

SOUTHWEST Connector

NEWS FOR EVERYONE, DELIVERED TO EVERYONE • JUNE 2024 • VOL. 3 • NO. 7 • 25,000 CIRCULATION



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LAKE HARRIET LOWER SCHOOL CELEBRATES 100 YEARS

Time capsule from 1954 opened at anniversary event

By **Iric Nathanson**

On a sunny May afternoon, a several hundred people gathered in front of Lake Harriet Lower School. They had come to the South Minneapolis school, formerly known as Audubon, to celebrate Lake Harriet's centennial.

That afternoon, the school's principal, Angie Ness, came out to greet the crowd carrying a small copper box. Ness explained that a former maintenance worker, known affectionately as Engineer Mike, had discovered the box, encased in a cement block, when an addition to the school was under construction in 2014.

"Mike took a sledge hammer to block and when it came apart this box, a time capsule from 1954, popped out. We thought this centennial celebration would be the right time to open the capsule," Ness said.

The crowd cheered as Ness pried open the box that had been hidden away at the school for 60 years. Inside she discovered



Lake Harriet Lower Campus School Principal Angie Ness gives event-goers a special treat on May 11, 2024 by opening a long-lost time capsule found on school property. "We thought this centennial celebration would be the right time to open the capsule," said Ness. (Photo by Terry Faust)

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Jamal Mitchell joined MPD in 2022.

SOUTHWEST MOURNS POLICE OFFICER

Jamal Mitchell shot and killed while responding to a shooting in Whittier

By **Cam Gordon**

On May 30, 2024, Minneapolis police officer, Jamal Mitchell, 36, was shot and killed while responding to a double shooting in southwest Minneapolis, near 22nd St. and Blaisdell Ave. S. after 5:15 p.m.

While rendering aid to an injured male (Mustafa Mohamed), the injured male pulled a gun and shot Officer Mitchell

and continued to shoot him after he fell to the ground, according to the Minneapolis Police Department. Mohamed was shot and killed by two responding officers.

Osman Jimale and Mohamed Aden also died from gunshot wounds they received that day. Another officer, a bystander, and a firefighter, were injured.

Southwest city council members were quick to share concerns about the tragedy.

Here is some of what they said through social media and email:

"I reach out to you this morning with a heavy heart. As many of you now know, a tragic incident occurred yesterday evening here in south Minneapolis' 5th Pre-

cinct," said Ward 7 Council Member Katie Casman. "Jamal Mitchell was a hero and a public servant who ran towards danger when it was necessary, and I join his family and his colleagues in grieving his death... I join my colleagues and our entire city in mourning for Officer Mitchell, the other two community members lost, and their loved ones. We will honor his life and remember the sacrifice he made. Thank you for your attention and care for our community at this challenging time."

"Yesterday Minneapolis was dealt another body blow," said Ward 8 Council Member Andrea Jenkins. "...The over saturation of guns in our communities is preposterous

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A view of Interstate I-94 looking towards Allianz Field from the top floor of the former Central Medical Clinic at 393 N Dunlap. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)

INTERSECTION OF IDEAS ON INTERSTATE 94

Being discussed: Rondo land-bridge, boulevard conversion, bus lanes, expansion and reconfiguration of 7.5-mile stretch between downtowns

By **Tesha M. Christensen**

As MnDOT evaluates its upcoming Interstate 94 project, community members are talking about how they live, work and play along the corridor, and what they envision for the next 50 years. It's part of the Rethinking I-94 project.

ReConnect Rondo has proposed creating a community land bridge around the site of the historic Rondo community. Our Streets has suggested replacing the existing freeway with a multi-modal boulevard and returning the surrounding land to neighborhoods. Recently representa-

tives from the three groups presented to the Midway Chamber of Commerce. The meeting was held on the ninth floor of the former Central Medical building with views of I-94 in both directions.

RONDO LAND BRIDGE

ReConnect Rondo aims to fix some of the wrongs done when Interstate I-94 carved through a Black middle-class neighborhood, according to Marvin Roger Anderson and Keith Baker.

▶ 3



Children from Audubon's first class pose in front of the school in 1925. Built in 1924, the school was added onto in 1954 and 2014. The name was changed in 2000.



Collector cars dazzled participants with their style and history during the 100th year event on May 11, 2024 at Lake Harriet Community School Lower Campus. (Photo by Terry Faust)

LAKE HARRIET

a Minneapolis Tribune newspaper dated Sept. 2, 1954. The headline story on the front page told about a U.S. Senate investigation of Wisconsin Senator Joseph McCarthy, a controversial anti-Communist crusader. Inside the paper, in the sports session, the Tribune reported on the Minneapolis Millers 9 to 7 victory over the Kansas City Blues at Nicollet Park. The capsule also included a Minneapolis school directory for a 1953-54 and a September Time magazine featuring the Italian film star Gina Lollobrigida on the cover.

No time capsules were hidden away when Audubon was built in 1924. But the South Minneapolis school did have a treasure trove of early historic artifacts that remained out of sight for 70 years. The artifacts were discovered in 1995 by Lonnie Jaworski, a carpenter who was sprucing up one of the school classrooms. "He had just removed a blackboard when a dozen drawings dropped from behind the board," The Southwest Journal reported. "Jaworski glanced at them and realized he wasn't looking a waste paper. Each drawing, by an Audubon student was signed and most were dated 1925."

One drawing depicted school rules; declaring that students should be kind, respectful and quiet in the halls. Another told about a new street built in from of the school that replaced an earlier unstable roadway built on peat. A third was a drawing a football player wearing a leather helmet.



Former student Iric Nathanson draws attention to his class picture at Lake Harriet Lower School's anniversary celebration. (Photo by Terry Faust)

When Audubon was built in 1924, it served an attendance zone at the west end of the Linden Hills neighborhood. Linden Hills, one of the city's oldest neighborhoods, traced its origins to the late 19th century when it was a small residential enclave overlooking Lake Harriet.

By the mid-1920s, the Linden Hill residential district had expanded along the route of the Como Harriet street car line at 44th Street, reaching the western city limits at France Avenue. That expansion prompted the Minneapolis Board to build

the new school to serve an attendance zone that was not yet fully developed.

By 1930, many blocks were filled in with houses built during the economic boom years that preceded the Great Depression. The Depression, followed by the war years of the 1940s, slowed Linden Hills' further development. That slowdown continued until the post-war period when a construction spurt brought new families with school age children to the Audubon district. The School Board responded to the school's burgeoning en-

rollment by building Audubon's 1954 addition. Sixty years later, a second addition would be added.

The 1954 addition honored the school's namesake, John James Audubon, the famous American naturalist known for his drawings and paintings of American birds. The hallway in the school's new section was decorated with ceramic tiles depicting Audubon's birds.

The tiles are still there but the school's ties to the famous naturalist were severed in 2000 when Audubon was paired with Fulton School at 49th and Vicent. Both were renamed Lake Harriet Community School with the former Audubon identified as the Lower Campus and the former Fulton designated the Upper Campus. Today, the Lower Campus serves children from kindergarten through second grade.

"Our school may have a relatively new name, but it has a proud history," Ness says. "The building has been here for 100 years, but this school is much more than a building. It is really a center – a focal point – of this community. It serves as the heart of the neighborhood where families come together. They get know one another. They are able to make long lasting friendships."

"The anniversary has been important to so many of us because it has given us this opportunity to celebrate our community and 100 years of learning at this special place."

Editor's note: Author Iric Nathanson attended the school he wrote about.

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1 INTERSTATE 94

A northern option for the interstate would have followed Pierce Butler Route, but the southern route was chosen through Rondo, which was designated as a slum.

This political and intentional decision resulted in the loss of 700 homes and 300 businesses between 1950 and 1969, including the home at 1021 Rondo Ave. that Anderson's grandfather lived in until it was taken. He and three of his friends had also owned four lots at 989 and 995 Rondo that they constructed 12 townhomes on. Today, the loss of property in Rondo is about \$250 million in unrealized home equity. There is an annual earning gap of \$370 million.

"Why did they feel like they could come into our community?" Anderson asked.

"Minnesota ranks next to Mississippi in racial disparities," pointed out Baker.

Baker worked at MnDOT for 18 years and is now the ReConnect Rondo Executive Director. When the Central Corridor rail line, now called the Green Line, was proposed in 2009, there were no stops in Rondo, he stated. The idea emerged then: "Not only do we want stops, why not replace the land that was taken in the 1950s," said Baker.

In 2018, a five-day advisory panel by the Urban Land Institute recommended creating up to 21 acres of new land over the I-94 freeway from Lexington to Rice St. They also advised creating an African American cultural enterprise district around the new land bridge that would be constructed and maintained by MnDOT.

ReConnect Rondo envisions a community-led development that emphasizes community ownership, history and cultural strengths, 21st century innovations (bringing broadband to Rondo), and the assets of the historic Rondo area. "When the community is the developer, the community becomes the beneficiary," said Baker.

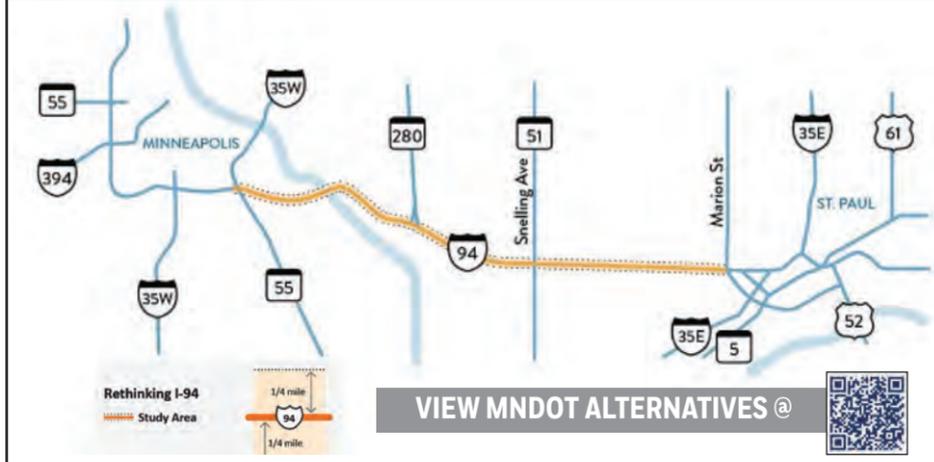
They have done a number of studies, including an anti-displacement and community investment study. In order to keep residents and businesses in the neighborhood, a Community Reinvestment Fund will be created to use revenue from the land bridge to support community assets. A Community Investment Trust will enable the Rondo Community to benefit from future development on and off the land bridge. A Right to Remain and Return for people who were displaced and their descendants will be established. Together, these initiatives will build wealth. "It's a systems approach," said Baker.

Now in the planning phase, the land bridge will include 21 acres, parks and open space, 576 housing units, and 140,000 square feet of marketplace/institution/non-profit. It will add 1,800 jobs to the city with over \$3 million in annual city revenue. Construction could begin in 2026 and be completed by 2030.

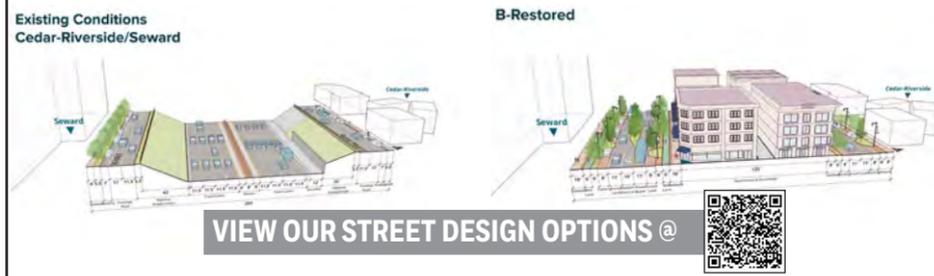
The land bridge (sometimes referred to as a "cap" or "lid") fit within all of the Rethinking I-94 options that have been presented by MnDOT except for the at-grade options and expansion A/B alternatives. ReConnect Rondo staff pointed out that there have not been traffic analyses or modeling of daily vehicle movement for at-grade options that will fill in the trench and bring the roadway back to be a city street. They also have mobility and safety concerns.

In Minnesota, there is a cap over Hiawatha Ave. in Minneapolis, providing space for Longfellow garden. In Duluth, a cap over I-35 is filled with a park and gardens. There is a similar park (Klyde Warren Park) over the Woodall Rodgers Freeway in Dallas, Texas. The first highway

COMMUNITY RETHINKS INTERSTATE 94



Cedar-Riverside before and after Interstate 94. At left 1956, at right 2003.



Bridge and Infrastructure Design, Engineering & Construction	\$313M
Buildings, Utilities and Parks & Open Space	\$167M
Pre-planning	\$13-15M

Feasibility Study

- 21 acres w/park and open space
- 576 housing units
- 140,000 Sq. Ft. market place/institution/non-profit
- 1800+ jobs
- \$3M+ annual city revenue

LEARN ABOUT THE RONDO LAND BRIDGE @

cap ever built was in 1976 in downtown Seattle.

The "Stitch" in Atlanta, Ga. plans to cap the I-75/I-85 Downtown Connector with green space and buildings spread over 14 acres on a three-quarter-mile platform. Construction is planned for 2026-2030.

OUR STREETS: CONVERSION TO BOULEVARD

Our Streets is proposing that the interstate be eliminated, the trench filled in, and a boulevard created in its place. The reclaimed land could be used for new housing, businesses and parks via a community land trust. They are proposing a similar model for Olson Highway in north Minneapolis (the Bring Back 6th initiative). According to Our Streets, the

original concept of the U.S. highway system was to bring people to the edge of cities, and then the network of streets and boulevards would carry people into and through cities. Plans changed, and interstates like I-94 were built through urban neighborhoods.

Our Streets Executive Director José Antonio Zayas Cabán pointed out that they have done door knocking and talked to 30,000 people in Minneapolis and St. Paul. Neighborhoods along the interstate have some of the worst air quality in the Twin Cities area. With that come health disparities as residents suffer from asthma, dementia and lower life expectancies.

I-94 interrupts the street grid, and it interrupts local access, observed Our Streets Advocacy Coordinator Yasmin

Hirsi.

Every day, 120,000 people travel on I-94. Twenty-five percent of the trips on I-94 are less than two miles, and those trips don't begin or end on I-94.

"Most people are going out of their way to use I-94 for short trips," said Hirsi.

Other cities have removed their freeways. Construction on removing Interstate 81 in Syracuse, N.Y. through the downtown area will begin this year. When Central Freeway in San Francisco, Calif. collapsed in an earthquake, it wasn't rebuilt as a raised interstate. Instead, it was replaced with an at-grade boulevard with side access lanes for parking. Some predicted that commute times would increase by two hours, but instead congestion improved. Over half of the car traffic "evaporated," according to the Our Street presentation.

The right of way that could be reclaimed over the 7.5-mile stretch of I-94 between Minneapolis and St. Paul is equal to 50 Allianz Field stadiums, said Hirsi. That's 10 acres in Cedar-Riverside, 26.1 in South St. Anthony Park/Merriam Park, 27 acres in the Midway, and 32.8 in Rondo.

"There is so much space to consider for better use than a freeway," remarked Hirsi.

Cabán pointed out that I-94 is not serving its intended purpose of long-distance, inter-city travel.

Our Streets questions MnDOT's modeling for I-94 traffic projects, and they believe a boulevard conversion can adequately serve transportation needs. They would like to see a "Restored Network" option added to the I-94 alternatives so that the potential for land use is factored in. Our Streets is pushing for a broader study area that includes both downtowns, additional parallel streets, and the portion of Highway 280 south of Energy Park Drive. They want to see the model account for short-term behavior changes and long-term land use changes following highway removal.

RETHINKING I-94

The 7.5 miles of Interstate 94 from Marion Street in St. Paul west to Highway 55/Hiawatha Ave. in Minneapolis is set for construction in 2029.

MnDOT is evaluating 10 possibilities for the roadway, from maintaining the existing roadway to upgrading it to current standards. MnDOT is also looking at removing the freeway and replacing it with an at-grade roadway with dedicated bus lanes. Or, they could separate local traffic roadway on either side of the freeway. The freeway could be reduced, reconfigured, or expanded.

Rail transit is not being considered.

MnDOT is planning for walkability and bikeability improvements within the corridor. MnDOT is also coordinating with ReConnect Rondo on a potential land bridge, and is creating a lid/stitch/land bridge working group.

"We understand the importance of this corridor not only to the people who live along the corridor but to the region," said Rethinking I-94 Project Manager Mark Lindeberg. MnDOT is focused on getting people to where they're going in a reasonable amount of time, he said.

The alternatives on the table right now followed input from 3,350 surveys, 25 presentations, 21 community events, and 2,008,046 impressions on media platforms including newspapers, the project social media, website and digital advertising between June and November 2023. "We are working to get out there," said Renee Raduenz, Rethinking I-94 Communications & Public Engagement Manager.

The 10 alternatives will be evaluated and refined. Provide feedback at talk.dot.state.mn.us/rethinking-i94.

DON'T FALL FOR 'THE FALL OF MINNEAPOLIS'

In November 2023, Alpha News released a program by former local news anchor Liz Collin called "The Fall of Minneapolis." In the hour and 42-minute documentary, interviews with (mostly) former Minneapolis police officers are interspersed with footage from body-worn cameras, the trial of Derek Chauvin, protests and the civil unrest. Overall, Collin attempts to rewrite history by painting George Floyd as responsible for his own death on May 25, 2020, police officers as victims during the subsequent uprising, and the conviction of Chauvin in Floyd's murder as unjust. Ultimately the documentary is as telling for what it doesn't say as what it does.



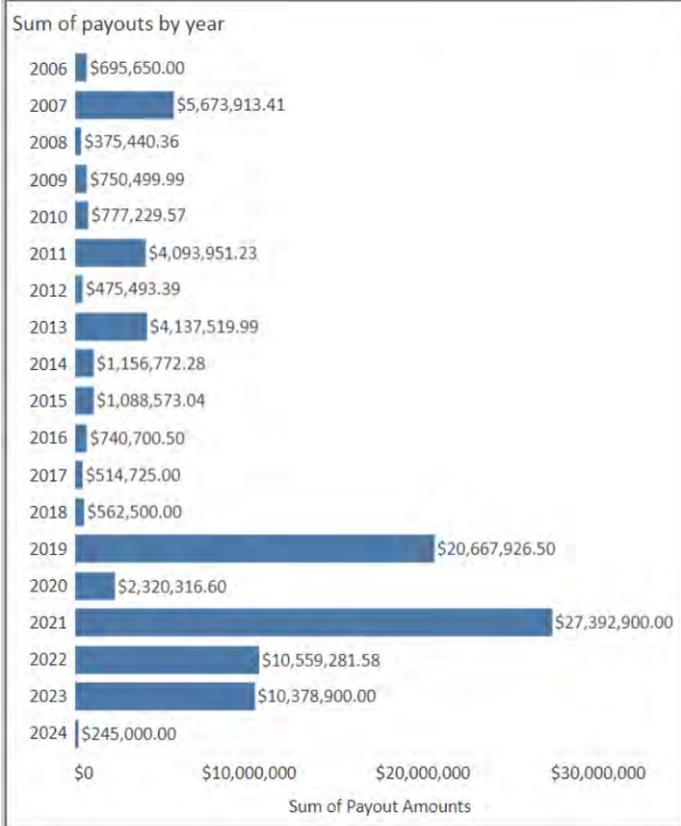
By Jill Boogren

The tone is set within the first minute and a half, with a closeup of Floyd's arrest record dating back to 1997 in Texas. It's irrelevant to his 2020 encounter with Chauvin, but its inclusion here does serve to impugn Floyd's character. The documentary then plays and replays footage of Floyd saying "I can't breathe" during a previous arrest, as well as before he was held to the ground by Chauvin. During each incident, he is visibly distraught, seemingly panic-stricken. For the purposes of the documentary, it doesn't seem to matter that in the first incident Floyd is not held face to the pavement for nine minutes or that in the second, when he is actually killed, he is.

The documentary selectively highlights words and passages of official documents to underscore points, while often leaving off key information. A couple of examples relate to Floyd's autopsy. Here Collin revisits the argument that Floyd's cause of death was drugs and a preexisting health condition and not his interaction with Chauvin (all of which was examined and cross-examined during the trial). One sequence shows a memo of a conversation that took place between Hennepin County Medical Examiner Dr. Andrew M. Baker and the Hennepin County Attorney's Office. The camera zooms in on Baker's statement that drug levels found in Floyd's system could be called an overdose if he were found dead at home alone with no other apparent causes. It highlights all text except "and no other apparent causes." It also pans past Baker's follow-up statement which reads, "I'm not saying this killed him."

In another memo, in which Baker opines that the cause of death may be multifactorial, the words "coronary artery disease," "stimulants" and "exertion" are highlighted. Not highlighted is the rest of the third item, which reads in full, "The exertion caused by Mr. Floyd's encounter with the police officers." It goes on to say (again, not highlighted in the video), "In [Baker's] experience, overexertion of the heart is one of the reason [sic] police departments avoid using the type of hold at issue."

Glossing past this detail is significant, given the assertion by officers in the documentary that the Maximal Restraint Technique hold used by Chauvin is part of Minneapolis Police Department (MPD) training. These remarks are juxtaposed with then-Police Chief Medaria Arradondo testifying at the trial, "It is not." Chauvin's mom, Carolyn Pawlenty, who was also in-



	2020	2021	2022	2023
Gunshot Wound Victims	551	658	544	416
Homicides	85	94	79	73
Carjackings	177*	655	524	305

*this data began being tracked in September 2020

terviewed for the documentary, pulls out an officer training manual that shows an illustration of the restraint. The insinuation here is that Arradondo is lying, and Pawlenty says so. But what the documentary leaves off is the testimony by both Arradondo and Lt. Johnny Mercil, who teaches use of force at MPD. Each say that even if the method is initially used to gain control, the officer should stop and move the person into a recovery position as soon as there are no signs of resistance - which was indisputably the case when Floyd was no longer responsive and lay motionless for the last three minutes Chauvin held his knee to Floyd's neck.

This, too, is examined and cross-examined during the trial. In his testimony, Baker reiterates his stance that Floyd's death was from a cardiopulmonary arrest caused by law enforcement's "subdual, restraint and neck compression."

Collin seems to dismiss the use of video taken by bystander Darnella Frazier (and a still image from it, Exhibit 17) in favor of the highly-obstructed view from former officer J. Alexander Kueng's body-worn camera, even though Frazier's footage offers a clearer view of Chauvin and Floyd. The documentary suggests that body cam footage was withheld in the trial. Minnesota Reformer's Deena Winter, who was among reporters in the press pool viewing the trial (I was not), writes in "I watched 'The Fall of Minneapolis' so you don't have

to" that she was asked by a national news outlet to count the number of times video of Floyd's death was shown at the trial - she counted 166 clips. It's noteworthy that the documentary never once shows the full nine minutes immediately preceding Floyd's death.

At another point, Collin shows a clip of Mayor Jacob Frey asserting that "crime is down" and cuts to data showing the opposite - a spike in the number of carjackings, gunshot wound victims and homicides in 2020 and 2021. The implication is that the mayor is lying, though a closer look at the data on screen shows a drop in 2022 in all three categories to levels lower than those reported in 2020 (except carjackings, which weren't tracked separately until September 2020). According to the MPD Crime Dashboard, these trends continued further downward through 2023 (see table above).

OFFICER MISCONDUCT

Other information is noticeably omitted as well. Collin does not disclose her marriage to former Minneapolis Police Federation union head Bob Kroll. Kroll willfully defied Minneapolis policy in 2020 by openly encouraging officers to participate in "warrior-style" training - a practice that was banned for both on- and off-duty officers.

Collin uses her access by interviewing officers who had not yet talked to the media, including Chauvin who spoke to her by phone from prison in Arizona and who called the trial and sentencing a "sham." If Collin considers Floyd's prior arrest record is relevant, then so is the history of officers who were interviewed - most of whom had a number of complaints filed against them. As tracked on the Communities United Against Police Brutality website: Lindsay Herron had 10 complaints; Scott Creighton, 16; Jason Reimer, 28; Al Williams, 32; Derek Chauvin, 32. With the exception of Chauvin who was fired and is incarcerated, these officers have all retired.

Sgt. Rich Walker, who chose to remain on the force, has had nine complaints. According to the Police Discipline Decision Dashboard, Walker was suspended in 2023 for failing to report derogatory remarks made by two officers during a 2021 arrest (who were also suspended). Other records show that in 2015, a trial jury awarded a

plaintiff \$66,000 in a settlement against Walker for use of excessive force during a 2013 arrest.

In fact, the City of Minneapolis has a long history of paying out cash settlements for claims of misconduct and use of excessive force by the MPD - more than \$50 million from 2020 through February 2024, when the City's Officer Payouts Dashboard was last updated. These include the \$27 million awarded to Floyd's family in 2021, as well as \$7.5 million awarded in 2023 to John Pope for alleged use of excessive force by Derek Chauvin; Pope was 14 years old at the time.

Kroll, who was not interviewed for the documentary, also had a long list of complaints lodged against him - 52 during his 32 years on the force. He retired in January 2021. A lawsuit brought against Kroll for his role in the police violence against protesters in 2020 was settled in April 2023 on the condition that Kroll not serve as a police officer nor in a leadership role for any law enforcement agency anywhere in Hennepin, Anoka or Ramsey counties for 10 years.

Another \$950,000 was just awarded in February 2024 to journalists who were injured or wrongfully detained by police during the 2020 protests.

Overall, the documentary is designed to elicit sympathy for Minneapolis police officers, many of whom have since left the job. In their interviews, some express feelings of abandonment by the city when they were instructed to leave the Third Precinct during the protests.

"Cops do not run away. You run to," says an emotional former Lieutenant Lindsay Herron in recalling how it felt to evacuate the Third Precinct upon order from the higher ups. She speaks to the feeling of being trapped inside the fencing behind the precinct building with no clear exit. They had inadvertently kettled themselves in. (This practice is frequently used by law enforcement against protesters - such as that which trapped 646 people for more than five hours on I-94 in November 2020. It is terrifying; no wonder many officers left their positions claiming post-traumatic stress disorder.)

And then there are the blatant omissions. In April 2022, well before the release of this documentary, the Minnesota Department of Human Rights (MnDHR) issued its findings that the City of Minneapolis and MPD engage in a pattern or practice of race discrimination in violation of the Minnesota Human Rights Act. In March 2023, the MnDHR reached a court enforceable agreement, a consent decree, with the city of Minneapolis to implement specific changes. In June 2023, the U.S. Department of Justice issued its findings of civil rights violations by the city and MPD, which will also result in a consent decree; the two-page table of contents in the DOJ report is by itself a scathing indictment of the culture of the MPD.

Neither of these investigations is mentioned in the documentary.

In attempting to make the case that Chauvin was doing the job as he was trained to, "The Fall of Minneapolis" - by its own omissions - ends up hitting on precisely the point advocates have been making for many years that is now corroborated by state and federal agencies: that the MPD as an institution must be overhauled.

Jill Boogren is a south Minneapolis resident who writes regularly for TMC Publications.

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SOMETHING NEEDS TO CHANGE. WE HAVE A PLAN.

Community-centered journalism, powered by youth, can be a vehicle for solutions.

Research shows that negativity is four to seven times more powerful than positivity. We are hardwired for negativity.

This negative bias is why we focus more on "bad things" to make sense of our lives and the world around us.

The negative grabs our attention. Traumatic experiences stay with us. Negative information outweighs positive data. All this negativity influences our thoughts, feelings, and decisions. We have to fight these negative feelings.

The news doesn't help.

Everywhere you turn, there is bad news, doomsday headlines, problems, complaints. Whether it's traditional news channels, social media, the internet, neighborhood conversations, or everyday interactions, it's hard to avoid Negativeville.

A few weeks ago, I started teaching a journalism class with middle school students as an after-school program at Ella Baker Global Studies and Humanities Magnet School in Minneapolis.

The students are in sixth, seventh, and eighth grade. One of the seventh graders, a 13-year-old, has a lot of energy. He is a bright and talented kid, but sometimes his energy can be misguided.

At his first class, during our break, he asked if he could go outside and play basketball.

I said no, not this time. He didn't like



By **Eric Ortiz**

that response and started grumbling about it.

When we got back to class, he started being disrespectful and disruptive, cussing and throwing papers around the room. I told him to stop.

That didn't work.

We had a guest speaker on Zoom scheduled, and he continued to be disruptive. This encouraged other students to be disruptive.

The class did not end well.

After all the disruptive students had left, one student remained. I know this student through our youth development program at the Strong Mind Strong Body Foundation. He is a great kid, and we have built a level of trust and mutual respect.

I asked him about the disruptive and disrespectful behavior. He said the disruptive and disrespectful behavior was normal. That's how it is with most students in every class every day.

After that class, I thought about how I could engage the disruptive student and get him to stop being disruptive in future classes.

The next time I saw him in class, I changed my approach.

It worked.

That student became a leader in our journalism class. With continued guidance and development, he can become a changemaker in the community.

It all started with listening. By listening, I learned how to channel the negative energy of a young student in a positive direction.

This is why we started a Youth Community Journalism Institute at the Strong Mind Strong Body Foundation, the youth and community development nonprofit where I am executive director.

The institute houses all of our journalism initiatives. Our first initiative was launching the community journalism

program with middle school students at Ella Baker. As part of the program, we launched Ella Baker News, an online student newspaper for the school, and taught students the fundamentals of community-centered journalism.

We want students to learn how to deliver news and information that meets the community's needs and use journalism as a tool to create solutions and positive change.

A student wrote a commentary on homelessness for Ella Baker News.

The article ran in the May Southwest Connector newspaper (page 5) and was also published on the Southwest Connector website.

The student wrote two more articles about homelessness for Ella Baker News: "What is the city doing about homelessness?" and "Please stop hurting the homeless."

He wants to do more.

This summer, the student will participate in our youth community journalism microinternship program. We are launching the program with SPEAK MPLS, a public community media center in Minneapolis. This program is for youth ages 12-17 and will teach the fundamentals of community journalism, including reporting, storytelling, interviewing, multimedia journalism, video production, field reporting, and live studio production.

The program will culminate in a live news show produced by students in front of a live studio audience and broadcast on SPEAK MPLS cable TV channels.

As part of the microinternship, youth will get to participate in the Mercado Central Local Journalism Project, another initiative of the Youth Community Journalism Institute.

The Mercado Central is a thriving Latino marketplace located in Minneapolis that is celebrating its 25th anniversary



A mural in Minneapolis at the corner of Portland Ave. and East Lake St. (Photo by Eric Ortiz)

on Aug. 3 this summer. Our journalism project will explore the past, present, and future of Mercado Central, reframe the immigration narrative, and educate the public on how anyone can be an entrepreneur and asset-based community development can add value to any community.

It's time to flex our humanity with every issue viewed as a negative.

This starts at home in our communities. Our goal is to get youth journalism programs in more middle schools across Minnesota and spark a nationwide Journalism for All movement.

With youth and a reimagining of journalism, we can turn any negatives into positives.



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.

WANT TO REACH 48,000+ PEOPLE IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD? YOU CAN – WITH EACH EDITION OF THE CONNECTOR.

HOSTING EXCHANGE STUDENTS IS AN ENRICHING EXPERIENCE

This fall, our family will host Marilyns, an exchange student from France, as our youngest daughter will be a sophomore at Southwest High School. We are so excited as a few years back, we hosted Lola, a girl from Spain, and she and my daughter both attended Washburn High School as sophomores 2019-2020. Living in Minneapolis during George Floyd's murder and the start of the pandemic really opened Lola's eyes to global events - as she was right in the middle of them. Young women now, they are still really close friends. It was an enriching experience not just for her but for our entire family.



Southwest High School has been so welcoming of our upcoming exchange student (letting her join the cheer team!) and they would love to have more exchange students this fall. Southwest High, Washburn High School and Field Community School PTA and other MSP families should know there are still kids who'd love to come to Minneapolis and attend high school this fall.

Exchange students, like Lola and Marilyns, arrive on a J-1 visa for public schools via non-profit agencies.

In an increasingly connected world, the opportunity to host an international exchange student offers families a chance to experience a new culture without leaving their home. International Cultural Exchange Services (ICES) is currently seeking host families for the upcoming 2024/2025 school year, and the benefits of such an experience extend far beyond the academic



Michelle Krueger and family enjoy hosting exchange students through International Cultural Exchange Services. They're looking for host families for next year. (Photo submitted)

calendar.

WHAT DOES HOSTING INVOLVE?

Hosting an exchange student is a commitment to providing a welcoming and supportive home environment. Families are expected to offer a room, meals, and love and guidance. More importantly, they are asked to include the student in family activities, making them feel like a true part of the family.

ICES assures prospective host families that all family dynamics are welcome. Whether you have young children, teenagers, or no children at all, you can become a host family. The primary requirement is a willingness to open your heart and home to a young person eager to learn and grow.

The upcoming school year brings a diverse group of students from around the world, including Japan, Poland, Germany, Spain, Slovakia, South Korea, Finland, Italy and more.

THE IMPACT OF HOSTING

The impact of hosting an exchange student is profound. For the student, it means experiencing life in a new country, improving their language skills, and developing a deeper understanding of a different culture. For the host family, it offers a chance to learn about another part of the world, develop lifelong friendships, and create lasting memories.

Families who have previously hosted students often

speak of the experience with great enthusiasm. They highlight the joy of sharing their traditions, the excitement of learning about another culture, and the special bond that forms between them and the student.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

If you are interested in becoming a host family, ICES provides all the support and information you need. You can visit their website at www.icesusa.org to learn more about the hosting process and the students available for placement. The website also features testimonials from past host families, offering insights into the many rewards of this unique opportunity.

Hosting an exchange student is more than just an act of kindness; it is an investment in a more connected and understanding world. By opening your home, you help to foster global friendships and provide a young person with the opportunity of a lifetime.

For more information and to apply to become a host family, please visit www.icesusa.org. Join ICES in making the world a smaller, friendlier place, one student at a time.

Contact information:
International Cultural Exchange Services
Website: www.icesusa.org
Phone: 651-307-5703
Email: mkrueger@icesusa.org

Make a difference in a student's life and enrich your own by becoming a host family today!

Michelle Krueger, Diamond Lake
Coordinator, International Cultural Exchange Services (ICES)

TEAMING UP FOR GOOD

I met Robert Everest on a beautiful Thursday evening in Linden Hills last month. He'd just finished singing an exquisite bolero for the diners and dog walkers, and then he piqued my interest with a comment about having two equal careers.



By Larry LaVercombe

If you're an artist, or a creative, as they are often called these days, you are distinctly different from others in that your primary "work" is your art. Most people "work for money," and that "work" is their work. Artists, on the hand, work for money on the side, enough to live on – and their art is their work.

We know this. It's not uncommon for artists to have a dead-end day job that pays the bills, and during their "art time" – not to be confused with your "off time" – you do your art with as much energy as you can bring to it. Sometimes, if you're lucky, your job relates to your art. (Think of the musician who also works with wood and builds violins and cellos.)

But when Robert said that he had two careers, I wondered how he found the balance – in his mind – to have almost two distinct identities.

"You are a professional, full-time musician – and you are into your day job, as a career?"

He said, "Yeah... and you know what's weird? I'm a painter, too, and I had this huge show, and tons of people came, and they loved it. But paintings are hard to sell. Making it as a painter is impossible."

I'd forgotten what his other job was. "Interpreter."

In seventh grade, back in 1980s when we could choose French, German or Spanish, he chose to take Spanish "based on Sesame Street" and the fact that his grandmother spent her winters in Mexico. "Yes, my Ukrainian Gramma spoke Spanish with me," he said with a laugh. Soon he was heading to Ecuador as a foreign exchange student. Fast forward through the University of Minnesota undergraduate Interpreter Program, he is now a medical interpreter employed by Hennepin Health Care.

I ask him: "So you are in life and death situations?"

"Oh yeah. Labor and delivery, too."

Robert graduated from the U with an interpreter certificate and became a full-time musician. He'd played music his whole life, and with all the traveling, he developed an ear for the musical styles of the Spanish and Portuguese. Plus, he was into linguistics.

"People want authenticity," he said. "Living overseas as much as I have, I became fluent in Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian. People wonder, am I Brazilian or American? Sometimes, when I sing a French waltz, they think I'm French."

"I laugh at this. But people ask me, 'How do you know 400 songs in seven languages from 30 countries?' and I say, 'It's well-channeled ADHD.' My brain is not

ROBERT EVEREST: ON BEING A LOCAL ARTIST



Local musician Robert Everest is also a painter – and his day job is working as a sign language interpreter. He recently performed in the Linden Hills Summertime Acoustic series, and will be releasing his first solo album soon. (Photos submitted)

good for keeping my house clean. But it's great for this. If you watch me for two minutes, it's obvious – Music is my calling."

I ask about the money he earns in music, and he rattles off the companies that have hired him: Target, Ecolab, General Mills. When Cargill – known for being a world-wide company – was looking for musicians for their 150th anniversary, they found Robert.

"Before children, I played out 8-10 times per week. Five gigs a weekend. My drummer once said, 'You're the hardest working musician I've ever known, and you have a day job.' It's true, but I'm a single dad, now, with two kids."

How can it be that this guy plays for free at Summertime Acoustic?

I'm friends with the Harriet Brasserie owners, he says, with a smile. They're Brazilian.

Suddenly, there's the telltale sounds of a car door and the bluetooth disengaging. We interrupt the phone call, so Robert can dash into Costco. I sit back and ask myself, "Where am I going with this story?"



throw three bucks in the musician's tip jar? Think of this way: if you put \$10 into the hat, it will take six other people to do the same thing in order for this singer to go home with \$90.

The phone rings. Robert's back. "Nothing in arts is easy," he says. He recorded five CDs over a 10-year period, and then life and kids took over for a while.

"I recently rediscovered about 10, 15 old notebooks, dating back to 1987. They are full of lyrics, songs I wrote. I found over 100 songs I wrote before graduating from high school. It inspired me to start paying more attention to my original compositions.

He's about to release his first solo CD of original compositions.

"Everybody likes 'Funiculi Funicula' and 'Girl from Ipanema,' but it takes boldness to perform original music," he says. "The audience doesn't know me yet. They don't know the heart broken teenager who wrote this song, or the single dad who wants to give his kid a good life. The songs I'm recording now are vulnerable songs."

"The title of the new CD is 'A Life of Lessons Learned,' and ironically, I wrote it when I was young, in my 20s, and I was messing up in life and asking for help, you know. My life was full of dumb mistakes, and I was reaching out, asking the universe, 'Send me the wisdom of a life of lessons learned.'"

When will it come out?

"Recording is done. We are mixing and mastering, writing liner notes, doing label art."

Robert hopes to have a CD release party in September or October. I'll be there.

Robert Everest plays regularly at Maria's Café on East Franklin. More at www.roberteverest.com.

CONSIDER TIPPING MUSICIANS MORE

At the Linden Hills Summertime Acoustic series, the musicians play for free. Or as we sometimes call it, "for tips." We've come to expect that from musicians.

Unless you're paying \$50 a ticket, every musician you ever see playing live is probably playing for less than \$20 per hour. When passers-by put a few dollars in, the musician often ends up with 17 single bills after 90 minutes of work. In a bar, the four-piece band rarely takes home more than \$50 each.

It takes work to become a musician. It doesn't take just "muscle memory," like riding a bike. It takes extraordinary discipline. Concentration. Specific and profound physical strength in your hands and forearms. A good memory helps. Ear training. And on top of all these things: collaborative skills.

Some dads are lucky to play in a bar once in a while, and that's fine. But some people make a living making music for us. Those professional musicians have to be good at what they do.

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Dog treats. I've seen this guy handing out treats to all the passing dogs around Lake Harriet for years. I guess that makes him dog's best friend. (Illustration by WACSO)

EVENTS

FILM SERIES AT MAYFLOWER

On select Wednesday evenings throughout summer, join Mayflower UCC (106 E Diamond Lake Road) for a social justice film series. They will provide popcorn, non-alcoholic beverages, and lightly facilitated conversation after each viewing. All are welcome. More at <https://www.mayflowermpls.org/2024/05/24/summer-2024-social-justice-film-series/>.

- June 26: Two Spirits & Transhood
- July 3: Targeting El Paso
- July 24: 'Til Kingdom Come
- Aug 7: Jim Crow of the North
- Aug 14: Bad River
- Aug 21: On the Divide
- Aug 28: My Name is Pauli Murray!

PATRIOTIC CONCERT JULY 5

The US Air Force Band of Mid-America will present a patriotic Independence Day concert on Friday, July 5, 7:30 p.m., Lake Harriet Bandshell, 4135 W Lake Harriet Pkwy. This 90-minute concert will feature the unit's 45-member concert band and will honor our nation and its veterans, share stories of our heritage, and reflect on all that makes us flourish as individuals and as a country. These are family-friendly, all-ages events. Admission to these performances is free and open to the public. The United States Air Force Band of Mid-America represents the professionalism and excellence found every day throughout the United States Air Force. All musicians are active-duty airmen stationed at Scott Air Force Base in Illinois. The



Anh Tran, '21, "Môt miếng khi đói bang một gói khi no (A morsel when hungry is worth a meal when full)," 2023, is part of "The Drawing Board" exhibit this summer at Minneapolis College of Art and Design.

band recently won the 2022 NATAS Mid-America Emmy for Arts & Entertainment Long Form Content for their "Spirit of the Season" holiday program that was broadcast on over 100 national TV stations.

THE DRAWING BOARD EXHIBIT

Minneapolis College of Art and Design (MCAD) announces the opening of The Drawing Board, an exhibition that brings together a wide range of work from established MCAD alumni and faculty who work across the field of illustration. With more than 40 illustration artists participating, the exhibition showcases their ideas through powerful, innovative images that entertain, inform, and evoke. View the exhibit June 3–Aug. 10, MCAD Main Gallery, 2501 Stevens Avenue. It is free and open to the public Monday–Friday, 9

a.m.–7 p.m. and Saturday, 10 a.m.–4 p.m.

The opening reception is Wednesday, July 10, 2024, 4–6 p.m., scheduled to coincide with ICON12 The Illustration Conference, a national event for illustrators, graphic artists, and image makers convening in Minneapolis.

Developed in partnership with MCAD faculty Jaime Anderson, Alison Nowak, and Jacob Yeates, the illustrations range from client projects to personal work, and digital mediums to more traditional ones.

MCAD Gallery Director and Curator Keisha Williams states, "It's been a privilege to collaborate with esteemed MCAD faculty to bring back these talented artists. Our alumni's work can be found all over the world, and this exhibition is an excellent reminder of the vast creative community MCAD nurtures."

'LOVE IN A TIME OF HATE'

Armatage resident Christy Johnson will perform the role of Marshal in the Teatro del Pueblo's presentation of "Love in a Time of Hate," a reimagined modern adaptation of Shakespeare's classic Romeo and Juliet with a Latino twist, June 20-30 at Minnesota Opera's Luminary Arts Center in Minneapolis (700 N. 1st Street). This modern adaptation, with a Latino twist, explores timeless themes of love, power, free-will and hope in a futuristic world where unscrupulous politicians manipulate the masses to stay in power. The music, a unique and lively collaboration between Teatro del Pueblo and Bach Society of Minnesota, will be led by Music Director, Marco Real-d'Arbelles, who serves as the Associate Artistic Director for Bach Society of Minnesota and is participating

as part of the collaborative program "Outside the Box" that he created. The performance will feature a fusion of Baroque music and a Latino soundscape, creating an immersive and electrifying backdrop to the story. June 27 and 28 performances are pay-what-you can (suggested \$30 amount). Teatro del Pueblo is a non-profit Latino theater company dedicated to promoting, celebrating, and preserving the richness of Latinx heritage through the creation and presentation of performing arts.

PIANOS ON PARADE

Pianos returned downtown on June 1st! Share your gift of music or catch a performance this June as Pianos on Parade presented by PNC Bank are back June 1-30. More than two dozen pianos are placed throughout downtown, all of which are painted by programs at Choices, Inc., FAIR School, Metro Work Center, Modern Day Me, MSS Fresh Eye Arts, University of St. Thomas, and individual local artists. There will be pianos in the area including Loring Park, Minneapolis Convention Center, Peavey Plaza, Basilica of St. Mary, and Twin Cities Pride office, and several along Nicollet. Scheduled piano performances will take place Thursdays at noon. Find the schedule and learn more at www.mplsdownatown.com/pianos. Find pianos in the Loring Park neighborhood at Loring Park Community Center and in front of Twin Cities PRIDE off the north side of the park on Harmon. In the Loring Neighborhood, the pianos are sponsored by Friends of Loring Park, Loring Corners, Inc, Twin Cities PRIDE, and Citizens for a Loring Park Community (CLPC).

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EVENT INFO

SIMPLIFY YOUR LIFE, STARTING WITH YOUR HOME

It's never too soon to start thinking about downsizing. Gentle Transitions can help.

By **Eric Ortiz**

Most people don't think of moving as fun. The thought of it can be overwhelming.

But Gentle Transitions will put anyone's mind at ease. Gentle Transitions is a move management company headquartered in Edina that has been making moves easier, less stressful, and more enjoyable for older adults in Minnesota since 1990.

Lee Syndergaard, the regional director of sales and marketing at Gentle Transitions, has some tips for how people can simplify their lives, starting with their homes.

"It's never too soon to start thinking about downsizing before a move," said Syndergaard during a Let's Connect event in May at The Eloise, a 100-unit community tucked into the all-new Wirth on the Woods development located between the quaint Bryn Mawr neighborhood in Minneapolis and the 759-acre Theodore Wirth Regional Park.

Syndergaard advises taking things in steps. Consider beginning with the linen closet where you can throw away expired medications.

"Most of the things in there aren't too sentimental," he explained. "It's not hard to get rid of expired Tylenol, extra bottles of shampoo, extra towels, more than you're going to need now that you have an empty nest. That's a lot better way to build up momentum and get some emotional wins and victories."

Syndergaard said, "Don't ever start with family photos. You won't get anywhere. That's one thing we say. Let's save that till last or even after the



Southwest Connector journalist Eric Ortiz (left) chats with Lee Syndergaard of Gentle Transitions during a Let's Connect event on May 3, 2024. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)



Speakers and sponsors of Let's Connect on May 3, 2024 (left to right): Darcy DeMars of Ecumen/Wirth on the Woods, TMC Publications Marketing Advisor Sandra Mikulsky, Lee Syndergaard of Gentle Transitions, Eric Ortiz of the Southwest Connector, and Steph Dehnke of Ecumen/Wirth on the Woods. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)

LET'S Connect COFFEE TIME

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move. So take it off in small bites and be strategic about where you start and when you start."

The key is to go through your home, room by room, piece by piece, and decide what you really need.

"We say let's do this in two phases," says Syndergaard. "Phase one, let's get you moved into your new home, set up, and comfortable because then this home is going to be a lot less cluttered and then it's going to be a lot less overwhelming. Phase one is the move. Then we can go back. That gives us the opportunity to really hammer home this less is more approach."

Take the kitchen.

"Kitchens can bring a move to a screeching halt if they're not planned for well," says Syndergaard. "So we say, I know you want to bring everything in this kitchen, however, it's just not all going to fit. There are two of you, so let's bring eight plates, eight of your favorite coffee mugs."

You don't need as much stuff as you think.

"Let's bring a lot less than you think you're going to need,"



MPRB LAUNCHES CYCLING WITHOUT AGE PROGRAM

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) has kicked off a new program, Cycling Without Age, aimed at helping older adults with mobility issues enjoy time and connect with others in Minneapolis parks.

The program is based around free, 20- to 45-minute rides in a trishaw: a stable, three-wheeled electric-assist bike that is comfortable and accessible. One or two passengers seated in the front of the trishaw enjoy a bike ride free of physical demands, while a friendly, trained, experienced "pilot" in back pedals and steers.

While MPRB's trishaws are the only ones available to the public in the Twin Cities area, the program is part of a worldwide Cycling Without Age network. The movement began in 2012 with a resident of Copenhagen, Denmark offering free trishaw rides to residents of local nursing homes, and has grown to more than 2,500 Cycling Without Age chapters.

'FEEL THE WIND IN YOUR HAIR'

"For someone who hasn't been on a bike in a long time, if ever, riding on a



Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board President Meg Forney (left), City of Minneapolis Director of Public Works Tim Sexton, and MPRB Superintendent Al Bangoura (right) pose with residents of the nearby Victory Health + Rehabilitation Center. (Photo by submitted)

trishaw can be an amazing experience" said MPRB Superintendent Al Bangoura, who first experienced Cycling Without Age

while serving as Superintendent of Recreation in Mecklenburg County/Charlotte, N.C.

LIVING 50+ GOOD NEIGHBOR

Know someone aged 50+ that contributes to the Southwest community and inspires those around them?

We want to hear about them!

We're launching a new series in our September Living 50+ section that will run quarterly. Send your nomination to tesha@tmcpub.com. Please include your contact information, their name, age, and contact information, and a paragraph about what they do that you find amazing about them.

We can't wait to amplify the stories of our good neighbors aged 50+.

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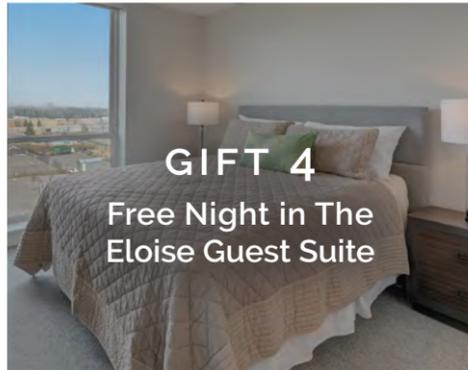
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THE GRAMMY CLIMATE RIDE ACROSS AMERICA

Donna Minter aims to raise \$500,000 for climate organizations this fall, part of her "reirement" after leaving MN Peacebuilding

By Margie O'Loughlin

South Minneapolis resident Donna Minter is riding her recumbent bike 3,200 miles from San Diego, Calif. to Saint Augustine, Fla. this fall. She plans to raise \$500,000 for five climate organizations before she's done. The organizations she'll

be fundraising for are Climate Generation, Minnesota Interfaith Power and Light, Third Act, Climate Ride, and Climate STARR.

Minter said, "I've set a big, hairy, audacious goal of raising money and awareness for sustainable climate solutions and active transportation. Because I have three grandchildren, I'm calling it the Grammy Ride. When I was growing up, I was deeply influenced by my parents and the way they cared for the earth. Now at 66 years old, I know that for the sake of my grandchildren and everybody else's, I need to engage with others and directly support those working for climate justice."

FULLFILLING A DREAM
Almost 50 years after she



Donna Minter on the recumbent bike she'll ride 3,200 miles across the country this fall. She said, "I'm doing this because I love outdoor adventures, I love the earth, I love being a responsible, caring elder, and I want to be a good ancestor for my grandchildren's grandchildren." (Photo submitted)

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▶10 **GRAMMY CLIMATE**

started bike touring, Minter is fulfilling her dream of biking across the country. She got turned on to the sport when she was 18, and took her first week-long bike tour in Florida. She rode from Kansas to California the following summer as part of an organized ride.

Now she and her best biking friend, Becky Bolander, are taking matters into their own hands. The two of them have done a biking or hiking trip together every year since 1997. For this 12-week adventure, they'll be riding a route called the Southern Tier created by the Adventure Cycling Association of Missoula, Mont. The route consists of safe, secondary roads with intermittent connections to bike trails.

Minter said, "We've been two women biking on the road together many times before. We're on the same page when it comes to our perceptions of safety. We're excited for the people we'll meet along the way. We're bringing our camping gear. We may use a bike hosting program from time

to time called Warm Showers, or stay in motels, if need be. The non-profits we're raising money for are reaching out to their members too, so they know we'll be coming through."

While Minter is raising money for climate justice action, Bolander is doing her own fundraiser for Habitat for Humanity in Ottawa County, Ohio, where she lives, and has been a Habitat volunteer for more than 40 years.

DAY IN AND DAY OUT

There's a certain culture that gets created on a long trip of any kind, a way of being together with a group or another person without driving each other crazy. In the case of these two old friends, their choice of different bikes helps to define the way they ride.

Minter said, "Usually during the day, we ride about one-quarter mile apart. Whoever's ahead will stop and wait at every turn. Becky rides up front more often than me, but not always. She rides an upright bike, which is lighter than mine. I ride a recumbent, which is built much lower to the ground. We're different

in other ways, too. Becky listens to podcasts while she's biking. I like the quiet, and just looking around. The important thing is that we never leave each other behind."

THE THIRD ACT

Minter is a licensed psychologist who practiced clinical neuropsychology for more than 25 years in outpatient, inpatient, and educational settings. In 2010, she founded Minnesota Peacebuilding Leadership Institute to teach trauma-informed, restorative justice-focused strategies for racial healing and reconciliation. Before retiring from MN Peacebuilding in June 2023, she trained over 16,000 people from community organizations, local, state, tribal, and federal government.

She said, "When people ask me what I'm going to do now, I tell them I want to become a professional athlete."

Somehow the word retirement doesn't quite fit what Minter is doing. Borrowing from retired Star Tribune reporter Jackie Crosby, she prefers the word "rewirement." Minter wants to stay actively engaged in community work as she enters

the last third of her life. A big part of her cross-country itinerary will be asking people she meets how climate change has impacted them personally. With those who give their permission, she'll record their conversations and post them on social media to share with others. Follow her on Facebook @grammyride.

HOW TO DONATE

The Grammy Ride will happen Sept. 1-Nov. 23, 2024. One hundred percent of contributions will go toward Minter's goal of supporting climate justice action. She is covering all of her own personal expenses. Tax-deductible donations can be made directly to the fundraising campaign by googling Grammy Climate Ride Across America.

Contact Donna Minter at grammyride@gmail.com with any questions, or with fundraising ideas.

Minter said, "While I will happily accept large donations, I believe that there are at least 50,000 people in Minnesota and the rest of the United States who will give \$10 or more to help achieve my audacious fundraising goal."



Valerie Miller was the lucky prize drawing winner at the May 3, 2024 Let's Connect event at Wirth on the Woods. (Photo submitted)

▶8 **SIMPLIFY YOUR HOME**

explains Syndergaard. "And then if we get everything unpacked in that kitchen and realize there's room for more dishes and coffee mugs, china, then it's easy enough to go throw some stuff in your trunk."

"So keeping the home or keeping the home until after you move is oftentimes a best-case scenario. There might be reasons why that doesn't work, but boy does it make it a lot less stressful."

TAKING PHOTOS TO MAKE MOVING IN EASIER

Gentle Transitions has a long history of success, and business is booming.

"We're doing 1,500 moves a year, and there's no signs of slowing because the demand and the need for our services is there," adds Syndergaard. "We're doing things basically the same way over the last 34 years, which is care and compassion for our client. Care and compassion for the client, walking them through the process. It's not just packing and unpacking. Anyone can do that."

The whole process starts with a complimentary consultation and a personal move manager. They help people every step of the way, from planning the move, mapping out the floor plan of a new residence, hiring a professional moving company, and ensuring all possessions reach their new home safely. They regularly work with Ecumen communities like Wirth on the Woods, as well as other senior living communities, and are available to do presentations on how to downsize and move.

Once every belonging is off the moving truck, Gentle Transitions staff unpack

everything, hang all the pictures, make all the beds, plug in all the lamps, and get the new home ready by the afternoon of the move.

"Our clients don't have to lift a finger," said Syndergaard. "And by the time we're done, in just a matter of hours, it looks like the client has lived there for a month because the boxes are all out, everything is just done. So instead of spending weeks or months or longer unpacking, they can immerse themselves in the community."

He added, "We work with the family, and there's a lot of emotional support in there and planning and making recommendations based on our experience we think you should do x, y, and z." Before anything is packed, they take pictures – of how a china hutch is arranged, the way bookshelves are arranged, and how magnets are on the refrigerator – so that when they putting it back, it's as familiar and comfortable as possible.

START PLANNING EARLY

The key for any senior move is to start planning early.

"A lot of people just don't realize how much is involved with moving," says Syndergaard. "One common example is they'll say, we'll get a call saying we need to move mom into memory care. I'm only available next Friday, so we need to move her next Friday. And we say, have you cleared that with the community? A lot of senior communities do not allow memory care moves on Fridays. And they say, 'Oh, I hadn't thought of that.'"

"They say, I want to move in on a weekend. Some communities don't allow that because there's less staff that can help

if the people might not be there if the cable doesn't work, that kind of thing."

"So we really steer them toward make sure you sign the paperwork as the nurse's assessment occurred. There are a lot of ducks to get in a row that they just don't realize, and that's why we're more than just packers and unpackers. We're guiding them through the process. After many decades, we've learned a lot of questions to answer or to ask and get the answers to."

"If they want to have an estate sale make sure you call a couple, get them into your house because you may or may not have enough things to justify an estate sale. Even if you do, a lot of these estate sale companies book out months in advance because of their schedule. Same

with moving companies.

"So just guiding them through all of these these things to think about and ask and prepare for. There's more to moving than you ever realize or remember, which is why it's important to start now."

Moving does not have to be a painful process.

"The people we are working with aren't necessarily thrilled at the thought of moving," sums up Syndergaard. "It's different than when you're younger, and it's exciting to move to a bigger house. And so we want to make it comfortable and in a very gentle transition."

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CITY REVIEWS OFF-DUTY POLICE OFFICER RULES

By **Cam Gordon**

The Minneapolis City Council is taking another look at how to better manage the decades-old practice of allowing city police officers to make money while working independently when they are officially "off-duty."

Scrutiny into freelance police work followed two police killings in Minneapolis. When Mohamed Noor started his 10-hour shift as a Minneapolis police officer on the night he killed Justine Ruszczyk in southwest Minneapolis, he had just finished a seven-hour shift working off-duty as a security guard. After Derek Chauvin killed George Floyd, he also pled guilty to tax fraud related to not declaring off-duty income. Chauvin was also identified as an officer who helped coordinate and assign this kind of work.

The work occurs when a city law enforcement employee works as a Minneapolis police officer for another agency or private entity as an independent contractor in their spare time. It usually involves security or traffic control.

On May 23, 2024, the council instructed their staff to perform a fiscal analysis and make recommendations on how the city might administrate fees to recover costs related to such off-duty work. The report is to be made by July 24.

This follows a similar directive and report from 2023 that led to few reforms, including more efforts to track the hours worked.

"Unfortunately, that directive came back incomplete," said Ward 2 Council member Robin Wonsley, "so this week I reintroduced this work as a legislative motion, which will move it to the Policy and Research division of the legislative department."

"I support the ongoing evaluation of off-duty police work. And I support the ongoing work to increase transparency and accountability surrounding this off-duty police work," said Ward 11 Council Member Emily Koski. "I do believe the city should be properly compensated or reimbursed for the use of its resources, vehicles, tech, etc."

Concerns about how it is managed are not new and are shared by some small business owners as well as police reform advocates.

"It's absurd that Minneapolis cops get to use taxpayer funded squad cars, weapons, equipment, etc., for freelance work that the city has no control over," said Kevin Brown, who owns a small business in Seward.

"Taxpayers currently fund the use of squads, fuel, equipment and liability for off-duty work while deriving none of the benefits," said longtime police reform ad-

vocate Michell Gross of Citizens United Against Police Brutality.

The Department of Justice report released last June found that "off-duty employment also undermines supervision at MPD. Private entities can hire off-duty MPD officers to provide security. In Minneapolis, these jobs can pay significantly more than overtime at MPD – up to \$150–175 per hour, according to a commander. MPD allows officers to use its squad cars (and gas), and the officer keeps all the compensation. The city has nothing. Some patrol officers manage these opportunities, deciding who gets the lucrative work. Because MPD allows patrol officers to control whether supervisors get off-duty employment opportunities, supervisors have ample disincentive to hold officers accountable."

Previously, there was a city auditor's report in 2019, and Mayor Jacob Frey established a task force in January 2020 that has yet to produce any work product.

"After the audit was released in 2019, Frey set up a Task Force, with Chief of Police, union rep, mayor's rep, and Palmisano as City Council rep," said Brown. "About a year later, I tried to follow up with the mayor's office, and I think they said there had been one meeting, but it was not public, and this was at the height of COVID-19, so I don't think it ever went anywhere."

Ward 13 Council Member Linea Palmisano was reported to say at the time that reform needed to be negotiated in the police labor contract.

The new contract, however, says only that "full-time personnel may also work off-duty jobs, subject to the terms of the MPD Policy and Procedure Manual." The manual is controlled by the police leadership and clarifies that working independently using city resources is allowed.

It also stipulates that "all MPD employees who pursue off-duty employment must apply for and receive approval, before the off-duty employment commences." Officers working off-duty are also required to handle police calls that are brought to their attention while working off-duty, as they would if they were working on duty. This is one reason people support the current practices.

In 2023, the police reported that rates and hours are negotiated directly between employee and the off-duty employer, and that the city "does not have a fiscal analysis of off-duty work as the hour and wage information is not received by the department from the off-duty employers or employees."

When Brown contacted the city about hiring off-duty officers a few years ago, he was told to arrange that directly with an individual officer he knows.

"Off-duty work for the MPD is de-



RISE AND REMEMBER 2024

On May 25, Singer Kashimana and Brass Solidarity led a joyful procession from the solidarity fist at 38th St. and Chicago Ave. to the Say Their Names cemetery, where 400 candles were placed around headstones there. The vigil marked four years since George Floyd was murdered by Minneapolis police in 2020 and a movement for justice that continues there today.

Earlier in the day, artist Mari Mansfield led volunteers in repainting the 169 names of stolen lives on the "Mourning Passage" on Chicago Ave. from 38th to 37th St. Artist Antonio Jenkins completed a new mural on the street where Floyd took his last breath. A mutual aid drive provided free clothing from the People's Closet, the Phoenix Steppers energized the crowd, and Vine Raynell and Star Child delivered spoken word. Visitors heard from Floyd's family members as well as pilgrimage guides Marquise Bowie, Jennie Leenay and Kia Bible. Amity Dimock, co-founder of the Daunte & Kobe No More Names Initiative, spoke about the loss of her son Kobe Dimock-Heisler who was killed by Brooklyn Center police in 2019, and read the names of other lives taken by police violence.

Rise and Remember, the name of the annual event, is now the official new name of the George Floyd Global Memorial, chosen to better reflect their work. "We want to continue to rise to the occasion and keep remembering George Floyd and all stolen lives," Floyd's cousin and co-chair Paris Stevens told the crowd at the vigil. "So everyone, stick together, love on one another... Keep lifting each other up. Lift your voices." (Photo by Jill Boogren)

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

centralized to the precincts and the job of managing it has historically been handed down from one person to the next. It is considered a plum role because it puts enormous power into the hands of the person who has that role," said Gross.

Minneapolis and Brooklyn Center both use a decentralized approach where businesses and organizations contact officers directly, and officers independently handle scheduling, rates and payment. St. Paul, Duluth, Bloomington and Rochester use a centralized approach where the local businesses or agencies request off-duty officers through the local police departments and pay those cities for the work, with negotiation and scheduling done by the department. Edina is an example of a city that uses a partially centralized model where the department manages work for

particular venues or events and coordinates scheduling facilitate payments, while other off-duty work may be managed by officers independently.

Brown and Gross both prefer a more centralized approach. "In St. Paul, all off-duty assignments go through the police department, for obvious reasons," said Brown. "Why are we the outlier here?"

"This police coverage should be arranged through the city, billed by the city and paid to the officers through city payroll," said Gross. "There would also be more fairness to the officers because off-duty work wouldn't just be assigned to the buddies of the person in charge of it."

"I don't believe we'll ever reform the Minneapolis PD without reforming the off-duty rules," said Brown.

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PUTTING THE 'UP' BACK IN UPTOWN

By **Brian Gabriel**

Organizers of the new Uptown Community Coalition want to push negative vibes out of Uptown and bring in resources to help local businesses make it cool again.

"We really want to make Uptown a destination. We really believe that it has the potential to be what it once was," Damla Erten, a co-founder of the Uptown Community Coalition (U.C.C.), said.

According to its flyer, the U.C.C. wants to "foster connections among residents, businesses, and community organizations to address shared challenges and create a vibrant, inclusive community."

Erten and co-founder Maren Findlay manage the Sencha Tea Bar on the southeast corner of 26th Street and Hennepin Avenue and have direct experience dealing with neighborhood challenges, especially drug use and safety concerns. They created the coalition after a man nearly died from a Fentanyl overdose on the shop's back steps, Findlay said.

A mix of neighbors, business owners, and politicians, including Ward 7 and Ward 10 council members, filled Sencha during its first organizational meeting on April 29, suggesting the U.C.C. can serve in a capacity that local government, neighborhood associations, and business owners have been unable to do.

"So, U.C.C. aims to bridge that gap between the neighborhood and act as a liaison to city and government offices in order to direct the funding that we know exists but that we just haven't had direct accessible means of reaching," Erten said.

That money would assist new, local and diverse businesses that sell "cool stuff we don't have" fill empty store fronts along Hennepin Avenue and in Uptown, Findlay said.

"Overall, I want people to see Uptown as a very high potential area. It is a nice place to be, and it was and can be," she



Maren Findlay and Damla Erten of Sencha Tea Bar believe in a thriving Uptown area, and have worked to launch the Uptown Community Coalition. They aim to bring in resources to help local businesses address shared challenges, which include the construction on Hennepin Ave.



said.

Specifically, the U.C.C. would 1) direct aid from existing grant programs such as the Minnesota Promise Act Grant Program that help businesses affected by the Hennepin Avenue's reconstruction work, 2) coalesce independent work done by business and neighborhood associations, and 3) fill in any remaining gaps with any other potential resources.

The emphasis on local and diverse is critical because Uptown has seen big companies come and go, especially after the pandemic and social unrest cut into their profits.

"But who stayed? Local businesses, small businesses, businesses owned by marginalized groups of people," Erten said. "We are owners serving people in our establishments. So, there's no way that we don't have this personal and emotional connection to it, so we are less likely to leave because of that, too."

The first phase of street reconstruction along Hennepin Avenue, currently closing it from 26th Street to Lake Street, is an obvious concern for Uptown's businesses, but Erten said this should not consume everyone's attention.

"It doesn't matter if you're like a business that makes a million dollars or a \$100,000 a year you are going to see the impact financially with road reconstruction," she said, criticizing news media's constant focus on commerce being negatively affected. "At this point, it's like redundant. It's almost like feeding off this drama of it, you know."

"I will say that positivity coupled with productivity will yield much, much better results," Erten said.

Findlay shares that feeling, adding, "I don't need to move out of Uptown. I just need to make it what I want it to be. There are so many things that I can do to do that especially through the coalition," she said.

If the U.C.C. succeeds in Uptown, it could serve as a city-wide model for other neighborhoods with commercial hubs, like Lyn-Lake, affected by construction or other disruptions, Findlay and Erten said.

Anyone interested in joining or learning more about the U.C.C. can send an email to uptowncommunitycoalition@gmail.com or find it on Instagram at @UCCMPLS.

1 OFFICER KILLED

and the senseless violence must end. No one leaves for work in the morning thinking they won't make it home that evening. Jamal should be getting his young child ready for school right now. Public service and public safety professionals help to keep the rest of us safe, they deserve to be treated with that same level of dignity and respect. To the Mitchell family we stand with you, to the MPD we stand with you, to all the impacted families and friends we stand with you."

"Like many of you, Whittier is my home. Last night, three people tragically lost their lives to gun violence in our neighborhood at the W 22nd St. and Blaisdell Ave intersection. I'm heartbroken for their families and loved ones, who are first and most deeply impacted by this loss," said Ward 10 Council Member Aisha

Chughtai. "We all deserve safety in our homes and communities. We deserve to be treated with dignity and care when our safety is violated.... Our community experienced a significant trauma last night, and all of us will continue to feel the impact of what happened in the days and weeks to come."

"Earlier today, Minneapolis Police Officer Jamal Mitchell was shot and killed in the line of duty in response to a 911 call. He gave the ultimate sacrifice to keep our community safe. He is a hero who, by all accounts, was exactly the type of officer we need in our great city. I am heartbroken over this tragic loss," said Ward 11 Council Member Emily Koski. "The shooting that claimed Officer Mitchell's life, also claimed two Minneapolis residents. My heart, thoughts and prayers go out to the family, friends, and community of all the victims. We have a gun violence epidemic that will require concerted effort by all

parties to address."

"Our community mourns this loss and wraps our arms around those whose lives are forever changed by last night's tragic events," said Ward 13 Council Member Linea Palmisano. "And we owe these officers more than thoughts and prayers. We must all work to end gun violence in our community. Like Governor Walz said, we as a governing body have a responsibility to provide the resources and support necessary to do this job, and come home safely afterward. I am very committed to that and will continue to do so through my actions, my legislative efforts, and my votes on your behalf."

A public memorial service for Mitchell was held on Tuesday, June 11, 2024 at Maple Grove Senior High School, in Maple Grove. A procession after the service proceeded to the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport, where Mitchell's body was flown to his home state of Con-

necticut.

Mitchell joined MPD in 2022. Shortly after, he was commended for running into a burning house next to Bde Maka Ska to rescue an elderly couple.

He was posthumously awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor and a Purple Heart.

In a social media post, Mitchell's fiancé, Tori Myslajek, said that her family is "completely devastated" by his death.

"Jamal and I created a beautiful life in Minnesota, and he was deeply passionate about helping and serving the community of Minneapolis," Myslajek said. "On behalf of our family and from the bottom of my heart, I want to thank our friends, neighbors, loved ones and the entire community for the continued support." He was father to Koen, 20, Jalen, 9, Kaden, 7, and Macen, 4.

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Proposed Improvements - Bridge



CEDAR LAKE ROAD BRIDGE

The city will replace the Cedar Lake Road bridge over the BNSF railroad in the Bryn Mawr neighborhood in 2027. The temporary repairs were completed, and the bridge is open for cars. The bridge will have one traffic lane in each direction. The sidewalk is closed, so people walking should use the paths on both sides with barriers to keep them safe. The City still plans to replace the Cedar Lake Road bridge in 2027.

The bridge over the BNSF railroad is a seven span timber beam bridge built in 1941. The bridge is 142 feet long and 51 feet wide. The Cedar Lake Road bridge is rated as "fair."

This project will replace the Cedar Lake Road Bridge (MSA route 406) which crosses the BNSF railroad tracks. This bridge replacement will include transportation infrastructure for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists. Planners are going to use the advice given in the Transportation Action Plan and Street Design Guide for this project. More information at <https://www.bmna.org/event/cedar-lake-road-bridge-feedback-meeting/>.

SIDEWALK WORK IN LYNNHURST, ARMATAGE, AND KENNY

This summer, sidewalk inspectors will be walking all of the public sidewalks in the designated areas of Lynnhurst, Armatage and Kenny, and marking sections of sidewalk for replacement. In general, these are sections of sidewalk that are settled, broken, defective, and hazardous to pedestrians. If sidewalk repairs are identified, the abutting property owners will receive a

MINNEAPOLIS PARKS FOUNDATION

After a nationwide search, the board of directors of the Minneapolis Parks Foundation is pleased to announce Anne Hoyt Taff's appointment as executive director of the Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board's nonprofit partner effective July 1. A longtime leader in Minnesota's nonprofit community, Hoyt Taff most recently served as Vice President of Partnerships at the Saint Paul & Minnesota Foundation, where she spent more than eight years working on collective impact initiatives centered on community-based grantmaking, racial healing, digital equity, economic development and more. Prior to that, she served as Senior Gift Officer at Planned Parenthood Central States.



"I'm excited to see how Anne will continue to positively impact our community in this new role," says Eric Jolly, Ph.D., President and CEO of the Saint Paul & Minnesota Foundation. "During her tenure, Anne has shown herself to be an inclusive leader, who listens to community within and beyond our organization."

Hoyt Taff is a graduate of Macalester College and the University of Minnesota Law School. She lives in the Kenny neighborhood in southwest Minneapolis and loves to go on adventures with her husband and two young children.

Since 2003, the Minneapolis Parks Foundation has raised more than \$42 million for transformative parks and programming in Minneapolis by aligning philanthropic investment and community vision.

"Sidewalk Repair Notice" by mail, 30 days in advance of any work being performed. Property owners may choose to use the city-hired contractor or hire their own sidewalk contractor. Sidewalk replacement work by the city contractor was anticipated to begin on or around June 1 with all work completed by Sept. 30 of this year.

CENTERPOINT WORK

Armatage: From early April into summer 2024, CenterPoint Energy crews will

return to Armatage for three projects. This work is in conjunction with the City of Minneapolis' Pennhurst South Residential Resurfacing.

Lynnhurst: From early April into summer, CenterPoint Energy's contractors Michels Corporation and Q3 Contracting will move inside meters outside by appointment, replace some natural gas service lines as needed, and restore the affected areas.

POLICE CONTRACT

The Police Officers Federation of Minneapolis voted to ratify a new proposed contract with the city of the Minneapolis which will be reviewed and voted on by the city council this month.

Minneapolis Public Schools Calendar
The Minneapolis Public School District announced plans to shorten the school year next year. In response some schools will likely extend school day to meet state requirements about time in school. Southwest, for example, is adding five minutes to the school day.

TRAFFIC CAMERAS

The state legislature has approved allowing Minneapolis and Mendota Heights to implement a four-year pilot project to cameras in high-risk areas or within 2,000 feet of a school to ticket those violating speeding and red light laws.

LYNDALE AVENUE DESIGN CONCEPTS

Hennepin County held an open house on June 11 at the Spring House Ministry Center at 610 West 28th Street to share designs, gather feedback, and answer questions. To learn more about what we are seeking and the updated timeline for gathering input, you can visit Lyndale Avenue South reconstruction page at <https://www.hennepin.us/residents/transportation/lyndale-avenue-safety>.

CITY BUDGET PROCESS BEGINS

Minneapolis elected officials are beginning their budget process with an estimated \$21 million budget shortfall due in part to decreasing property values downtown. The mayor will present is recommended budget in August. In June, the council's budget committee endorsed a proposal to add 15 additional staff to support their legislative work, including one additional policy aide for each ward office. The committee also shared priorities of individual council members. Southwest Council Members priorities as follows.

- Cashman Ward 7: Skyway Signage, Promise Act Support, Uptown Safety, Traffic Calming, and Zero Waste Initiatives;

- Jenkins Ward 8: 38th Street Thrive, George Floyd Square, and Pillsbury Creative Commons;

- Chughtai Ward 10: Small Business Support During Road Work, Traffic Calming, Employee Resource Groups, 2116 Nicollet Ave S Development;

- Koski Ward 11: Maintain or Lower Levy, Police Hiring & Retention Strategies, Auto Theft Prevention, Traffic Calming, Small Business Labor Standards project, and Fire Station Alerting Systems;

- Palmisano from Ward 13 did not share any budget priorities.

E LINE STATION AT UPTON & 43RD

This intersection is expected to be closed until mid-July while construction is underway to improve the sewer partial street reconstruction, traffic signal reconstruction, new station platforms, new sidewalks, and new pedestrian ramps. After it reopens, shelters, pylons, and other station features will be added. Sidewalks are expected to be open throughout construction on at least one side of the street and pedestrian access will be maintained to homes and businesses.

FRANCE AVE.

Construction work on France Avenue began on June 10 on the west side of France Avenue at each intersection and will shift to the east side of France Ave. at each intersection as work is completed. Construction is planned to allow France Ave. to remain open to northbound through traffic for the duration of work, detouring southbound through-traffic to Xerxes Avenue between 39th Street and 60th Street.



Briefs compiled by Cam Gordon.

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

E-WASTE COLLECTION EVENT JUNE 29

What do old cell phones, aging computers, and obsolete chargers have in common? They are all part of the e-waste problem in the U.S. According to a 2023 study, only about 24% of Minnesota electronics waste gets captured for recycling, leaving a multi-billion dollar opportunity to increase collection and recycling of the critical elements in our electronics. On June 29, from 9 a.m. to noon, bring your old data-bearing devices, such as cell phones and laptops, for reuse or recycling to the Fuller Park parking lot. Accepted items: Cell phones, Tablets and E-readers, Laptops and desktop computer towers (no monitors), Power/charging cables and cords and Peripherals: external hard drives, keyboards, computer mice (no printers). A suggested donation of \$5 is appreciated when dropping off your items to help cover event and recycling costs.

KINGFIELD GARDEN TOUR JULY 11

The annual Kingfield Garden Tour is taking place this year on July 11. This is a self guided tour where you will receive a map of the participating gardens and you can enjoy the beautiful spaces created by your fellow neighbors. The tour will last for up to two hours, and will be followed with an opportunity to get together and enjoy refreshments and ask any questions or continue to mingle with known and fresh faces.

PUPPET PLAY AT THE AVALON

Commutator Collective, a local arts group, will be presenting DETECTIVE CHUNK, THE MULTIVERSE, AND ME, a play with puppets, on June 27-30, 2024 at the Avalon Theater / In the Heart of the Beast. All performances at 7:30 p.m., with a masks-required performance on Sunday, June 30. Tickets available at www.commutatorcollective.org/CHUNK. Commutator Collective is an interdisciplinary group of artists, writers, theater people, musicians, and filmmakers working in Minneapolis. Since their inception in 2018, they have produced three full-length plays, 12 dance parties, five one-acts, one wine-class-slash-theatrical-experiment, nine curated movie-nights, three Purim spiels, one COVID-induced fever dream, and about one-and-a-half feature films (currently editing, etc.).

BUSINESS NEWS

SEBASTIAN JOE'S EXPANDS

Sebastian Joe's has taken over the former Apoy space at 4301 Nicollet Ave., and opening its third ice cream shop. It will be the only Sebastian Joe's shop to offer its new take on soft serve called Scoop 'N Swirl. Apoy, a Filipino restaurant, was there for six years before closing. Residents had been asking for an ice cream parlour for some time, according to the Southwest Business Association.

NEW STEAKHOUSE AT 4751 NICOLLET

Estancia Larumbe Steak House is going into the old Prieto's/Chela's space at 4751 Nicollet Ave., according to the Southwest Business Association.

LE BURGER

Le Burger 4304, a French-themed burger restaurant, will be opening at 4304 Upton Ave. It is a joint project between Chef Jonathan Gans and Josh Hoyt.

PATIO AND SIDEWALK CAFE

The owners of Martina and Rosalia plan to make their outdoor patio and sidewalk cafe permanent at 4312 Upton Ave S.

Submit your business news for publication. Email tesha@tmcpub.com.

CITY BRIEFS

RESTAURANT WORKERS SEEK TO UNIONIZE

Workers at Ann Kim's Korean American restaurant, run by award winning Ann Kim, are expected to vote on June 27 on joining Unite Here Local 17, a union that represents thousands of hospitality workers in the Twin Cities.

FOOD FUNDING

The city has approved funding for several local groups intended to support efforts to create a fair and climate-resilient food system in Minneapolis including the Kingfield Farmers Market (Neighborhood Roots) which will receive \$13,860 to strengthen its food redistribution program, Nourishing Neighbors, by buying unsold produce from its vendors to be distributed to local food shelves.

BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE APPOINTEES

The city has approved the appointments of Cliff Mountjoy-Venning from Ward 7, Aaron Shaffer from Ward 8, Natalie Wagner for Ward 10, and Kevin Dillon for 13, to the Bicycle Advisory Committee for terms that end May 31, 2026.

PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

The city has appointed Neal Baxter from Ward 8, Amy Nash from Ward 7, Andrea Riehl for Ward 8, Eric Smith from Ward 7, and Alexander Johnson from Ward 10, to the Pedestrian Advisory Committee for two-year terms that begin in July and end on June 30, 2026.

ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMISSION

The city has approved appointing Gladys Mejia from Ward 7, Adam Schneider from Ward 10, and Zamzam Ahmed for Mayoral from Ward 13, to the Environmental Advisory Commission.



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