.



The pioneering Latino marketplace at Lake St. and Bloomington Ave. turns 25 this year.

Mexico City is 2,106 miles from Minneapolis. But you don't have to travel that far to experience authentic Latino culture. The Mercado Central, or Central Market, is a few minutes from any neighborhood in the city.

The official address is 1515 E Lake St, Minneapolis, MN 55407. Once you get there, you can't miss the Mercado. It's the 28,000-square-foot building at the corner of Lake and Bloomington Ave. that looks like a Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo painting.

Up top, the second-story outdoor walls resemble bright-colored piano keys. Green, turquoise blue, royal blue, yellow, purple, orange, pink, red. Above a door to enter the market is a picture of an Aztec warrior with his palms facing upward to show thankfulness or gratitude.

Below, at street level, beautiful murals adorn the walls with authentic Latino characters and symbols. A Mayan pyramid, a small village of adobe homes, and Mexican sun art. We see campesinos (farmers), una familia (family), un luchador (wrestler), una vieja con flores (old woman with flowers), una madre y su hijo mano en mano (mother and son holding hands), and the Virgin of Guadalupe, all walking together. There are colorful calaveras (skeletons from Day of the Dead), one in a blue dress, one in a box, one flying.

The building represents all sides of life, death, and rebirth. All sides of Latino identity and faith. The human experience.



By Eric Ortiz

MERCADO CENTRAL KEEPS TEACHING COMMUNITY 'HOW TO BUY THE POND'

Step inside the building, and you are transported to another time and place, another time and space, an old world in the 21st century. The magical sights, sounds, and smells are straight off the pages of a Marquez book or Neruda poem. You can find the labyrinths of Borges and Octavio Paz here, but there is no solitude. Even when it's quiet, there's hustle and bustle.

If you want traditional goods and daily use products, there are plenty of quality retail stores for shopping. Joyería Ashley has a huge assortment of women's jewelry. Del Sol Florería offers superior flower arrangements. Want clothes? Candela has you covered. Need shoes, boots, and belts? Zapateria Aracely has them for men and women, all made from 100 percent Mexican leather. For sports fans, Deportes Azteca is the premier soccer store in town. And kids of all ages will love the candy at Dulcería la Piñata.

The Mercado also has all kinds of services, such as Imperios Beauty Salon, Molina Realtors, Noack Law Office, and Sartería Don José (tailoring). From satellite television to internet access to insurance to driver's licenses and healthcare, there is a service for every need. Amigos del Mercado helps Latino community members navigate the daily challenges of living in Minnesota to create more opportunities. Interamerican Services makes it easy to ship packages to Mexico, Latin America, and the Caribbean. They offer international money orders, prepaid cell phone services, and more. Unidos Minnesota builds power for working families to advance social, racial, and economic justice.

After you work up an appetite, you can find the best in authentic Latin American food. Pick up some fresh Mexican



BELOW Juan Linares, one of the Mercado Central founders, points out a service offered at the Latino marketplace at Bloomington and Lake St. (Photo by Eric Ortiz)



MERCADO CENTRAL LOCAL JOURNALISM PROJECT

To honor and celebrate Mercado Central, the Southwest Connector is leading the Mercado Central Local Journalism Project. We will explore the past, present, and future of Mercado Central, the Mercado Central cooperative association, and how community-based development can benefit entrepreneurs, local workers, and more communities in Minneapolis and around the United States — especially communities with immigrant populations. If you would like to be part of this project as a journalist collaborator, media partner, sponsor, donor, or in any other way, let us know at bit.ly/mercadolocaljournalism.

bread at the Panadería el Mexicano or tortillas from La Perla. Take home meat and produce at Valerie's Carnicería. Or eat some tacos, tortas, and tamales from the restaurants at the Mercado, such as Cocina San Marcos, La Loma, or Maria's Restaurant. Then, wash everything down with juice from "Mrs. Keta" at La Reyna de los Jugos, the queen of juices.

The Mercado Central is more than a Latino marketplace. It is a place of dreams. Those dreams came true in 1999 when Mercado Central had its grand opening with 43 businesses. Today, Mercado Central has 38 businesses and is celebrating its 25th anniversary as a gathering place for commerce, community, and culture.

It also celebrates 25 years as a business cooperative and incubator, a national model for community-based development, and a world-famous example of how local leadership can create a structure for ownership and control.

Mercado Central grew out of a Latino community's need in South Minneapolis to reconnect with their culture. Led by Juan Linares, one of the Mercado Central founders, visionary entrepreneurs started organizing in 1991. They used asset-based community development (ABCD) and

community talent inventory (CTI) to fulfill community goals. With support from community partners, the Mercado Central cooperative was born, and they established a venue to serve as the center of the Latino community. In 2019, the Mercado Central acquired the building they occupy.

"The whole idea was creating jobs," said Linares when I met him at the Mercado in February. "Now these folks are employing people. We were not only successful in teaching how to fish. We taught them how to buy the pond."

Linares still serves as an advisor for community-based development in Minneapolis, and the Mercado continues teaching a new generation "how to buy the pond."



Eric Ortiz lives in the Wedge with his family. When he's not bonding, he is community building with the Strong Mind Strong Body Foundation and writing bilingual children's books with his kids. Their first book, "How the Zookalex Saved the Village," is available in English and Spanish.

An educational series

Walker-Talks

All talks are free and open to the public.



FRIDAY, MARCH 22 | 5 P.M.

Classic Cars and Overdressed Duo Opera

5 p.m. cocktail hour; 6 p.m. "Do What You Love! Have a Good Ride!" by Mark Brandow of Quality Coaches followed by poet Elmer Lovrien and opera.



FRIDAY, APRIL 19 | 5 P.M.

Honeybees and National Poetry Day

5 p.m. cocktail hour; 6 p.m. "Sweet Secrets of Honeybees; Owning and Operating an Apiary with Scott Nelson of AARP followed by National Poetry Day readings by the Writers of Walker Place.



SATURDAY, MAY 11 | 11 A.M. TO 7 P.M.

Walker Place Garden Party

Welcome spring at Walker Place with flowers, ice cream, open-air 60s bands, Pedicab rides to the Lyndale Park Rose Garden, honeybee, birding and green energy booths, crafts, lawn games, apartment tours and a downsizing presentation.

RSVP to 612.827.8508

Walker Place | 3701 Bryant Ave. S | Minneapolis, MN

Walker Place features high-rise premier apartments for adults 55+ with a youthful spirit and a zest for life.



KNUTE NELSON, WALKER MERGE

Knute Nelson and Walker Methodist, two esteemed leaders in the aging services field, have successfully merged, marking a transformative step forward in their shared commitment to enhancing the lives of aging adults. The merger, initially announced in July 2023, has come to fruition, positioning the new combined entity to adeptly navigate the ever-evolving health care and senior housing landscape.

The strategic decision to merge reflects the organizations' commitment to expanding home and community-based services programs, senior living options, and rehabilitation and wellness. By consolidating their efforts, Knute Nelson and Walker Methodist aim to better serve and uplift their workforce, residents, and clients across their integrated continuums of care.

The date also marks the official retirement of Walker Methodist CEO, Scott Riddle, who faithfully guided the organization for a decade. Assuming the role of CEO for the new merged entity is Mark Anderson, who has led Knute Nelson for almost 20 years.

Reflecting on the journey leading to this significant milestone, Anderson expressed, "When Scott and I first explored merging our two organizations, we were united by our shared goals and values. Our commitment to servant leadership became a cornerstone that brought us together, making this transition not only possible but purposeful. It was our dedication to caring for those we serve and those within our teams that propels us into this new era."



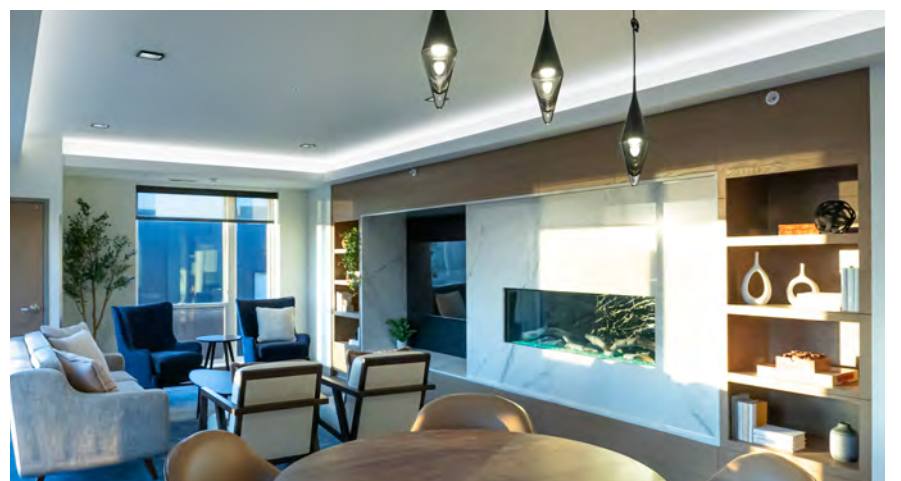
GET 2 MONTHS RENT FREE!
OFFER ENDS SOON! More details online.

LUXURY 55+ LIVING IN BRYN MAWR!

The Eloise is an active 55+ community new to the Bryn Mawr neighborhood in Minneapolis. Located next to Theodore Wirth Park, residents enjoy a variety of floor plans, convenient amenities, and beautiful shared spaces to mingle with friends.

- 1-bedroom, 1-bedroom + den, and 2-bedroom/2-bath apartment floor plans
- 9-ft ceilings & large windows
- Patio or balconies in all units
- Luxury finishings
- In-unit washer and dryer
- Pet-friendly
- Guest suite
- Fitness & yoga studio
- Golf simulator
- Club rooms & rooftop sky lounge
- Greenhouse, courtyard, grill, fire pit, and pond
- Underground parking

Residents will also enjoy walking paths connecting to Theodore Wirth Park, Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden, an on-site playground, and so much more.



SCHEDULE A TOUR & FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK TO LEARN ABOUT OUR UPCOMING EVENTS
TheEloiseApts.com | 612-448-3575

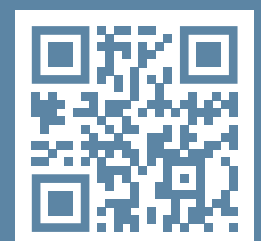


CONTACT US TO LEARN MORE

2850 N Wayzata Blvd. | Minneapolis, MN

TheEloiseApts.com | TheEloise@ecumen.org

AN ECUMEN[®] MANAGED LIVING SPACE Copyright © 2023. Ecumen. All rights reserved.



MEDITATIVE ACT OF CREATING

THE ART OF...

Spending time in nature helps reduce stress. There are many scientific studies that have found it can help lower blood pressure, anxiety, and evoke a feeling of relaxation and positivity in us. Paintings of nature can be created simply to display the beauty of the natural world around us, to connect us to nature, and



By Suzie Marty

has the potential to make us feel good. We love nature and enjoy the feeling of it around us, but how do we get the natural beauty into our homes or offices? Landscape paintings are the perfect piece of art to connect us to nature. There is something spectacular about scenic pieces that help us reconnect with nature or let us drift away with a warm feeling and sense of wonder. Meet Lisa Fertig, an award-winning artist and art instructor who is insanely passionate about sharing the beauty of art. Her paintings of nature (and abstracts) will not only brighten your living space,



Lisa Fertig is passionate about sharing the beauty of art through paintings of nature and abstracts. (Photos submitted)



but make you feel good too. "Art has enriched my life, and I have happily dedicated my entire career to fine art. I began my artistic journey at the Fine Arts Program at the American Academy of Art in Chicago before moving to further studies at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis College of Art and Design and Atelier Lack in Minneapolis. I have been fortunate enough to train under nationally renowned artists. My works can currently be seen in galleries throughout Minnesota, as well as businesses and private collections. I find it most rewarding to create custom pieces for clients by learning about their artistic interests and preferences and working hands-on with them to design a tailored piece for their home or office."

LISA'S ARTISTIC STYLE

Never one to be confined or limited, Lisa's art style is multi-faceted. She creates both abstract and realistic fine art. Her representational work embodies response to the environment, particularly to the countryside and to the shades, shadows, and colors of early mornings and late afternoons. As she paints, she recalls and re-experiences the peace and freedom of the open air as well as the spectacular and captivating qualities of the great outdoors. This meditative act of creating art about real places inspires and centers Lisa in her life.

When painting in abstract, Lisa travels inward, exploring and responding to progressions of thoughts and emotions deep within her mind. Free of visual constraints, these intangible introspective meditations take no recognizable form. Instead, they manifest themselves as successive, unfolding, and spontaneous adventures in color, texture, and composition.

Lisa has a studio in the Northrup King building in Northeast Minneapolis and at various galleries, including Everett and Charlie in Linden Hills (EverettandCharlie.com).

More at Lisafertig.com.



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

MSP FILM
PRESENTS

MSP IFF₄₃ Minneapolis St Paul International Film Festival ₄₃

APRIL 11-25 2024

get carried away.

200+ international films
parties / panels / special guests

THE MAIN CINEMA
115 SE MAIN ST, MPLS

StarTribune KNOCK

mspiff.org

Serving the Twin Cities for over 165 years.

Today and tomorrow, year-in and year-out, know that you can trust our experienced professionals to partner with you, planning each step of your funeral or cremation service with exacting care.

18 LOCATIONS | ONE NEAR YOU

CALL TODAY | 612.377.2203

Washburn-McReavy

Funeral Chapels, Cemeteries, & Cremation Services
washburn-mcreavy.com

THE SOUTHWEST EXPERIENCE

There is so much to enjoy and experience through our small businesses here in Southwest Minneapolis. In fact, we're home to more businesses than the Mall of America! With more than 600 storefronts across 10 neighborhoods, we have a diverse array of shopping, dining, services, and entertainment offerings.



By Karen Binkowski

More than 100 of these storefronts are dedicated to retail. There are a plethora of clothing, home goods, craft supplies, and gift stores, plus a number of specialized retailers. For example, we have three jewelers who create and sell handmade pieces and two toy stores with unique options for your kiddos including Kinoko Kids located at 38th and Grand in Kingfield. There are also six art galleries, many of which sell pieces made by local artists like Everett & Charlie at 43rd and Upton in Linden Hills, and 14 stores dedicated to second hand goods, which is a growing sector as more shoppers consider sustainability and environmental impact in their purchasing decisions.

If you're looking to take care of your day-to-day needs, we have six grocery stores, five delis, seven dry cleaners, and five hardware stores including Guse Hardware at 46th and Bryant in East Harriet and Bryant Hardware at 36th and Bryant in South Uptown, both of which have been at those locations for 100 years. You can choose from 11 dentists to get your teeth cleaned or work out at any of our 16 fitness options including gyms, personal training, yoga, Pilates, CrossFit, and group classes. Need a pick-me-up while you're out and about? You can stop in to any one of our 13 dedicated coffee shops, six bakeries, or three ice cream parlors.

We also have more than 100 options for dining. And what sets Southwest Minneapolis apart is that the vast majority are

SOUTHWEST MINNEAPOLIS BUSINESSES WE'VE GOT WHAT YOU NEED



The grand open of Herself Health at 5450 Lyndale Ave. S was celebrated on Feb. 22, 2024 by members of the community. (Photo by Karen Binkowski)

locally owned, with only a few national chains offering takeout and delivery. We have cuisine from China, Thailand, Korea, Laos, Italy, India, France, Mexico, South America, and, of course, plenty of American and fusion options with new restaurants opening regularly. Plus, we have two breweries if you're in the mood for a craft beer.

There are some incredible specialized services as well, which offer the opportunity to utilize the skills of an expert craftsman. For example, you can have your clock and golf clubs repaired, your old tapes converted to digital, your furniture restored or reupholstered, your rugs cleaned, and your artwork or photographs custom framed. Our local locksmith Minneapolis Lock & Key, located at 45th and Nicollet in Kingfield, has been in operation since 1915, and is one of the few businesses left that specializes in repairing and restoring pre-1950s locks.

That comes in handy considering the

landscape of 20th century homes across Southwest Minneapolis. In fact, we have 12 businesses dedicated to restoring and remodeling homes, many of which specialize in maintaining original character and features, promoting sustainability, or both like Quartersawn Design Build at 60th and Pillsbury in Windom. We also have four architecture firms, four interior design firms, and a number of contractors and suppliers to service any of your renovation or home repair projects.

Need your wheels serviced? We have two bike shops, a scooter repair shop, and 22 auto service and repair options including Quality Coaches at 38th and Nicollet in Kingfield which has been in business for over 40 years.

Perhaps you just want to wind down, in which case you don't have to go far to indulge in some self-care. We have 33 businesses (and growing!) offering a range of services such as massage, acupuncture, facials, bodywork, sauna and salt therapy,

and so much more. Plus almost 30 hair salons and nine nail salons. Southwest Minneapolis is also home to the Center for Performing Arts, located at 38th and Pleasant in Kingfield, where you can enjoy performances and shows, or take classes in music, dance, and a variety of continuing education options.

To access a list of all the wonderful options that our business community has to offer, check out www.experiencesouthwest.com. We're continually updating and evolving our directory, so you can utilize this one-stop platform for making all of your local shopping, dining, and entertainment plans.

We're also excited to announce a printed and digital Southwest Business Directory that we're publishing in partnership with the Southwest Connector this July. We'll list all the businesses in our district by category, in addition to interesting editorial content and ads for our local businesses and associations. It will be printed in magazine form and delivered to 23,000 homes and 1,500 high traffic points like coffee shops and cafes where it can be perused at leisure. There's still time to purchase an ad for your association or business so if you're interested, contact Suzie Marty at ads@southwestconnector.com or 612-255-1180.

The Southwest Business Association is a nonprofit dedicated to supporting our small businesses located in Southwest Minneapolis between 31st St and Highway 62, from France Ave. S to 35W. If you'd like to learn more about the association or become a member so you can access our growing catalogue of benefits for your small business, reach out to Karen Binkowski at info@experiencesouthwest.com or 646-306-0746.



Karen Binkowski is the Southwest Business Association (SWBA) Manager of Business Development & Marketing.

The non-profit supports small businesses. Learn more at swba.wildapricot.org or email info@experiencesouthwest.com.

FROM YOUR CENTER WITHIN

When you see your health care provider or have a question about your health, are you a great advocate for yourself and those you support in their well-being? Some of us were taught to believe that we can't challenge our healthcare experts, that we need to go along with the status quo. We may feel there is a power imbalance, experience discrimination, or have low self-esteem. Other barriers to self-advocacy can be feelings of inferiority due to a language barrier, disability, confusion, overwhelm, or fear. Some of us simply avoid conflict or confrontation as much as possible. Thankfully, self-advocacy is a skill each of us can develop over time with a little effort and guidance.



By Michele Rae

Self-advocacy means speaking up and taking full responsibility for yourself and your needs.

It includes making your own choices about your life, learning how to get information so that you can understand what is best for you. It involves finding out who will support you in your journey, and reaching out to others when you need help. When you can identify your needs and communicate them clearly you can help others understand how they can support you. When it comes to your life, you are the person with the biggest interest, and you're the person who should have the most control over it. Ask yourself how you define a good quality of life and what matters most to you when it comes to your health.

SELF-ADVOCACY AND YOUR HEALTH

HOW DOES STRONG SELF-ADVOCACY SUPPORT YOUR OPTIMAL HEALTH?

- Increases your knowledge by proactively learning everything you can about your needs, disease, disability, strengths, health, rights, and challenges.
- Clarifies where you can go for help, support, and information to make the best healthcare choices for your specific situation.
- Improves your ability to communicate clearly and articulate your desires.
- Reduces your stress and anxiety.
- Increases your confidence, moving from stuck or passive to powerful.
- Reinforces your own values and sense of self-worth.

When speaking up for yourself, remember that effective and respectful communication is important for successful advocacy. Regardless of your communication method such as spoken words, email, text messaging, sign language, or assistive technology, the key is to make yourself heard.

Practice what you want to say. Allow yourself to feel afraid, upset, or angry and remain non-blaming and as calm as possible. Remember to be aware of your body language when you are advocating for yourself as 70% of communication is non-verbal. Eye rolling, frowning, or crossing your arms will likely lead to a defensive reaction. Keep eye contact, smile, and remain as authentic, open, confident, and friendly as possible.

All these elements of self-advocacy contribute to improving your physical, mental, and emotional health.

ARE YOU A HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL?

Encourage your patients and clients to clearly ask questions and ask for what

they need. Respect them for being a strong self-advocate. This can:

- Improve person centered care and quality of life.
- Reduce health care utilization and symptom burden.
- Improve access and navigation of health care systems.
- Reduce health inequities.
- Improve compliance with health care rights such as the right to be treated with respect, the right to learn about their treatment's risks and benefits, and the right to a second opinion.

Developing strong self-advocacy skills goes beyond application to your health. It means you will be able to champion your needs and gather the support you deserve.

If you know how to self-advocate, you are more likely to do well in school, work, and life. You often feel confident in what you are learning and doing. Self-advocacy creates independence. It empowers you to find solutions to problems that others might not be aware of. This is a vital skill in achieving your goals, establishing respect, and building strong relationships. Remember, self-advocacy is a skill you can develop over time with practice. You are worth it!



Michele Rae, RPh, MA, NBC-HWC is the founder of The Center Within, LLC and author of "Living From the Center Within: Co-Creating Who You Are Becoming." She provides holistic coaching designed to accelerate and support personal, professional, and organizational transformation.

We are a non-profit supporting small businesses and our community in Southwest Minneapolis

WE HELP

- Navigate the regulatory environment
- Develop custom marketing solutions
- Facilitate access to grants and other funding opportunities

Visit us at experiencesouthwest.com
For membership, email info@experiencesouthwest.com

LEARNING TO LOVE THEIR CURLS

working at the salon.

"After that experience I was like, this isn't my job," Jablonsky said. "My job isn't to make little girls hate their hair."

Jablonsky studied film-making in college. Struggling with her career path, she made a list of what she wanted to do for work, which included: working on her feet and with her hands, being creative every day, working mostly with women, talking and telling stories, making a positive impact and being joyful. She also made a list of the things she was actively doing, one of which was cutting her friend's hair, the only thing that ticked all the boxes. In 2008, Jablonsky studied at the Vogue College of Cosmetology, in Santa Fe, N.M., and noticed immediately the lack of curly hair education.

"I was raised in a pretty counter cultural family," Jablonsky said. "I wasn't really exposed to a lot of popular trends, and so I really didn't understand how much curl hatred was in the world."

After cosmetology school, Jablonsky moved to Minnesota, and worked at a salon in the Mall of America. The salon focused heavily on straightening systems and encouraged the insecurity of curly hair, she expressed.

Soon after her time in the salon at the MOA, Jablonsky found the curly hair salon, Twisted Hare, (3401 Nicollet Ave., Minneapolis) on Facebook and realized that a curly hair salon was where she belonged. She wanted to work at a salon that made people feel like the best versions of themselves, not one that capitalized on insecurities. Working at Twisted Hare expanded her curly hair education, teaching methods like dry cutting where instead of cutting curly hair in a wet or straightened state, the hair is cut dry as it naturally falls.

In the past, she'd applied to jobs that had rules against curly hair and didn't know at that time there was a history of legally controlling people's hair. It was exciting to work at a place that helps people embrace their texture. She is also excited about the growth in curly hair centered salons across the state.

Jablonsky opened Curl Power in 2016 and wanted clients of different racial backgrounds, sexual orientations, and socioeconomic backgrounds to feel comfortable and safe being themselves in her business. The salon started as two locations, but Jablonsky closed the Franklin Ave. location in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The second and current Minneapolis location opened in 2018. She expressed that together, her team of stylists create ideas around the different ways that they can help people love their hair.

"It was so easy to see that people loved what we were doing and needed it," Jablonsky said.

AN ACT TO PROTECT CURLY HAIR

On Feb. 1, 2023, Minnesota adopted the CROWN Act, a law that bans race based hair discrimination. According to, The Official CROWN Act website, the Acronym CROWN stands for, "Creating a Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair. It was created in 2019 by Dove and the CROWN Coalition, in partnership with then State Senator Holly J. Mitchell



Curl Power stylist Paige Graling trims and styles a young client's curly hair. Graling was bullied in school growing up because of her natural hair. Now, teaching others about how to care for their natural hair is one of Graling's passions. (Photo by Talia McWright)

of California, to ensure protection against discrimination based on race-based hairstyles by extending statutory protection to hair texture and protective styles such as braids, locs, twists, and knots in the workplace and public schools."

Jablonsky expressed that the CROWN Act creates a movement towards professionalism reflected in one's natural state. Though Jablonsky has not experienced direct hair-based discrimination, she was given the nickname "Lion girl" growing up. The nickname is a place of tension for her as it holds both positive and negative associations. A lot of Jablonsky's identity, especially for others, was tied to her hair and how her curly hair made her different from others. Though she is not always called, "Lion girl," in a positive way, the nickname makes Jablonsky feel powerful.

"Take up your space," Jablonsky said. "Be loud if you want to."

Jablonsky explained that she understands that the issue is not just about hair discrimination, but that its roots lie in a system of racial discrimination. She said one thing she does to grow her awareness is try to educate herself, and her stylists, on anti-racist efforts. Curly hair gets called messy a lot, Jablonsky said. She explained it's going to take a broad shift in the media especially for more representation of people with curly and textured hair going to work to be seen as professional.

"People of color, especially those with tighter texture, are often deemed unprofessional by White America. People view tight curls and texture as unpolished and unprofessional."

There is no such thing as a hair type,

as everyone's hair is unique to them and has its own set of needs, Jablonsky said. She discussed the "Curly girl method," an idea originally created by Lorraine Massey and Deborah Chiel in 2002, in her book, "Curly girl: The Handbook." A catchphrase in the book is, "Where there's frizz, there's a curl waiting to happen." This is an idea Jablonsky recommends against, because the fear of frizz is a remnant of a racist idea, and hair does not have rules.

"I would hope that this [The CROWN Act] opens doors for people to feel comfortable exploring their texture if they didn't before," Jablonsky said.

It's not surprising to Jablonsky that 26 states have yet to adopt the CROWN Act, but it is disappointing. She believes there needs to be more awareness and education of the issue, and people should not worry about or be bothered by what others do with their hair.

Jablonsky wants to instill confidence in her clients, and ensure that they can walk away with techniques that will help them in achieving what they'd consider to be a, "good hair day," because everyone deserves to feel confident in their hair, especially in the workplace. She thinks that it's exciting to think that people will wear more natural styles, braids and locs at work, to the point that it becomes normalized.

"Love your body," Jablonsky said. "Your hair is a part of your body. It's natural."

STYLIST CEYONN WADE

Ceyonn Wade, a North Minneapolis resident, has been natural for half of her

life. For most of her childhood, her hair was chemically relaxed, which she said appealed to the Midwestern norm. At 27 years old, Wade said she's gone natural because she loves and embraces her natural hair and Black culture.

Wade has been working at Curl Power since 2021. She studied cosmetology at Aveda Institutes, and expressed that she was not taught about how to care for curly hair. After touring the Curl Power salon and meeting Jablonsky, Wade said she knew she loved it. She especially loves the inclusivity of Curl Power in being LBTQIA+ allied and owned, how it's open to everyone and has products for all hair needs.

"I felt like Curl Power fit who I was as a person," Wade said.

Wade is happy someone acknowledged that curly hair, locs and other protective styles are professional in the Black community. She feels that the CROWN Act took initiative to bring it to life for the greater communities.

"When I first heard about it I was excited and ecstatic, and I still am," Wade said. "But I feel like it's so crazy that in order for us to



County commissioner Rena Moran worked to help pass the CROWN Act while she was serving in the Minnesota House of Representatives. (Photo submitted)

SOUTHWEST BUSINESS DIRECTORY

COMING IN JULY 2024



DON'T MISS OUT! CALL US AND BOOK SOON!

This Directory is the only one of its kind that lists Southwest businesses by category, including name, address, phone and web site. **Connect with your community shoppers who want to support local businesses.**

CONTACT US TODAY TO PLACE YOUR AD

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

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

Denis Woulfe • 651-917-4183 • denis@longfellownokomismessenger.com

Tesha M. Christensen • 612-235-4464 • tesha@swConnector.com

THE STATE REPRESENTATIVE

Esther Agbaje, born and raised in Saint Paul, has been serving in the Minnesota House of Representatives since 2021 and represents part of Minneapolis in District 59B.

"I'm just really happy to be in this role because public service has been really important to me," Agbaje said. "A lot of my jobs really focus in that area, and being able to help the people on more of a macro level has been what I've been drawn to."

The bill for the CROWN Act, written by former District 65A State Representative Rena Moran of St. Paul, was originally introduced in Minnesota in 2020. Agbaje was familiar with the movement on a national level, and carried the bill in 2021. During this time Agbaje said there were many stories coming out about teachers cutting off the braids of children in schools. She expressed that this is extremely damaging on both a physical and psychological level. The bill passed in the House in 2021, but the act was not able to get a hearing in the Senate.

"It just seemed really important to me, especially because there's so many young Black girls and Black women that are made to feel if not told outright that they need to change their hair in order to fit in, or have a specific job, or to participate in school," Agbaje said.

Agbaje is hopeful for a federal CROWN Act law. She explained that she's glad the law is passing in multiple states, but is disappointed by the need for the law.

"It's an unfortunate circumstance that in the United States of America we have to continue to pass laws that recognize the humanity of Black people, it's just really sad," she stated.

Agbaje described her relationship with her own hair as a "process." She doesn't straighten her hair very often as she's grown more comfortable having her hair in its natural state, or in protective and braiding styles. Though Agbaje expressed that she's never been directly told she couldn't do something because of her hair, she has experienced it through micro aggressions. For a large part of her life, her hair was relaxed and when it wasn't she took to methods like straightening and blowouts to "tame" her hair. She's been wearing it natural since 2016, and still finds herself questioning the judgment of other people.

"I think like most Black women who grew up in the United States we were always told you can't really wear your hair curly, you can't let it be out, and you have to figure out a way to keep it down," Agbaje said.

Growing up in a predominantly White neighborhood, Agbaje said she found herself existing in the unwritten rules of fitting in with society, and textured hair did not fit. For interviews, jobs and during her role as a litigator, she'd have her hair blown out, or straightened because that's what made her feel professional. She said that in the U.S., frizzy hair is seen as unprofessional.

"I think that at every term we're always fighting to show that we're humans and that we are worthy of being valued and respected," Agbaje said. "I'm just glad that we value ourselves and continue to put up these movements, but it's tough that we still have at least half the country left."

Agbaje said the CROWN Act leads to the ability of people to be able to show up as who they are, and have access to opportunities and they're not arbitrarily excluded because someone thinks someone's hair is too big or too distracting.

"At the end of the day it's a civil rights issue," Agbaje said. There's people who are always looking for ways to discriminate against Black folks, or people who aren't White, and this is another way to do it."



Curl Power Salon founder Rosie Jablonsky said, "Love your body. Your hair is a part of your body. It's natural." (Photo by Talia McWright)

▶ 12 LOVE THEIR CURLS

not be discriminated against for wearing our hair naturally curly we have to have things like this in play for us to be safe as people of color."

In elementary to middle school, Wade was often the only girl of color in her classroom. Though her hair was relaxed, it was often in protective styles like twists. She remembers other children and their parents passive aggressively commenting on her hair, and touching it, saying things like, "Oh, it's a lot softer than I expected it to be," or, "Oh my gosh, how can you take care of this much hair?" She expressed that these experiences made her feel like she wasn't beautiful, made her question her hair when she had never before viewed it as a problem, and made her feel uncomfortable about who she was because her hair was a part of her.

"Nowadays, even before the CROWN Act came into play, people are like, 'I love your hair,'" Wade said.

Wade went natural as a sophomore in high school, and during the transition period felt really insecure about the way she looked. She hated her hair at the time. Once her hair grew into an afro, she began falling in love with it. At 18, she felt confident in her hair, and began experimenting more with different styles, and protection methods, so much so that others would ask her to style their hair.

During the earlier stages of the pandemic in 2021, Wade decided to cut her hair after being inspired by singer Ari Lennox, who had recently done a big chop. After cutting her hair, Wade said she cried for a long time. She'd spent so long growing it out, and couldn't believe she'd just cut it. Then, it felt like a weight had been lifted from her shoulders. She realized that so much of her identity was tied to her hair. From there, her growth journey began again with what she said was a healthier mindset and better products. The experience taught her so much about herself, and she is now able to be her authentic self without worrying about how others will judge her based on her hair.

"I can say I have a stronger bond with my hair now than I did before," Wade said.

Wade expressed that many of her clients are not people of color, weren't aware of the CROWN Act, and are shocked at the reality of the hair-based discrimination people of color experience. Wade said she's surprised at the amount of people

that were unfamiliar with the CROWN Act.

"A lot of times our hair is deemed as an obstacle in different industries, and career fields," Wade stated.

STYLIST PAIGE GRALING

Growing up in Red Wing as a biracial girl with curly hair was difficult because most of the people around her had straight hair, or would straighten their hair, said Paige Graling. Her mom and grandparents tried to instill in Graling a love for her natural hair, but she said it was hard to feel confident when no one else had or wore their hair natural like her. It wasn't until high school when she moved to the Twin Cities that she started seeing people of color with natural hair like hers, and began feeling more confident.

"But I feel like it wasn't until I worked here, that I was like, 'Oh now I actually know how to do my hair,'" stated Graling.

Graling's mom and grandparents encouraged her to pursue beauty school as they felt she was creative, and passionate about cosmetology. While studying at The Salon Professional Academy in Maplewood, Graling said that most of the people she styled had straight hair, and if they had natural or curly hair, it would be flat ironed or blown out.

"In school we really didn't learn anything about curly hair, so even if we got people in with curly hair, we'd straighten it first, then cut it," Graling said.

After graduating from beauty school, she first worked at a blow-out salon, then moved to Curl Power in 2020. Her experience at Curl Power was completely different from the past hair education she'd received. She said that in her early stages at Curl Power, she relied on what she knew about caring for her own natural hair when working with clients.

"Most of the stylists that graduated within 2019 and under will tell you that there was really no education at all for curly hair," Graling said.

Straightened hair was a trend of the 2000s, and she loves that the CROWN Act now exists. In school as a child, she does not remember anyone wearing their hair in natural styles, including her teachers, and hopes that the CROWN Act will help people accept that part of themselves.

Graling was bullied in school growing up because of her natural hair. She said she had a lot of hair, and was made to feel that it was an inconvenience to others. Sit-

ting in the front of class, she'd slouch and shrink herself to not disturb or block the view of others.

Teaching others about how to care for their natural hair is one of Graling's passions. She wants to instill confidence in others about their curls, and is joyful about working in a salon that supports that. Still, she feels irritated by the amount of states that have yet to adopt the CROWN Act, and believes it is holding the country back.

"It's a huge part of us, and who we are, but in political terms it's hair," Graling said. "Let us do what we want with it, let us not be discriminated against doing something that's natural to us. It's time."

STYLIST CELESTE GRAVATT

Uptown resident, Celeste Gravatt joined the Curl Power team in 2017 and calls it "home." She said she's always felt safe, supported and able to practice her craft without judgment.

As a child, Gravatt attended a Montessori school and was one of the few Black children in her school. She and her family were unsure of how exactly to style her hair, but did the best they knew how, using things like coconut oil to keep it moisturized. Gravatt said that in middle school, she cut all of her hair off because she was so tired of getting teased for it, and spent the next 20 years not knowing what to do with it.

At 27, she attended the, Bloomington Empire Beauty School to become a nail technician. In beauty school, Gravatt said she was taught that all hair was the same, and that if the techniques were not working from person to person, it was an issue with the stylist, not an issue of technique, an experience she found very frustrating. She was even once told during her education, that no one would want to wear their hair naturally curly, even though she herself has naturally curly hair. After school, she got a job as a nail tech at the Twisted Hare salon, which at the time was one of the only curly hair salons in Minnesota.

"It kind of landed in my lap," she said.

Gravatt acknowledges that hair-based discrimination stems from institutionalized racism. She believes that a good first step in combating the issue would be to have more school curriculum about textured hair. She said that several states now have legislation that require students in beauty and cosmetology schools to learn how to do textured hair before graduating, and Minnesota is not one of them.

Gravatt said she spends a lot of time destigmatizing hair, and trying to reprogram people's understanding of what is seen as professional. She tells people that they can wear their hair naturally curly and not have to fear repercussions of any kind, particularly in corporate settings. Many of her child clients are involved in activities like dance, and are told that they must wear their hair in specific styles even if their hair cannot be manipulated to fit the style.

"I love being able to empower those kids, and tell them that they can wear their hair the way that it grows," Gravatt said. "Dance companies in particular need to adjust their perspective."

In 2012, Gravatt said she put away the flat iron and never looked back. Now that she is well educated about curly and textured hair, she is growing her hair out for the first time since she was a kid.

"I really love my curls," Gravatt said.

Drive & Ride

Coming in April

Contact us today to be included.

denis@MonitorSaintPaul.com

tesha@tmcpub.com

sandra.tmcpub@gmail.com

ads@swconnector.com



DRAGONS WYND

Environmental Entomology

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

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

CITY BRIEFS

MINNEHAHA WATERSHED DISTRICT PARTNERSHIP

An agreement has been signed between the City of Minneapolis, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, and the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD) that is intended to align planning and investments in the Minnehaha Creek watershed area. It includes establishing a steering committee and "Partnership Implementation Plan," and will evaluate the Penn Newton Morgan, Nicollet, and Bloomington Cedar areas to be the initial focus of the partner's work over the next five years. MCWD will lead the feasibility evaluation process for the three projects and will be the lead agency for the group.

CEDAR LAKE ROAD BRIDGE

The city will be collecting a community input this spring regarding the Cedar Lake Road bridge over the BNSF railroad in the Bryn Mawr in plans to replace in 2027. Project staff will hold an open house on Tuesday, March 26 from 4:30- 6:30 p.m. at Bryn-Mawr Presbyterian Church (420 Cedar Lake Rd S). People may visit www.minneapolismn.gov/government/projects/cedar-lake-rd-bridge/ to learn more and sign up for email updates about the project.

550 WEST LAKE STREET AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROJECT

Following the public hearing on March 12, the city council is expected to authorize issuing tax exempt housing revenue bonds of up to \$21,000,000 for this project in the Whittier neighborhood of Ward 10. This will help finance the building of a 110 unit, 6-story building with approximately 5,000 square feet of amenity space and 1,000 square feet of commercial space. The total development cost for this project is currently estimated at \$41,108,424.

POLICE MONITOR CONTRACT

The city council and Mayor Jacob Frey have unanimously approved a \$1.5 million per year contract with Effective Law Enforcement for All, Inc. to be the independent monitor for the city's settlement agreement with the Minnesota Department of Human Rights related to discriminatory police practices. The non-profit firm's president is David Douglass, who is a former Assistant United States Attorney and Department of Justice Civil Rights Prosecutor. He was deputy monitor for the consent decree between the city of New Orleans and the Department of Justice. There will be a two-year performance evaluation of their work, after which the city may terminate the contract.

LABOR STANDARDS BOARD LISTENING SESSION

On March 4, Ward 10 Council Member Aisha Chughtai hosted a meeting about the Labor Standards Board ordinance amendment that she is drafting. The amendment, if approved, would establish a Labor Standards Board to study and report on working conditions in

ROUTE 4 PROPOSED CHANGES

South Minneapolis, Richfield, Bloomington



ROUTE 4 PROPOSED CHANGES

Metro Transit is proposing changes to the Route 4 bus route as part of their Better Bus Routes programs to improve the customer experience. Proposed changes include:

- Consolidating bus stops for up to quarter-mile spacing (see attached map for specific bus stop locations)
- Relocating select stops to the far side of signalized intersections to reduce delays
- Expanding the no-parking zone

around select stops to ensure buses can fully pull up to the curb at the bus stop

- Installing concrete pads at 14 bus stops to improve accessibility for customers
- Installing new shelters at five qualifying stops
- Installing transit signal priority at select intersections along Lyndale Ave. S in Minneapolis

Metro Transit is seeking public input on these changes, which will be implemented in August 2024.

specific industries in Minneapolis. She reported that more than 100 people attended the session, and roughly 20 people who work in Minneapolis spoke about their work experiences and how such a board could improve conditions in their work-places and industries. An official public hearing date on the ordinance amendment is expected to be set sometime this spring.

TRAFFIC CAMERA BILL

The state legislature is considering a bill that would allow Minneapolis, and other local jurisdictions, to use traffic cameras to issue tickets for speeding and running red lights in high-crash areas near schools. The effort has the support of city policymakers, and some legislators want to expand it to authorize the deployment of cameras statewide.

▶▶ Briefs compiled by Cam Gordon.

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION MEETINGS

- Armatage: Third Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m., Armatage Rec Center
- East Harriet: First Wednesday of odd months at 7 p.m., Lyndale Farmstead Park
- Fulton: Second Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m. Via Zoom. E-mail info@fultonneighborhood.org for the meeting link.
- Kenny: Third Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m., Kenny Park or via Zoom
Zoom Meeting ID: 817 5108 0936
Passcode: 121112
- Linden Hills: Second Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m., Linden Hills Rec Center or via Zoom. Register online for meeting link.
- Lynnhurst: Second Thursday of the month at 6:30 p.m., Mt. Olivet Lutheran Church - 5025 Knox Ave S. Meetings are held in the library

Information courtesy of Ward 13 newsletter

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS



BIKEABLE SCULPTURE

A new sculpture is on view - and available for biking - as part of the recent improvements project at Hall Park (1524 Aldrich Ave. N). During the project, a team from the Environmental Design Lab at Juxtaposition Arts (JXTA) worked with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) to design, build and install the sculpture, which features in the park's new bicycle skills course. Additional thanks to Keith Wyman of Concrete Pig for fabrication work, and TKDA, St. Croix Recreation and Albrecht, Inc. for engineering and installation services

WASHBURN PARK HISTORIC DISTRICT

The Heritage Preservation Commission's decision to deny the demolition of 400 Prospect Ave was appealed. Upon review of the materials submitted for the appeal, and in consultation with the Minneapolis City Attorney's Office, it has been determined that there was an incorrect interpretation of the ordinance related to interim protection for the potential Washburn Park Historic District. Currently, no properties are under interim protection in the potential Washburn Park Historic District.

COLLABORATIVE AFFORDABLE HOUSING

South Minneapolis neighborhood associations have joined together to invest \$250,000 in Opportunity Crossing, a mixed-use development including 110 units of deeply affordable housing located at Lake St. and Nicollet. Plans for the former Wells Fargo site were developed in 2020 by Project for Pride in Living. In 2023, instead of groundbreaking, the project faced an uncertain future due to inflation and rising construction costs. Lyndale Neighborhood Association (LNA) saw an opportunity for collective action.

GRAND AVENUE RAIN GARDENS

The Grand Avenue rain garden reconstruction team has shared an update. Contractors will begin work mid-April to clean up the rain gardens and to install native plants.

LAKE STREET ART DROPS RETURN

Lake Street Art Drops are back. The Lake Street Art Drop is a monthly scavenger hunt featuring photo clues on social media and local artwork prizes. These art drops will be hosted on the first Thursday of every month, beginning April through October. The first one will be on Thursday, April 4 inside the Midtown Global Market. Participants are encouraged to stay for dinner, drinks, or shopping at Lake Street's local businesses. Learn more at VisitLakeStreet.com.

LIVING 50+

Coming in June.
Contact us today.

ads@swConnector.com
612-255-1180

boost INFINITE
Brought to you by DISH

Get Boost Infinite
1-877-683-5440

INFINITELY BETTER WIRELESS!

- ▶▶ Plans starting at \$25/mo
- ▶▶ Unlimited Talk, Text and Data
- ▶▶ America's Smartest Network
- ▶▶ Smart Switching Between 3 Wireless Networks

Get the latest iPhone every year with unlimited wireless for \$60/mo

- ▶▶ iPhone 15 included with no trade-in needed to get started
- ▶▶ Unlimited Talk, Text and Data
- ▶▶ Free upgrade to the latest iPhone EVERY YEAR.

BOGO 40% OFF

OFFER ENDS 4/30

RENEWAL by ANDERSEN
FULL-SERVICE WINDOW & DOOR REPLACEMENT

855-502-6514



CHILEEN PAINTING
Serving Lakes Area Since 1952

Family Owned for Over 60 Years

Insured | References





Free Estimates

greg@chileen.com **612-850-0325**

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

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

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

HOUSECLEANING
20/20 Cleaning, Dependable House Cleaning, Family Owned and Operated, Serving the Area for Over 25 Years, 651-635-9228, www.2020cleaningspecialist.com.

SERVICES
snow . Tree . Shrub . Lawn
Get same day service. Premier Lawn & Snow. Call or text 952-545-8055.

Gutter cleaning. Let the Rain Drain Away. Call Larry 651-635-9228.

Paint, patch, wallpaper removal. Caulking. Stain. Interior. Exterior. Jim. 612-202-5514.

WINDOW WASHING
Window washing, inside and out. "You will see the difference." Call Larry. 651-635-9228.

NEXT DEADLINE: Monday, April 8 | PUBLICATION: Thursday, April 18


Treating your house like a home.



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

IDEA: REACH 50,000 PEOPLE HERE WHO ARE THINKING ABOUT THE BEST PLACE TO USE THEIR TALENTS. PLACE AN AD.

WACSO COMMISSIONS AVAILABLE. HOUSES, CABINS, PETS ETC.



www.WacsoWasHere.com wacso@mac.com

Window Washing and Gutter Cleaning



• Family Owned and Operated
 • Serving the area for over 25 years
 Call Larry 651-635-9228
 2020cleaningspecialist.com

Roofing Gutters Windows



40+ years experience, licensed and insured.
 Greg Johnson
 (701) 969-2290

AFFORDABLE ADS
JUST \$1 A WORD

TREE TRIMMING, REMOVAL & STUMP GRINDING



Matthew Molinaro
 FREE ESTIMATES
 612.239.2508
 MolinaroTree.com
lic&Insured | certified arborist MN-4551A



THINK STUCCO

Buying

★ Free Appraisals ★

Memorabilia Sports Card Collections

★ Consignment Available ★

Info@minnieandpaul.com
612-208-6405

Create a personal & professional life you love



Michele Rae

Get started with a FREE 20-minute consult.

TRANSFORMATIONAL COACHING

the Center Within

Michele@CenterWithin.com
612-465-9775 CenterWithin.com

KELJIK'S RUG WASH

AREA RUG CLEANING ♦ ORIENTAL RUG SALES

SINCE 1899

NOW OFFERING

"Clean Clear Through Wash" for heavy soil, pet odors, overdue cleaning

ALSO OFFERING: RUG PADS & REPAIRS

4255 Bryant Ave. S., Mpls. • 612.823.6338 • WWW.KELJIKS.COM

HOURS: MON-FRI 8:30-5 • SAT 10-2

20% OFF

RUG CLEANING

Bring in your rugs with this coupon good thru 4/21/2024.

When quality and price matter, True Blue has your back



• Roofing • Siding
• Storm Damage
• Insurance Experts



MN LIC.#BC665536

Free Estimates Local & Family Owned

763-208-8862 www.truebluebuilders.org

"BUILDING THE FUTURE – RESTORING THE PAST"™



MN License # BC-693563



SMITH COLE

STUCCO & STONE

OUR SERVICES

MOISTURE INTRUSION | FOUNDATION REPAIRS
NEW STUCCO | STONE | SANDBLASTING
PATCHING | STUCCO REPAIRS
STUCCO REFINISHING AND RESTORATION

FREE ESTIMATES 612.709.4980

Home & Garden

Reach local folks who want to hire locally.

Coming in April & May.
Contact us today.

sandra.tmcpub@gmail.com | 612-260-7967
ads@swConnector.com | 612-255-1180
Denis@MonitorSaintPaul.com | 651-917-4183
tesha@tmcpub.com | 612-345-9998



MN Lic. BC750502

BRING NEW LIFE TO
YOUR ORIGINAL
WINDOWS

- Wood combination storm windows
- Sash cord repair and tune-up
- Weatherstripping
- Restoration and refinishing



SCAN ME



hayeswindows.com 612-259-7855

INTRODUCING

ACE HANDYMAN SERVICES™

Bringing Helpful To Your Home

To schedule an appointment or get a quote, call us at

612.822.9952

We are always looking to add talented craftsmen/craftswomen to our growing team.



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.



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



CorTrustMortgage.com
Member FDIC • Bank ID 405612
NMLS 458038

