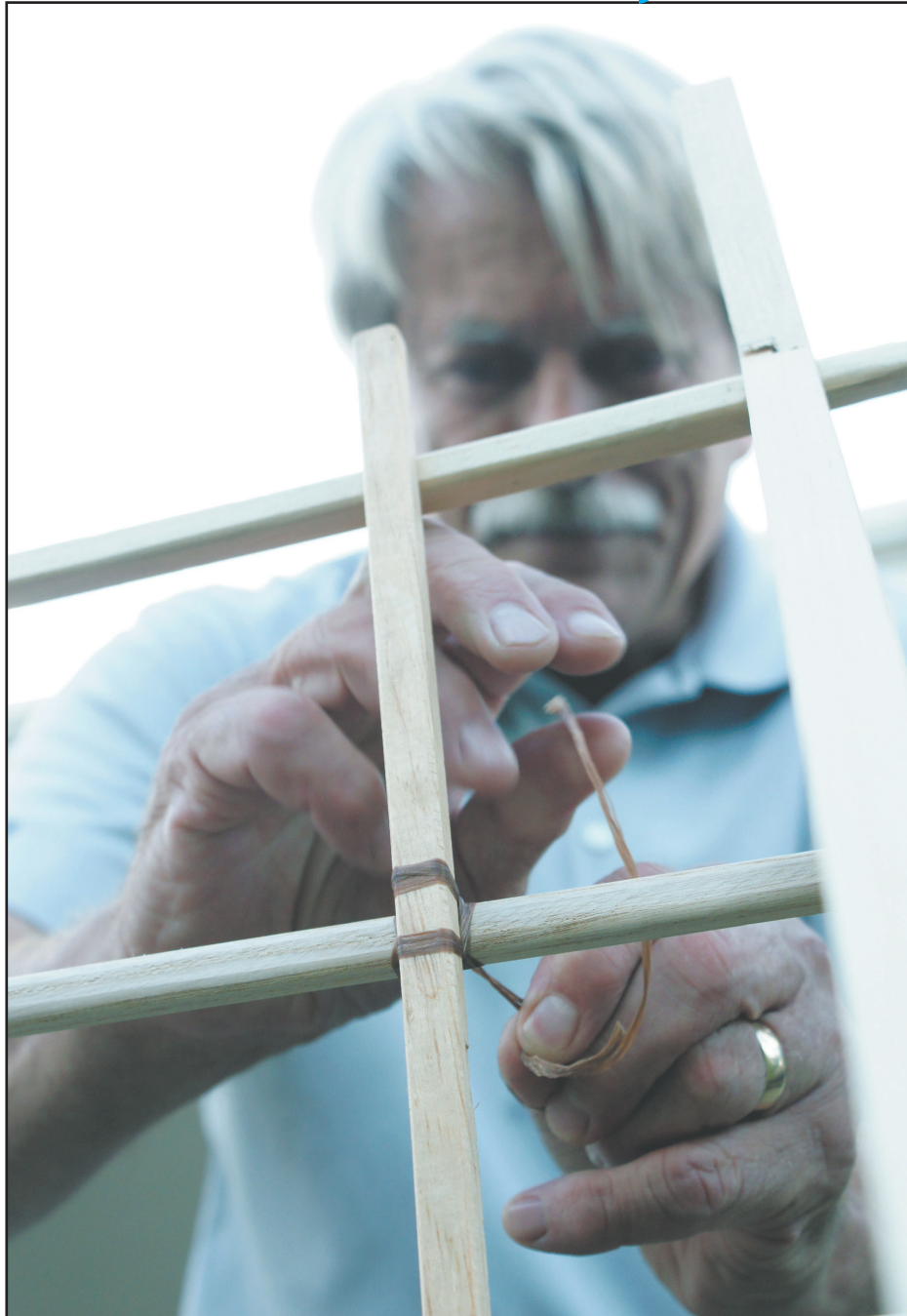




## BUILDING BOATS, LAUNCHING LIVES

Darwin Muzzy tries his hand at lashing a canoe frame during an Urban Boatbuilders event at Como Lake Pavillion on Wednesday, Aug. 21, 2019. Urban Boatbuilders is a 501(c)(3) non-profit focused on empowering youth to be successful in work and life through woodworking and experiential learning. Urban Boatbuilders was founded in 1995 as a partnership between community leaders who saw an increasing lack of opportunities for youth to learn, develop, and grow through hands-on activities. Last year, the organization served more than 850 youth throughout the Twin Cities. The Como Lake event celebrated the graduation of 20 youth apprentices. At the event, youth launched the boats they built, told stories from their build, shared their visions for their futures, and led a hands-on community build experience for guests to learn woodworking skills. During a three-month intensive Apprenticeship Program, youth facing barriers to employment developed work skills and stronger visions for their futures while building skin-on-frame canoes. Through coaching, mentorship, and collaborative boatbuilding, Urban Boatbuilders' apprentices leave the program with enhanced work skills, greater self-confidence, and stronger visions for their futures. (Photo by Terry Faust) BOAT BUILDERS >> 2



## Midway Walmart to close Sept. 20

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

St. Paul's only Walmart store, located in the Midway Marketplace at 1450 University Ave. W., will close Sept. 20. The pharmacy will close one week earlier, on Sept. 13.



(Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

The retail giant issued a statement on Aug. 28 citing factors that included poor overall performance. Employees commented on consistently high theft rates at the Midway Marketplace location, and its inability to provide a full scale grocery as also being contributing factors.

The store's 333 workers will be encouraged to seek positions at other Walmart locations, the company said. The nearest Walmart stores are located in West St. Paul and Roseville. Employees who don't choose to relocate will be paid through Nov. 8, and subsequently will receive severance pay.

Walmart is one of the world's largest companies with revenues worth more than \$500 billion, according to the 2018 Fortune Global 500 list. It is also the largest private employer in the world with 2.2 million employees, yet it is quietly closing stores across the US and Canada.

Other recent major retail closures in the neighborhood include Herberger's in the Midway Marketplace, and the Rainbow Foods that was torn down in the adjacent Midway Shopping Center to make room for Allianz Field. It remains to be seen what kind of amenities will be developed to meet the needs of Hamline Midway residents.

Kraus-Anderson Realty is the development division of Kraus-Anderson Construction. They purchased the Midway Marketplace last March. The 324,430-square-foot center has been anchored by national and regional businesses including Walmart, Cub Foods, TJ Maxx, LA Fitness, and Dollar Tree for years. According to Kraus-Anderson Realty, redevelopment plans include the addition of office and retail space, residential and hotel development.

## Midway business owner levels the playing field for people of color with mental health and addiction issues

### Matching clients of color with therapists of color

By JAN WILLMS

Katy Armendariz wanted to start an agency that would level the playing field for people of color seeking help with mental health issues, and diminish the disparities between them and the dominant culture.

And so she did.

She started Minnesota CarePartner, located at the old Central medical building at I-94 and Lexington. Starting with a couple of part-time therapists, the agency has grown to 55 employees.

But this did not happen

overnight, and along the way, Armendariz has struggled with her own traumas and issues while forging a path forward in building and strengthening Minnesota CarePartner.

#### Stripped of cultural identity

"I am from Korea," she said in a recent interview, as she described her background. "My birth mom was homeless and had a mental health condition. She couldn't parent, so she gave birth and then walked out of the hospital."

Armendariz was first placed

in an orphanage and then foster care, and eventually was adopted by a Minnesota couple.

"There were good intentions, but I was completely stripped of my cultural identity," she recalled. "They denied any racial experience I had. I was exposed to a lot of comments growing up, and I started to grow very critical of the systems that create disparities between who is adopting and who is being adopted."

Armendariz noted that oftentimes the child's adoptive parents did not know how to do their hair, did not know much

about their culture, and did not raise them around people who looked like them.

#### Burn out leads to new business

She attained her master's degree and became licensed and started working as an Adult Rehabilitative Mental Health Services (ARMHS) worker, then became a therapist. "But I was unfulfilled; it was just a burnout," she said.

"I wasn't sure I wanted to stay in the social work field," she continued, "so I went out and got my real estate license when I



As an adult, Katy Armendariz has delved into how she lost her cultural identity after being adopted from Korea, and she's working to help others sort through various types of trauma through that lens. (Photo by Jan Willms)



Mobile Market fills gaps in grocery scene

PAGE 6



Dream adventure with a purpose

PAGE 7



William Kent Krueger thinks his latest book is best ever

PAGE 12

# BUILDING BOATS, LAUNCHING LIVES

>> from 1

Gerri Iwanouskos listened to Matthew McPherson explain canoe building techniques. BELOW Canoes built by Urban Boat Builders line up at Lake Como, ready to take to the water. (Photos by Terry Faust)



ABOVE Kiara Montgomery, a senior Urban Boat Builder, shows (L-R) Carey Montez, Jan Montez, Faith Wisland, and Richard Wisland learned how to lash together a canoe frame on a practice stand during an event at Lake Como Pavillion on Aug. 21, 2019. AT RIGHT Urban Boat builders Damarion Evan (left) and Tamyscha Camaco-Estudillo navigate Lake Como their canoe. (Photos by Terry Faust)



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# Matching clients of color with therapists of color

>> from 1

was pregnant with my second son. One week after I had given birth to him, I held my first open house. And I hated it, really hated it. I decided I didn't want to do that."

Armendariz was drawn back to the field of social work, but she determined she wanted to provide mental health services for individuals who faced disparities and families at risk of child protection services.

"In Minnesota, 85 percent of child protection services are with families of color," she said, "in a system that is unfair and unequal."

Armendariz went out and applied for a business name, got a tax ID and got certified for ARMHS and Children's Therapeutic Services and Supports (CTSS.)

"I hired a therapist part-time, I made some flyers and brochures and set up a website, and I went out to several counties and told them what we wanted to do. And it just exploded. We now have 55 employees."

## Roots in Recovery

Minnesota CarePartner has a unique outpatient program, according to Armendariz.

"It is not a typical Minnesota model," she said. "We take a social justice approach, where we validate and support."

The program reaches out to people where they are, staff meeting with them in their homes or

homeless shelters or libraries. "A lot of our clients have been underserved and over oppressed," she said, "and programs designed by the dominant race don't always work for people of color."

As well as addressing mental health concerns, Armendariz's agency has set up its own substance abuse program called Roots in Recovery. The program, which started last December, now admits 200 participants. The substance recovery, also, approaches things from a cultural standpoint, according to Armendariz.

"We deal with the experiences, systematic and traumatic, that contribute to addiction," she said. "We take some of the more violent clients who have been kicked out of other programs. We will help them."

## Her own addiction

As Armendariz continued to build her organization, she struggled with her own problems with addiction.

"I was doing payroll, billing, hiring, marketing, clinical supervision and compliance, raising a family and dealing with a lot of unresolved trauma, and I started drinking a lot of wine. It became an addiction. I went to treatment, and it was one of the best things I could have done."

## Coffee Rehab

As the substance abuse program for Minnesota CarePartner took off, Armendariz started

planning for a project that could employ addicts as they grew in their sobriety. She wanted to start a coffee house called Coffee Rehab, run and operated by individuals in recovery.

"I did a Kickstarter and found a location on East Lake St. in Minneapolis," she said.

She had support from her Twelfth Ward council member Andrew Johnson, who said the following about her proposal: "For anyone struggling with addiction, knowing they are not alone and getting support from others can make a huge difference. Having Coffee Rehab in our neighborhood is going to help many people on their path towards healthier and happier lives. It's truly an asset for our community."

Mayor Jacob Frey and Chef Andrew Zimmern were also supporters. She got T-shirts made. But the location fell through.

"It was kind of a sign I needed to slow down," Armendariz said. "I needed to clean up in any areas where we are struggling." She said that in a couple years, when her current lease is up, she will look again for a location that can house her agency and the coffee house.

## Reflecting community they serve

Regarding her agency, Armendariz said, "I wanted to reflect the community we serve." She said she looks for staff members who may speak the same language, share a similar back-

ground and look like the clients they work with.

"It is hard during a therapy session to have to use an interpreter," she noted.

It is Armendariz's hope that Minnesota will make an investment in communities of color, offer more opportunities for clinicians of color and help them get into school.

"We apply the same standards to all people, but starting out I had less credibility and more issues getting off the ground," she said.

Looking back a few years to when she began her agency, Armendariz said she was not certain she had what it took to run a company. "Who am I, to think I can do this?" she recalled asking herself. "But through the process of recovery and sobriety, watching things fall into place and attracting a great staff, I know I can do this."

Currently Minnesota CarePartner provides addiction services for adults only, but in mid-September this will include an adolescent program that will help children suffering from addiction. For mental health treatment, the agency treats all ages, including babies.

## Exactly what she's supposed to be doing

Armendariz said initially one of her biggest challenges was retaining staff. "There's a big staff turnover when you don't offer PTO or benefits," she said. She

*"A lot of our clients have been underserved and over oppressed, and programs designed by the dominant race don't always work for people of color."*

*- Katy Armendariz*

also realized she was doing too many things at once and wearing too many hats. "When you do too many things, you can't do everything with quality," she said.

"But now I have an administrative team, a clinical supervisor and staff. I can wear the hat of manager."

She added, "Being a start-up is really hard. People want to judge you and criticize you, and it is hard to build from the ground up."

Right now, Armendariz said she feels amazing. "I am in a perfect spot, doing exactly what I am supposed to be doing."

She said one of the greatest rewards she has felt has been seeing a culture at her company that is truly a safe space for clinicians and counselors of color, as well as others. "We have fun."

"The staff members now stay because they get the mission and they believe in it," Armendariz said. "Finally, after blood, sweat and tears and being out in the arena, I am glad now things are shaping up."

## Development Roundup

By JANE MCCLURE

### STAR requests OK'd

On Aug. 21, the St. Paul City Council approved more than two dozen Neighborhood Sales Tax Revitalization (STAR) requests, including Midway projects.

None of the area projects were affected by changes made by Mayor Melvin Carter. About \$2.6 million in grants and loans won approval.

Co-Motion Center for Movement at 655 N. Fairview Ave. received a \$40,000 loan and \$40,000 grant, with a \$180,000 match. The fund would be used for building improvements, by Element Boxing & Fitness.

New Vision's new headquarters in St. Paul at 860 Vandalia St. was awarded a \$105,424 grant will be matched with \$105,424 to build out the facility, which also houses the Tech Dump electronics recycling program.

The Community Involvement Programs-ALLY People Solutions agency at 1515 Energy Park Drive was awarded a \$100,000 loan and \$50,000 grant, with a \$150,000 match.

A new Playwrights' Center at 711 Raymond Ave. obtained a \$100,000 grant and \$50,000 loan, with \$7.625 million match to convert an old warehouse into a playwrights center.

### Lexington-University project faces pushback

Two area district councils are asking that a planned mixed-use development near Lexington Parkway and University Ave. include more affordable units. Summit-University Planning Council and Frogtown Neighbor-



Two area district councils are asking for more affordable housing units in the development planned for Lexington and University.

hood Association are asking that the Alatus LLC project include more affordable units. Those two district councils are asking Union Park District Council (UPDC) to vote against the two current proposals for 411 Lexington Parkway. The requests were discussed by the UPDC land use committee Aug. 19. That committee took no action but took the request under advisement.

How much say UPDC can have isn't clear. Alatus needs no zoning changes or variances, and isn't seeking public subsidy.

Two redevelopment plans would each have a six-story mixed-use building with a grocery store and east-west bicycle-pedestrian connection through the structure. Both plans offer about 21,000 square feet of space for a grocery store. The number of apartments, ranging from efficiencies to four-bedroom units, would be about 226. There would be about 180 parking spaces, underground and on the main level. Both plans also call for the building to have two outdoor amenity decks. One plan calls for all market-rate apart-

ments, as well as 5,000 square feet space for smaller community coworking or a business incubator space. The second plan calls for what Alatus representatives describe as privately subsidized/affordable units, with six to 12 units allocated to people who meet income restrictions.

Frogtown and Summit-University district councils are asking for more affordable units, noting that development along the Green Line light rail has already forced renters out. That include Tia Williams, co-director of Frogtown Neighborhood Association. She and others said the need for more affordable housing has to be considered.

Ward One Council Member Dai Thao has also joined in the issue, asking that property owner Wilder Foundation only sell the development site for affordable housing.

Wilder officials have pushed back, saying they are selling property to cover the costs of their social services mission. The Lexington site has been for sale for several years and hasn't found a buyer yet.

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# The Motley Conversation

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We were vacationing up along the North Shore last month and it was a great time of the year to see those iconic spots that make Minnesota the great state it is: the views at Gooseberry Falls, the crafts of Grand Marais, ships pulling into the Duluth harbor, the sea gulls serenading the tourists along Lake Superior, and the list goes on. The North Shore is like a picture postcard at every turn.

As we stopped in at various merchants in and around the North Shore, I was struck at how often the North Shore, a vacation destination that draws visitors from around the state and the country, still proudly promotes its own "Buy Local" campaign. Businesses religiously remind local residents that they need their support to be successful.

But that Buy Local state of mind is not unique to the North Shore. I think it goes without saying that many residents and business owners believe that their own neighborhood is the best place to live and work. I know that's true of the Midway and Como neighborhoods. I think it's also true that when given the opportunity, many residents want to do whatever they can to support their local merchants. They know the stability of their neighborhood and their city depends on the vitality of their business community.



## Stop the presses!

By DENIS WOULFE, [Denis@MonitorSaintPaul.com](mailto:Denis@MonitorSaintPaul.com) or 651-917-4183

### Make your neighborhood your brand

That's why when advertisers ask me what they should promote in their advertising, I usually tell them that in addition to their products and services, they also should promote the fact that they are longtime Midway and Como businesses that are devoted to the community and devoted to making their community the best place to live and the best place to do business. And I believe those businesses that partner with local schools and charities to "give back" through special promotions where a portion of the proceeds goes to the charity make a strong statement

that they are committed to the community in which their business is located.

Now when Midway and Como business owners ask me about what the best options are for them to advertise in the *Monitor*, the answer can get a bit complicated. In addition to a run of press ad in the paper, we also offer clients inserts and online advertising. Sometimes a marketing plan might call for a mix of options that might include print, radio, TV, social media, and so forth.

And while there's no doubt that a full page ad with color is bound to attract the attention of our readers, the story of advertising is much the story of the tortoise and the hare. While there is always that temptation of wanting to get to the finish line faster than anyone else, the magic

of advertising is really about the long game. It's about having a presence in your local media on a regular basis for the long haul. And when *Monitor* readers finally have the need to buy their next home or that pepperoni pizza for tonight's dinner, and maybe can't remember your name or your contact information, they will pick up a copy of the *Monitor* and see your ad.

But in addition to those fine products and services that businesses are offering, I hope businesses also know to convey their local ties and community investment when they advertise their wares. Certainly mammoth companies like McDonald's, Apple, WalMart, or Heinz Ketchup will always be companies that capture market share in their respective industries, but there are times when being the local guy, the

merchant down the street, can be an important selling point in the equation.

Make your neighborhood your business. And be sure to share that message in your advertising in the *Monitor* and in other media. It's a message that your customers will appreciate and respond to. And to our loyal *Monitor* readers, don't forget to support local businesses, and particularly, those businesses that make a statement by advertising in the *Midway Como Monitor*. They are asking for your business, reinforcing the fact that they are a community minded business, and need your support to thrive in our community. And we need those same advertisers to hear that from you.

As always, thanks to our loyal advertisers to making advertising in the *Monitor* a priority in their marketing plans. And thanks to our loyal readers who take the time to keep up on important community news in the *Monitor* and also take the time to support our advertisers with their pocketbook.

I'm writing while my family visits my mother-in-law in Wyoming. It's a wonderful place to visit, and very different to our lives in the Midway. We are interested in places and things the locals take for granted, like mountains, horses and wide open spaces.

But we should take a step back and be wowed and fascinated by the sights we see at home. Whether entertaining an out-of-town guest or just being a tourist in your own town, what are the places we take for granted?

Prior Works at 755 Prior Avenue is a wonderful place to take visitors or just yourself. Can Can Wonderland is not just an ordinary mini golf course as it's also a fun, funky art exhibit with an old school arcade. In the same building you can throw some axes and play other lumber-



## Building a Stronger Midway

By CHAD KULAS, Midway Chamber of Commerce Executive Director

### A tourist in your own town

jack-style games at FlannelJax's. If you haven't thrown an axe at a large, wooden dart board, put in on your list of things to do soon. Even those who are unsure of trying have a great time. You can also start and end your day at the same spot at Prior Works at the BlackStack Brewing space, which is now partnering with True Stone Coffee so it can be a coffee shop by day, and taproom by night.

Another new hot spot is on

the cultural side- the new Bell Museum. Now on the Saint Paul campus, the museum offers a planetarium as well as natural history. You'll learn more about Minnesota and about the far reaches of our galaxy.

If you want to show an out-of-town guest around, you can start your day at Groundswell where they can see some fun Minnesota-themed artwork, buy gifts about (or in the shape of) Minnesota and get the famous

Minnesota cookie. Groundswell also partners with HWY North, and sells local artists ranging from jewelers, potters, authors, wood carvers and more.

Visitors will also be impressed with the local cuisine and all the cultures represented on or near the Green Line. We have taken guests to Bole so they can try Ethiopian food, and others to Vietnamese restaurants so they can try some of the best pho in the world.

The Minnesota State Fair may have just ended but the Fair has events throughout the year. Upcoming events in September include an antique show, a children's consignment sale, a dog show, an Arabian horse show and many more - just in September alone.

Another jewel we take for granted is the State Capitol building. Considered by many as one of the most beautiful capitol buildings in the country (have you seen the North Dakota State Capitol?) tours are available to learn more about the history a self-guided tour wouldn't tell you.

Next time you're looking for something different to do, look around the neighborhood. Not only would you save travel time, you can help support your local businesses.

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**TMC**  
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# Letters to the Editor

## Jessica Kopp for Saint Paul's School Board

Dear Editor:

In November, I will enthusiastically vote for Jessica Kopp to serve on our Saint Paul School Board. I write today to encourage you to connect with and learn more about her and her campaign (at <http://www.jessica4stpaul-schools.com>); I am confident her record and her key commitments will earn your vote, too. Here are some of the reasons why.

I first met Jessica in a local forum where she represented the Hamline Elementary PTA. I took some time afterwards to ask questions about how she saw the school fitting into the broader Midway neighborhood. She gave me a quick yet thorough snapshot: students she knew, community organizations they had partnered with, programs she celebrated (and often had helped to set up), other parents and teachers who were doing phenomenal work, connections to key city agencies which made a meaningful change happen in the Rec Center or that engineered a community-wide arts project on the fences adjoin-

ing Snelling Ave. (She also gave me a delicious cookie.) I was struck by the depth of her network and her knowledge. Jessica doesn't just know that schools are in, and dependent on, the surrounding community – one of her superpowers is the ability to facilitate and shape meaningful relationships between diverse community partners and stakeholders in order to get things done.

A core goal for her candidacy is to help Saint Paul Public Schools better understand and draw on these assets. She has repeatedly helped me see the intersections between various organizations and activists in our community, to see how we could – how we must – define powerful new collaborations between schools and community leadership to serve our students and families.

To do so, she knows the school board must also deepen its understanding of – and responsiveness to – the needs of parents and teachers. Jessica's strengths as a community organizer are tied to her strengths as a listener. As a board member she will be intentionally and fully present in our schools, re-shaping how the district attends to the voices and

needs of each community. Further, she recognizes that, all too often, too many voices are marginalized, neglected, or mistreated. As a teacher, she grappled with the inequities that traumatize students and families; her community activism in the years since has tackled systemic inequality, for instance helping to build a collaboration between Hamline Elementary and Hamline University which improves all students' experiences in classrooms while also comprehensively rethinking teaching and teacher training.

Jessica Kopp is herself an incredible asset for Saint Paul Schools – she knows how to empower stakeholders, to understand and work with what they tell her, and to help make sustainable change throughout a big, complicated system. I urge you to consider giving her one of your votes for School Board.

Sincerely,  
Mike Reynolds

## Look through lens of Climate Crisis

Dear Editor:

Early on in Mayor Carter's 2020 Budget address he said the following about the Climate Crisis: "We must act to protect our envi-

ronment and adapt to the impacts of climate crisis on our city." Following that during the speech he noted several ways in which the city is attempting to address the climate crisis such as; increase in non-carbon transit options, cooperation with Minneapolis to install 70 electric vehicle charging stations, expanded bike lanes, etc. I for one support those ideas and give the Mayor credit for his leadership in those areas. That being said, I will admit some frustration with how the Mayor and/or the city are approaching this issue of the Climate Crisis. Similar to what our state, nation, world community and many individual people are doing, the issue is looked at as yet another priority to address. It is looked at as yet another issue to get in line for the funding stream. When the reality is that it is THE issue of our time, present and future.

If we looked at climate change as priority number one, I think the reality of its daunting nature and its solutions would be easier to see. We would see that our concerns about education, poverty, violence, immigration are all tied into this issue. We would also see that any and all decisions made about those other issues need to be made looking through the lens of the Climate Crisis. In looking through that new lens we would see that must stop looking at what can we

afford to do but rather what we need to do. To compare this to other issues, let's pretend we have a sick child. None of us would ask the doctor what can we afford to do, what is the most pragmatic, etc. We would ask what do we need to do regardless of cost.

So with that in mind, I want to thank the city of St. Paul for their leadership but also throw some specific challenges and/or questions their way. It has been estimated that Saint Paul has the solar capacity for 800 MW of energy, yet we are planning to develop only 300MW of that by 2050. Why? When we look at new building/new developments (ie the Ford site) we are still seeing the use of natural gas. Why? As the new green economy develops, our city, the nation and the world will need the workers to fill those green jobs. How are we as a city being a leader in giving our residents (adult and youths) the skills to become those green workers? I will end with a quote shared by the Climate Justice Now movement. "We need everyone, everywhere doing everything all the time as quickly as possible." Saint Paul nice job so far but you are on the clock and it's time to keep moving.

Thomas Lucy

By JANE MCCLURE

# Monitor In A Minute

## Survey on frontage roads

The St. Paul Department of Public Works is conducting a survey, prior to resurfacing the Concordia and St. Anthony avenues' freeway frontage roads. The survey was posted in August on Twitter.

The 2021 project will include St. Anthony from Snelling Ave. to Victoria St., and Concordia from Lexington Parkway to Marion St. "Share your thoughts on how we can make these streets safer at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/94frontageroads>," the post stated.

The five-question survey asks how safe people feel walking, biking and driving along the streets. Both lack sidewalks in places. Neither has consistent bike improvements from end to end.

One survey question is, "What would make walking, bicycling or driving feel safer for you on St. An-

thony and Concordia?" Survey-takers are also asked to identify where they live, by zip code.

Public Works will use the survey input to help shape plans and then take the plans out for community meetings at a later date.

## Stormwater management eyed at Midway Center

A key piece of the Midway Center superbloc and Allianz Field redevelopment went into place Aug. 7. The council approved the Snelling Midway Green Infrastructure Stormwater Management District, to outline management of and responsibilities for the extensive stormwater and drainage improvements done as part of soccer stadium and site redevelopment.

Putting the district in place establishes connections and ongoing operation and maintenance charges for property and uses served by the

district's stormwater infrastructure. The district and improved water runoff management practices have been in the works since stadium and area redevelopment planning got underway a few years ago.

The agreement involves Minnesota United FC and Midway Center owner RK Midway Shopping Center, LLC, RK University Midway, LLC and its affiliates. It governs the block bounded by Pascal St. and St. Anthony, Snelling and University avenues.

The sustainable stormwater management system was agreed upon in 2017, by the team and shopping center ownership. The agreement acknowledges that as the site continues to be redeveloped, any future development must pay to connect to this system as well as pay for the long-term maintenance of the stormwater management system. Water runoff is collected, fil-

tered and reused at the site.

City officials studied a number of stormwater systems before one was chosen and installed. It is hoped that the district and its environmentally sustainable practices become a model for other redevelopment sites in St. Paul. A city ordinance passed earlier this year sets up regulations and payment structures for future districts.

## Gabe's obtains license change

Gabe's by the Park, 991 N. Lexington Parkway, can play music over a speaker system on its patio. The St. Paul City Council Aug. 24 approved the changes to business licenses, dropping a longstanding condition banning music outdoors.

Added license conditions state that any activities taking place outdoors including those taking place on the outdoor patio seating area – such as music being played over a

speaker system – shall comply with applicable state and local rules and regulations, including the city code. The patio speakers shall be turned off when the patio is closed and/or there is no food/beverage service provided directly by waitstaff. Amplified sound shall be controlled at all times so that it will not be audible at the residential properties across Lexington Parkway

The change has a recommendation of approval from Como Community Council, but did generate neighborhood objections, sending the issue to a legislative hearing this summer.

Two existing license conditions will remain. The patio will close by 11 p.m. and Gabe's will not contract with Topline Credit Union, 976 N. Lexington Parkway, for use of its parking lot.

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Twin Cities Mobile Market's Keshawn Williams (right) finished a transaction with a Hamline Hi-Rise resident. There are no chips, pop, or junk to be found on the Mobile Market, and customers comment that they appreciate not having the temptation. The easy-to-spot Mobile Market brings healthy food directly into Twin Cities neighborhoods on 33 regularly scheduled routes. (Photos by Margie O'Loughlin)

## TC Mobile Market FILLS GAPS in local grocery scene

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

The Midway offers plenty of grocery shopping opportunities, but what if someone is physically unable to get to a grocery store – or just can't afford the prices?

The residents of Hamline Hi-Rise, a 186 unit St. Paul Public Housing complex located at 777 Hamline Ave. N., are grateful to have another option.

Technically, the residents of the hi-rise live in what has been called a food desert (though the language is changing.) That term has been used to describe urban areas where people are low-income, and live more than one mile from a full-service grocery (or 10 miles from a full-service grocery in rural areas.) Hamline Hi-Rise offers subsidized housing to senior citizens, and is located 12+ blocks from the Midway CUB and Target.

Every Thursday at noon, a retired MTC bus pulls into the Hamline Hi-Rise parking lot and opens its double doors for shoppers. Painted from top to bottom with colorful fruits and vegetables, this grocery store on wheels is called the Twin Cities Mobile Market – and it really gets around.

Leah Porter is the founder and director of the Mobile Market, a social enterprise of the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation. Six years ago, she had just graduated from Hamline University with an MA in non-profit management. Her concentration on food distribution systems had her thinking a lot about how food access could be improved in the Twin Cities.

She thought, "If people are facing barriers such as lack of transportation, affordability, or mobility, why not bring the grocery store to them?"

Porter talked with hundreds of community members, testing the viability of the grocery store on wheels idea. It was important to her that whatever concept emerged from these discussions be community-driven. She wrote a business plan for the Twin Cities Mobile Market, secured funding for her new non-profit organization, was able to buy a retired MTC bus at a public auction, and oversaw its acquisition by the Wilder Foundation in early 2014.

By the end of that year, the first Mobile Market route was launched with 19 stops in St. Paul. A second repurposed bus extended service into Minneapolis in 2017, which brought the total number of stops to 33.

The Hamline Hi-Rise is just one stop on the St. Paul route, but it's an important one.



Porter said, "We've partnered with them from the beginning, ever since their resident council reached out to us. Something unique about the Mobile Market is that where ever we stop, anybody who needs groceries is welcome to come onboard and shop. We don't check ID or require income verification. We believe there's a huge gap between food shelves and regular grocery stores. The Mobile Market is filling that gap by bringing healthy, affordable food right into the neighborhoods that need it."

The Mobile Market stocks more than 200 items in their year-round inventory, and has price points at or below what grocery stores charge. Items for sale include fresh fruits and vegetables, meat, dairy, assorted dry goods, and a limited number of paper products.

To increase affordability, the Mobile Market accepts EBT and participates in a state-funded program called Hunger Solutions. Through that program, for every dollar a customer spends on fresh produce, they receive one Market Buck to spend on fresh produce the next time they visit. In addition to the Market Bucks, anyone who spends \$10 with their EBT card at the Mobile Market gets a goodie-bag with free produce donated by Loaves and Fishes. Every first-time customer also receives a free, re-usable tote bag for carrying their groceries home.

Porter said, "We try to provide an excellent value to our customers for their money, as well as friendly, helpful service. We know that many factors contribute to good health – that making positive social connections is very important. For the elderly especially, isolation and loneliness are social determinants that can lead to ill health. We make every effort to get to know our customers, especially the ones who come regularly."

The Mobile Market has volunteer opportunities for community members interested in leveling the playing field of equitable food distribution. To learn more about volunteering, to check the Mobile Market schedule, or to make a donation toward the cost of food or fuel, visit [www.twincitiesmobilemarket.org](http://www.twincitiesmobilemarket.org).

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St. Paul teachers and others tour three SPPS school gardens to learn about the Garden to Cafeteria program beginning this year. (Photo submitted)

## Garden to Cafeteria launched

On Aug. 19, 16 St. Paul School district teachers, staff, University of Minnesota representatives in food safety and gardens, and representatives from Urban Roots toured three different SPPS school gardens to learn more about the Garden to Cafeteria (G2C) program.

"It is a chance to get the students in touch with their food and know where it comes from. It promotes healthy living, not only nutritionally, but in actively gardening in the fall and the spring," said Kirsten Saylor, SPPS garden coordinator. Garden to Cafeteria is a program that will start this year, where these teachers, trained in the process of safely harvesting and handling food, will start to bring the student grown and student harvested

food, like cherry tomatoes, kale, lettuce, spinach, and other vegetables into their cafeteria in a way that is safe for students to eat.

There are 24 of school gardens/orchards in SPPS, and this group of teachers went to visit several of them to learn more about the process of starting a garden, sustaining a garden, and how to properly bring the food into the supply chain of the school cafeteria for the salad bar.

Kris Wirtz, school cafeteria supervisor at Murray, was willing to pilot the protocols last spring at Murray with student grown lettuce. She, along with Mr. Chase, a science teacher who had students grow lettuce in the school, supervised the students in harvesting, washing, and prepping it for the lunch line salad bar. "If we are



## DREAM ADVENTURE WITH A PURPOSE

One day, kids climbed into the cockpits of real Blackhawk and Chinook helicopters. The next, they built magnet-powered cars and blasted chemistry rockets into the sky. It all happened at the new summer STEM academy at Macalester College Aug. 5-9. Project Scientist is exclusively for girls ages four through 12 with a mission to change their perception of who a scientist is and what a scientist does. Women fill nearly half the jobs in the U.S., but they hold less than 25% of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) jobs, according to the U.S. Department of Commerce. Project Scientist provides summer academies and expeditions to close this national gender gap. Founder Sandy Marshall is a native of Anoka, Minn. (Photo submitted)

going to promote sustainability in the district, this is a great way to teach it, and the team has come up with a set of protocols that will assure food safety and provide a paper trail of what food was harvested when and how it was served," she said.

Over the past two years

over 500 pounds of produce has been donated to the local food shelf out of the Murray garden. Teacher Tim Chase, who has been working with students on the garden, is excited to bring the food into the cafeteria, and hopes to use food, agriculture, sustainability, and culture to

build understanding across the diverse population at Murray.

"We will be inviting several local chefs into the classroom too to tie culture and food together with hopes that the thread of sustainability is a natural way of thinking in many cultures when it comes to food," he said.

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## BUTTERFLY RELEASE



Close to 400 people gathered Thursday, Aug. 15 in the gardens at Our Lady of Peace Hospice (2076 St. Anthony Ave.) in Saint Paul to release monarch butterflies in memory of their loved ones during an annual celebration of remembrance. This beautiful event brings together family and friends who have had a loved one cared for in the Our Lady of Peace hospice home – a 21-bed residence – or through the Our Lady of Peace community hospice program that cares for patients in their own homes. (Photo submitted)

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## First Fun Run set for Oct. 5

The Como Park High School Booster Club is hosting the first annual Homecoming 5K and Fun Run on Saturday, Oct. 5, beginning at 9:30 a.m.

Neighborhood residents are invited to participate and celebrate the Como school community with healthy activity for multiple abilities, followed by festivities that will include food trucks, socializing, and the homecoming football game on the Como turf at 1 p.m. versus Minneapolis Southwest.

"Shifting from the parade that Como has had for many years, we wanted to get something healthy and fun for the community that would bring more people in," said Como Athletic Director Koua Yang.

Como Lake is just a couple hundred yards from the school track and football field. With such a popular, beautiful resource in the neighborhood, connecting Como Park High School events to it and the larger community is a goal.

For those willing and able, the 5K will be two laps around the lake. The Fun Run will be one lap around the lake, totaling 1.6 miles, which can be walked or run. And for young children,



# News from Como Park High School

Compiled by ERIC ERICKSON, Social Studies Teacher

## Attend Homecoming 5K and first annual Fun Run



Athletic Director Koua Yang and the Como Park Booster Club are coordinating the inaugural Homecoming 5K and Fun Run which will take place on Sat., Oct. 5.



Summer construction at Como Park High School included the completion of the Como Commons.

there will be a Kids Fun Run around the track at school.

Sponsors who are pledging to support the homecoming events already include Hiway Federal Credit Union, TRIA, the Army National Guard, GEAR UP and the St. Paul Police Department.

ment.

Registration details will be available on the school website, social media sites, and paper flyers. All 5K and Fun Run participants will receive a free ticket to the football game. Additionally, there will be opportunities to

volunteer at the event and / or donate to the cause.

All proceeds will go to Como Athletics and help support programs and resources to help the more than 600 hundred student athletes of Como Park High School.

## Athletic director in marathon

Beyond his participation and leadership in the Oct. 5 Homecoming 5K, Koua Yang will be running the Twin Cities Marathon the following day! This will be Yang's third marathon, but the first time his effort will be supported by donations to Como Park Athletics.

Yang has secured a matching grant from the United States Tennis Association for up to \$2,600 in donations. All donations to his marathon run will be specifically directed toward the creation of a supervised fitness and recovery room for student athletes.

## Construction this year

Construction continues into the school year with work on the front entrance and main office scheduled to be completed in 2020. Many aspects of the project were completed over the summer including hallways, science classrooms, elective classrooms, a new nurse's office and health clinic.

"Our commons and cafeteria space have been opened up to provide greater ease moving throughout the building," said Principal Stacy Theien-Collins.

# Hamline Elementary

By JESSICA KOPP

**Hamline Elementary Fall Festival - Saturday, Oct. 5, noon-4:30 p.m. at Hancock Rec Center**

It's almost time for the 6th annual Hamline Elementary Fall Festival! Stop by for good, cheap food, games and activities, community resources, and a chance to meet and hang out with your neighbors. Confirmed entertainment includes Babatunde Lea, Center for Irish

Music Youth Ensemble, O'Shea Irish Dancers, and local duo Mac & Cheese. Big thanks to community partners Hamline Midway Coalition, Hamline University, Hancock Recreation Center, and Celtic Junction for helping us share this free, family-friendly event with our Hamline Midway neighbors. See you in October!

The Family Room at Hamline Elementary, just steps



from the main office, is a sunny and lively space.

Home to most of our full-service community school programming and resources, it's completely run and supported by Hamline families and staff. Designed to be multi-purpose, this fami-

ly-friendly space has room to work, gather, and relax. With work stations equipped with computers and Internet access, plenty of cozy places to sit, and a play area for little ones, it's a pretty popular place. We're so grateful to neighbors who have supported our efforts the last two years and as the new school year gets underway, we'd like to invite you to keep that love flowing! Donations can be delivered to the school between 7:30 a.m.-3 p.m.

Here's how you can help:

-Community Closet: we accept donations of clothing, shoes, and outerwear for all ages. Please be sure items are clean and ready to wear. This saves a step for families using our community closet and volunteers who receive and organize donations.

-Community Pantry: we accept donations of 1) non-perishable food items including

canned meat, soups, fruits, vegetables, beans, rice, pasta, oatmeal, and microwaveable meals, 2) household items including dish soap, laundry detergent, facial issue, and toilet tissue, 3) baby products including diapers, wipes, baby soap, and diaper cream, and 4) personal care items including toothpaste, toothbrushes, deodorant, feminine care products, face and body lotion, hair care products for all hair types, soap, and lip balm. Donations of backpacks and school supplies are also accepted.

-Family Room Hospitality: we accept donations of coffee, tea, creamer and sweetener packets, hot cocoa packets, breakfast bars, and packages of goldfish crackers and raisins. We also accept reusable coffee mugs, plates and flatware to be used and enjoyed by families and guests visiting the Family Room.

# HAMLINE HEADLINES

sharing campus events with the neighboring community

## Join the Team

Hamline University is a proud sponsor of the Neighbors United Funding Collaborative, dedicated to helping redevelop the neighborhood near Allianz Field. To get involved, email [info@hamlinemidway.org](mailto:info@hamlinemidway.org).

## Homecoming and Alumni Weekend is October 11-13

Homecoming and Alumni Weekend is fast approaching. This year, we have some great things planned, including Fall Fest, The Big Bash, new Leo Lecture topics and speakers, reunions, unique behind-the-scenes tours, Pizzapalooza, and more. For more information, email [alum@hamline.edu](mailto:alum@hamline.edu).

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# Como Community Council Corner

By MICHAEL KUCHTA, Executive Director, [district10@district10comopark.org](mailto:district10@district10comopark.org)

## Special election for vacancy

The Como Community Council Board will hold a special election Sept. 17 to fill the seven months remaining in the term of vice chair. The vacancy is the result of the resignation of long-time board member Amy Perna.

Want to vote? The special election will be on Tuesday Sept. 17 at 7 p.m. at the Como Park Streetcar Station, which is at the northeast corner of Lexington and Horton. All renters, homeowners, and other residents age 16 or older who live in District 10 are eligible to vote. So are authorized representatives from a business or nonprofit organization located in District 10. Community members must vote in person; there is no absentee or proxy voting.

Want to run? The deadline to get on the ballot is past, but applicants can still run as write-in candidates on the night of the election. You can get more details about the position on the District 10 website: [www.district10comopark.org](http://www.district10comopark.org).

## Director to speak at D10 meeting

Saint Paul Public Works director Kathy Lantry will be the guest presenter at the Sept. 17 Como Community Council board meeting. She'll give a brief update on issues such as street repairs, crosswalks, leaf-sweeping, and consolidated trash, and answer residents' questions on those

and other topics. The meeting begins Tuesday Sept. 17 at 7 p.m. at the Como Park Streetcar Station. If technology cooperates, we'll also stream the meeting live on the Como Community Council Facebook page.

## Immerse yourself in Como Lake's condition

Experts from the Capitol Region Watershed District will lead a free walking tour highlighting Como Lake's history, water quality and monitoring issues, aquatic plant and fish communities, shoreline restoration, watershed projects, community efforts, and the long-term implementation of the Como Lake Management Plan.

The tour is Wednesday Sept. 25. It leaves promptly at 6 p.m. from the south side of the Lakeside Pavilion. It will end approximately 7:30 p.m. at the fishing pier. The tour will take place rain or shine; please wear clothing and shoes appropriate for walking and the weather.

## Candidate forum set

A public forum for candidates running for the Ward 5 seat on the Saint Paul City Council takes place the evening of Thursday Oct. 10. Location and exact time were not confirmed as of press deadline.

The forum is being organized by the Como Community Council, North End Neighbor-

hood Organization, Payne-Phalen Community Council, and League of Women Voters Saint Paul. Candidates on the ballot (in alphabetical order) are Bob Blake, Amy Brendmoen, Jamie Hendricks, and Suyapa Miranda.

## Upcoming District 10 meetings

- Neighborhood Relations Committee: Tuesday Oct. 1
- Land Use Committee: Wednesday Oct. 2
- Environment Committee: Wednesday Oct. 9

All meetings typically begin at 7 p.m. at the Como Park Streetcar Station. Renters, homeowners, and other community members are always welcome to attend and participate. Whenever possible, agendas are posted in advance in the "Board News" section of District 10's website.

## Streetcar Station open Sundays

The Como Park Streetcar Station is open every Sunday through Oct. 6 from noon-4 p.m. It is a great chance to introduce yourself to the long-gone trolley system in the Twin Cities, to get a sense of the history and visionaries behind Como Park (and the Twin Cities' overall park system), to pick up organics recycling bags or kitchen starter kits, or just to chat with a District 10 board member who is staffing the day. The Historic Streetcar Station is at the northeast corner of Lexington and Horton.



**The Walmart Supercenter at 1450 University Ave. W in St. Paul will close on September 20 and the pharmacy will continue to serve customers through September 13.**

**Our pharmacy staff will work with customers to transfer prescriptions to another convenient location. Otherwise prescriptions will be transferred to the Walmart Supercenter at 1960 Twin Lakes Parkway in Roseville (612) 788-1303.**

# Classifieds & Service Directory

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Want ads must be received by the Monitor by Sept. 30 for the Oct. 10 issue. Call 651-917-4183 for more information. Your classified ad will also be automatically placed on the Monitor's website at [www.MonitorSaintPaul.com](http://www.MonitorSaintPaul.com)

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## GARAGE SALE

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## North End Community Foundation Position Available | 20 Hours per week

The North End Community Foundation is seeking a half-time COMMUNITY RELATIONS COORDINATOR.

•Duties include: Attending monthly Board meetings and other community meetings; Helping the Board plan and execute community events, including making phone calls, working with community partners and vendors and event sites.

•Qualifications include: high school diploma, some college preferred, a solid knowledge of computer skills, and social media. Applicants must have their own computer and printer, and live in, or be familiar with the North End Community.

For more information on salary, start date, a complete position description, and other details, please call or email Jane Stevenson at 651-668-0636 or [Jane@dwsassociates.com](mailto:Jane@dwsassociates.com)

# In Our Community

## Monitor

Send us your news! When you submit your press release, [news@monitorsaintpaul.com](mailto:news@monitorsaintpaul.com), it will be considered for the next print edition of the Monitor.

### Cooking challenge

On Saturday, Sept. 28 and Sunday, Sept. 29 from 8 a.m. to noon, area chefs will gather at the Saint Paul Farmers' Market (SPFM) to compete in the fifth annual American Culinary Federation Minneapolis Chefs Chapter (ACF) "Category KG-Green, Sustainable and Local Food Cooking Competition." This year, the chefs will each create a recipe and finished dish using locally sourced trout from Star Prairie Trout Farm, smoked pork chops from Gilbertson Farms, sweet corn and kale from various SPFM vendors, and red lentils. The event is free and open to the public to observe – each chef will have 90 minutes to set up, fabricate and cook, plate their dish, and clean up.

### Donations needed

Jehovah Lutheran Church, 1566 Thomas in St. Paul, continues gathering food-shelf items for families and clothing and household basics for just-released prisoners. Keystone Food Shelf needs canned goods, paper grocery bags and cash donations. Its location nearest the church is at 1916 University Ave. W. in St. Paul. Keystone announced in July that it lost its lease for its Roseville location at 2833 Hamline Ave. N. effective Aug. 31 and hadn't yet found a replacement site. Crossing Home, working with just-released prisoners, needs bedding, pillows, household items, men's large clothing and backpacks. The group, based in Richfield with an office at Jehovah Lutheran, helps just-released prisoners find housing and jobs. Donors to either group can leave items at the church Donation Center, through the inner doors and to the left at the Thomas Street entry. Drop off items before or after worship at 9:30 a.m. Sundays or call the church at 651-644-1421 to set up another time. Donation forms for tax purposes are available.

## Hamline Midway Library

By CARRIE POMEROY, Hamline Midway Library Association

### Families and kids

Preschool Storytimes in English happen Fridays from 10:30-11 a.m., with upcoming storytimes on Sept. 13, 20, and 27 and Oct. 4 and 11. Storytimes feature stories, songs, puppets, and more. They're a great way for caregivers to bond with children and build social skills, listening comprehension, and letter and number recognition while creating a solid foundation for lifelong learning. Children of all activity levels are welcome!

On Wednesday, Sept. 18 from 4:30-5:30 p.m., CLIMB Theatre presents Grandpa and Lucy, a play for school-age students and their families about how even when Alzheimer's Disease changes a family, the special relationships that bond family members together do not need to weaken.

### Lifelong learning for adults

Jody's Documentary Film Series presents the film America on Wednesday, Sept. 25, from 1-3 p.m. Directed by Erick Still and Chase Whiteside, the film focuses on 93-year-old America and the three grandsons who return to Colima, Mexico to care for her. How do the very different grandsons handle the challenges of round-the-clock care? Come see the movie, stay for the discussion, and find out!

### Book Club gathers

The Saints and Sinners Mystery Book Club meets on Saturday, October 5, 1-2 p.m. This month's book is Peter Robinson's Innocent Graves. Contact volunteer G. Balter for more information at [gerribalter@gmail.com](mailto:gerribalter@gmail.com) or 651-224-5570.

### DuBose in concert

Neo-soul, pop, and R & B vocalist Ashley DuBose kicks off the Rondo Community Music Series at 7:30 p.m., Friday, Sept. 13, at Walker|West, 760 Selby Ave., St. Paul. The concert is free and open to the public, but reservations are encouraged. To reserve your seat, please call 651-224-2929.

### Autism classes set

Life with Autism and Understanding Autism classes will be offered by the Autism Society of Minnesota. Available are: Oct. 5: Adolescence and Transition (11-21 yrs.), Nov. 16: Childhood (10 mos.-10 yrs.), and Dec. 7: Adults (18+ yrs.). Understanding Autism and Best Strategic Practices will be held on Nov. 21, from 4-6 p.m. Jan. 20, 2020

from 2-4 p.m., March 14 from 10 a.m.-12 p.m. and May 4, 2020 from 6-8 p.m. More at [www.ausm.org](http://www.ausm.org).

### Walk to school

Great River School parents are organizing a drop and walk event on October 2. Students who are normally driven to school are invited to be dropped off away from school and to walk part of the way to school. Parent volunteers will assist students crossing roads adjacent to the school property including Pierce Butler Route and Energy Park Drive. Walk to School Day events raise awareness of the need to create safer routes for walking and bicycling and emphasize the importance of issues such as increasing physical activity among children, pedestrian safety, traffic congestion and concern for the environment. The events build con-

## Hamline Midway Elders

By LAUREL COLLINS, [laurel@hmelders.org](mailto:laurel@hmelders.org) or 651-209-6542

### Reading Buddies

We invite elders to be a Reading Buddy with third grade students at Hamline Elementary School on the first and third Wednesdays of each month from 1:30-2:10 beginning September 18. No experience is necessary, just a desire to interact with children. And you don't have to attend every session, just come when your schedule permits.

Older adults interested in participating should contact Tom Fitzpatrick at 651-209-6542 or [tom@hmelders.org](mailto:tom@hmelders.org).

### Gentle Exercise Class Series

Joni O'Connell leads this arthritis-friendly exercise class for older adults Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2-3 p.m., from Sept. 17 through Nov. 7. Joni utilizes her

unique Irish sense of humor to create a welcoming and motivating atmosphere. New attendees are always welcome for these free classes. Location: Zion Lutheran Church, 1697 Lafond Ave.

**Jody's Documentary Series – Wednesday Sept. 25, 1:00 at Hamline Midway Library (1558 West Minnehaha)**

Join us to view documentaries with discussion after, refreshments provided. This month's film: America (see our website for film descriptions [www.hmelders.org/events.html](http://www.hmelders.org/events.html))

**Monthly Luncheons – Second Tuesday of each month, 11:30 a.m.–1 p.m., at St. Stephanus Lutheran Church, 739 Lafond Ave.**

nections between families, schools and the broader community.

### Drum circle meets

Women's Drum Center, 2242 University Ave., will offer a class in hand drums for beginners on Sept. 27, 5:30 to 6:30 pm. The cost is \$10. Drums are provided. Visit [womensdrumcenter.org](http://womensdrumcenter.org).

### Guitar concert

The Minnesota Guitar Society will present the internationally known Levante Guitar Duo from Serbia on Friday, Sept. 27, 2019, 7:30 p.m., Sundin Musical Hall (1531 Hewitt Ave, St Paul). The Levante Guitar Duo (Aleksandra and Vojislav Ivanovic) has performed all over Europe. The concert for our series

will be their first appearance in Minnesota. Their performances feature the original compositions and arrangements of Vojislav Ivanovic, which combine elements of jazz with traditional and contemporary classical music. Tickets \$10-\$25 at the box office and in advance at [www.mnguitar.org](http://www.mnguitar.org).

### Speakers on recovery

In Our Own Voice (IOOV), a free public education program featuring two speakers sharing their personal stories of living with a mental illness and achieving recovery, will be offered on Sept. 29, from 10:30 a.m. to noon at Trinity Lutheran Church 115 4th St. N., in Stillwater. For information, contact Patrick at [publicawareness@namimn.org](mailto:publicawareness@namimn.org) or 651-645-2948 ext. 128..



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# Free fitness classes, fun at Defining You event

Fall is in the air, and with the season of gathering here, St. Paul's premier Pilates studio Defining You Pilates & Fitness announces a Fall Open House on Saturday, Oct. 5, 2019. It will include free classes, fun giveaways, community goodwill, snacks, studio tours and package discounts. The welcoming event takes place from 7:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at 550 Vandalia Tower, Suite 310.

Those interested trying a class sampler may check the Open House schedule and register in advance at [www.definingyoufitness.com](http://www.definingyoufitness.com). Free class formats will include Pilates, HIIT, TRX, Barre and Indoor Cycling. In addition, several community partners will staff tables and offer samples and information including Mastel's Health Foods and Athleta of Rosedale.

Defining You will also launch a Miles for Monarchs cause initiative to support Monarch Joint Venture throughout October. Clients can participate by clocking their mileage during indoor cycling classes with a comprehensive team goal set to top 2,000 miles, close to the same distance monarch butterflies trek from Minnesota to overwintering sites in Mexico.

"Fall represents a season of transformation and gathering, the perfect time to come together

to reflect on our personal health and the wellbeing of our community," explained Suzy Levi, owner of Defining You. "At Defining You, we pride ourselves on helping our clients transform their minds and bodies through movement so they can connect with their healthiest selves. Our open house is the perfect opportunity for curious individuals who perhaps have heard about Pilates or our studio to stop by, sign up, learn more, try a free sampler class and learn more about Miles for Monarchs. All are welcome!"

The Miles for Monarchs effort is a new way to support monarch butterflies through athletic activities and helps raise awareness about the decline of monarch butterflies and other native pollinator species. Funds raised will support local and national pollinator habitat projects and conservation work with both Monarch Joint Venture and Pheasants Forever. Officed in St. Paul, Monarch Joint Venture is a national partnership of federal and state agencies, non-governmental organizations, business and academic programs working together to conserve and monarch butterfly migration for future generations.

Defining You offers group fitness, Pilates and private training through certified and motivating

instructors who share a passion for wellness. Levi founded her studio in the basement of her St. Paul home in 2006 believing that through the spirit of fitness individuals can improve their inner and outer strength and flexibility so they can do more, feel more and be happier. After moving to a location on Snelling Ave. for several years, Levi and her husband Scot Jennings recently retrofitted space in the convenient and historic mixed-use Vandalia Tower to accommodate her growing wellness business.

For more than 30 years with certifications and expertise in Pilates and fitness training, Levi has helped hundreds of individuals transform their health and lives through movement, and she believes exercise is about more than burning calories and getting leaner. Levi specializes in working with individuals living with scoliosis and other complex mobility issues.

Defining You is a wheelchair-friendly studio; however, Vandalia Tower property management will close the elevator for updating through Oct. 6. Guests visiting the studio who rely on use a wheelchair or accessibility device, should call 651-769-5712 or email [definingyoufitnessdesk@gmail.com](mailto:definingyoufitnessdesk@gmail.com).



"My mission is to create achievable workouts for clients, and I am passion about nurturing future instructors and business owners in this wonderful wellness space," said Defining You owner Suzy Levi (back row middle). "Movement can change unhealthy physical and emotional patterns, this philosophy influences, energizes and heals our clients every day." (Photo submitted)



## Gibbs Farm Apple Festival

September 21, 2019, 10:00 am-4:00 pm

Apple Crafts, Games, Treats, Tours - and Fun!

A day of family-friendly apple fun at Gibbs Farm!

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All-Day Book Fair with 150 exhibitors

Author Readings, Talks, Activities, and Signings

Used Book and Record Sale • Children's and Teen Events

more info at [twincitiesbookfestival.com](http://twincitiesbookfestival.com)

This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through grants from the Minnesota State Arts Board and the Metropolitan Regional Arts Council, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.



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# Krueger writes updated version of 'Huckleberry Finn'

## Local author of popular Cork O'Connor series considers 'This Tender Land' to be his best book

JAN WILLMS

For years, local author William Kent Krueger has wanted to write an updated version of Huckleberry Finn.

"I knew it would be a story of kids on the river, but an updated version," he said. "I knew when I wrote the story it would still be in the past, but I wasn't sure just when."

The multi-award winning author has spent the past three years researching and writing the book, while still working on his Cork O'Connor fiction series about an Irish and Ojibwe private investigator.

The result is "This Tender Land," a story of four Minnesota orphans set in the Depression era, who flee from the Indian school they had been sent to and travel by canoe along the river, connecting along the way with others who are trying to survive hard times.

The book was published Sept. 3, and Krueger will have a full schedule of book signings in the Twin Cities area.

### Crushing weight of expectations

Krueger wrote "Ordinary Grace" in 2013, a novel about a young man, a small town and a murder, set in 1961. That book garnered him the prestigious Edgar award for best novel, and he contracted to write a second companion novel.

He said the idea for this second novel was to go more deeply into the effects of war on people of his father's generation, the "Greatest Generation." "It was an attempt to look at how war

affected these men when they came back and tried to live ordinary lives. But it wasn't the story I thought it would be, and over time my heart just wasn't in it. I had a contractual deadline, but I wasn't happy with the manuscript, and I ultimately spoke with my editor and publisher and asked them to pull it and not publish it. They were quite understanding, but reminded me I still owed them a companion novel."

Krueger said that because "Ordinary Grace" had been so well received, there were extraordinary expectations for his next novel.

"They were crushing, and I was feeling the weight of those expectations the whole time. Once all that weight was off my shoulders, I felt free," he explained. He put away his original manuscript and started over. "I could write what I wanted," he said. And "This Tender Land" came into being.

### How we remake ourselves in extreme need

"I wish I could tell you what ultimately led me to set the story in the Depression," Krueger said. "I think one of the things I wanted to explore was how as human beings we react when we are in times of extreme need. The Depression just seemed the perfect backdrop to talk about how we respond to each other in those kinds of circumstances, and the truth is we respond in all kinds of ways."

With their journey down the river, the kids in Krueger's book see the broad spectrum of how



William Kent Krueger said that one thing he knew about this book when he started was that he wanted the kids to be on an epic journey, and the journey he thought most about was Homer's "Odyssey." (Photo by Jan Willms)

people cope with harsh reality.

Krueger remembers hearing stories of the Depression from family members. His wife's grandmother for a period of time lived with her family in an abandoned corn crib. Krueger's father recalled how his dad was out of work, and families had to move in together. "My father came out of the Oklahoma Dustbowl, and stories of the Depression were certainly fresh in our parents' minds.

"The Depression reshaped us as a nation," Krueger said. "So much collapsed and disintegrated, and we had to come out of that and remake ourselves as people and as a nation. It was an epic period, and those children in the book are on an epic journey."

### Seeds of truth

Krueger is acclaimed for his strong characters and strong sense of place, yet he does not necessarily describe his characters in detail but lets the reader form an image in his or her mind.

"Unless something physical about a character is significant to his behavior or the story, I want people to imagine these characters in a way their imaginations create them," he said. "What I shoot for is showing the weaknesses and strengths of a character."

For "This Tender Land," Krueger walked a lot of the land he thought his main characters might have walked. But for this book, he had to create a period of time that no longer exists and situations he has not experienced. For example, the Indian school and the Hooverville shanty towns he describes no longer exist, so he had to rely on extensive research.

"I tried to come up with specific telling details, and then I just imagined. There is a seed of truth in every story, and then the story grows. I tried to put as many seeds of truth in as I could. But it is just a story," Krueger explained.

He said he always walks over the land he writes about, whether for his novels or for the 18 Cork O'Connor books he has written. "I don't know how you can write about a place if you have not experienced it," he said. "There is so much that is sensual and that you need to create movingly for a reader."

"If you haven't seen the color of a river, or smelled the river, or heard the sounds of a tree frog or watched the reflection of a bird across the river, how can you write about that? So I kayaked the river and walked the places Odie, the story's narrator, walked. I climbed the hills."

He also spent a lot of time in libraries and in Mankato, pored through the Archives of the Pipestone and the Gale Family History and read many old newspapers. When he writes his books, he said he does some research up front, some during the writing, and some at the end when he needs to go back and fill in any missing pieces.

### Local book signings by William Kent Krueger

Monday, Sept. 16, 7 p.m.  
Barnes and Noble, Har Mar Mall  
Roseville

Friday, Sept. 20, Noon  
Lake Country Booksellers  
White Bear Lake

Saturday, Oct. 12  
Twin Cities Book Festival  
Minnesota State Fairgrounds  
Saint Paul

Wednesday, Oct. 23, 7 p.m.  
Subtext Books  
Saint Paul

For a more complete schedule, go to [www.williamkentkrueger.com](http://www.williamkentkrueger.com).

### Epic journey inspired by 'Odyssey'

Krueger said that one thing he knew about this book when he started was that he wanted the kids to be on an epic journey, and the journey he thought most about was Homer's "Odyssey." He said he began to think about places his characters could go that would mirror the places Odysseus journeyed. The orphans encounter One Eyed Jack, a flawed but redemptive loner who resembles the Cyclops. They meet Sister Eve, a modern version of Circe. Maybeth, similar to Calypso, tries to lure Odie off the river. The children come to a place that could be compared to the Land of the Lotus Eaters. And like Odysseus, Odie eventually finds his way home to Ithaca.

"With the Odyssey in mind, the story began to coalesce, and it was so much easier. I had all the elements in my mind, and I was able to put them together," Krueger said.

He writes most of his books in a coffee shop, this time choosing the Caribou on Lexington. He is currently working on another Cork O'Connor book, "Lightning Strike," which is a prequel to the others and tells of Cork's boyhood and the people who shaped him into the man he became. "I'm having a ball with it," Krueger said. He has two more O'Connor books contracted, but he does not see any end to the Cork O'Connor series at this point.

He also plans on writing another separate novel. "I am so grateful "Ordinary Grace" opened the door for me to be able to do the things I want," Krueger said.

"I thought when I wrote that, it would be the best book I have ever written. I changed my mind. I think "This Tender Land" is better, and I love it just as much, if not more.

"It's just a good story," he continued. "It's a very old-fashioned form of storytelling. I tried not to think of what audience to write for. I just wanted to write the kind of story that would appeal to me."