



Green burial
option coming
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RETHINKING MANHOOD WITH AUTHOR DESTYN LAND

By ERIC ERICKSON

"I saw how masculine egos started wars both around the world and in the community. I saw how patriarchal masculinity worked to move our world further away from love."

Local author and podcaster Destyn Land shared those observations in the introduction of his book, "The Rules We Live By: Stories and Reflections on Un-learning Patriarchal Masculinity."

While the subject is indeed scholarly, Land leads his readers into self-reflection and inquiry through an inspiring mixture of storytelling, introspection, humor, faith, and optimism. Land shares his personal experiences growing up in St. Paul, and broadens the scope to examine cultural norms regarding anger, accountability, trauma, friendship and family.

Land wrote "The Rules We Live By" during the first five months of 2024. His ambitious project was made possible through a fellowship he earned with Princeton Theological Seminary. The funding Land received allowed him to self-publish and hire freelance editor Kimberly Lim, who provided influential feedback to strengthen the final product, which is available at Barnes & Noble and on Amazon.

DESTYN LAND » 8



Como Park High School graduate Destyn Land explores patriarchy through his new book and podcasts. (Photo by Raygen Brown)

Minnesota United soccer fans give back to Hamline-Midway



Dark Clouds President Meagan Weber (left) helps pick up trash and recycling with minority Black Hart owners and longtime Dark Clouds supporters Sam and Collin Solberg. (Photo submitted)

SOCCER GROUPS HELP CLEAN UP

By MATTHEW JOHNSON

Allianz Field opened its doors in 2019. Since then, both soccer supporters and Minnesota United FC have organized neighborhood cleanups around the Hamline-Midway neighborhood.

The longest-running of Minnesota United supporter groups is the Dark Clouds that started back in Minnesota Thunder years (1990-96). Rich Harrison explained, "The idea is you can't have Thunder without Dark Clouds."

DARK CLOUDS SILVER LINING: FANS GIVE BACK

In 2012, Rich Harrison started a volunteer group within the Dark Clouds

called Silver Lining. However, his involvement with volunteering goes back further. Harrison recounted, "Yeah, I got heavily involved in volunteerism during the economic crisis, or the 2008 economic crash. I volunteered with Surly Gives A D*mn groups and my neighborhood organization Green Team [East Isles Neighborhood Association] and the Loppet Foundation."

He added, "That inspired me to think we need to get more involved in the community during the off season, when we're not cheering on our teams, stay connected with each other, and give back to the community."

SOCCER GROUPS » 2

DRIVE-THROUGH DILEMMA

By JANE MCCLURE

A proposed ban on new drive-through services in St. Paul is parked for almost a year. Action on a set of major restrictions was tabled until Sept. 23, 2025. That is meant to give city leaders more time to look at St. Paul's commercial areas as a whole.

The St. Paul City Council voted 6-1 Nov. 13 to postpone action on the planning commission's study of drive-through services pending completion of a more comprehensive commercial corridors zoning study.

Following the public hearing, Ward 2 Council Member Rebecca Noecker tabled the planning commission recommendations with support from Anika Bowie,

DRIVE-THROUGHS » 3

CITIZENS CRITICAL OF HOUSING FIRST MODEL AT KIMBALL COURT

By JANE MCCLURE

Frustrations are increasing about crime, drug use and general cleanliness in the University and Snelling area, and along Snelling to the north. Neighbors are upset that more hasn't been done to quell problems, pointing at elected officials and Kimball Court apartment building owner Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative demanding that changes be made.

More than 300 people attended a meeting Nov. 7, 2024, filling the gym at Hancock Recreation Center. That meeting was organized by Hamline Midway Coalition (HMC). Frustrated neighbors planned to meet Dec. 3 on their own, tired of living and working near an epicenter of the fentanyl crisis.

Neighborhood residents, business owners and church leaders are weary of groups gathering to buy and use drugs in public, of being aggressively panhandled, threatened and harassed. They are unhappy with yards, alleys and parking lots being used as outdoor toilets. They are unhappy with break-ins, thefts and vandalism. Even the recently installed loon sculpture at United Village hasn't been immune from graffiti.

CITIZENS CRITICAL » 2

	Most Trusted
Local newspapers	51%
Local TV stations	51%
Local radio stations	49%
Network TV news	43%
National newspapers	36%
Cable news networks	36%
Social media	20%

Local newspapers hold trust while national media slips

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Black Garnet Books has a new owner, other business updates from 2024

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Como Park High School launches 3DE program for all freshmen

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SOCCKER GROUPS >> from 1

Back in 2012, the Minnesota Stars FC, which became Minnesota United in 2013, played at the National Sport Center in Blaine. Rich Harrison remembered one of the first Silver Lining events was helping former Thunder player Tony Sanneh and his organization The Sanneh Foundation: "Tony had all of this used soccer equipment in his storage lockers in this apartment building on Grand Avenue.... And so he's like, 'Hey, could you guys come over and help me pull all this stuff out and get it organized?' So we did, and we showed up with maybe a dozen people, and [there were] all these boxes of miscellaneous soccer shoes and jerseys and shorts and balls."

Harrison explained, "The idea was to provide soccer equipment gently use soccer equipment to teams in need, both locally and abroad. I know some have also gone to Haiti and other Central American countries."

In 2019, the Dark Clouds Silver Lining started doing trash pickups around the Midway. Harrison pointed out that a lot of soccer fans park in the neighborhoods (primarily north of University, but also south of University) and walk in to the games once a week. "And we knew that it was a little bit of a problem for the residents to have all these people come in and take the parking away, but it was only once a week," he said. "We wanted to give back, and we wanted to show that we're part of your community, and we want to help keep it clean."

Collin Solberg got into local soccer "accidentally." Solberg recalled, "I used to live in a downtown Minneapolis condo about two blocks from U.S. Bank Stadium. When they changed the name from the NSC [Minnesota] Stars to Minnesota United, they announced they were playing a half season at the Metrodome. And I said, 'Hey, I like soccer. I've never been in one of these games. I can walk to the walk to the Metrodome at the time to watch games.' So I got a half-season ticket package, walked in, saw the Dark Clouds with about eight-foot-tall puppets in the stands, and I fell in love instantly."

Solberg added, "My wife Samantha and I live over in Seward, over in Minneapolis, but we are part of the ownership group here at Black Hart. So we have a very close tie with the neighborhood, and want to make sure that the place is looking nice and looking good, and people want to come here."

Harrison said the supporters do two clean-ups every year. "Now we do it in the spring and in the fall. As we all know, once all the snow melts, it leaves all this stuff behind." He explained that they try to get out before the "April rain showers,



and clean up trash so it doesn't go into the storm sewers. And also just cleaning up the neighborhood. Then we do one in the fall." This year's event was on Oct. 20 after the last home game. "It also gives, of course, us a chance to come together as fans and celebrate the team and learn more about each other, which is another big part of why Silver Lining is so awesome."

MN UNITED ORGANIZES FOOD DRIVES, CLEANUPS

Jen Winterfeldt has history with working in the Midway neighborhood, including time as the Director of Development and Community Relations at Keystone Community Services. She said, "I worked

at Keystone for 10 years, so I was responsible for helping fundraise to build the new Community Food Center, which is at Fairview and University."

She remembered when Cori Frankenberg-Meixner of Minnesota United first reached out: "They were really authentic about how they engaged with us [Keystone], and really wanted to uplift the work we did and support us in the ways that made sense for club-aligned work. We were doing that honestly even before the stadium was finished."

Winterfeldt related, "It just started with like, 'Hey, we have extra tickets. Would you like to give these to the youth in your after school program?' And then

As soccer fandom has grown, MN Wonderwall became a benefit corporation that includes several supporter groups. DGS (Do Good Stuff) helps to organize volunteer events. Four independent soccer supporter groups, Dark Clouds (Silver Lining), True North Elite (North Keepers), Red Loons, and Bucket Hat Brigade, participated in the fall 2019 clean-up.

from there, it really went to because of the partnership with Allianz Life.... where we opted to make our focus was all about the food-shelf work that Keystone does in the Midway."

Winterfeldt spoke about Minnesota United helping Keystone organize food drives when the club played at TCF Stadium (2017-18), and how that continued when Allianz Field opened in St. Paul. "What was really awesome is then during the pandemic, when people really just were lost and really needed resources ... [we did] a drive-through event right at the stadium that was important, really impactful. That because we had already built a long standing trusting relationship between Keystone, Minnesota United, and Allianz Life."

Remember Frankenberg-Meixner who first reached out to Winterfeldt at Keystone? Winterfeldt was recently selected as

SOCCKER GROUPS >> 3



Rich Harrison (lower left) and 14 other Dark Clouds Silver Lining "voLOONteers" helped during the Fall 2024 Neighborhood Clean-up, a day after Minnesota United's last regular season home match. (Photo submitted)

CITIZENS CRITICAL

>> from 1

Much criticism is leveled at Beacon for its "housing first" model which has the premise that after residents are housed, treatment for addiction and needed social services can follow. That has been used at Kimball Court for the past two years.

How to address problems has brought an array of suggestions. One idea is to challenge Beacon's upcoming expansion from 76 to 98 dwelling units, by asking that its site plan and other zoning approvals be reviewed again. Others have called for scrutiny under the city's excessive consumption of police services ordinance, or state public nuisance laws.

Complaints have been made to city's Department of Safety and Inspections about conditions inside the building.

The latest entity to step in is the Ramsey County Attorney John Choi's Office, which was asked by the Midway Chamber of Commerce to meet with business owners so they could gain a better understanding of the legal process. Dennis Ger-

hardstein, county attorney's office spokesperson, said a request has been made to the St. Paul Police Department to compile police reports made in the area. A review could potentially trigger sanctions under the state public nuisance laws.

Another part of the solution is the St. Paul Fire Department's recent addition of suboxone to its way of treating people in crisis due to fentanyl use. While Narcan can save a life in the event of an overdose, suboxone can be administered to counter the subsequent craving for more drugs.

"The need for housing and ways to combat the fentanyl crisis are needed," said County Commissioner Rena Moran. "We are going through an epidemic right now." She and others noted that fentanyl is as cheap as \$1 per bill, compounding problems.

Groups including HMC, Union Park District Council and the chamber are working to form a separate group just to focus on the University and Snelling area.

But one complaint is that too many empty promises have been offered. The crowd at Hancock Recreation Center gymnasium Nov. 7 was at times skeptical of city, county and Kimball Court represen-

tatives, jeering, cat-calling and laughing during the meeting.

One source of frustration is unrealized redevelopment promised years ago with Green Line construction and more recently with the United Village development. Buildings destroyed in 2020 civil unrest haven't replaced. One speaker referred to University Avenue as a "wasteland."

But most unhappiness is aimed at Kimball Court, which was described in a recent St. Paul Police Department incident report as the "hub of narcotic traffic" in the police department's Western District.

Beacon officials counter that they are trying to help and that the upcoming expansion and renovation of their facility will bring needed improvements.

"Kimball Court is part of this community and we want to be part of this discussion," said Ben Clarke, asset manager for Beacon.

Clarke said several measures have been taken, including having an armed security guard on-site 24/7 and adding door sensors. More cameras will be added soon. He said long-term Kimball Court residents believe the building is safer.

But Clarke also pointed out that many residents struggle with substance abuse and behavioral issues.

Clarke and others from Beacon, as well as Ward Four Council Member Mitra Jalali, spoke of the property's upcoming renovation and expansion. The adjoining Star Market building will be torn down soon, allowing expansion to serve 98 residents from the current 74. A new, secure entrance and other security measures will be implemented. Construction will start by year's end and be completed by 2026.

Jalali defended the city's recent decision to provide \$3 million funding toward the \$19 million Kimball Court expansion. She and Clarke said that the planned expansion and improvements will add to safety and building functionality, and bring in more funding for operations.

Jerry Kragt, pastor of Mosaic Alliance Church, 1632 Charles Ave., was among those expressing skepticism about the "housing first" model. He called the current neighborhood situation "devastating." He asked, "What tragedy will it take to acknowledge that this is not working in this particular neighborhood?"



PK (mascot) helps volunteers at the 2022 Minnesota United neighborhood clean-up. (Photo submitted)

SOCCKER GROUPS >> from 2

her replacement as the Minnesota United is Director of Community Relations.

While Minnesota United has helped organize neighborhood cleanups since 2019, Winterfeldt spoke specifically about organizing a Minnesota United cleanup that took place Oct. 4, 2024: "The St. Paul Cup is the game that happens between two St. Paul area high schools, where their boys and girls soccer team play on the field." She added, "And so this year was the very first time that we added a community day activation around the St. Paul Cup.... So, we probably had about 30 volunteers out that day, walking the neighborhood in the morning."

Winterfeldt recalled, "There were some supporters. There were some neighbors who maybe even just walked up. Then there were staff from nVent [corporate sponsor] who came, and then there were staff from the club." She added,

"There was a volunteer and he said, 'Oh, I got the email. I am a season ticket member. I'd like to come and help.' There was a family that came: a mom brought her four kids, and they walked up and helped."

Winterfeldt spoke about a connection between the morning clean up and the pregame festivities for the Oct. 4 St. Paul Cup. "There's a local business across the street, a gym that the owners were like, 'We've been wanting to do a community cleanup. I'm so glad you're here. Can we come out and join you?' That was like, just really like sweet. Because then later on, we were hosting a clinic on the lawn for the community activity. So, he brought his son out to kick a ball with us later on in the afternoon."

If you have ideas or want to help Minnesota United in the community, Winterfeldt said, "Please do. You can email us at Community Relations. That's an open public email address communityrelations@mnufc.com."

DRIVE-THROUGHS

>> from 1

Hwa Cheniqua Johnson, Saura Jost, Hwa-Jeong Kim and Nelsie Yang. Council President Mitra Jalali cast the lone dissenting vote.

Jalali said she wanted to act on the planning commission study and recommendations in a timely manner, questioning if information would become outdated. She also pointed out that two of the most controversial drive-thrus in recent memory, Taco Bell at 565 N. Snelling Ave. and Starbucks at Marshall and Snelling avenues, are in or adjacent to her Fourth Ward.

However, Noecker said that while she agrees with the proposed restrictions' goals of pedestrian safety and reducing motor vehicle emissions, the pending commercial corridors study and conditions business face today must be considered. "This is a really hard time, especially for our small businesses," she said, adding that the city should make it easier for businesses to invest in their properties, "rather than doing the reverse."

While the recommendations make sense, it's the "wrong time" to act on them, said Noecker. The proposed regulations should be looked in a broader context instead.

A majority of council members agreed, saying they heard from business owners and other constituents who oppose the proposed restrictions.

"How pertinent is this to our city right now? I'm not sure," said Johnson. Her Seventh Ward borders suburbs and their business districts. Customers could all too easily drive to Woodbury, Oakdale or Maplewood to patronize their drive-through restaurants.

Yang has spoken with teenage restaurant workers who've dealt with people overdosing on drugs in the restrooms. Some restaurants have gone to drive-through and walk-up services only for safety reasons.

Yang, who has two small children, and Bowie also spoke for parents who find it easier to use drive-through services than

to get youngsters out of their car seats and into buildings.

The St. Paul Planning Commission recently recommended that new fast-food and coffee shop drive-thrus be banned, and that new banking and pharmacy drive-thrus be allowed in specific areas of the city. Existing drive-thrus of all types could remain but if a business closed for a time, it could be difficult if not impossible to restore the drive-through service.

More than half a dozen people appeared before the council, and several letters were also received. A letter was read from Courtney Henry, whose family has owned McDonald's restaurants in St. Paul since the 1980s. The Henrys now own seven McDonald's restaurants, including all three along University Avenue. Their longtime Midway Center restaurant closes this month to make way for United Village development.

Henry said that the planning commission proposal needs to be amended, to allow existing drive-through services to be renovated for technology, environmental and safety reasons.

Hospitality Minnesota, the Minnesota Retailers Association, banks and the St. Paul Area Chamber of Commerce oppose the regulations. The council received a few emails from residents seeking a total drive-through ban. Supporters and foes made a number of recommendations which the planning commission and council could take up later.

Drive-thrus have long sparked controversy in the Midway area. In 1989, plans were announced to develop three fast-food restaurants along University at Midway Center. The plan met opposition and eventually only McDonald's was developed. The other two sites housed a Perkins restaurant and a building with smaller storefronts.


Taco Bell clashed with neighborhood and city officials for years over plans to rebuild and revamp its driveway, before winning in court several years ago. As for Starbucks, it was nicknamed "Carbucks" and "Snarshall" due to traffic backups caused by the coffee shop drive-thru. The drive-through closed a few years ago.

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

Green Party of Minnesota

BY CAM GORDON



WHY PEOPLE VOTE THIRD PARTY

Why?

One primary reason people do not vote for a major party candidate is because they have ideological belief systems that do not align with the major party platforms. This year it was evident that many voters opposed the major parties' support for Israel's violent attacks on Palestine and Lebanon. Many of us may have been seeking "peace" or "anti-war" candidate and didn't find that in either major party candidates. This made the alternates who were pushing for a ceasefire and arms embargo, including Jill Stein (Green Party) who ranked 3rd among the southwest voters, or Cornel West (Independent/Justice for All Party), Chase Oliver (Libertarian), or Claudia De la Cruz (Party for Socialism and Liberation) more appealing.

Voting for third or minor-party candidates can send important messages.

In Minnesota, we have seen how single-issue minor parties and voters can help make change in government policy. It is likely that the growing number people who were willing to vote for parties focused on

legalizing cannabis helped influence public opinion and legislation that ultimately led to it begin legalized in the state.

Additionally, if more of us were willing and able to vote for the candidates who most closely and accurately reflected our values and our individual interests, over the long term or government could better reflect who we are and what we value.

One of the most common arguments again voting for third party is that a voter, or the public, may end up with a worse alternative than the one they most prefer. This may lead many voters to "hold their nose" and vote for the so-called "lesser of two evils."

This, of course, was not the case this year In District 61A where there was a "minor" party candidate on the ballot for state legislature, with Toya Lopez. In that race, however, she was not really a "third" party candidate because no republican was in the race. That may have helped her get 3,200 votes and her kind of race.

There is a solution to the wasted vote

problem in single winner elections like the presidency. It is called ranked choice or instant run off voting and, as many voters in Minneapolis and St. Paul know, it offers people the ability to vote for preferred candidate without fear of wasting their vote because they have the option to select a second and third choice if their first choice is not elected.

According to a PEW research Center 2022 poll, 39% of the USA people they polled said the statement: "I wish there were more political parties to choose from in this country" describes their views extremely or very well. Another 32% said say it describes their views somewhat well.

While many people likely decide to vote for a third or minor-party candidate to maintain their personal integrity, register their opposition to major party positions and to send a message that might help influence policy in the future, some also hope that such voting could, in the long-run, help create a richer multi-party democracy like those seen in so many other countries throughout the world.

Cam Gordon is the co-chair of the Green Party of Minnesota. He regular writes for TMC Publications CO, covering government.

guest column

BY DEAN RIDINGS



Local newspapers hold trust while national media slips

Transparency is a defining characteristic of this trust. According to the study, 61% of Americans say transparency is the most critical factor in determining trust in media, and more Americans rate local newspapers as the best at upholding these standards. This level of accountability is not just a practice; it's a necessity. Local journalists live in the same communities as their readers, which means they are answerable to the people they serve. Local newspapers prioritize showing readers exactly where their information comes from, clearly identifying sources and detailing how stories are reported. This transparency, rooted in their close connection to the community, allows local newspapers to earn trust in ways that national media can't.

Beyond reporting on the critical issues that impact local families, local newspapers play a crucial role in supporting

democratic engagement and civic accountability. According to the study, 85% of Americans believe that local newspapers are essential to sustaining democracy, and 74% worry that losing their local paper would significantly hurt their community. Local newspapers provide critical insights into local decisions that impact everyday life — issues that national media simply can't cover in the same depth or with the same understanding.

While local newspapers continue to be recognized as the most trusted media, there are still significant challenges. The impact of the overall erosion in trust in media certainly has a negative impact on local newspapers, who too often get lumped in with the rest of "the media." And, without question, local newspapers continue to be impacted financially by the shifting advertising models and the actions of Big

Tech companies over the years. The financial impact makes it difficult to adequately staff local newsrooms in far too many areas across the country. Newspaper closures, and the resulting news deserts, have severe consequences for these communities, and there often isn't another media source in the area to compensate for the newspaper's loss. Legislation to support local newspapers is critical to maintaining these trusted, vital media leaders.

America's Newspapers remains dedicated to supporting these efforts and reinforcing the vital role that local papers play in making sure every community has a voice. In a time when skepticism of media is high, it's essential to distinguish local newspapers from the larger media landscape. Local newspapers aren't part of "the media" that people often view with suspicion. Instead, they're committed members of the community, present in readers' lives, and devoted to ethical, transparent journalism.

While national media outlets navigate their own trust challenges, local newspapers stay deeply rooted in their communities, providing the kind of honest, accountable reporting that helps ensure an informed, connected and engaged community.

For more information about the America's Newspapers Trust in Media Study, visit: <https://member.newspapers.org/trust-in-media.html>

Dean Ridings is the CEO of America's Newspapers. On behalf of its approximately 1,700 newspaper and Solutions Partner companies, America's Newspapers is committed to explaining, defending and advancing the vital role of newspapers in democracy and civil life. They put an emphasis on educating the public on all the ways newspapers contribute to building a community identity and the success of local businesses. Learn more: newspapers.org

The recent decision by The Washington Post and Los Angeles Times to skip endorsing a presidential candidate has put the issue of media trust in the spotlight — and it underscores just how differently local newspapers are perceived from their national counterparts.

America's Newspapers, the leading trade association for local newspapers nationwide, understands that local newspapers hold a unique place of trust within their communities, especially when compared to national media, social media and cable news. Recognizing this critical distinction, America's Newspapers commissioned a national study to quantify how local newspapers continue to earn and retain the trust of their readers, even as skepticism about media in general grows.

The 2024 America's Newspapers Trust Study shows that while public confidence in national news sources is declining, local newspapers remain a trusted source for communities across the country. More than half of Americans see their local newspaper as their most reliable news source, citing the transparency, ethical standards and community focus that are unique to local journalism.

Unlike national media outlets, local journalists are active members of the communities they cover. They're present at town hall meetings, reporting on school boards and investigating local government. This closeness fosters a relationship of accountability that simply doesn't exist with national media, which can feel distant or disconnected from the everyday lives of their readers.

Americans Most Trusted Media

Transparency, unbiased reporting and ethical standards are the dominant drivers of trust in media

	Most Trusted
Local newspapers	51%
Local TV stations	51%
Local radio stations	49%
Network TV news	43%
National newspapers	36%
Cable news networks	36%
Social media	20%

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The Monitor is for profit and for a purpose — and we don't sacrifice one for the other. We

consider ourselves a zebra company, one that is both black and white, both/and. As a media company, we work to highlight issues, solve real, meaningful problems, and repair existing social systems. We are working with our readers and advertisers to create a more just and responsible society that hears, helps and heals the customers and communities we serve.

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BUILDING A STRONGER MIDWAY

BY CHAD KULAS,
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As 2024 winds down, December is a time to look back and reflect on the past year. Like all years, there were certainly challenges both locally and nationally as we all try to consider what the future holds. It can be easy to dwell on the negative, and it can be common to forget the good. Here are some things that happened in our neighborhood this past year as we look toward 2025.

Over the past few months, many businesses have opened, expanded, or changed ownership. Udo's African Restaurant and Grocery opened at the former hardware store at 755 Snelling Avenue N. Previously, Udo's operated as a grocery store on University, and this move means not only an expansion of the grocery but also the addition of a restaurant featuring many West African cuisines. The site had been without any business for some time, and the news was very welcome to the Midway. At the grand opening, it was apparent owner Mike Udo has the support of many friends and family members.

Udo's isn't the only African grocery store opening on Snelling Avenue. African Economic Development Solutions has renovated a 1926 building originally used as a car dealership. Little Africa Plaza will house AEDS, a museum, and an African grocery store.

Dilla's Sports Bar opened in late November next to Ax-Man Surplus in the former Midway Uniform store. The site

A LOOK BACK ON 2024



Dionne Sims (left, holding scissors), founder of Black Garnet Books, celebrates handing over the book store to new owner Terresa Moses on Thursday, Nov. 21, 2024.

is opened by the same ownership group which owns Dilla's Ethiopian Restaurant on Riverside Avenue in Minneapolis. The site was chosen for its proximity to Allianz Field and will show several soccer matches, as well as other sports. The menu will also feature Ethiopian food, similar to the original Dilla's.

HOTWORX is a national chain with over 700 locations, but the first Saint Paul location is opening at 431 Snelling Ave. N. The site offers infrared sauna workouts, making for a faster workout that also detoxifies.

While not a new business, Black Garnet Books has changed ownership. The bookstore, which Dionne Sims originally opened as an online store and found its Hamline and University intersection in 2022, has been bought by Terresa Moses.

The bookstore will continue its tradition of anti-racism and maintaining "care" as its core value.

New stores aren't the only thing to celebrate. In 2024, we can also recognize anniversaries such as the tenth anniversary of two breweries: Burning Brothers and Urban Growler. The brewery industry has come a long way, but with the challenges they have faced it is a big accomplishment to make it 10 years. Both breweries have survived and thrived by offering fun events and continuously changing their menus to offer new and exciting items.

The first phase of United Village also opened this year. After much anticipation, the first two pieces are for the public and free. PK's Place is a 16,000-square-foot playground that can be used by children of all physical abilities. "The Calling" is

the talk of the town: a giant loon sculpture with an 88-foot wingspan. Both have brought thousands of visitors to the Midway, and construction will begin soon on a hotel and office space.

In a sign of symbolism, The Calling features a loon taking flight while also facing toward the vacant former CVS. After months of observing large groups of people hanging out in the CVS parking lot, the site is now fenced off. This came after the Saint Paul Police Department conducted a sweep along University Avenue in September. Several arrests were made, and many in the neighborhood noticed a difference. While efforts like that cannot be sustained, it was a welcome cause that helped. It was also one of the ongoing signs of support that have been made by some of our public partners, including SPPD, Ramsey County and Met Transit. For those of us living and working around University Avenue, we are well aware of the challenges and appreciative of these efforts. We hope to see more in the new year.

CVS isn't the only site open for redevelopment. At Home also moved out of the former Walmart space near Hamline and University. It can be frustrating to see our businesses leave, but there are opportunities in both sites and the chance for long-term investment. For those with ideas on what could be successful and assets to the community, I encourage you to reach out to the city of Saint Paul, the property owners or to me.

I wish everyone a happy holiday season spent with loved ones. As we air our grievances, don't forget to also count your blessings. One of those blessings are those who are choosing to invest in our community by opening businesses and creating public spaces for us to use. The holidays will be more enjoyable if you support those who support our neighborhood.

FIRST EDUCATOR

BY DR. ARTIKA TYNER,
dr.artikatyner@gmail.com



October marked the celebration of National Dyslexia Awareness Month. Roughly 3-4% of the school population across the nation experience a learning disability related to reading that qualifies them for special education support. Yet, research indicates that up to 5-20% of the general population experiences symptoms of dyslexia. This may include poor spelling, challenges with writing, or mixing up sounds in words.

What is dyslexia? According to MN Statute 125A.01, subd 2, dyslexia is defined as a specific learning disability that is neurological. "It is characterized by difficulties with accurate or fluent recognition of words and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede the growth of vocabulary and background knowledge."

This month's column explores research, resources, and a personal testimonial from Decoding Dyslexia Minnesota. This nonprofit organization strives to raise dyslexia awareness, empowers families to support their children, and improves resources for students with dyslexia in Minnesota educational systems.

A PARENT'S JOURNEY

A Decoding Dyslexia Minnesota Board Member and former Rondo Early Childhood Family Education parent shares personal reflections on understanding dyslexia. The parent begins by iden-

COULD YOUR STRUGGLING READER HAVE DYSLEXIA?

tifying common warnings: "Our family's struggles with dyslexia started well before I knew what dyslexia was. I mistakenly believed it was seeing letters backwards and that someone with dyslexia would never be able to read proficiently. So when another mom suggested that my daughter's struggles in kindergarten could be due to dyslexia, my initial reaction was denial. The school also dismissed it, saying she just needed to try harder. If I had understood dyslexia better, I would have recognized the warning signs and been better prepared to help her.

The signs were there in preschool. She qualified for speech services and struggled with nursery rhymes. Tracing letters upset her, and she confused similar-sounding words like "tomato" and "potato" (malapropism). She mixed up colors to the point where I asked her pediatrician if she was color-blind.

In kindergarten, it was obvious something was wrong, but I didn't know what. Her mental health declined—she didn't want to go to school and wasn't learning to read. I felt lost, chasing various suggestions, trying to figure out how to help her. Her teacher encouraged more reading practice at home, but despite our efforts, she wasn't making progress and her frustration grew. She started saying things like, "I wasn't meant to be a grown-up." Watching her excitement for school fade as she struggled to learn to read was heartbreaking.

She also struggled with letter reversals. While this can be normal in the early stages of learning to read, children should grow out of this as they realize that letter orientation matters (for instance, b, p, q, d are the same shape, just rotated). But for her, this confusion lingered.

No child wants to feel like the "dumb" one in class. Kids will adopt coping mechanisms: they'll fade into the background, become the class clown, or avoid class. My daughter's reading struggles were causing a host of other issues,

and we needed a path forward.

Eventually, we received a diagnosis and began targeted reading interventions. She needed more repetition and practice than her peers. With the right support, she improved. Today, she's in high school, taking honors and AP classes, and aspires to become a pediatric occupational therapist.

Her siblings were also diagnosed with dyslexia, though their struggles weren't as obvious. Dyslexia exists on a continuum from mild to severe, and children don't need to show all the signs to have it. Dyslexia presents as a difficulty with reading, involving trouble linking letters to sounds or recalling familiar names like letters, numbers, and colors. Not every reading struggle is dyslexia. No matter the root of a reading struggle, it's essential for parents to understand that their child IS trying. It's not about "just trying harder." We, as parents, need to be patient with our children and work with schools to ensure our children receive the support they deserve."

A CALL TO ACTION

Raising awareness about dyslexia is a call to action. It is an opportunity for all caring adults to support our children as they learn, grow, and lead by serving as First Educators.

A "first educator" refers to the fundamental primary role that parents and caregivers play in a person's early development and education. They instill essential life skills, morals, and behaviors.

Interested in learning more about the early warning signs of dyslexia, please visit: decodingdyslexiamn.org.

First Educator: refers to the fundamental primary role that parents and caregivers play in a person's early development and education. They instill essential life skills, morals and behaviors. Through her organization, Planting People Growing Justice Leadership Institute, Dr. Artika Tyner offers resources to foster literacy and education.

WARNING SIGNS OF DYSLEXIA

There are a few common warning signs for Pre-K and Kindergarten scholars that First Educators need to understand:

- **Delayed Speech:** Not speaking any words by the child's first birthday. Often, they don't start talking until they are 2, 2½, 3, or even older.
- **Mixing up sounds in multi-syllabic words:** For example, aminal for animal, bisghetti for spaghetti, hekalopter for helicopter, hangaberg for hamburger, mazageen for magazine, etc.
- **Early stuttering or cluttering.**
- **Lots of ear infections.**
- **Can't master tying shoes.**
- **Confusion over left versus right, over versus under, before versus after, and other directionality words and concepts.**
- **Late to establish a dominant hand:** May switch from right hand to left hand while coloring, writing, or doing any other task. Eventually, the child will usually establish a preferred hand, but it may not be until they are 7 or 8. Even then, they may use one hand for writing, but the other hand for sports.
- **Despite listening to stories that contain lots of rhyming words, such as Dr. Seuss, cannot tell you words that rhyme with cat or seat by the age of 4½.**
- **Difficulty learning the names of the letters or sounds in the alphabet; difficulty writing the alphabet in order.**
- **Trouble correctly articulating R's and L's as well as M's and N's.** They often have "immature" speech. They may still be saying "wed and gween" instead of "red and green" in 2nd or 3rd grade.
- **Family history of dyslexia.**

More at decodingdyslexiamn.org

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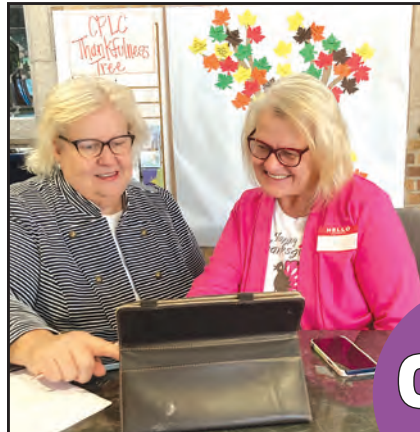
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NATURAL ORGANIC REDUCTION

A greener burial option is coming to Minnesota

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

Live On Minnesota is working to become the first provider of Natural Organic Reduction (NOR) in the state of Minnesota. Also known as "human composting," NOR is the safe and peaceful transformation of the body into nutrient-rich compost after death.

South Minneapolis resident Erik Halaas wants to become garden compost himself one day. Through his social venture Live On Minnesota, he is exploring how this natural alternative to cremation and conventional burial can become viable in Minnesota.

Halaas has 10+ years of experience building partnerships to research, test, and apply new approaches to programming in public health and education. He uses the term "intrapreneur" to describe his role: that of a person exploring new opportunities inside longstanding institutions.

HOW IT WORKS

There aren't many institutions older than funerary care. According to the Green Burial Council, coffin burial and cremation account for 94% of all funerals in the US. Both have significant negative impacts on the environment. Coffin burials account for 64,000 tons of steel, 1.6 million tons of concrete, and 4 million gallons of embalming fluid annually. Cremation has an annual carbon output equivalent to burning roughly 400 million pounds of coal.

Like all composting, NOR creates new life through death. Leaning into the principles of nature, NOR layers the body with organic material (wood chips, straw, alfalfa, wildflowers) in a reusable vessel, adds oxygen and movement to facilitate microbial activity, and breaks the body



Erik Halaas is founder of Live On Minnesota, which aims to return the body to the earth after death, while conserving land and reducing carbon emissions. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

down into its natural and nutrient-rich elements. Inorganic materials like artificial joints are sifted and removed and the final product is ready to support new life. Once decomposition is complete, about a cubic yard of organic material can be returned to the family.

TABOO SUBJECT

In addition to bringing NOR to Minnesota, Halaas hopes to support a culture of open communication on the topics of

death and dying. He said, "Even though there's nothing as normal as death, it can create real challenges for families. I think we could all learn to live better if we deepened our understanding of death and its inevitabilities."

Halaas added, "NOR provides a unique opportunity to process loss and grief. We typically rush through the preparations for memorial services and final disposition. Because this process is slow, usually around two months from start to finish, there's just a lot more time to reflect."

DISPOSITION

Disposition, in end-of-life vocabulary, means the disposing of the body. All have to go somewhere when we die. Seven years ago, Halaas' mother-in-law died and his family had their first close-in experience with death. At the time, NOR was in its infancy. Without plans for her burial, the family defaulted to cremation. He said, "She was an avid gardener and would have welcomed the chance to be returned to her garden. I wish we had

had this option then."

The NOR movement began in Washington state in 2014, when an architecture student named Katrina Spade started looking at different systems of disposition for a thesis project. She went on to create her own company, called Recompose, which has one of the few NOR facilities up and running in the country. Washington, Nevada, and Colorado are the only three states with operational NOR facilities to date, but that will likely start to change soon.

Halaas is working to make his business, Live on Minnesota, the state's first NOR facility. He said, "I started the design of a vessel with students at the University of Minnesota last spring. My hope is to continue exploring that option. Opening a facility is a capital intensive process; the entry point is a hurdle. I have heard of other folks, both within and beyond the state of Minnesota, who have an interest in investing."

In the meantime, he's hopeful that people will start having more conversations around death and dying. He said, "Funeral costs are the third largest life expense on average for people living in the U.S. In Minnesota, the average cost for a full-service burial is over \$9,000, and can easily cost far more. In states with NOR facilities, the cost is around \$6,000. The average cost for direct cremation is around \$3,000."

Halaas concluded, "I don't expect NOR to be the burial method that all Minnesotans choose, but it's an option many may feel comfortable with. I'm excited by the possibility of offering a more sustainable alternative."

For more information on Natural Organic Reduction and the work of Erik Halaas and his team, visit www.liveonmn.com. Mueller Memorial, a funeral home with locations in St. Paul and White Bear Lake, offers NOR coordinating resources: www.muellermemorial.com/dust-to-dust.

Remembering

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DESTYN LAND

>> from 1

At 27 years old, working full-time as a senior health equity educator for Hennepin Healthcare, while preparing for his wedding last June, Land claimed, "The writing process was fun! It was a hectic time – wedding planning was a hot mess, work was new and challenging, and the book was like the most peaceful part of life."

For Land, the book gave him a space to organize the anecdotes and write the academic findings of his research, which were first expressed in his successful podcast called "Rethinking Manhood."

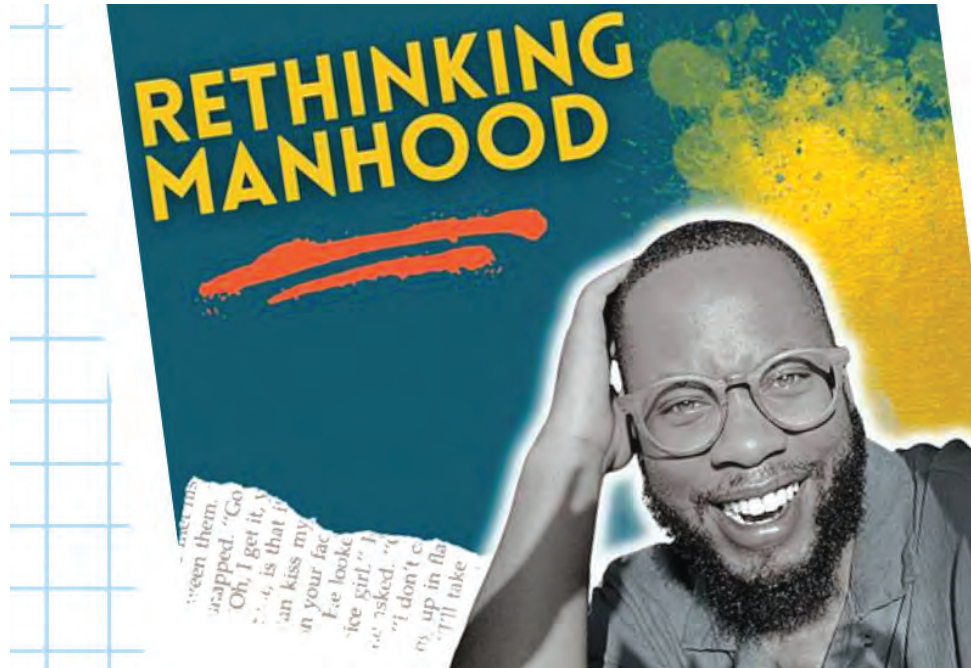
Initially, the podcast was an outlet for Land to creatively utilize a variety of his skills. He dove into themes of patriarchy and masculinity which he had explored and developed through undergraduate and graduate coursework. He shared stories and experiences, composed original music for each episode, and spent countless hours editing.

Land created his own website (destynland.com) and Instagram account (@rethinkingmanhood) to distribute the podcast. Within a couple of months in 2022, he had thousands of followers, and the podcast had listeners in over 60 countries.

While interest and praise for his content were higher than imagined, Land explained that its impact is complicated. The audience he reached was unexpected.

"I expected to reach mostly Black men since I focus so much on my Black identity, but White men started coming out of the woodwork and loving the content. I thought it would stay local and primarily resonate with men, but people of all genders, races, and locations connected with the subject. In my heart, I really want to have these conversations with youth."

Land grew up in St. Paul's Rondo



As a Black male, Land navigated places and spaces where he observed consistent patterns of patriarchal masculinity. He recognized that expectations prevented him from being whole. (Photos courtesy of destynland.com)

community where his family has been a fixture for generations. He graduated from Como Park High School and went on to earn his B.A. in English from Augsburg University.

With social justice omnipresent in his Augsburg studies, a paper he wrote for a class taught by Dr. Jeremy Myers ignited Land's spark for serving youth. He pursued a master of education at the University of Minnesota with a focus on youth development leadership.

As a Black male with a lifetime of experience in St. Paul and Minneapolis neighborhoods, schools, and churches, Land navigated places and spaces where he observed consistent patterns of patriarchal masculinity. He struggled with this societal norm, recognizing that expecta-



tions prevented him from being whole.

It's the consistent theme found throughout his podcasts and book. And it's his goal to have future generations grow up in a world where patriarchy doesn't dictate how men express themselves and interact with others.

Land lays out complex terminology in the book's introduction, stating, "Patriarchy is the social system that places men above women. Masculinity and femininity

are the socially constructed characteristics, behaviors, and roles that dictate how men and women should be."

One might think the book is exclusively scholarly analysis based on its subject. But the journey of reading "The Rules We Live By" is emotionally uplifting with its infusion of personal storytelling, keen observations of how men act and behave, and how reflection might lead each person on an improved path toward healthier relationships.

The author provides ample opportunity to "pause-and-reflect" by interweaving questions in each of the book's 10 chapters. Another unique feature is concluding each chapter with a devotional.

While Land reassures readers that "this is not a Christian book and should not be approached as such," he felt that excluding his Christian faith would limit his authentic self.

There is value for the reader in every element of the 180 pages. Land tells stories with humility and remarkable vulnerability. Yet he simultaneously adds a sense of humor alongside wisdom that makes a reader smile and laugh at oneself for living out relationships in a typically patriarchal way.

Examples include references to "bro code" displays of stoicism, silence, and utterances of "it's all good" masking as closure to conflicts that were never processed or resolved. No relationships are left unturned, including family, marriage, and fatherhood.

Land and his wife Netta were married last June, days after the book's completion. They are anticipating the birth of their first child in the spring. The 2025 season of "Rethinking Manhood" podcasts will likely have plenty of parenting conversations.

As for another book? "I could see that down the road. But I think I have a lot more living and learning to do first."

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**COMO PARK
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BY ERIC ERICKSON
Social studies teacher

COMO LAUNCHES 3DE PROGRAM



Como 9th grade students at the culminating event for their case study with Ramsey County. (Photo courtesy of Le'Shon Archie)

Como's new 3DE (three-dimensional education) program for all freshmen has successfully launched. A culminating event took place in November with a field trip downtown to St. Paul City Hall and Ramsey County Courthouse.

The students presented the findings of their case study in partnership with Ramsey County. Several weeks were spent on the case which asked students to develop a solution to the question: Which non-profit should Ramsey County collaborate with to build their talent pipeline?

Como's 3DE coordinator Le'Shon Archie explained that all students presented a solution in class during the first academic quarter. Then the top four groups presented to Ramsey County employees and officials at city hall. From those finalists who spoke in front of over 200 people, a winning group was selected. They were Molly Zbacnik, Nijia Wheeler and Lilly Werner.

The 3DE classes have embarked upon their next case study, which is with the APi Group, a construction and building safety company headquartered in New Brighton.

APi employees are coming to Como to coach teams in early December. On Dec. 17, the CEO and Chief Operating Officer of the APi Group will come to Como for student presentations in the school auditorium.

The 3DE program is sponsored by Junior Achievement. Next year 3DE will be in place for both ninth and 10th graders, meaning this year's freshmen will contin-

ue their 3DE courses. They are the pioneers of a program that will eventually be embedded on a school-wide scale as Como adds another grade level one year at a time.

MUSICAL GUESTS AND LESSONS

Como Park band students had the opportunity to hear a performance from a professional brass quintet represent-

ing the Saint Paul Conservatory of Music (SPCM). The quintet came to Como and played quality brass repertoire, followed by a question-and-answer session which allowed students a chance to discuss musicianship and think critically about their developing craft.

Como band and orchestra students are eligible for free private lessons on their instrument from a professional through SPCM. Band, orchestra, and choir students are also receiving weekly lessons during the school day from their directors Katie Miller and Huy Tran.

LUECK MEDALS TWICE AT STATE SWIM MEET

Cougar junior Aleia Lueck qualified for her third consecutive Minnesota state swim meet. She finished with a fourth-place state medal in the 50-yard freestyle and a sixth-place state medal in the 100-yard backstroke.

At the section meet (where state qualification occurs), Lueck defended her title in the 50 free from last year and set a new section meet record in that event. The relay team of junior Hattie Miller, freshman Adeline Hanson, eighth-grader Alice Van Keerbergen, and Lueck set a new school record in the 400-yard free relay.

Como highlights from the St. Paul City Conference Meet included championships for Hanson in the 100-yard breaststroke and Lueck in both the 50 free and 100 back.

PEACE BUBBLES



BY MELVIN GILES
peacebubbles@q.com

MAYBE SO, MAYBE NOT. WE'LL SEE.

"My message is about changing our way of thinking about women and abuses of power." - Anita Hill

Hope is life's essential nutrient, and love is what gives life meaning." - Dick Van Dyke

"If there is no struggle, there is no progress." - Fredrick Douglass

Hello Monitor readers,
Good cheer and blessed tidings to all. I want to start with 'shout outs;' however, there are way too many shout outs that would fill my column word count. So, I will just do a combo 'shout out' to TPT and MPR! I'm choosing TPT/MPR because of their diverse, unbiased fact-based educational documentaries and creative storytelling. I'm often thankfully surprised with the information that their programming shares, and I'm often sadly surprised that some folks are outraged with the information and documentaries that are shared on TPT/MPR. I applaud their November Native American Month broadcasts, as well as their other informative broadcasts and shows.

TPT and MPR help me to better understand why the need to change names and/or take down statues that represent the exploitation, disrespect, and/or killing or genocide of Indigenous people; the sinful, cruel, and inhumane enslavement of African people; the shameful bias, and racist enforcement of internment camps of Asian people; and the corrupt, rip-off, and swindling of land/country of Mexican

people. Similar things and situations happened to Swedish, German, Irish, Finnish, Polish, Italians, Dutch, Norwegians, and other European people too until they publicly gave-up their cultural roots/values and became White. Asian and other Brown people tried to give-up their cultural identity roots to become White (the perfect minority) too; however, in the 19th and 20th centuries, it was all about being White and having White Puritan values based on control-fear and individual-power with wealth and those who think the same instead of universal-love and shared and collective power with the land and all our earth relatives. I was taught that all cultures have indigenous roots/values. However, it has always been a choice of whether to maintain and cultivate those values or to let go of those roots/values or to modify the values in hope of progress for the betterment of the culture.

I just know this stuff/information is complicated and hard to deal with and to process. However, for our kids and future generations, we cannot "keep kicking the can" of America's dysfunctional, bad and unhealthy values forward to the next generation. Our climate shifting is in real-time not in future-time.

A FARMER AND SON

With that in mind and with the elections now behind us, I want to share a seasonal/holiday story that I have shared before:

A farmer and his son had a beloved stallion who helped the family earn a living. One day, the horse ran away and their neighbors exclaimed, "Your horse ran away, what terrible luck!" The farmer replied, "Maybe so, maybe not. We'll see."

A few days later, the horse returned

home, leading a few wild mares back to the farm, as well. The neighbors shouted out, "Your horse has returned, and brought several horses home with him. What great luck!" The farmer replied, "Maybe so, maybe not. We'll see."

Later that week, the farmer's son was trying to break one of the mares and she threw him to the ground, breaking his leg. The villagers cried, "Your son broke his leg, what terrible luck!" The farmer replied, "Maybe so, maybe not. We'll see."

A few weeks later, soldiers from the national army marched through town, recruiting all the able-bodied boys for the army. They did not take the farmer's son, still recovering from his injury. Friends shouted, "Your boy is spared, what tremendous luck!" To which the farmer replied, "Maybe so, maybe not. We'll see."

The moral of this story, is, of course, that no event, in and of itself, can truly be judged as good or bad, lucky or unlucky, fortunate or unfortunate, but that only time will tell the whole story. Additionally, no one really lives long enough to find out the 'whole story,' so it could be considered a great waste of time to judge minor inconveniences as misfortunes or to invest tons of energy into things that look outstanding on the surface, but may not pay off in the end.

By Dr. Marlo Archer

HOW THE STORY HELPS ME

This story helps me to congratulate and accept President-Elect Trump to lead our country when President Biden's term ends. It also encourages me to congratulate Vice President Harris for directing a joyful and inspiring campaign. I appreciated her joyful and hopeful attitude for the future instead of the standard distracting

repeated fearful messages of the past. It takes a few generations to learn historical lessons or to let go of America's false Manifest Destiny message of superiorly to rule and be in charge of everything including Mother Earth. For example, it took decades to end Jim Crow and a few more decades for some people to be okay with sitting next to a Person of Color in a movie theater or drink from the same water fountain. And, it's still taking more decades for America to honor Indigenous treaties. As a country, we still haven't been able to pass the 1923 Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) Bill that would simply guarantee women equal rights with men. Again, it takes 2-4 generations not to repeat past boo-boos, mistakes, and human actions of exploiting other humans, in particular of Black and Brown People and of women.

I remain hopeful and optimistic going into 2025. How can I not be optimistic with advanced technology and so many bright children and young people stretching their comfort zones and becoming aware of the critical climate conditions we/they are facing in the upcoming short years. I am also hopeful because more than 90% of Black women and a large group of White men voted for Vice President Harris. Next year, 2025, will indeed be very challenging. However, working and playing together with empathy, patience, and the power of love, things will be alright. I am a seed. A descendant of people that have progressed through struggle. As the saying goes, I am my Ancestor's Wildest Dream. Merry Christmas, Blessed Kwanzaa, and Happy Sacred Holiday Season. Good fortune to all in the New Year! Stay optimistic. Share and spread the joy and goodness you want to see and live.

May Peace Be In the Rondo, Frogtown, Hamline/Midway, Como, and Surrounding Communities... May Peace Be In Our Homes and Communities... May Peace Prevail On Earth (MPPOE).

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BUSINESS

BUSINESS AWARDS WINNERS

The Saint Paul City Council announced the eighth annual Saint Paul Business Awards winners:

- Flava Cafe, 623 University Ave W (Ward 1) – Alice O’Brien Award: honoring a women-owned business that is committed to equity and empowerment. (Runner-Up: Whole Life Elevation LLC)

- The Curl District, 647 Smith Ave S (Ward 2) – New Kid on the Block Award: honoring a business that has opened in Saint Paul within the last five years. (Runner-Up: Black Garnet Books)

- Tiffany’s Sports Lounge, 2051 Ford Parkway #1932 (Ward 3) – Traditions Award: honoring a business active in Saint Paul for at least 20 years. (Runner-Up: Keys Cafe, Raymond)

- Willie’s American Guitars, 1381 N Eustis St (Ward 4) – People’s Choice Award: honoring a business that is recognized for its excellence by Saint Paul residents. (Runner-Up: Brunson’s Pub)

- Storehouse Grocers, 781 7th St E (Ward 7) – Good Neighbor Award: honoring a business that shows a dedication to improving the community. (Runner-Up: Highland Popcorn)

STAR HOUSE CRISIS NURSERY OPENS

STAR House, a nonprofit crisis nursery in Ramsey County, will open its doors to the public on Nov. 22, 2024. STAR House offers safe, trauma-informed, overnight care for children and connects caregivers to supportive services to uplift and strengthen families during challenging times. Evidence shows this kind of support can decrease child abuse and neglect, reduce trauma for children, and increase strength and resiliency for the entire family. Located in Saint Paul, STAR House is the only service of its kind available to residents of Ramsey County. “We are thrilled to open our doors and begin serving the community,” said Interim Executive Di-

rector Sarah Ellefson. Every parent knows what it’s like to face a crisis and what it takes to get through. For many families in the community, when a setback occurs, the results can be catastrophic. STAR House wants to change that.

FELINE RESCUE REOPENS

Feline Rescue, a long-time nonprofit cat rescue and shelter in St. Paul, is thrilled to announce its official reopening on Oct. 14, 2024. After a period of closure for improvements, program realignment, and hiring, the shelter is ready to welcome both cats and community back to its facility. In the second week of reopening, Feline Rescue welcomed 10 cats through a partnership program with a rescue in northern Minnesota. These cats will be followed by additional intakes from this partnership. After this initial phase, Feline Rescue will gradually resume intake through an updated intake program.

“We’re excited to open our doors to the community again,” says Kate King, Executive Director of Feline Rescue.

As part of the reopening, Feline Rescue is calling on volunteers and community members to engage with the shelter’s ongoing efforts. In 2025, the shelter will focus on expanding programming to enhance care for more cats in need, with the planned addition of a second veterinarian and support staff.

2024 CANNABIS SUMMIT

Public health and safety experts, legislative leaders and treatment providers all gathered at Betty Ford Hazelden Treatment Center in St. Paul on Oct. 25 to participate in the first major interdisciplinary discussions and exchange of information about the state of cannabis legalization and regulation in Minnesota. The event was co-organized by Hamline psychology professor Dr. Serena King, in partnership with Hazelden Betty Ford Graduate School and Smart Approaches to Marijuana Minnesota.

This event was the first of its kind in bringing together a broad field of experts

AREA SLEDDERS, TAKE NOTE

Folks who enjoy sledding, crossing country skiing and winter walks on the Town & Country Club Golf Course will need to go elsewhere during winter 2024-2025. Club officials announced that the course at 300 N. Mississippi Blvd. will be closed to all forms of access this winter.

The closing is meant to protect extensive work done as part of Town & Country’s Golf Course Enhancement Project. Much of the course has been rebuilt over the past several weeks. Closing the course is meant to protect the newly made improvements over the winter months, said Tregg Hagen, membership and communications director.

Town & Country leadership spent several months weighing plans for the course, before approving a comprehensive renovation master plan developed by architect Jeff Mingay and the club’s long-time course superintendent Bill Larson in 2023, according to the website Golf Course Architecture.

The work has included expanding greens and fairways, as well as tee and bunker work. Initial alternations began in 2023 including removal of trees and restoring the

to closely examine the evolving landscape of Minnesota’s cannabis legislation, policy, legalization, research and lived experience.

“One take-home message was that we need to have a lot of cross-disciplinary communication between policy experts and scientists who are studying cannabis in Minnesota, so that we can stay on top of what is developing nationally,” King noted.

Participants also identified an important need to educate the community moving forward about current trends, policies and diverse products that will be on the market, as well as developing early discus-

size of greens. All 18 holes at Town & Country are expected to open to golfers in spring 2025.

Town & Country is considered to be the birthplace of golf in Minnesota, hosting the first-ever round of golf in Minnesota in 1893.

LIBRARY TO BE DEMOLISHED SOON

Demolition activities at the Hamline Midway Branch Library, 1558 Minnehaha Ave., get underway soon, according to a St. Paul Public Library press release. Demolition and construction of a new library can get underway following an October Ramsey County District Court decision allowing the project to go ahead after a 16-month delay.

Area residents will start to see activity as items are removed or salvaged. Building utilities will be deactivated and hazardous materials removed.

Work will continue through December. Other timelines and updates will be issued as the old library is prepared for demolition and a new one built.

The library is being replaced as part of the Transforming Libraries initiative. Once construction begins, the project is anticipated to take 18 months for completion. For more information about Transforming Libraries and for ongoing updates, visit www.sppl.org/transform.

Compiled by Jane McClure

sions on high potency cannabis research and examining trends that indicate strong popularity among youth populations.

“We will also need to improve the understanding and preparedness for mental health and addiction counselors as they face a new landscape of cannabis use in Minnesota,” King said.

Only days after the event, organizers began seeking feedback. King said many of the involved parties have shown interest in hosting another summit in 2025. Some possible themes include K-12 education and support, have already been proposed.

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Heart & Solstice

December 18, 2024 – January 5, 2025

Celebrate the season with the Bell Museum! The winter solstice marks the shortest day of sunlight in our hemisphere—after December 21, the days begin to get longer again. We've planned a variety of programs and activities and invite you to visit the museum to enjoy them all.



Sensory Friendly Saturday

December 21, 8–10 am

This monthly series provides a welcoming and accessible environment for individuals, families, and children who have sensory sensitivities. Experience our Minnesota Journeys gallery, temporary exhibits, the Touch & See Lab, and a brief planetarium show at 8:45 am—all with lowered lighting, quieter sounds, and fewer visitors.



Bell Museum Seasonal Hours

Plan your visit

Visit us December 26–31, 2024 and learn about Earth's past in temporary exhibitions *In Search of Earth's Secrets* and *Coring the Continents*, experience the intimate connections between sound and nature in award-winning planetarium show, *Secrets from a Forest* and more!