

# SOUTHWEST Connector

NEWS FOR EVERYONE, DELIVERED TO EVERYONE • JULY 2024 • VOL. 3 • NO. 8 • 25,000 CIRCULATION



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## LAKE OF THE ISLES TRASH BOOM INSTALLED



**Neighborhood association's Green Team has been working to combat litter in lake for two years.**

By **Margie O'Loughlin**

If you're walking around Lake of the Isles, take a look at the newly installed

The Osprey Initiative's litter boom is a floating barrier designed to capture litter at the storm water outflow. The blue float line slows the speed of incoming storm water, so that whatever trash it is carrying can be easily contained by the boom. The whole system will be removed in November, and put back in the water next April. It's designed for minimal environmental impact, including easy navigation of wildlife. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

trash boom floating in the water where the parkway meets Euclid Place. You'll see a smaller blue barrier that slows the speed of incoming storm water, and a larger black barrier holding captured plastic bottles, tin cans, cigarette butts, and probably much more.

Neighborhood resident and East Isles Neighborhood Association (EINA) board member Henry LaBounta is intimately ac-

quainted with trash floating in Lake of the Isles. When he and his family moved here in 2020, he was excited to be able to kayak near his home. He quickly found a new mission to accompany his love of kayaking: picking up trash along the nearly three miles of shoreline and the two islands that give the lake its character.

As co-chair of EINA's Green Team, he estimates that he and his team members

have pulled about 1,000 pounds of trash out of the lake each of the last three years.

### HOW IT WORKS

Lake of the Isles has several storm water outflows. The one at Euclid Place and the parkway is especially problematic, because it carries storm water from Hennepin Ave. and surrounding streets in



## A LINDEN HILLS COLLAB

**Three neighbors combine their skills in writing, photography and wrangling**

By **Tesha M. Christensen**

A local author opted to highlight two Linden Hills locations for the publicity photos being used for the release of her new book – and two neighbors helped her make it happen.

Pallavi Dixit released her debut novel, "EDISON" in June 2024. She grew up in Edison, N.J., attended the University of Pennsylvania and University of Massachusetts, worked in the publishing industry in New York, and settled in Minneapolis after getting married. "My husband thought I would suggest settling down on the East Coast somewhere, but I just loved Minneapolis whenever I visited. And now we never want to leave!" said Dixit. "My husband and I moved to Linden Hills from downtown about 13



Pallavi Dixit

years ago, sort of on a whim. We didn't have kids yet and one Sunday we thought it would be fun to drive around and go to open houses in some of the neighborhoods we were considering for the future.

We stumbled upon a house here in Linden Hills and just fell in love with it. We put in an offer that day!"

One day, while writing at Rustica Bakery, Dixit approached a stranger to tell her how impressed she was that the woman was out with her one- and three-year-old children, and shared that she had children about the same age. Kim Richards had recently moved back to Minnesota and was excited to make friends, so they exchanged numbers. "Pallavi was immediately outgoing and positive and continues to be extremely generous with her compliments," remarked Richards. "Whenever I have a conversation with her, I always leave feeling good about myself."

"I met Kim about 10 years ago at Rustica Bakery and immediately adored her," said Dixit. "I'm happy to say we've been



## HORNSTEIN RETIRES AFTER 20 YEARS IN LEGISLATURE

**Frank Hornstein's career in Minnesota House focused on economic justice, climate change, human rights and protecting democracy**

By **Cam Gordon**

In February, Minnesota State Representative Frank Hornstein announced that it was time for him to "reorder" his "life's priorities and to pass the torch to new leadership after 22 years of legislative service."

This November, voters in southwest's District 61A, will elect a new representative and Jan. 6, 2025 will be his last day as a state legislator.

He is still working, even though the legislature is not in session. "I'm still weighing in with state agencies on the is-



Frank Hornstein

sues of the day," he said, noting that he was currently working on his formal comments to the Public Utilities Commission about the 100% clean electricity bill that commits all utilities to provide their Minnesota customers with 100 percent carbon-free electricity by 2040.

He is spending some time door-knocking and advising candidates he supports. When asked about the candidates running to replace him in 61A, he said, "I'm staying out of it. They are all working very hard from what I see and that's good for the community."

### INSPIRED BY WELLSTONE, HE SOUGHT TO BE A PROGRESSIVE, TOO

Originally from Cincinnati, Ohio, Hornstein moved to the Twin Cities when he attended Macalester College in St. Paul, and later the University of Minnesota – Humphrey Institute. He is married to Marcia Zimmerman (senior rabbi at Temple Israel



**Minneapolis Sailing Center offers free sailing every third Sunday, noon to 5 p.m.**

By **Margie O'Loughlin**

The Minneapolis Sailing Center (MSC) is a non-profit organization that works to improve access to what has historically been one of the world's most exclusive sports. MSC Executive Director Ted Salzman said, "Our mission is to foster an inclusive, sustainable community, and to teach sailing to all."

**FREE SAILING SUNDAY**

Every third Sunday from June-September, noon to 5 p.m., MSC offers free 30-minute sailing lessons on Bde Maka Ska in Uptown. MSC doesn't take reservations, but the wait rarely exceeds 10-15 minutes. More than 850 people accepted the invitation to sail with them through this program last summer.

Salzman said, "People come off the boat smiling and wanting to learn more. We hear things like, 'I've been walking around this lake for years, but I've never been out on the water before.'"

Southwest resident Vikas Narula is one of the many experienced MSC sailors who share their time, skills, and passion for sailing. On the Free Third Sunday in August 2019, Narula asked two men sitting near the boat house if they'd like to go sailing. It took some coaxing to get them on board, but eventually they agreed to try their first-ever sail boat ride.

The two men were George Floyd and his friend Alvin Manago. When Floyd died nine months later, MSC dove deeper into its Equity and Inclusion initiative, expanding the size and scope of its Community Partnership Program and forming Free Sailing Sundays. The initiative exists to create a pathway to sailing for people who have historically been underrepresented in the sport.

MSC aims to help newcomers develop a lifelong passion for sailing by providing education, encouragement, and sliding fee schedule/scholarships for all of their classes and events.

**COMMUNITY PARTNERS**

In 2023, MSC welcomed nearly 1,000

# SAILING FOR EVERYBODY



Vikas Narula (left), George Floyd (center), and Alvin Manago (right) on the free Third Sunday Sailing event in August 2019. (Photo submitted by Vikas Narula)



If you look at the data, the demographics of sailing doesn't match that of society at large. With a diverse population near our sailing center on Bde Maka Ska, one of our goals is to reflect the demographics of our community. We're looking to lower the barrier to entry."

**Ted Salzman**



sailors from 28 different Twin Cities' non-profit organizations to the world of sailing. Partners include Girls Taking Action, Boys of Hope, Outdoor Afro MN, Outdoor Latino MN, New Directions Youth Ministry, Bolder Options, Urban Ventures, YWCA, and many others.

Salzman said, "Partnerships range from one-hour sailboat rides to day-long field trips. Group classes can be as small as three people, or as large as 100. Learning to sail develops self-confidence and independence in people of all ages. It improves critical thinking skills, which are necessary both on and off the water."

He continued, "Learning to sail is a craft honed over time but sailing, at its core, is about observing your surround-

ings. It requires that you adapt to changing circumstances – and that's where it becomes a teaching tool for facing life's challenges and tough times."

**IT'S JUST BETTER ON THE WATER**

Executive director of MSC since 2016, Salzman grew up in a sailing family, near the shores of Cedar Lake. He was actively involved with the Lake Calhoun Sailing School, MSC's predecessor, and enjoyed sailboat racing as a kid with his dad. He said, "I was someone who loved being close to the water, the wind, and the waves. I took a break from competition, went to college, and suddenly found myself 10 years into an engineering career. I worked for a firm downtown, with a cubi-

cle for an office. It was time for a career change."

MSC offers opportunities for everyone to try the sport of sailing – and to get comfortable on the water while learning new skills. Salzman said, "On a sailboat, you can put your stresses and worries aside. You can actually leave them on-shore. Seeing the city from the water gives you a different perspective."

To learn more about Free Sailing Sundays, Community Partnerships, or MSC's extensive list of classes and events, go to [www.sail.mpls.org](http://www.sail.mpls.org). You may also visit the team dockside at 3010 East Bde Maka Ska Parkway, Minneapolis, MN 55408.

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## HORNSTEIN RETIRES

in Minneapolis), is a father of three and, since April, the grandfather of one. He turns 65 this September.

Prior to his election in 2003, he worked in the area as a community organizer and, in 2000, was appointed by Governor Jesse Ventura to the Metropolitan Council.

He met Paul Wellstone in the summer of 1982 in southwest Minneapolis at a meeting at the Rainbow Café when Wellstone was running for state auditor. "I got to know him then and was inspired by him," said Hornstein.

Hornstein supported him and his "vision of governing as a progressive," when was first elected to the U.S. Senate in 1990.

"I was working at Clean Water Action at the time and you know all of a sudden we had a guy that was our friend who was an organizer in the United States Senate who would show up at our press conferences who would not worry about being part of a 97 to 3 vote and would do courageous things over and over again," Hornstein said. "It was a model for me."

"The year I ran, that's when the plane crashed [that resulted in Wellstone's death], so we never served in elected office together, but I tried to model what he modeled which was how you could be a progressive but still build relationships with the other side," said Hornstein. "His impact on Minnesota politics is profound."

### URBAN-SUBURBAN COALITIONS

From the start of that first term Hornstein worked to have positive working relationships, even, and perhaps especially with people who didn't necessarily share his political views.

"The first bill I did was to do a study of bus rapid transit on I35W and the Republicans south of the river were interested in that. And that's when I realized that relationships matter at the legislature and that's what I learned from organizing. If you don't agree with someone, build a relationship, and so I did," he recalled. "So we had a nice urban-suburban coalition to develop 35W transit which eventually became the orange line."

His interest in transportation policy and funding remained a priority throughout his time in office, including in 2024.

"I don't think we're going to have a session like the one last year for a long time," he said. "Passing the transportation bill was really the key and that was 20 years in the making. I am very proud of it but it wasn't just me. Senator Dibble and I worked on that and, of course, we had many, many community partners and even public sector unions stepped up in a big way to pass this bill. It was really monumental. Every single thing we could have dreamed of we packed into that bill and some of it was too successful like the e-bike vouchers."

Among his accomplishments, he includes progress on waste management. "We were able to increase the recycling and composting goals for the region," he said, "but right now the region is way behind our goal of having 75% recycling and composting by 2030 and we passed that 2014. It's one of the things that just continues to frustrate me."

Hornstein admits there is more work to be done.



"It was a great ride, and I'm proud of the work that we've done collectively. I feel like the progressive movement is in a good spot to continue to have a lot of influence," said Frank Hornstein as he retires from the Minnesota House seat he's held since 2003.

### FOUR PERSPECTIVES OF THOSE RUNNING TO FILL HIS SEAT

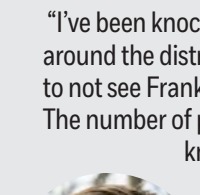
Here is a some of what the four people who are running to replace Frank Hornstein had to say about him.

"I met Frank years ago and have been lucky to call him a mentor. Last year, I worked closely with him on the Transportation bill. We developed nation-leading work incorporating new metrics into highway planning to curb emissions. I hope to continue his work on climate and transportation, because Minnesota still needs our district to lead on those fronts. But Frank's true legacy is rooted in his ability to work with anyone, no matter their background, identity, or politics. Frank brings people together, and that's what I strive to do through responsive governance and bringing empathy and compassion to the evidence-based policy solutions I hope to champion."

**Katie Jones, Wedge resident seeking Democratic Farmer Labor (DFL) party endorsement**

"Frank Hornstein has been a longtime ally for various environmental and socioeconomic justice issues such as public transportation and shutting down incinerators. Continuing to don the mantle of climate champion is expected of Frank's successor. Frank's dedication to reaching constituents, by prioritizing in person organizing over mass digital advertising, reinforces my deep canvassing approach to trust building in our district."

**Toya Lopez, Elliot Park resident endorsed by the Green Party**



"Frank taught me the importance of mentorship, and making folks around you feel comfortable, I'm lucky enough to be one of those folks who benefitted from learning from him, on the campaign side and legislative. The entire institution is better because of the knowledge he has passed down to staff and elected officials. Whoever wins this

race has big shoes to fill, and a Bob Dylan impression to work on."  
**Isabel Rolfes, East Isle resident seeking DFL endorsement**

"I've been knocking thousands of doors around the district and it's just impossible to not see Frank's impact on the district. The number of people who answer who know Frank personally, who talk about him as a friend, is head-spinning. As a candidate, it's incredibly intimidating -- you're constantly being reminded of the size of the shoes

you're filling. So first and foremost, if I was elected, I'd like to model myself around his incredibly open, congenial approach to politics. I'm not sure I've ever met anyone in politics who was as widely beloved as he is, which is no small feat in the present political environment."

**Will Stancil, Lowry Hill resident seeking DFL endorsement**

"We passed the landmark 100% carbon-free bill and how that gets implemented is really important because we can't have carve outs and loop holes and exceptions," he said. "If we keep exempt-

ing certain things, like incinerators, then we're not going to meet our goal. Those are fossil fuel plants and they emit on a per kilowatt basis as much as coal."

### CONCERN ABOUT HATE CRIMES INCREASING

Hornstein is also concerned about hate crimes. "We had triple-digit percentage increases in Islamophobia and antisemitism and the anti-immigration hate that's going on right now," he said, also noting serious concerns with transphobia. "We can do some degree of legislating around that but the legislature and every public body has to set an example," he said.

He views this kind of "othering" of people as a sign of authoritarianism and of democratic institutions being in crisis.

"The four things that I've always run on are in jeopardy," he said, listing economic justice and the growing disparity between rich and poor, climate change, human rights and protecting democracy itself.

### TELL PERSONAL STORIES TO YOUR LEGISLATORS

Hornstein said that it was "the honor of his life to serve" such a "uniquely wonderful community," of south central and southwest Minneapolis. "It's just a fantastic place, not without problems to solve or things that need to be fixed, but people have been generous and wonderful and helpful for the entire time."

As advice to constituents working with whoever his replacement turns out to be, he said, "It's better to write a personal letter or call or have a meeting then to just do a form letter." If someone can tell a personal story about how a policy decision impacts their lives "that makes a big difference. It's very rare that we get handwritten letters that someone puts a stamp on and sends to our office and if they do it really stands out... Be as personal as possible."

There is little doubt that Hornstein was well supported by voters in the area. Not only did several people stop by to say hello to him during an interview at what he calls his "district office" at the Rustica Café on West Lake street, but in his last election, in 2022, he received 98% of the vote.

### GET IN THERE. GET PEOPLE BEHIND YOU.

For the incoming representative, he wants them to understand the importance of building relationships "both within the caucus and on the other side of the aisle and be intentional about it." He said that everyone has their own areas of interest and expertise and that finding a cohort of people that shares yours is crucial to being successful.

He also wants them to be activists. "There used to be advice that freshmen just need to observe," he said. "I totally reject that. Get in there. Make speeches. Chief author legislation. Try to get people behind you."

He advised his successor: "Work with organizations, work with neighborhood groups, work with community groups. Just because something is a great idea it's not going to see the light of day in the legislature. You gotta have a movement behind it. The most significant things we passed had groups who had been working on them for many years. You can't go with it alone."

Hornstein added, "It was a great ride and I'm proud of the work that we've done collectively. I feel like the progressive movement is in a good spot to continue to have a lot of influence."

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# ITALIAN TRAVEL: THINK DIFFERENTLY

## Travel non-profit offers way to connect with culture and people

This time of the year many of us begin to dream of traveling to distant places. As Baby Boomers, we often possess both time and money to allow us to make yet another memorable trip to (where else)... Italy! The mere mention of Italy conjures up iconic images: the epicenter of the Roman empire, the hub of Catholicism, and the birthplace of the Renaissance. Indeed, Italy's rich heritage in art, history, religion, architecture, fashion, design, music, and cuisine has deeply influenced Western cultural tradition.

With more UNESCO World Heritage sites than any other country in the world, Italy's tourist volume is overwhelming, relentless, and focused predominantly on the biggest attractions: Venice, Rome, and Florence. This phenomenon has even earned a name, over-tourism, or if you prefer, "The Venice Syndrome." It happens when such formerly desirable locations are overrun by tourism, causing notably regrettable changes in local character, and diminishing tourists' experiences.

According to the World Bank, in 2019 Italy welcomed 100 million tourists. Venice, a small island city of 51,000 residents, alone attracted 20 million visitors. Such a stunningly high number of



By **Anna Bonavita**

visitors in a small city has made Venice ground zero for studying the phenomenon of over-tourism. Those residents who remain from Venice's population height of 170,000 just a few decades ago, are there simply to serve tourists' needs. High real estate costs, to some extent fueled by the Airbnb phenomenon and fading infrastructure, have caused a massive exodus of residents. An article in the Guardian reported that the remaining residents fear becoming "relics in a museum." The sad reality is that it seems like everyone wants to see Venice for a day, and in the process of doing it the city is losing character and its very substance – its people.

It is easy to explain this phenomenon when combining Venice's unique physical, cultural, and historical attractiveness with the power of external forces: low-cost airlines, especially within Europe, proliferation of giant cruise ships, and the tens of millions of tourists who are motivated by checking items off of their bucket lists.

I remember reading in a Columbia University publication the proud statement of an alumnus: "My wife and I have visited 154 countries." I do understand the bucket list mentality. I, like many of us, have participated in friendly exchanges of bucket lists and a discussion of often-superficial travel experiences. But I think most of us also know there's a better way to travel. We know that our social media selfies and historic monument check marks do not really make for satisfying, enriching travel experiences.

Tourism represents the largest service industry in the world and is here to stay, so let's begin with the hopeful idea that it can be a catalyst for good if we re-think our approach. As inhabitants of a priv-

ileged part of the world, we Americans are not just part of the problem, but of the solution, as well. We, as enlightened, conscientious travelers, could begin seeing the destructive force of over-tourism, and look for a positive alternative to its consuming reality. Perhaps we could give a second thought to cruise ship offers, inexpensive packages to oversold places, or destination-hopping travel spoofed by the 1960's film "If it's Tuesday This Must be Belgium."

I encourage you to recognize that a bucket list approach can promote a superficial and ultimately unsatisfying approach to appreciating cultural treasures. I invite you to embrace a different ethos: travel less but stay longer. Localized stays create more meaningful experiences, more lasting memories, and result in more positive emotional, intellectual, and economic impact for everyone involved.

And here is an idea. As we travel to desirable places, what if we put connecting with people and local cultures first as our primary objective? Inevitably we will need to embrace an intentionally slower pace, one which will keep us grounded and allow us to reach out to others and locals.

When I lived in Italy I watched with growing discomfort, bordering on disgust, the corrosive impact of mass tourism on places that have succeeded far too well in attracting visitors. How and where we travel truly matters. So, for a moment, imagine a trip that not only will take your body to a new place, but will elevate your mind and spirits to a higher level of being. This is my vision, and it's why I started a travel-based nonprofit (Esperienza) that leads tours to Italy. We keep our groups small, and we create time and place where our

travelers fall in love with undiscovered little towns and rural places, and people that are far removed from the disappointing impact of crowds, tours, and faux-authentic experiences. The slow, immersive, intimate experiential journey that we offer helps to genuinely connect with local communities of artists, chefs, farmers, musicians, and even politicians, gaining greater insights into locals' lives and culture. Friendships are formed in spite of the language barrier, and some of our visitors become regulars and keep coming again for the same – the warmth of human connection, the profound joy of conviviality, and the feeling of being fully alive. The honest food and wine of Romagna, my favorite off-the-beaten path region, always helps as well.

Our vision is that travel should be an inspiring and powerful force, with an underlying commitment to the local environment. People, communities, and culture are at the forefront, reinforcing creativity, enrichment, and preservation of cultural identity, while also providing opportunities for sustainable rural development. Venice, Rome, and Florence don't need us, nor do the Amalfi Coast or Cinque Terre. But the rest of Italy does, and perhaps we need it even more. It is difficult to disagree with Ernest Hemingway, who said it best: "We only half live over here. The Italians live all the way." Find out for yourself!



**Anna Bonavita** is a former physicist with a passion for culture, cuisine and environment. Born in a small village in Bulgaria but swept up in the waves of globalization, she claims several countries as the source of her cultural identity. Her travel nonprofit, Esperienza, provides small-scale, immersive experiences. She is also the founder of the Italian Cultural Center of Minneapolis/St. Paul, the Italian Film Festival, and The Communal Table.

## STORIES & JOURNEYS

### RECONNECTING WITH STORIES AND JOURNEYS

From time to time I need to remind myself what I am tasked to do when it comes to writing Stories and Journeys. I am tasked to write what I'm thinking, learning and experiencing in my life as an elder. Occasionally I run across readers who want to tell me what to write. Others ask me what this column is about and usually in the moment my beginner's mind says, "Damned if I know." The column takes shape as I write/sculpt it out of the word clay in my mind as I picture how different words fit together to create a column.

The fact is there are at least two things no one can do for me. They are die and write Stories and Journeys. And now to assist me with the dying part I have an End of Life Doula. I have become very aware that we all have filters whereby we process incoming stimuli that includes Stories and Journeys. This means everything I write is subject to interpretation including by me. This doesn't mean I don't get ideas from readers that fit in with what I am tasked to write and picturing in my mind. These are appreciated. And if you have read this far you have taken the plunge into the river (flow) of life experiences that is Stories



By **Donald L. Hammen**

## RECONNECTING, STREAMING, THINKING IN PICTURES

and Journeys. Buckle up as I celebrate my car trip to Des Moines.

### STREAMING MY CAR TRIP TO DES MOINES

In a previous column I wrote that one of my end of life aspirations was to make a return visit to my home town of Des Moines – specifically the north side of Des Moines where I "grew up." I wanted it to be time spent without the duress of it being a weekend visit for the committal service for my deceased brother in 2022. In other words, to stay longer and linger. I wanted to re-visit my paper route from back in the year I delivered the Des Moines Register and Tribune newspapers. Most importantly, I wanted to test out my idea that my cervical spine fusion and decompression surgery last year stabilized my spine so I could tolerate the 4.5-hour car trip with minimal or no pain.

Well, dear reader, I can now write that the trip did take place May 24 to May 31, and I did tolerate the car trip to north Des Moines and back to south Minneapolis with no pain. Mission accomplished thanks to the driving of my niece, Crissy, and my sister-in-law, Carol. I did it!

Now the first thing I discovered upon arrival at my sister-in-law's house is that she doesn't watch television the same way I do. She uses a remote that I do not understand that causes what I call "streaming channels" to show up on a large screen in her living room. At any time day or night

she can click on one of these channels that she has subscribed to and watch whatever.

Now I have written that my life is like a free movie which I call "As Life Goes By" which I can watch any time and now it turns out anywhere. Since returning to south Minneapolis I have discovered I am now starting to remember my Iowa trip as pictures on a screen that I can stream into my awareness. Part of my ongoing movie "As Life Goes By."

### THINKING IN PICTURES

Dear reader, do the words "thinking in pictures" apply to you or someone you know as to how they process the world? Tell yourself, tell others or tell me via tesha@tmcpub.com. It's a part of me that I am beginning to explore. There are times when I am writing Stories and Journeys I find myself mentally stepping back to see how the column is looking. I have other examples. Maybe you have some of your own.

### THE LONG GOOD BYE OF DEWAYNE AND MARCEA – HELLO TO A NEW REALITY

What started out as a once-a-month reason for myself, DeWayne Townsend and Marcea Marianni to stay in touch evolved into what today is Elder Voices. Today things are different. DeWayne's Parkinson's disease plus other health issues has led him to be admitted to a facility where he can receive 24-hour care. This has presented his wife Marcea with a hard

truth, a bitter pill to swallow as she moves forward with their life together.

There are those besides me that know that DeWayne and Marcea have devoted much of their life time and energy to making Greater Longfellow a better place to live, work and play through their work and service via the Longfellow Community Council. My impression: It will take a village/neighborhood to support them on this end of life journey.

### SPOKEN AT ELDER VOICES.

Dorothy and Judith, Messenger readers from Nokomis and Greater Longfellow neighborhoods respectively showed up to tell their stories and share their journeys. Topics of conversation included history of Elder Voices and Medicare Advantage plans.

Dorothy wanted to talk about Medicare Advantage plans. We talked about the recent "die in" at United Health carried out by health justice advocates.

Elder Voices (Telling Our Stories/Sharing Our Journeys) will meet July 26 and Aug. 23 (not the last Friday this month), 10-11 a.m. at Turtle Bread, 4205 E 34th Street. Look for the table with the All Elders sign. If you want to celebrate anything do show up.

In gratitude always.



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

## SOUTHWEST Connector

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# YOU'RE INVITED TO (SUPPORT) THE TWIN CITIES BOOK FESTIVAL

It's the 24th annual celebration of books. And Rain Taxi, the nonprofit that runs the festival, needs your help.

The Twin Cities Book Festival is Minnesota's largest gathering of readers and one of the region's premier art events. It also might be the best-kept secret in the country.



By Eric Ortiz

Presented annually by the literary organization Rain Taxi, the Twin Cities Book Festival is having its 24th annual celebration of books this year. The free one-day festival will be Saturday, Oct. 19, at the Minnesota State Fairgrounds, where it's held every fall.

The book festival brings together nationally known writers, local literary heroes, publishers, magazines, booksellers, and more to celebrate our region's vibrant literary culture. The TCBF regularly attracts nearly 7,000 people to enjoy a bustling exhibit hall, author readings and talks, and other literary fun for adults and children.

The festival's audience is diverse and tends to be college-educated, independent-minded, and active in civic life. They strongly value the arts and the businesses that support them. We invite you to reap the benefits of interacting with this culturally engaged group.

I am a board member of Rain Taxi, and I have seen the value of the organization and book festival firsthand.

Rain Taxi presents the annual Twin Cities Book Festival free of charge, but we need your help. You can support our annual Twin Cities Book Festival gathering and the nonprofit that organizes it by making a one-time donation or becoming a Rain Taxi member. Suggested donations are \$25, \$50, or \$100.

A \$25 gift allows us to offer free admission to the festival, helps us run our other literary engagement projects throughout the year, including the Twin Cities Literary Calendar and the Twin Cities Independent Bookstore Passport, and makes you a member of Rain Taxi. As a member, you'll get print issues of the award-winning quarterly magazine Rain Taxi Review of Books delivered to your door.

A \$50 gift allows Rain Taxi to include emerging authors in TCBF events, expands children's and local author programming at the festival, and makes you a member of Rain Taxi, as described above.

A \$100 gift gets you all of the above, plus offsets rising venue costs, expands the possibilities for future festivals, and makes you an Editor's Circle member of Rain Taxi. As an Editor's Circle member, you'll get VIP benefits in addition to print issues of Rain Taxi Review of Books.

Rain Taxi also offers sponsorship packages for business and community organizations. Sponsorships range from \$1,000 to \$10,000, and Rain Taxi is happy to customize packages based on your organization's particular goals and interests.

You can let Rain Taxi know what financial level of support is right for you, and we can tailor a plan that suits your needs. Contact TCBF director Eric Lorberer at [bookfest@raintaxi.com](mailto:bookfest@raintaxi.com) to set up a call.

Book lovers age 16 and older can volunteer at the festival, as well. Volunteers help run our used book and record sale, stage events and author appearances, children's events and activities, and more. It's a fun, fast-paced, rewarding way to get a look behind the scenes of the year's biggest book day and to be an essential part of making it happen.

Now in its 29th year, Rain Taxi has been championing diverse voices in literature and publishing a quarterly magazine of book reviews since 1996. Led by Lorberer, the Rain Taxi editor and executive director, and art director Kelly Everding, this print journal is not your average look at fiction, nonfiction, poetry and comics. It produces 40-50 award-winning pages of adventurous literature every four months and is now distributed in 150 locations nationwide.

But Rain Taxi is much more than just a magazine. Rain Taxi also organizes the Rain Taxi Reading Series and publishes original creative works via chapbooks and broadsides, and, as a service to the local community, maintains the Twin Cities Literary Calendar with a list of literary events in our region.

In all its programs, Rain Taxi is committed to artistic diversity, cultural relevance, and widespread access. They exist for readers, writers, publishers, booksellers, educators, and kindred spirits of all shapes and sizes. The common bond is a desire to keep books flourishing.

Now more than ever, we need the arts and everything they bring to society. The literary arts help people from different cultures connect and understand each other through stories. Books and writing can be a tool for social change. Books are good for your health, help you see life's beauty, and can offer therapeutic relief.

On top of all that, books can provide an economic boost, as nonprofit arts and culture organizations in the United States contribute an estimated \$60 billion to the national economy each year.

It takes money to preserve the arts.



Authors at the 2023 Twin Cities Book Festival in St. Paul.



The free Twin Cities Book Festival draws 7,000 people each year for author readings and talks, a bustling exhibit hall, and other literary fun for children and adults.

You can play a part. Start today.

Contact Rain Taxi executive director Eric Lorberer at [bookfest@raintaxi.com](mailto:bookfest@raintaxi.com) to sponsor the Twin Cities Book Festival or make a donation at [bit.ly/twincitiesbook-support](http://bit.ly/twincitiesbook-support).



**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.

## GREEN PARTY CANDIDATE SHOULD BE PART OF FORUM

The decision by the League of Women Voters to exclude Green Party candidate Toya Lopez from the upcoming Minnesota House of Representatives District 61A forums is a disappointing one. It is undemocratic to not allow her to participate. Even though Lopez will not be on the primary ballot, right now is when voters are having conversations about the election and making up their minds on who to support. I fail to see the harm in allowing a third party candidate to be part of the forums to share their views. If it spurs conversations about not voting DFL, so be it. These forums exist for issues to be discussed and perspectives to be shared. Let's welcome more candidates and more ideas instead of shutting them out.



Taylor Dahlin, Loring Park

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Source: 'Demand Generation', Feb 2021, Mindshare/MediaCom/Wavemaker/GroupM/Gain Therapy. The payback series analyzed the ROI of 60 brands with annual turnover of \$23b, and \$450m in advertising. Data is based on 14 finance brands. Total News is primarily based on print and magazine data.

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THE ART OF...

I had the pleasure of experiencing a sound bath by Royce Vagnier. It transcended me into a beautiful, relaxing, and healing place.



By Suzie Marty

For many years I have dipped my toe in different realms of various healing modalities but had not yet experienced a Sound Bath. Quite honestly, I wasn't sure what it was. I am somewhat familiar with crystal singing bowls, but to be in a safe environment and soak in the harmonious vibrations at one of his sessions was deeply magical and cleansing. Much like a deep meditation, I lie listening and feeling the vibrations of the bowls and I was quickly moved to a comforting zone feeling the stresses of my mind and body release. Royce not only is technically trained with the bowls but has a natural gift using his life experiences. His talents playing the bowls uniquely bring rebalance for holistic wellness.

MEET ROYCE VAGNIER

I first experienced a singing bowl about 15 years ago while working with Nancy Lindgren to release compressed emotions around my heart. At one session, she asked me if she could use a singing bowl tuned to the heart chakra. I consented, not really knowing what it would do. She began circling the bowl and I was immediately taken to a place of calm and wonder. I loved the sound I was hearing. I loved feeling the sound waves pulsing against my skin. I loved feeling the sound within my body. I was transported to a familiar and comfortable place - I felt at home and at peace with myself. Little did I know at that moment, that this healing experience would have a profound influence on the rest of my life.

Fast forward to May 2022. My husband and I were visiting Sedona, Ariz. where we discovered an amazing singing bowl store. The store was closed, but the windows were filled with at least 200 singing bowls in every size, shape and color. My heart jumped with joy at the sight - I wanted one. I would later learn that these were alchemy singing bowls - pure

THE SOUND OF HEALING LOVE



Royce Vagnier, a sound alchemist and lifelong musician, believes in the transformative power of music and the integration of movement, breath, and sound in his practice as a yoga instructor. (Photo submitted)

quartz bowls infused with semi-precious gemstones, minerals, and precious metals to enhance the healing properties. These bowls give the receiver the benefits of both the frequency and the alchemies.

Then in November, the next chapter in my journey began. The Universe guided me to my teacher Jeralyn Glass, a leader in the field of Sound Healing using Alchemy Crystal Singing Bowls. Our shared back-

ground in instrumental and vocal music created an immediate bond.

Sound healing is rooted in the concept that frequency + intention = healing. Jeralyn taught me that I'm the primary instrument and the bowls are conscious instruments that transmit my intentions, my love, and my connection with Spirit, to the receivers. My training focused on connecting to my Higher Self and using sacred



musical intervals to create a sacred space for healing.

It will not surprise you that the first singing bowl I purchased was my heart chakra bowl. When asked how I wanted to choose my first bowl, I replied that I wanted to listen and choose the bowl that "felt right" to me. What I didn't know at the time was that the heart bowl I chose was tuned to 528hz - the frequency of Universal Love (modern music is tuned to 440 hz). This high frequency, beautiful heart bowl sits in the center of my alchemy bowl collection.

The Signature Sound Baths I offer are a culmination of my life experiences thus far. As a strategist by profession, my analytical side loves finding the science to prove what ancient wisdom has taught us and what our Intuitive Self already knows. My musical side loves creating beautiful chords based on sacred intervals for healing. And, my experience as a certified yoga teacher along with my personal healing journey opens me to curate a mix of healing modalities to include in my sound bath experiences.

I believe that the combination of intentions, healing frequencies and the powerful alchemies of my bowls, create a multi-vitamin for the Soul. I'm grateful for this incredible journey. It has taught me that Intention + Frequency + Love = Enlivened Living.



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



2024 ANIMAL ADVOCATE AWARD

Minnesota Senator Scott Dibble (DFL) of Minneapolis was presented with the 2024 Animal Advocate Award by Animal Humane Society (AHS) in recognition of his work to support the welfare of Minnesota's companion animals during the 2024 state legislative session. He accepted the award from Janelle Dixon, AHS's President & CEO, at one of the organization's metro area shelters. Senator Dibble was the chief author in the Minnesota Senate of the Companion Animal Board Bill, legislation that AHS supports, and a state funding request that supported AHS's campaign to build a new animal care campus in the Twin Cities. The state funding request ultimately was not included in the legislature's final funding bills this year.

Dixon said, "We're proud to award Senator Dibble with this year's Animal Advocate Award because he values the human-animal bond and helps ensure the voices of animal lovers are heard at the state capitol."



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EVENTS

COMPLETE WORKS OF SHAKESPEARE

Jackdonkey Productions is excited to venture into the fast-paced, coordinated, and physical production of "The Complete Works of Shakespeare" (abridged). Performances through July 21 at the Phoenix Theater in Minneapolis. Shows are at 2 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday afternoon and 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Saturday and Sunday evenings. Quickly becoming a worldwide phenomenon, and earning the title of London's longest-running comedy, "The Complete Works of William Shakespeare" (abridged) is one of the world's most popular scripts when it comes to versatility and flexibility. Featured are all of William Shakespeare's plays, meant to be performed in an hour and a half, by three actors (Amanda Espinoza, Noah Hynick, and Adam Iverson). Fast-paced, coordinated, and physical, it's full of laughter for Shakespeare lovers and haters alike.

Jackdonkey Productions is a Twin Cities-based theater company sharing working-class stories through the lenses of absurdism, surrealism, and experimentalism. Founded in 2022 by artistic director Zach Christensen, Jackdonkey Productions has grown exponentially with the support of local artists and the community. Find Jackdonkey Productions on Facebook and Instagram, or email jackdonkeyprod@gmail.com.

LORING PARK FUN NIGHT JULY 24

Citizens for a Loring Park Community, Friends of Loring Park and MPRB present Loring Park Family Fun Night, an associated Aquatennial event, on Wednesday, July 24, at Loring Park, 5:30-7:30 p.m. Dance along to KIDS DANCE. There will be food vendors, inflatable jumpers, USTA tennis exhibition and canoe rides.

ICE CREAM PARTY IN THE STREETS

It's an ice cream party in the street! Please join us at the largest Bryn Mawr Neighborhood Association sponsored event of the year on Thursday, July 25 from 6-8 p.m. There will be 10 different flavors of ice cream, Italian ice and sorbet - plus birthday cake from Bryn Mawr Church. The BMNA will be accepting non-perishable food items to be donated to NorthPoint Food Shelf. Boxes for food donations will be near the entrance of the event. Chicky Rooster will be playing during the event. Area 6 resident, Deacon Warner is a member of this great band. Wear your dancing shoes. Bring a lawn chair. Supplies for this event are 100% compostable.

ART FESTIVAL AT LORING PARK JULY 27-28

Since 2000, Loring Park Art Festival has combined creative expression and community connectedness to surprise and delight all who attend. With beautiful ponds and formal gardens, Loring Park makes an idyllic spot to celebrate art,

music, food and entertainment for two days each summer. The event features 140 visual artists selling original work. Visitors will engage with strolling musicians, scheduled stage performances, engaging children's activities, adventurous culinary options and the Fulton Beer Garden. On Saturday, the Minnesota Symphonia will give their final concert.

SUMMER PARTY & MOVIE JULY 27

Tangletown's Summer Party & Movie in the Park will take place on July 27, in partnership with Fuller Park. Find fun for everyone, including live music from Dive Bar Orchestra, food trucks, kids' activities, and a free outdoor movie at sunset on the big screen. New this year: Sebastian Joe's ice cream, beach balls in the wading pool, and a caricature artist. Event details at tangletown.org/summer-party.

LYNNHURST SUMMER FESTIVAL

The Lynnhurst Summer Festival with live music, food, games, raffle is Aug. 1,

2024 from 5:30-8:30 p.m. outside the Lynnhurst Community Center.

BASILICA BLOCK PARTY

The Basilica Block Party is back at Boom Island Aug. 2-3, 2024. Go to basilicablockparty.org/volunteer/to sign up to volunteer.

HISTORIC WALKING TOUR AUG. 3

Explore the winding streets, impressive homes, and creek environment of the neighborhood originally known as Washburn Park on Aug. 3, 10:30 a.m. to noon. Meet at the Washburn High School south entrance on W. 50th St. Learn about landmark sites such as the Washburn Water Tower, the Harry Wild Jones House, Washburn Memorial Orphan Asylum (where Justice Alan Page Middle School now stands), and the Minnehaha Creek parkway, bridges, woods, and trails. The tour is free, but participants must reserve a spot. Tour guide is Tangletown Neighborhood historian Tom Balcom, who grew up in

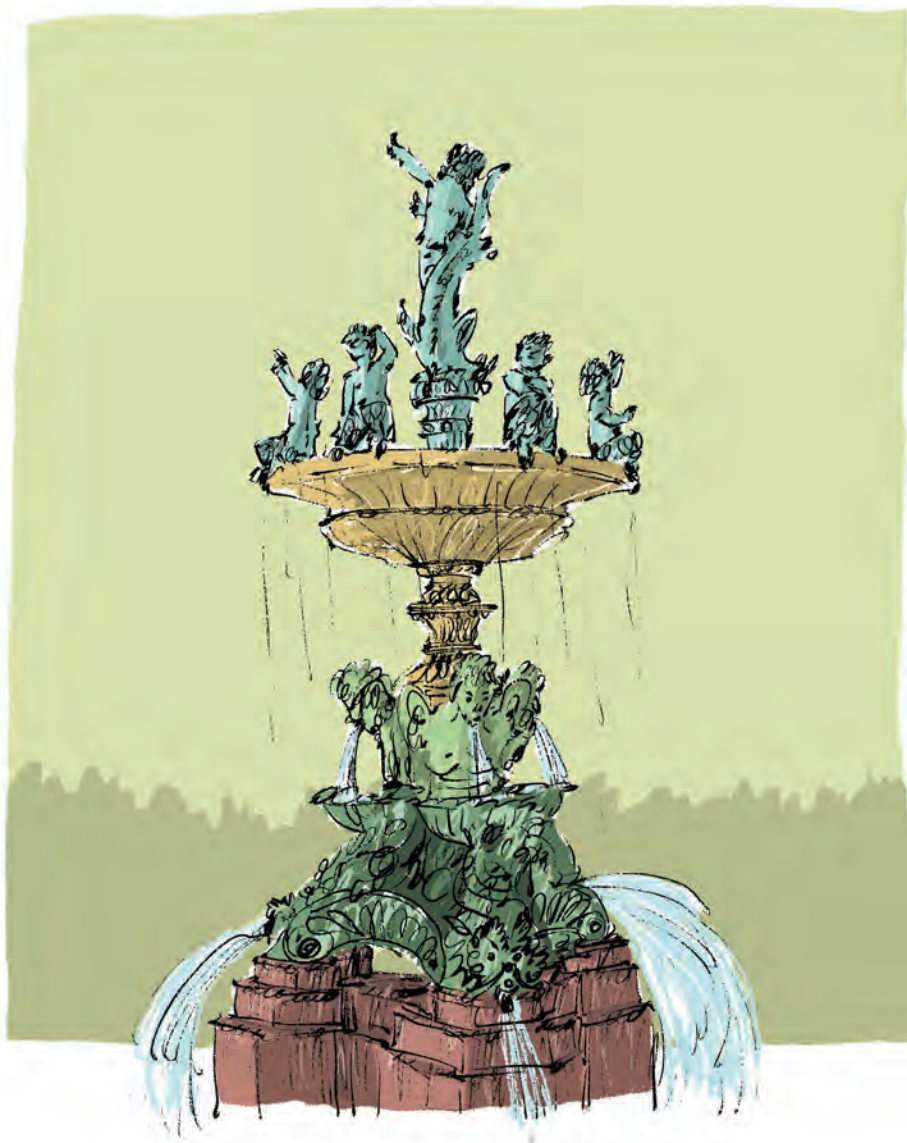
the area and believes that local history is not about yesterday; it's the context for why, where, and how we live in neighborhoods today. <https://tangletown.org/>.

ARMATAGE SUMMER JAM AUG. 18

Hear Heavy for the Hawk during the Armatage Summer Jam 2024 on Sunday, Aug. 18, 4-6 p.m. at Armatage Park. Also there will be Baron of Bubbles, Magic by Bruce, face painting, food trucks, lawn games and inflatables.

POLICE BAND LOOKING FOR MEMBERS

The Minneapolis Police Band is looking for more members. The Minneapolis Police Band is a community band as all citizen musicians in the greater Twin Cities are welcome to join. Rehearsals are Thursday nights in the community room of the 5th precinct, a short drive from anywhere in south Minneapolis, at 31st Street and Nicollet Ave. The Minneapolis Police Band plays at a variety of locations. Email [mpls.police.band@gmail.com](mailto:mpls.police.band@gmail.com).



Heffelfinger Fountain at the Rose Garden. I've been coming to this fountain since I was a little kid. We're pretty lucky to have such cool places to hang out at in this city. (Illustration by WACSO)

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EVENT INFO

# MAKE THE TWIN CITIES MORE BIRD-FRIENDLY

Birds collide with windows on homes as frequently as those on office towers. Consider making your windows more bird-friendly.

By Margie O'Loughlin

Cradling the Mississippi River on either side, the Twin Cities are a critical, yet hazardous, resting place for migrating birds. An estimated 40 million birds migrated through the Mississippi River flyway on their way to northern breeding grounds this spring – navigating obstacles in the human-built environment as they flew. The flyway is one of four major migratory corridors in the US.

Jeannine Thiele is the interim president of the Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis. She said, "A 2019 study revealed that North America's bird population has declined by almost 30% since 1970. Responsible for this are climate change, habitat loss, pesticide use, cat predation, and collisions with glass."

These mortality numbers are so big that they're hard to wrap one's head around. But bird deaths, at least in the last category, can be prevented one crash at a time without even leaving home.

### FLY BY NIGHT

Most migratory birds travel at night, relying in part on the moon and stars to



What can one person do to help birds avoid collisions with windows? Close your curtains at night, especially during the migration season, to reduce light spread. Make sure outdoor light is directed downward and use minimally. And consider using window markings. (Photo by Sara Sharp of Feather Friendly)

guide them. Night flying has other advantages too: the air is smoother, the temperatures cooler, and the predators fewer. But there is one huge disadvantage – artificial light attracts and confuses birds. When they see it, birds often crash into wherever the light is coming from: houses, office towers, transit shelters, car windows, greenhouses, solariums, and skyways. Collisions with windows on homes are about as frequent

as collisions with those on office towers.

So, what can one person do? Close your curtains at night, especially during the migration season, to reduce light spread. And give consideration to your choice of outdoor lighting. Beams of light should only be directed downward, never up into trees, and used minimally as safety needs require.

### STOP THE 'THUD'

Minneapolis city council member Linea Palmisano (Ward 13) tried to amend the glass at US Bank Stadium during construction to be more bird safe, but the Metropolitan Sports Facility was unwilling to pay for it. The stadium has 200,000 square feet of highly reflective window glass, and is a threat to migrating birds.

Palmisano said, "Bird-safe zoning for our city is an important issue. We need to be incentivizing construction materials and projects that minimize bird collisions. I find it galling that people laud US Bank Stadium as one of the premier sports facility in the country, when it's a 30-story-tall building made of glass right in the Upper Mississippi Flyway."

The city of Minneapolis did pass a Bird Safe Glass ordinance in 2016, which has been used effectively in downtown skyway construction since then.

Local examples of buildings with bird-safe glass include the Bell Museum, Bakken Museum, Minnehaha Academy, Minneapolis Central Library, Allianz Field, and Hennepin County Government Center skyways.



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**8 BIRD-FRIENDLY**

**FLY BY DAY**

Daytime flight has its challenges too. Thiele said, "Birds can't interpret glass. They 'see' the reflections of trees, shrubs, and open skies as real – and try to fly on through. A bird's first interaction with glass is usually fatal, so there isn't much opportunity for learning. Migrating and juvenile birds are especially susceptible to window strikes."

Thiele continued, "Glass looks transparent, reflective, or dark to birds depending on available light. Markers placed on the outside surface of windows makes glass visible to them, while still being transparent to the human eye. Markers placed inside windows are not nearly as effective."

Research from the American Bird Conservancy (ABC) has shown that birds will not fly through spaces less than two inches high and two inches wide. This is the recommended spacing for marking windows to help birds "see" glass, and there are a variety of products to choose from.

**MAKE YOUR OWN BIRD-SAFE GLASS**

Feather Friendly ([www.featherfriendly.com](http://www.featherfriendly.com)) is a Canadian company that has been designing window markings to prevent bird collisions since 2006. Visit the small-scale DIY section on their website to see a variety of adhesive products that can be applied to home windows.

In partnership with Feather Friendly, the American Bird Conservancy offers a

Purchase or make your own window markings to make the glass bird-friendly. (Photo by Tony Stoddard of Feather Friendly)

product called ABC Bird Tape. The white or light blue vinyl tape can be applied to windows in long strips or patterns of squares. The tape lasts an average of four years, and is translucent enough to let natural light through.

Acopian Bird Savers ([www.acopianbirdsavers.org](http://www.acopianbirdsavers.org)) are a simple solution



Birds can't interpret glass. They 'see' the reflections of trees, shrubs and open skies as real – and try to fly on through. A bird's first interaction with glass is usually fatal, so there isn't much opportunity for learning. Migrating and juvenile birds are especially susceptible to window strikes."

Jannine Thiele

made of parachute cord hung in two-inch strips across the width of a window. Note that cord should be cut longer than window length, as rain will cause cord shrinkage. Acopian Bird Savers can be purchased ready-made through their website, or you can make them yourself.

And the most economical solution of all? Apply tempera paint (available at most art supply and craft

stores) free-hand with a brush or sponge, or use a stencil. Tempera paint is long-lasting, rain-proof and non-toxic, but wipes off easily with a damp rag and a little elbow-grease.

The hawk decals many of us thought were sufficient for alerting birds don't work, it turns out. If you have a window or windows prone to bird strikes, try one of these other methods to prevent bird deaths at home.



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**▶ 1 TRASH BOOM**

a heavily-used commercial corridor. When car tires flatten pieces of trash, they flow effortlessly into the storm water system – and ultimately into the lake.

The trash boom public demonstration/installation was held on Wednesday, June 26 at 5 p.m. with more than 50 people in attendance. It marked the culmination of two years of work by the Green Team to combat litter in Lake of the Isles. Organizations that partnered in acquiring the trash boom included Minneapolis Department of Public Works, Minneapolis Park Board, and Freshwater Society.

Speaking at the event, LaBounta said, “The East Isles and Wedge neighborhoods worked together to host 28 clean-up events last year that drew 335 volunteers. We also organize two safety walks per month. Wearing bright orange t-shirts so that we’re recognizable, a group of us walk along Hennepin Avenue to check on folks who might be struggling. We pick up litter at the same time, and we have lakeside clean-up events on the second Saturday of each month, as well.

**KEEP THOSE DRAINS CLEAN**

LaBounta is a staunch advocate of the Adopt-a-Drain Program. Keeping storm drains clear means that trash and organic matter don’t enter the storm water system after it rains, and helps improve the water quality.

In his remarks to the crowd, LaBounta said, “At 53%, the East Isles neighborhood has the highest percentage of adopted storm drains in the country.” Visit <https://adopt-a-drain.org/> to learn more about adopting a storm water drain in your neighborhood.

Following comments by each of the partner organizations, Yael Girard, Special Project Lead with the Osprey Initiative, explained the two functions of the trash boom. She said, “First and foremost, its job is to catch trash – but it also catches people’s attention. It’s a great way to show how water and trash move together through the storm water system. This is a very visible location.”

She went on to describe the Osprey Initiative’s role in this project. She said, “We’re a small environmental consulting business out of Mobile, Ala. We’ve designed systems to improve water quality in 22 states and four countries so far. We install and maintain our systems and, when the system is a trash boom, we also recycle or dispose of the trash that they capture.”

This is the Osprey Initiative’s second



The black outer layer of the boom holds captured trash until it can be removed by technicians. The system is designed for minimal environmental impact, including easy navigation of wildlife. There is still room for canoers, kayakers, and paddle boarders to access the water at this location. (Photo by Margie O’Loughlin)



Neighborhood associations help foster new friendships, connect members to neighborhood issues, and can result in improved shared spaces. Pictured left to right are Lona Healam, Henry LaBounta, and Ellen van Iwaarden of the East Isles Neighborhood Association. (Photo by Margie O’Loughlin)

project in Minneapolis. Their first trash boom was installed in Lake Hiawatha last year, and was so successful that the City of Minneapolis wanted to tackle the problem of removing litter in another city lake.

To learn more about the Lake of the Isles trash boom, safety walks, or upcoming clean-up events in the East Isles neighborhood, visit [www.eastisles.org](http://www.eastisles.org).

**PARK NEWS**

**CLINTON FIELD IMPROVEMENTS**

The Minneapolis Park & Rec Board has approved a new concept plan for improvements at Clinton Field Park at 2433 Clinton Ave in the Whittier neighborhood. It includes, among other things, new playgrounds, a fenced in futsal court, a sheltered picnic area, a community garden and full basketball court. Some construction could begin this fall, but is not expected to be completed until summer or fall of 2025.

**PAINTER PARK IMPROVEMENTS DONE**

The now-complete improvements on the west side of Painter Park include:

- Sport court reconstruction and upgrades: Finishing touches to the basketball court and tennis/pickleball court recently wrapped up, following delays due to spring’s cool weather and frequent rainfall. (Note: portable pickleball nets will be delivered soon.)
- Street-style skatepark with transition-style features
- Above- and below-ground storm-water management: Stormwater runoff from the skatepark flows via drains into chambers underneath its middle section, where it can slowly infiltrate and recharge the groundwater. Runoff from the tennis/pickleball courts flows into adjacent infiltration basins.

There are also new seating and gathering spaces, native plantings, and improved paths and pedestrian lighting.

**WHITTIER PARK WORK DELAYED**

Construction work for the new playground and other improvements at Whittier Park was originally planned for this summer, but is now delayed due to necessary environmental testing. Routine soil testing in preparation for the project indicated the presence of specific contaminants such as coal ash, brick debris, and lead below the soil surface in a few locations of the project site. These elements are commonly found in parks built on former residential land, and do not represent any risk to the public when they are beneath the soil surface. This summer, MPRB will complete the testing and enroll the Whittier Park site in the Brownfield Program from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) for review. This fall, MPRB will solicit construction bids for the project. Due to these delays, construction is now planned for spring-summer 2025, in coordination with the schedule for Whittier Elementary School.



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Linden Hills author Pallavi Dixit signs copies of her novel during an event at Barnes and Noble on June 4, 2024. "I strongly encourage folks to purchase the book," said her friend and photographer Kim Richards. "It'd make a great book club read featuring a local author."



Neighbor Kim Richards (not pictured) snapped photos of author Pallavi Dixit to use for publicity for her new book, "Edison," at the Linden Hills Library and local restaurant Rosalia. She picked the two for their natural light and simple backgrounds. (Photo by Kim Richards)



Attendees at the June 4 book signing event at Barnes and Noble at Greenway Commons hold Pallavi Dixit's debut novel, "Edison." Dixit also did events in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, and plans to hold additional readings soon in Minneapolis. (Photo submitted)



Molly Reitsema, Pallavi Dixit and Kim Richards celebrate after a successful photo shoot for Dixit's new book. (Photo submitted)

## ►1 LINDEN HILLS COLLAB

friends ever since."

Their kids have been in the same grades at Lake Harriet Lower and Upper, and Anthony Middle School. They have common friends in the neighborhood and also volunteer at the neighborhood-sponsored garden on Beard Avenue.

Richards has a photography background and has taken family pictures for the Dixit family and other friends, so Dixit asked if she might be up for taking her author photos.

After growing in Sauk Rapids, Richards spent time in Wisconsin, Israel, New Jersey, and DC. She returned to Minnesota so her children could grow up near relatives, and moved into the Linden Hills neighborhood in 2019. "We wanted to be near the lakes, in a traditional neighborhood (think sidewalks, grid blocks, etc.) that is also walkable, and close to schools. We really appreciate the strong community in Linden Hills," said Richards. "I love knowing my neighbors well, feeling my kids are safe to bike and explore independently, and having so many opportunities to be a part of an active community by volunteering, supporting local businesses, meeting people at parks, attending events, etc."

She started photography in high school, where she fell in love with developing film and prints in a traditional 'wet' darkroom. She worked as a photographer in college and as a young adult for supplemental income with a wide range of experience from newspapers, magazines, weddings, sporting events, and fine art.

Richards is inspired by plants, flowers and community. She likes street scenes that capture a moment and the botanical details of a flower. She isn't currently working as a photographer, but would like to return to darkroom and fine art photography in the future. "I love that it's tactile and challenges creativity with certain restrictions," said Richards. "I am more immediately interested in combining my

professional work in international conservation with local environmental efforts, specifically in schools."

"She was so generous with her time and energy and went above and beyond to set up a shoot," stated Dixit. "She thought about which spaces would have the best lighting along with interesting architecture and checked with both venues about availability."

"Regarding site selection, I always look to local places first, and my top priority for photographs is natural light and simple backgrounds – the [Linden Hills] library and Rosalia meet both requirements," said Richards. "I spoke with staff at both prior to our shoot and they were agreeable. We needed to be relatively quiet (very quiet at the library!) and respectful of the spaces, only making minor adjustments to furniture and working around patrons. We ended our shoot with a celebratory meal at Rosalia just as the early lunch crowd was arriving."

Fellow neighbor Molly Reitsema came along to assist and entertain, making sure Dixit's hair was behaving, and also taking care of any background-related things that needed fixing. "We had a great time!" said Dixit.

Reitsema and Dixit are block leaders for their section of Beard Ave., and they organize a pretty fun National Night Out event every summer.

### 'EDISON,' A NOVEL

Dixit's book, "EDISON" started with a desire to write something about the town she grew up in, which has an extraordinarily large Indian American population. "It's kind of an amazing place with tons of Indian grocery stores, jewelry stores, video stores and restaurants in a one-mile stretch of road in this random suburb," observed Dixit. "But then I had to figure out a plot and characters that would allow me to tell the story of the town, which led me to a Bollywood-inspired romance, peppered with Edison and Bollywood history. The entire process took more than 10 years, which included research, plot outlines, character studies, more research, and experimentation with tone and style – plus time off for having kids!"

The book publisher is Third State Books, an independent house that focuses on amplifying Asian American and Pacific Islander voices. Dixit connected with them after winning the Pages in Progress Prize from the Asian American Writers' Workshop, of which Third State was a sponsor.

She has done publicity events at the Barnes & Noble at Greenway Commons (right by Rustica Bakery), along with ones in New Jersey and Pittsburgh.

"I strongly encourage folks to purchase the book," said Richards. "It'd make a great book club read featuring a local author."



Dignitaries including Governor Tim Walz, Congresswoman Ilhan Omar, and Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey join business owners and developers in celebrating the reopening of the Coliseum at E Lake St. and 27th Ave. on June 19 four years after it was damaged in the Uprising following the murder of George Floyd by 3rd precinct officers. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)

**Coliseum rises from the ashes around East Lake St. and Minnehaha Ave., models new way of doing business and development**

By **Tesha M. Christensen**

It's been four years since the Coliseum building was damaged in the Uprising following the murder of George Floyd around the former 3rd Precinct site at E. Lake and Minnehaha. On Juneteenth 2024, people gathered there to celebrate the renovation and reopening of the building that marks a new way of doing things in the city.

"Like the phoenix, we will rise from the ashes and here we are today," said Carol A. Behmlander as she stood looking at the area where so many buildings were damaged and destroyed. She lives a few blocks away from Lake and Minnehaha.

"This building and the process is only the beginning," said Taylor Smrikárova of Redesign, a nonprofit community development corporation based in greater Longfellow that will be occupying the third floor of the building. "So today, we celebrate."

From the beginning, the purpose of this project has been to create genera-

tional wealth for BIPOC-, women-owned, and small business owners who are also often othered (LGBTQIA+, Veterans, etc.), through the equitable redevelopment of a site that bears the scars of the community's pain. The historic building has been brought back to life, ensuring long-term affordability for up to 30 BIPOC and other local entrepreneurs/small businesses, pointed out Jessie Roeming of Redesign.

"Juneteenth marks a day to reflect on where this country has come," said Smrikárova, and "hope for the future."

"The last four years have been a reckoning in this state," said Governor Tim Walz. He observed that the murder of George Floyd brought to light systems operating as they were designed to do that created gaps in homeownership, education, and more between Black and White. Project like the Coliseum building help in equitable distribution of resources, he said.

"It's amazing what powerful women can get done," stated Governor Walz.

Black-owned community develop-

ment is a right that so many White businesses have had for generations, pointed out Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey. "That should be a right for everyone," he said. "That starts to change right here. You are all making a difference. ... Let's keep the momentum going."

Robin Wonsley recalled standing outside the 3rd Precinct in May 2020 demanding justice for George Floyd. "In that moment, it became clear that I wanted to run for office," she said. She now serves as the Ward 2 City Council member. "How can we bring this area back?" she asked. It was done through the "fierce leadership of black women," she praised. "I thank all of the co-owners for being a beacon of hope."

Co-owners include Alicia Belton (Urban Design Perspectives), Janice Downing (CommonSense Consulting@Work), and restaurant/cocktail room owner Shanelle Montana (Lagniappe & Du Nord Cocktail Room) who have partnered and co-developed the Historic Coliseum Building with nonprofit community development corporation Redesign, Inc.

# LIKE A PHOENIX

**DIVAS FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE**

Clarisa James has been a Prince fan since she was nine years old. After he died in 2016, she began traveling from New York City to mark the anniversary of his death with events in Minneapolis. She made friends and connections in Minneapolis, and in 2021, she met the women leading the effort to renovate the Coliseum.

James co-founded DIVAS for Social Justice after she started mulling over the digital divide and how it intersects with social justice. "How do you show people that their voice can contribute to community?" she pondered.

DIVAS uses a makerspace model to connect youth living in underserved communities with computers, sewing machines, VR/AR equipment, 3D printers, videography/photography tools and more – things they otherwise wouldn't have access to.

After talking about her work with two of the Coliseum building developers, Alicia Belton

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**MEET THE WOMEN OF THE COLISEUM PROJECT**

**COMMONSENSE CONSULTING@WORK**

CommonSense Consulting@Work is a woman and Black-owned practice that utilizes the skills of diverse and seasoned consultants located around the country. Owned by Janice Downing, they match their consultants' skills and experiences to most efficiently and effectively meet their clients' needs.

**ABOUT LAGNIAPPE AND DU NORD COCKTAIL ROOM**

Lagniappe is a new funky, cool restaurant serving New Orleans cuisine in The Historic Coliseum Building, co-owned by Shanelle Montana. The Du Nord Cocktail Room is a full service-bar where everyone is invited and everyone belongs.

**ABOUT REDESIGN, INC.**

Redesign is a geographically-based Community Development Corporation working in the five neighborhoods of Greater Longfellow in South Minneapolis. Redesign's mission is to build economic justice in collaboration with the community

by developing and sustaining affordable housing and commercial real estate, investing in entrepreneurs, and creating living wage jobs. Redesign envisions an inviting community woven together by collective community voice where housing is affordable for all and local businesses thrive. Leading the Coliseum project was Taylor Smrikárova.

**ABOUT URBAN DESIGN PERSPECTIVES**

Urban Design Perspectives is a woman and Black owned, environmental justice firm that uses the framework of architecture, project management and community engagement to create equitable and sustainable spaces that fuel your mind, body, soul and spirit. Alicia Belton is the principal architect.

SHOWN AT RIGHT: (left to right) Janice Downing of CommonSense Consulting@Work, Alicia Belton of Urban Design Perspectives and Taylor Smrikárova of Redesign. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)



"Like the phoenix, we will rise from the ashes and here we are today," said Carol A. Behmlander as she stood looking at the area where so many buildings were damaged and destroyed. She lives a few blocks away from Lake and Minnehaha. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)



DIVAS co-founder Clarisa James said, "I remember coming to this building in 2021 when there were no walls. You could see the beauty of it, the beautiful floors that had potential." (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)

**▶ 13 LIKE A PHOENIX**

(Urban Design Perspectives) and Janice Downing (CommonSense Consulting@Work), James said she wanted to bring the DIVAS to the Coliseum building in South Minneapolis. "Our visions aligned," she said. "I knew it was something I wanted to hold out for."

James added, "I remember coming to this building in 2021 when there were no walls. You could see the beauty of it, the beautiful floors that had potential."

DIVAS will be on the second floor, and will be led by board member George Suratt, who resides in the Twin Cities.

"People of the community will be involved in doing participatory design workshops," said James, and give input into what they want the space to be. They are also collaborating with University of Minnesota professors Dr. Nathaniel Stewart, Dr. Elliot James, Dr. Nicole Dillard, and Dr. Stephanie Sisco.

**✳ MORE PHOTOS online at [www.SouthwestConnector.com](http://www.SouthwestConnector.com)**

**MEET A TENANT: DIVAS FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE**

DIVAS (Digital Interactive Visual Arts Sciences) empowers and inspires youth living in underserved communities to use tech and visual arts to promote social justice and become change makers in their communities.

While the organization's commitment is to work with both girls and boys in its community, its name DIVAS (an acronym for Digital Interactive Visual Arts Sciences), remains relevant as women have been and continue to be anchors for community building in neighborhoods across the United States. The organization itself, which was founded by women, continues to be led by women who are fostering social justice change.

Tools made available include a makerspace for collaborate project work and classes, computers, sewing machines, VR/AR equipment, 3D printers, videography/photography tools, and more.

Founded in New York City, DIVAS will open its satellite office inside the Coliseum building in south Minneapolis.

DIVAS will be hosting participatory design workshops the week of Aug. 12.

1) Defining a Makerspace for Ward 9 - DIVAS for Social Justice will share their goals for South Minneapolis based on experiences designing a social justice makerspace in NYC. In this workshop, participants will look at examples of other maker spaces and brainstorm ideas of what a maker space should include in Ward 9.

2) Learning Environment Designs for Emerging Technology: How do we design a space that resonates with ages 8-80 years old in South Minneapolis. Everyone learns differently. How do we create an all inclusive space?

3) Community & Culture & The Digital Divide-How do we ensure that all cultures of Ward 9 are reflected in this third space. How is the digital divide reflected in Ward 9 (lack of access to wifi, devices, digital literacy.)?

These 90-minute workshops are open to all.

More at [www.divasforsocialjustice.org](http://www.divasforsocialjustice.org)

**WORK AT THE FORMER U.S. BANK SITE**

A block away from the Coliseum is another project that aims to also create generation wealth for BIPOC-, women-owned, and small business owners. At E. Lake and 28th Avenue, the former U.S. Bank site is undergoing a transformation into affordable housing, commercial and outdoor retail, non-profit and arts.

Redesign is advancing a first-of-its-kind in the U.S. Aquifer Thermal Energy System (ATES) at the Coliseum and 2800 E. Lake St. sites. When combined with wind or solar power, this will provide carbon-free heating and cooling to multiple buildings in the area including development on the 2800 E. Lake St site, the Coliseum Building, and other nearby properties. The system will be managed by a customer-led nonprofit board.

**3RD PRECINCT BUILDING REUSE**

The city held an open house on June 10 at the Minneapolis American Indian Center at 1530 E Franklin Ave. to share a city proposal to use the former 3rd precinct police station building at 3000 Minnehaha. The proposal includes relocating the city's Elections & Voter Services from the space they are now renting in northeast Minneapolis. The building that was damaged during civil unrest in 2020 has been vacant and fenced-in ever since. Several staff from various departments were there to answer questions and share information, including senior project manager Alexander Kado and City Operations Officer Margaret Anderson Kelliher.

The proposal includes building a new warehouse space to store election equipment. It would also house election staff and house an early voting center.

At the open house, the city was also gathering feedback on how to use the roughly 8,000 square feet of the space for a yet-to-be-defined community use or uses. The facility could open in 2026. People may provide input through an online survey on the city website at [www.minneapolismn.gov/government/programs-initiatives/minnehaha-3000/](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/government/programs-initiatives/minnehaha-3000/). (Photo by Cam Gordon)



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## LOWRY HILLS EAST

## NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

BY VALERIE BLOMBERG



## NEW BOARD MEMBERS

The Lowry Hill East Neighborhood Association (LHENA) is excited to announce the election of its new Board of Directors and Executive Committee. The updated list of board members and committee chairs reflects a dynamic group of community leaders dedicated to enhancing the quality of life in the Lowry Hill East neighborhood (also known as the Wedge neighborhood).

The LHENA Board of Directors and Executive Committee, featuring community leaders and local business representatives, were elected at the annual neighborhood meeting held in May. Composed of 11 community members, the board oversees LHENA's direction, programs, and funds. This election ensures the continued growth, safety, and well-being of the neighborhood through dedicated leadership and community involvement.

## Executive Committee:

- Elise Moore, President - president@thewedge.org
- Pete Boisclair, Vice President - peter.boisclair8@gmail.com
- Anna Berglund, Treasurer - treasurer@thewedge.org
- Jack Strawn, Secretary - secretary@thewedge.org

Elise Moore, the newly elected president of LHENA, expressed her enthusiasm for the role: "I am approaching this in-



Elise Moore (left) and Valerie Blomberg met at Disco Death Records recently to talk about vision and planning for the upcoming year. (Photo submitted)

volvement with community health worker experience and a public health/pharmacy background. I would like to focus my energy on connecting our neighborhood with health resources and introducing harm reduction resources to businesses in our area."

Over its 50 years, LHENA has formed numerous committees to address the evolving needs of the neighborhood. Current active committees include:

- Environmental Committee: Noah Cameron, Chair - noahcameron95@gmail.com
- LHENA Volunteer Network: Jackson Hampton, Coordinator - neighbors@thewedge.org

- Food Share Program: Joan Moser, Coordinator - foodshare@thewedge.org
- Community Development Committee: (Chair position open)
- Welfare & Safety Committee: (Chair position open)

The commitment and vision of the newly elected board promise a vibrant future for the neighborhood. For more information, please contact Elise Moore at president@thewedge.org.

The LHENA board has 11 seats, and all neighbors are welcome to attend our monthly board meetings held on third Tuesdays, 6:30-8 p.m. Find out more about the next meeting and how to attend on our events calendar page.

## CITY BRIEFS

## PRIMARY VOTING

Early voting for the state primary election for Aug. 13 started on June 28. People who wish to vote early can do so in person at the Early Vote Center, 980 E. Hennepin Ave. or by mail. In Minneapolis, there will be a runoff primary for at-large school board member where Shayla Owodunni, Kim Ellison and Elena Condos are running. The top two vote getters in that race will go on to be on the general election ballot in November. For southwest Minneapolis voters, in addition to the major party federal level senate and congressional candidates, there will be a primary in district 61A for state representative where Isabel Rolfes, Will Stancil and Katie Jones are running for the Democratic Farmer Labor endorsement. The winner of that primary race will join Green Party endorsed Toya Lopez on the November Ballot. The General election will be held on Nov. 5. To learn more, see <https://vote.minneapolismn.gov/> and [www.vote411.org](http://www.vote411.org)

## VACANT DWELLING OR BUILDING ORDINANCE

The Minneapolis City Council has amended its vacant building ordinance to limit the previously unlimited time that a property's can be the city's registry of vacant building to two years, with an optional third year if the owner applies and the director of regulatory services determines that the owner has made substan-

tial progress towards bringing the building into compliance. After two or three years, the property will be handled with standard administrative citations for noncompliance, which can cost up to \$24,000 in annual citations, rather than the previous maximum fee of \$7,087 per year.

## TRAFFIC SAFETY CAMERA PILOT

The city is preparing to provide automated enforcement of traffic laws following the state law change that now allows camera's to be used to enforce speeding and traffic light laws and authorizes a 4-year pilot for Minneapolis and Mendota Heights for speeding and red light running to go from Aug. 1, 2025 - July 31, 2029. According to report presented on July 11, 33 people were killed in crashes involving speeding/red light running in Minneapolis in 2022 and 2023. City staff hope to start the pilot with five cameras as early as Aug. 1, 2025, and expand it in 2026. Later this month, they hope to apply for federal grant to help cover costs and return to the council for pilot framework approval this fall with more community engagement in early 2025.

## LAKE STREET SAFETY COORDINATOR

The city has selected the Lake Street Council to hire and supervise a full-time Community Safety Coordinator to manage a Lake Street Public Safety Coordinator Pilot Program from July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2026, with an option to extend one additional year. The coordinator would work with residents, businesses,

other community members and city staff to improve safety along Lake Street from Pillsbury Ave. to the West, 28th St. to the North, Hiawatha Ave. to the East, and 32nd St to the South.

## METRO E LINE CONSTRUCTION

Southbound traffic on France Avenue is now being detoured to Xerxes Avenue between 39th Street and 60th Street. Phased construction will allow France Avenue to remain open to northbound through traffic for the duration of work, Local traffic between station intersections will be able to travel northbound and southbound. Work is under way at the Upton and 43rd Station, France and 58th St, and France and 47th. Watch for traffic control and pedestrian access signage, as well as detours. For more information email [ELine@metrotransit.org](mailto:ELine@metrotransit.org), or call 612 524-6050.

## GREEN LINE CONSTRUCTION TOURS

The Met Council is offering construction walking tours in July and August including two tours for the Kenilworth LRT Tunnel on Wednesday, July 31 and Friday, Aug. 2. Space is limited and registration is required. People wanting more information and groups that would like to arrange a walking, biking or driving tour may contact Community Outreach Coordinator Diane Anastos at [diane.anastos@metrotransit.org](mailto:diane.anastos@metrotransit.org).

 Briefs compiled by Cam Gordon.

## BUSINESS NEWS

## UNION ELECTION AT KIM'S RESTAURANT

On June 27, a majority of service and kitchen workers at Kim's voted 'yes' in their union election. Workers are represented by UNITE HERE Local 17, Minnesota's hospitality and craft beverage workers union. About 60 cooks, dishwashers, servers, support staff, and bartenders work

at Kim's. In May, a supermajority of workers from across the restaurant called on Vestalia Hospitality to voluntarily recognize their union and negotiate a union contract. Workers are calling for respect, stability, and better pay and benefits.

"I started organizing because I was tired of worrying about my income week to week. I've been devoted to hospitality for 20 years, I felt it was time I got some devotion back. Kim's being a union restaurant is such a benefit to Uptown, because

I know improving our jobs will also improve the restaurant for everyone. I'm excited for the future and look forward to bargaining a contract," said Kaylee Murphy, Kim's bartender and server.

## CAFE CERES AND COLITA WORKERS

More workers at leading Minneapolis restaurant groups are organizing to make their jobs better. The latest are workers at Colita and the four locations of Café Ceres - all establishments from prolific restaura-

## NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

## BIKE TRAILS OPEN

The reconstructed South Cedar Lake and Minnesota River Bluffs trails are now open for public use from the Midtown Greenway in Minneapolis to Shady Oak Road in Minnetonka. The remaining closed trail segments in Minneapolis in 2025.

## DISTRICT 61A FORUM ON JULY 17

The League of Women Voters Minneapolis is co-sponsoring a primary candidate forum for MN House Legislative District 61A with community organizations. The forum is on Wednesday, July 17, 7 to 8:30 p.m., at Lake of the Isles Lutheran Church, 2020 W Lake Of The Isles Pkwy. Co-sponsors of this forum are Hill & Lake Press, Kenwood Neighborhood Organization, East Isles Neighborhood Association, Lowry Hill Neighborhood, Bryn Mawr Neighborhood Association, Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association, and AYADA Leads. Participating will be DFL candidates Katie Jones, Isabel Rolfes and Will Stancil.

The forum will be live-streamed and video recorded, which will be available at <https://lwvmppls.org/>. This is the only contested primary race for House 61A. Candidates will respond to questions on a wide variety of issues of concern to voters. This event is free and open to the public.

The League of Women Voters Minneapolis is cosponsoring this event with local co-sponsors to bring nonpartisan voter education to the community. LWV does not support or oppose candidates for office or political parties.

## GRAND AVENUE RAIN GARDENS

It was a productive spring working on the nearly 200 basins that line Grand Avenue between 31st Street and 48th Street. Planting on the rain gardens started the last week of May and were done in early July. Over 15,000 native plants were installed. The Surface Waters and Sewers division of Minneapolis Public Works hosted a Community Pollinator Planting event on June 1 with Natural Shores, the project contractor. With over 50 volunteers, they restored 20 rain gardens and planted over 1,500 plants. Please note that throughout the city, boulevard maintenance is the responsibility of the adjacent property owner. Boulevards are the vegetated areas between the street and sidewalk, excluding rain gardens. All basins will be watered weekly throughout the summer. Maintenance of all basins by the contractors will continue throughout this growing season.

## NICOLLET OPEN STREETS RETURNS

Lyndale Neighborhood Association has been selected by the City of Minneapolis to bring back Nicollet Open Streets on Saturday, Sept. 28 from 11 a.m. through 5 p.m. Contact the neighborhood organization to be involved.

## UPTOWN ART FAIR AT BACHMAN'S

Uptown Art Fair: Detour will be at Bachman's on Lyndale Aug. 3 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Aug. 4 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at 6110 Lyndale Ave. S. Explore over 150 artist booth, including youth and up-and-coming artists.

teur Daniel del Prado.

Colita and Café Ceres workers informed their managers on June 18 they each had supermajority support for joining UNITE HERE Local 17, calling on the employers to respect their decision, recognize their unions, and negotiate contracts.

About 60 dishwashers, bartenders, cooks, and servers work at Colita. About 30 baristas work at the four Café Ceres locations across Minneapolis.



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