



Principal  
Brown  
honored  
» 11



Lyngblomsten residents (left and middle) Lynn and Gary McDonald admire Rob McHattie's flower arrangement. The St. Paul gardener makes sure there are always fresh roses at the Lyngblomsten front desk. (Photo by Terry Faust)

## DOING GOOD EVERY DAY

Scout Troop 13 celebrates 100 years on Sept. 14

By JANE MCCLURE

A century of camping, community service, spaghetti dinners and the marching Hi-Lex Gnomes are all part of St. Columba Scout Troop 13's history. The troop hosts a centennial celebration and reunion 1-4 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 14 at the former St. Columba School, 1330 Blair Ave. Troop memorabilia will be on display and light refreshments served.

A flag ceremony is at 2 p.m., followed by guest speakers, camp stories and open mic time so that former scouts, their leaders, families and friends can share memories. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Since 1924, more than 100 Troop 13 scouts have achieved Life rank, with 60 becoming Eagle Scouts.

The founding of what is formally Troop 9013 came just a decade after St. Columba Catholic Church opened its doors in September 1914. The St. Columba grade school opened in 1922, just two years before the troop began.

The Boy Scouts of America (BSA) organization was just 14 years old when Troop 13 was organized, getting its start in 1910.

Faith-based institutions typically sponsored Cub Scout packs and Boy Scout troops. The BSA provided sponsoring institutions with resources including leader training materials and camping opportunities.

Former Troop 13 members and leaders have sons and grandsons who have gone on to be scouts. They are parents and grandparents of Eagle Scouts. They note

SCOUT TROOP 13 » 3



In 2017, Scout Troop 13 members Phil Wald, Eli Baynes-Marsh, Andrew Wussler and Tim Fah achieved their Eagle Scout status. (Photo submitted)

## STOP AND SMELL THE ROSES ROB MCHATTIE GROWS

By JAN WILLMS

Rob McHattie tries to have as many people as possible stop and smell the roses that he grows.

The St. Paul gardener has raised tea roses for many years, and he shares the blooms with neighbors and friends and

LIVING 50+  
**GOOD NEIGHBOR**

the Lyngblomsten Care Center, which is across the street from his home.

McHattie, whose great, great-grandfather founded Afton, Minn., said that when he and his wife, Jane, moved into their present home in the Como neighborhood in 1983, the garden was full of all kinds of

ROB'S ROSES » 8

## City's longest serving mayor spurred St. Paul revitalization A look back at George Latimer's career

By IRIC NATHANSON

George Latimer, St. Paul's colorful and longest serving mayor died on Aug. 18, 2024 at the age of 89. During his last 10 years, Latimer lived in Midway at Episcopal Homes, where he was a familiar sight on the campus of the senior care agency across from the Fairview Ave. LRT station.

Latimer may have been a former mayor but everyone at Episcopal Homes – staff and residents alike – called him "George." In his final years, even as he battled chronic illnesses, Latimer's ebull-

lient personality and sparkling wit never dimmed.

During his lifetime, the former mayor was never the subject of a biography that recounted his long career in St. Paul. But he did leave behind an unpublished monograph that provides a comprehensive account of Latimer's time in city hall. The 500-page document, titled "The St. Paul Experiment, Initiatives of the Latimer administration," was compiled by David Lanegran, Cynthia Seelhammer and Amy Walgrave.

GEORGE LATIMER » 3



St. Paul's longest mayor George Latimer died Aug. 18. (Photo courtesy of the Ramsey County Historical Society)



BACK 2 SCHOOL  
Views about Central High School from student intern

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LIVING 50+  
Seniors at Episcopal Homes write rich stories

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REBUILD REPAIR RECYCLE  
Local fibershed connects people with local fiber

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

## SCOUT TROOP 13

>> from 1

that scouting gave them experience they have carried throughout their lives. They speak of lifelong friendships, camaraderie and shared values they practice every day.

They also note the many changes the troop has faced. The closing of St. Columba School in 2004 meant an end to what was a troop feeder program.

Another change has been who can be in scouting, as girls could become scouts starting in 2017.

Gary Gorman grew up in the Midway. He was a member of the troop during his school days, as a Cub Scout, Boy Scout and later took part in Explorer Scouts. He graduated from Wilson High School in 1960.

Some of his favorite memories are of the Tomahawk Camp, near Rice lake, Wis. He learned how to swim and paddle a canoe, and took part in other activities. He also has fond memories of a Boundary Waters trip and camping near the St. Croix River.

Al Madison has been a leader for scouts of all ages for 37 years, and was encouraged to get involved through a fellow member of the St. Paul Police Department reserves. He's worked with almost 40



Scout Sunday 2003. Longtime Troop 13 Scout leaders Al Madison is on the left and Bill Wald on the right. (Photo submitted)

young people who became Eagle Scouts, including his son Brian.

One of Madison's favorite and special memories is of a ceremony for two Eagle Scouts, both of whom gifted him with mentor pins.

### HI-LEX GNOMES

Bill Wald has served as the troop-church liaison for many years. He is part of the story of the Hi-Lex Gnomes. Scouts don the gnomes every year during the St. Paul Winter Carnival Grand Day Parade.

Hi-Lex Bleach Company began in

St. Paul in 1927. The company initially made large gnomes or bleach drops out of chicken wire and paper machine, and then plaster of Paris, to wear in parade. Those gnomes fell apart after a decade, Wald said, and were replaced with fiberglass creations.

Hi-Lex workers carried the gnomes, known as the Hi-Lex Drips, until deciding "we don't have that many pairs of legs," said Wald. In 1948, Troop 48 was contacted to see if boys would take on Winter Carnival marching duties for a small stipend. The gnomes and scouts are now the oldest continuous marching unit in the parade.

Another longstanding tradition is the spaghetti dinner, which is 65 years old. Another tradition Wald cited is that of placing 400 flags at Calvary Cemetery to mark graves of veterans from the Civil War through the current day.

All three men said they especially appreciate the values they learned working with Troop 13. Gorman said the experience of being in scouting is something he maintains today at age 82.

"I got so much out of it as a boy and I've always worked to pass that along," he said. His experiences instilled a lifelong commitment to community services.

"One of our mottos was to do a good deed every day and I have always remembered that," he said.

## GEORGE LATIMER

>> from 1

In "The St. Paul Experiment," Latimer was able to comment, with wry asides, on some of the key developments that occurred during his years as mayor from 1976 to 1990. He was particularly proud of the arts initiatives that occurred during those 14 years:

"If you believe as I do, that arts and artists are essential to a great city then you will agree that 1985 was a good year for St. Paul. Consider the way the year started. In January of 1985, the \$45 million Ordway Music Theatre opened. If I were pressed to name one single building that altered downtown – or the city as a whole, it would surely be the Ordway. When I was asked to open the theater and give some comments, I said the city had little or nothing to do with the building of the Ordway. The mayor's contribution had been to get out the way 'so rich people could build a beautiful music hall.' (The rich people, bless them, hate to be called that.)

"Skeptics might argue that a good bowling alley would be a more helpful contribution to downtown life than the flourishing of the arts. These are the same people who contend that the arts are a frill, somehow unconnected with what they see as 'real' life. My response is that I think it would be a great to have a bowling alley or two downtown. Indeed, a great city should have many nights of the type I observed a number of years ago. There was a night in Saint Paul when Pinky Zuckerman was playing the fiddle as only he can, at one end of our arts strip, one hour after Garrison Keillor had completed his very special and immensely popular radio show at the other end of the strip, and All-Star Wrestling was drawing its fans at the Civic Center behind the Ordway Theatre. All-Star Wrestling and great chamber music, cheek by jowl, so to speak, at the center of our city – that's good stuff. That diversity is what urban centers have represented to millions of



George Latimer (left) is shown here with Minneapolis Mayor Don Fraser. The terms of the two mayors overlapped. While in office, the two men worked together on projects that benefitted both cities. (Photo courtesy of the Hennepin County Library Special Collections)

people all over the world. It is the very reason people want to be part of the city."

In terms of bricks and mortar development, Latimer is remembered today for his efforts to spur the revitalization of Lowertown, the historic downtown district that had fallen on hard times before the former mayor took office. "Lowertown was intended to be the link with the past and the promise of the future," Latimer observed in The St. Paul Experiment. "It was St. Paul's unpolished gem. In the plans for redevelopment, we saw the vision for a new way of urban life. We approached the foundations and asked for funds to help us revitalize, with the goals of meeting the needs of the people, not the needs of the buildings. While it is true that the redevelopment is not yet complete, the vision is clear. There has been enough success that few can doubt how much of that vision is now real."

Latimer was confident that Lowertown would realize its potential, but he recognized that not all city-sponsored projects that took shape on his watch would be equally successful. "Lowertown is one ex-

ample of an attempt to celebrate and reaffirm one of the special places in Saint Paul. How well has Saint Paul done with that kind of celebration? Have we used our spaces in imaginative and harmonious ways? I think we have done marvelously well. There are, however, places I would definitely do over if I had the chance, such as the gray monolith exterior of Town Square."

In summing up his approach to urban development, Latimer borrowed a quote from George Bernard Shaw who observed that, "The reasonable man tries to adapt himself to the world around him. The unreasonable man tries to adapt the world to himself. Therefore, all progress depends on the unreasonable man." If that is true, I am pleased to know that I have joined all those unreasonable people who have left their distinctive and individual marks on the exceptional places of St. Paul."

"George was one of a kind," said Dave Beal, business editor at the Pioneer Press during most of the Latimer years in the 1980s. "When I came to St. Paul in 1981, I initially saw him as a standard-issue lib-

### HHH JOB CORPS SPARKED CONTROVERSY DURING LATIMER'S EARLY YEARS

Soon after George Latimer was elected mayor in 1976, he was caught up in a controversy over a proposal to locate a Job Corps program on the former Snelling Avenue campus of Bethel College.

Named for then Minnesota Senator Humbert Humphrey, the federally project provided basic education and job training for disadvantaged and unemployed young people between the ages of 16 and 22. A staunch supporter of the youth development program, Latimer incurred the wrath of some nearby residents who were convinced that the Job Corps would lead to increased crime and disorder in their neighborhood. Latimer stood his ground as the neighborhood opponents, led by the Como Falcon Heights Coalition, exerted political and legal pressure to block the development of the residential job training center on the former Bethel College campus.

Latimer's support for the HHH center helped eliminate the political hurdles erected by the opponents. After the Hubert Humphrey Job Corps Center opened in 1981, the opponents' fears proved to be unfounded and the project eventually won the support of its nearby neighbors.

eral, a labor lawyer whose views often collided with those of corporate leaders and others in the business community. How wrong I was. He worked closely with businesses to forge private-public partnerships that brought new projects to the city's long-slumbering downtown.

"That approach was representative of George's ability to bring all kinds of interest groups and individuals together to run the city well. He gave the people of St. Paul a re-energized sense of pride and place and raised the city's profile in the world beyond its borders. When it comes to leadership, George checked all the boxes."

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## BUILDING A STRONGER MIDWAY

BY CHAD KULAS,  
Midway Chamber of  
Commerce Executive Director  
[chad@midwaychamber.com](mailto:chad@midwaychamber.com)



As University Avenue and other main corridors in the Midway continue to transform, it felt like a good time to talk about a few of the recent and upcoming changes.

Life Juices Super Food Bar opened at 450 Lexington Pkwy. N in July, giving new life to the former Dairy Queen. The red roof was painted blue and the business boasts healthier options for the consumer. Menu items include organic juices, smoothies, juice cleanses, wellness shots, sorbets and acai bowls. Owner Kali Terry is committed to the Saint Paul community and the opening is a big welcome to a site which sat unused for years.

On the morning of Aug. 4, right before the annual Little Africa Festival, Af-

# REPURPOSING BUILDINGS

rican Economic Development Solutions held a ribbon cutting for the future site of Little Africa Plaza. Located at 678 Snelling Ave. N., the building was built in 1926 as a car dealership and was most recently Dan's Fans. However, the 9,000-square-foot building has been vacant for a few years and the project was delayed due to a fire. The site will house upstart businesses by African immigrants, including a grocery store, a community meeting space, a museum and office space for AEDS.

In 2009, I was a board member for the Frogtown Neighborhood Association when the first conversations occurred for restoring – and saving – the Victoria Theater. The historic building was built in 1915 as a silent movie theater, eventually becoming a speakeasy in its early colorful history. As with other projects already mentioned, the time between the last use, the new concept and the ribbon cutting

were longer than originally anticipated, but the time for a new beginning has begun. In late August, 825 Arts opened with a mission “to build community power by providing a creative home that incubates the arts and amplifies the voices of all people in the neighborhood.”

On Sept. 28, the long-awaited opening of Udo's African Restaurant and Grocery Store will finally occur in the former hardware store at 755 Snelling Ave. N. Hamline Hardware opened in 1926 and closed in 2020. For the past four years, there have been many ideas on what to do with the space, sitting prominently along Snelling Avenue near Hamline University. Mike Udo's dream of moving his grocery store and expanding to a restaurant will finally happen. The restaurant will serve West African cuisine for breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

What remains to get renovated? The



After many years, the historic Victoria Theater has been renovated and reopened. In late August, 825 Arts opened. (Photo courtesy of Facebook page)

eyesore of the former CVS at the corner of Snelling and University. Here's hoping a solution can be found much sooner than the other examples in this article.

## PLANTING SEEDS

BY DR. ARTIKA TYNER,  
[dr.artikatyner@gmail.com](mailto:dr.artikatyner@gmail.com)



I am sharing exciting news about the release of Tisidra Jones' new book, “A Guide to Business Inclusion Programs in Government Contracting.” It provides practical strategies for strengthening our local economy and creating lasting change in our communities. Jones draws upon her expertise as a lawyer, entrepreneur, and researcher to create a blueprint for a brighter economic future.

Jones is the founder of Strong & Starlike Consulting, Inc., a consulting collaborative that works to create systems that increase individual and community access to information, knowledge, and financial opportunities that help them thrive economically.

**Q. Why did you decide to write the book?**

After years of working with business owners and public sector employees, I repeatedly heard people mention how it would be useful for them to have access to information on what is happening in business inclusion across the country in one place. I wanted to find a way to share as much information as I could to (1) help public sector employees learn from others doing the work and (2) to help business owners in navigating certification and business inclusion contracting programs.

**Q. What is business inclusion? Why does it matter?**

Business inclusion may be used interchangeably with terms like vendor inclusion or supplier diversity. Overall, what is meant by any of these terms in the context of the book are: laws, programs, policies, practices, and initiatives that seek to in-

## BUILDING VIBRANT COMMUNITIES: THE ROLE OF BUSINESS INCLUSION

clude in government contracting opportunities or increase access to government contracting opportunities for small and diverse businesses. Private sector entities also have business inclusion programs, however, the scope of the book focuses on public sector efforts.

Business inclusion matters because collectively local, state, and federal government agencies spend trillions of dollars on goods and services. Large businesses may have the resources and people to dedicate to understanding how to navigate these government contracting systems, but small businesses where the owners are wearing multiple hats may not. When entities create programs that allow for procurement methods, such as sheltered market programs, where small businesses are not competing against large businesses for contracting opportunities, but rather competing against other small businesses those are steps in the direction to include more small and diverse businesses when contracting opportunities exist.

**Q. How does business inclusion impact the economic and community development?**

Senator Paul Wellstone's quote comes to mind, “We all do better when we all do better.” Small Business Administration Office of Advocacy reports that pull their data from the U.S. Census Bureau highlight the number of small businesses in our country. In the most recent Small Business Economic Profile for the U.S., it reported 33.3 million small businesses accounting for 99.9% of U.S. businesses. It further notes that small businesses employ 45.9% of U.S. employees. Working with local small and diverse businesses supports more than the business owners, but the employees they have as well as the suppliers and contractors they purchase from in the community. There is a rippling economic impact.

**Q. What are the business inclusion**

**program, policies, and practices in MN?**

This is a big question, so I want to provide more context. In Minnesota, as with many states, you have a mix of public sector programs, policies, and practices as well as private sector (ex: by large corporations) programs, policies, and practices. In recent years I have also seen nonprofits and foundations exploring the creation or more robust programs. When considering the public sector business inclusion programs, you can explore local programs (ex: cities, counties, schools); state programs (ex: state agencies); and federal programs (ex: programs that apply when there are federal funds involved in a project/contracting opportunity). In addition to these, you have colleges and universities with programs as well as hospitals. As much as each entity's business inclusion efforts may have similarities, there are nuances that matter when a business owner is seeking to navigate these programs, policies, and practices.

Some key components of a business inclusion program include:

1. Certification: A type of certification for businesses or a designation. In short, a process to confirm that a business stating they are small and/or diverse is actually small and/or diverse. The process may (a) be comprehensive with an application; submitting lots of documents; and onsite visits; (b) simply request the business upload a certification from another entity that the business has; or (c) an entity may allow businesses to self-certify.

2. A Searchable List or Database: To be able to find the group of small and diverse businesses that have been certified when contracting opportunities arise, entities have some sort of searchable list or database.

3. A Policy & Some Procedures: A policy, ordinance, or statute is often in place noting the requirements of the program; identifying when it applies and when it



Tisidra Jones

does not (often restricted by certain types of contracting opportunities over or under a certain dollar threshold); and procedures explaining things like reporting requirements in greater detail.

4. Compliance: It is one thing to have a policy. It is another to enforce it. Some entities do the work to create programs then are understaffed and do not appropriately resource the compliance part of the work. This directly impacts how effective these programs are at including small and diverse businesses.

5. Outreach & Technical Assistance: Many programs hold outreach events to engage businesses; have mentor-protégé programs; offer technical assistance; conduct meet and greets. These are just a few things some entities do.

In Minnesota there are three public sector business inclusion related certification programs. These include the following:

1. Central (CERT) Certification Program [collaborative partners include Hennepin County, Ramsey County, City of Minneapolis, and City of Saint Paul]

2. Targeted Group (TG), Economically Disadvantaged (ED) and Veteran-Owned (VO) [Minnesota Department of Administration leads this]

3. Minnesota Unified Certification Program (MNUCP) Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program [Certifying agencies include the Metropolitan Council; City of Minneapolis; Metropolitan Airports Commission; Minnesota Department of Transportation]

Through her organization, *Planting People Growing Justice Leadership Institute*, Dr. Artika Tyner seeks to plant seeds of social change through education, training, and community outreach.

# Monitor

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Keep in touch with the *Monitor*. Letters to the editor under 200 words and news releases for publication can be sent via e-mail to [tesha@monitorsaintpaul.com](mailto:tesha@monitorsaintpaul.com). Unsigned letters will not run.

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## LETTER

## JUDGE RUNNING FOR OFFICE

My name is Tim Mulrooney. I am a lifelong St. Paul resident, serving and seeking re-election as your Ramsey County judge. I have been a licensed attorney since 1994. I have worked as a lawyer, family court referee, and, since 2016, a judge. As a lawyer, I litigated civil, family and criminal cases before judges, juries and appellate courts. As a judge, I have worked in all areas including criminal, civil, family, juvenile, child protection, mental health and treatment courts. Over my long judicial career I have earned a



reputation for fairness and good judgment.

Every person who appears before me has a complex life story that brings them to court, and both sides have legal and factual points to be considered. I bring my extensive experience to weighing the issues and applying the law to reach a just result in every case. I treat everyone with dignity and respect, apply the law accurately, and work hard to improve the justice system for all. I am a respected, seasoned judge with 16 years of judicial experience and I humbly request your vote to continue to serve as your Ramsey County judge.

**Tim Mulrooney**

## ELECTION

## IT'S CANDIDATE FORUM TIME

The League of Women Voters announces the following forums. All will be hosted and held at the SPNN Studios at 550 Vandalia Street, #170 at 7 p.m.

- 64 A & B Candidate Forum, Tuesday, Sept. 17, 7 p.m.
- Ramsey County District 3 Candidate Forum, Wednesday, Sept. 18, 7 p.m.
- 66 A&B Candidate Forum, Thursday, Sept. 26, 7 p.m.

All forums will air live on Channel 19 and be recorded and shared on SPNN's YouTube page. Questions can be submitted in advance to [lwvstpaul@lwvnmn.org](mailto:lwvstpaul@lwvnmn.org).

## Neighborhood, residents upset with crime around Kimball Court

### Beacon says upcoming \$13 million project will be 'transformational'

By JANE MCCLURE

Kimball Court has become a flashpoint for the myriad of problems along North Snelling Avenue, a stretch of street where open-air drug dealing and use, loitering, theft, panhandling and other problems are all too frequent. Neighbors are deeply concerned about upcoming plans to expand and renovate the supportive housing facility at 545 N. Snelling Ave. They question whether owner-operator Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative and its security and supportive services contractors have the capacity to better manage its building and serve residents at a time when the neighborhood is beset with problems.

More than 30 people attended an Aug. 28 meeting at Mosaic Community Church to discuss issues at Kimball Court and learn about its plans. The meeting was organized by Hamline Midway Coalition (HMC).

Person after person had a story to tell. Homes and yards are broken into. Neighbors pick up trash constantly, including used needles and drug paraphernalia. One local landlord described how her efforts to rent to people in recovery and help them succeed were thwarted by drug dealers tempting tenants back into addiction.

"I don't know what to do anymore," one neighbor said, noting his gate was broken and yard entered just before the meeting.

Businesses have had to step up secu-

rity. Midway Books now has to buzz customers in. The longtime Holcomb-Henry-Boom-Purcell Funeral Home is up for sale. Other storefronts are vacant. The shuttered CVS, which is a short walk from Kimball Court, is blamed for many problems.

Built as a hotel more than century ago, Kimball Court was a boarding house before it became supportive housing. Beacon took over Kimball Court in 2010. That year there were nine police calls.

In 2022, trespassers all but took the property over, with 425 calls made to police. Beacon went through four security firms that year. The facility logged 113 police calls in 2023.

As of early August, there were already more than 110 police calls for 2024.

HMC representatives and neighbors said they want Beacon and Kimball Court to succeed and to provide quality housing and services for those who need shelter the most. They support efforts to help coming out of long-term homelessness, which beacon and its partners provide.

But they are beyond weary of the current situation.

Neighbors want people to be housed, said HMC Board president Cole Hanson. "But we must, as the coalition and community, insist that it be done right."

Hanson was blunt in saying that if the promised improvements don't materialize, "it's not going to work."

Neighbors were frustrated with some of Beacon's responses, especially when told that some policies and practices are still a work in progress. When Babette Jamison-Varner, Beacon's vice president for supportive housing, said that neighborhood churches are part of Beacon, she was pressed for specifics.

As it turns out, no Hamline-Midway churches partner with the agency. The closest church partner is House of Hope Presbyterian Church on Summit Avenue.

Jamison-Varner and representative of social services provider Avivo and Property Solutions and Services, explained what they have been doing to improve conditions at Kimball Court. The work of a new security firm was described, with one guard on duty 24/7 and others on call. Neighbors said more security is needed.

One point emphasized is that residents at Kimball Court also want improved safety and security. The average length of tenancy is 4.3 years. One resident has lived there since 1996.

A major concern is the facility's upcoming expansion. Kimball Court has 76 single-room occupancy units, with about 60 units occupied at this time. Expansion would provide 98 housing units, a few of which would be efficiency apartments.

In 2020, Beacon obtained a new conditional use permit to expand with a four-story addition. Delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the expansion work should start in earnest in December with demolition of the former Star Market. A key point is the addition of a new, more secure entrance.

More cameras will be added, along with community space and other amenities for residents and the social service staff who help them. The community room, computer room and exercise room will be welcomed by residents who hang out on Kimball Court's stoop because they have no place to go.

The plus-\$13 million project is to be completed in 2025 after 15 months of work.

Expansion will not only make the fa-



cility better and safer, it also allows Beacon to tap into additional operating resources. Kevin Walker, Beacon's vice president of housing development, described the upcoming addition as "transformational." He and others cited other low-income housing facilities that have seen conditions improve after physical changes were made.

Neighbors said the expansion shouldn't be allowed unless conditions at Kimball Court improve. One frustration is that neighbors cannot weigh in on the expansion due to recent zoning code changes on supportive housing. One criticism raised is that past city conditional use permit processes have failed to add adequate operating conditions.

But the way city supportive housing regulations are now, neighbors cannot weigh in unless they appeal the site plan for the expansion.

The number to call if neighbors see problems at Kimball Court is 651-323-4414.

## Neighbors worried about noise at upcoming music festival

By JANE MCCLURE

The Forbidden Festival is coming to Allianz Field Sept. 21, 2024, with unanimous St. Paul City Council approval of a needed sound level variance Aug. 14. But will the surrounding community hear an encore of this summer's Breakaway festival, which drew many noise complaints?

Breakaway, which drew more than 24,000 attendees over two days in June, generated noise complaints as far south as Mendota Heights. Ward One Council Member Anika Bowie, whose ward includes Allianz Field, and Council President Mitra Jalali, whose Fourth Ward borders Allianz, said they will be watching the upcoming event closely.

Jalali, who lives near Allianz, said she could feel the sound while lying in bed during the Breakaway Festival. She said the Forbidden Festival will have stepped-up noise monitoring, with follow-up on compliance.

Bowie agreed with neighbors that the city's current 300-foot notification requirement is insufficient. When Allianz is considered, notice covers University Avenue

businesses and neighbors beyond University Avenue.

The council approved a 90-decibel sound level variance from 2 to 10:30 p.m. Sept. 21.

Forbidden Festival organizer Bruno Bueno didn't appear at the city council meeting. He met in advance with Bowie and city staff. He also met with Union Park District Council (UPDC) Aug. 7.

Bueno made promises that the upcoming event would have more controls in place. The festival will be just one day and will have attendance capped at 4,000 people. He also said that stage placement and other controls should make a difference.

The council received seven letters from area residents objecting to the variances. Merriam Park resident KC Cox testified at the public hearing. Cox said her windows were rattling during the Breakaway event.

Letters from Merriam Park, Snelling-Hamline, Lexington-Hamline and Hamline-Midway neighbors outlined similar concerns. Many neighbors are worried that the event, with an open bar, is

being marketed to college students. "How can we think an open bar festival for just turned legal drinkers is a good idea?" said Snelling-Hamline resident Gretchen Hoar.

Others said events at Allianz and at Concordia University's Seafoam Stadium are overwhelming neighbors with noise and spillover parking.

UPDC didn't make a recommendation on the variance, but asked for sound monitoring throughout the event and monitoring in the surrounding neighborhoods. "The sound got out of control during the Breakaway Festival," said UPDC Board President Sarah Dvorak.

The district council also discussed measures to be taken with the event's open bar, server training and security. Bueno assured district council members that event staff will have proper training and that sound will be monitored carefully.

Bueno is an undergraduate student at the University of St. Thomas. He said his upcoming event is designed to appeal to a different crowd than other area music festivals, and that he has experience with festivals similar to his Sept. 21 event.

### More sound restrictions in place around Sept. 21 event at Allianz Field following complaints during summer festival

Forbidden Festival organizers will place the stage in a way that doesn't send music into the surrounding area. It's planned to have the stage face the Allianz Field stadium itself.

"We will have systems in place to control noise," Bueno said.

UPDC members and neighbors want a way to audit sound during an event, so that actual noise levels can be checked afterward. One huge issue during and after the Breakaway event is that community members haven't been able to see any documentation of what noise levels actually were.

"We're much more interested in sound levels beyond the festivals' permit," said UPDC Board Member Mark Morrow.

Forbidden Festival organizers will do continuous sound monitoring during the Sept. 21 concert, said Bueno, and will have a contact phone number for use during the event. Bueno said he is glad to meet with UPDC after the event.

*Students, staff reflect on what they appreciate and things they would change*

# VIEWS FROM CENTRAL HIGH

By ZEYD ABDULLAHI

Explore the viewpoints of the people in the community at Central High School as they discuss the importance and challenges of the school.

Students and faculty at Central High School have a close relationship with the school's lively community, which reaches past its academic doors. Let's explore the opinions of its committed members to find out what really makes Central High unique.

Ceramics teacher Anna King recognizes the good qualities in her students, but she also recognizes the difficulties that new employees and students have adapting to the layout of the school. She believes in "endless classroom budgets to support student learning, more physical space in classrooms, and more time to collaborate with colleagues" in an effort to bring changes that will enhance the learning environment.

Longtime Central High School English teacher Kat Jordahl expresses her love for the school's culture, the colleagues' friendship, and the great student body. "I love the school spirit, the people I work with, and the outstanding student body," she says.



Zeyd Abdullahi (left) and Lucia Bodling (right) were part of the Right Track internship program through the city of St. Paul in spring 2024. They focused on journalism with the Monitor. Overseeing it at the school was 2023-2024 Work Based Learning Coordinator Emily Punyko (center). (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)

A sophomore named Huda Omar appreciates having a quiet study area between the busy hallways, such as the library. She

also works for the necessary changes, raising concerns about the important issues of restroom hygiene and privacy.

**STUDENT INTERN ZEYD ABDULLAHI**

Central High School Student Zeyd Abdullahi participated in the Right Track internship program through the city of St. Paul during spring semester 2024. He worked to hone his journalism skills, and wrote this article. Overseeing the interns were former Work Based Learning Coordinator Emily Punyko at Central High and Midway Como Frogtown Monitor owner Tesha M. Christensen.

Another sophomore, Raaida Jama, takes comfort in Central's rich history but points out areas that need work, especially in infrastructure that affects everyday activities.

Sophomore, Armani Stevenson, complains about the difficulties brought on such small quarters while also thanking the school for its exciting events held during the school year.

At Central High, despite differences in opinion, one thing never changes: everyone feels like they belong and have a common goal. Strong bonds are built outside of the classroom through monthly grade meetings and shared experiences.

Our exploration into Central's community shows that there are both challenges and opportunities for growth. The voices and experiences of its community members transform Central High School into more than just a school; it's a great community that grows each day.

**STEVE GERNES WINS DAYTIME EMMY**

Hamline graduates can be found all over, but one of the more unique places to find alumni is on Netflix's top trending page. That's where Steve Gernes' work was last fall, as cocreator of the four-part docuseries



"Live to 100: Secrets of the Blue Zones," which debuted Aug. 30, 2023.

Fast-forward 10 months and Gernes, along with co-composers Duncan Thum and Tyler Sabbag, were awarded with the Outstanding Music Direction and Composition Emmy for their work on "Live to 100" at the Creative Arts and Lifestyle Emmy Award ceremony held on June 8.

"It felt like a culmination of all the work we've done together," Gernes, who

graduated with a degree in music theory and composition in 2010, said of the Emmy win with Thum and Sabbag. "It was really special, considering we've made so much music together all these years."

Gernes, who recently moved back to St. Paul, now collaborates virtually on projects - including "Live to 100," which, in addition to the Emmy recognition, is also Gernes' most heard work.

In addition to more Netflix work,

Gernes is currently finishing up an 10-track soundtrack album for a Dungeons and Dragons campaign, Obojima Tales From The Tall Grass.

"It's a Studio Ghibli, Legend of Zelda-style orchestral album," Gernes said. "That's some of my favorite styles of music, so it's been sort of a dream pursuit. It's been super fun."

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## ROB'S ROSES

>> from 1

onions.

"We started planting a few roses the first year, and then more the next and more the next," McHattie said. He now has about 100 rose plants, including 35 roses he grows at the Oak Marsh Golf Club in Oakdale.

"My wife grows all kinds of plants," he said, "but growing roses is my hobby."

A financial advisor by trade, McHattie has moved his office from Shoreview to his basement. "I'm kind of winding down and work part-time now, but I still have a fairly large amount going on."

His hobby of growing roses can be time-consuming. He digs up all the roses around Halloween and puts them in trenches. He covers them with dirt and leaves and a little mouse poison to keep out mice and moles. In the spring, he digs them all up, gets his garden ready and replants them.

McHattie said Minnesota is home to hardy rose bushes that can weather the winter, but tea roses are more difficult to grow. "You can't grow a tea rose in Minnesota unless you bury it during the winter," he explained.

McHattie said roses do not die from freezing, but die from lack of moisture over the winter unless they are buried.

When he was growing up, his mom grew some roses but was not very good at it, according to McHattie. "I was always trying to keep them alive, but I was not very good at it," he noted.

"I learned a lot of things not to do," he added, such as Styrofoam cones around the roses are useless because the roses need moisture.

After all his years of growing roses he has thought of writing a book about it.

"Some friends suggest I should, and I started to a couple years ago, but I had



Rob McHattie was nominated by Lyngblomsten for the Midway Como Frogtown Monitor Good Neighbor series. McHattie has about 100 rose plants, including 35 that he grows at the Oak Marsh Golf Club in Oakdale. At Lyngblomsten, he makes sure there are roses at the front desk all the time, and provides roses for special events. (Photos by Terry Faust)

such an old computer I didn't get far. Now I have a much better computer, but I'm too busy. Maybe this winter I will try again."

He said the roses first bloom in June. They start with shorter stems and not as nice of a flower, but in about a month they take over and produce a rose every day. "It reaches a point where I might get three dozen a day," he said.

When he cuts the roses, he does so at an angle. He then puts them in hot water, which opens the flower up. Then he puts them in the refrigerator for about an hour, which makes the roses last longer.

When he grows the roses at the golf club, with a trade-off that he can golf for free, he said a lot of golfers tell him they really appreciate the roses. "I used to work with finances for the railroad," he said, "and I made sure the women all had a rose. Then the guys told me they wanted

roses, too. Growing roses is fun."

At Lyngblomsten, he makes sure there are roses at the front desk all the time. He also has given the center pots of roses and geraniums for outside the building, and he provides additional roses when there is an event such as an ice cream social or street fair. He and his Great Dane, Cinder, are frequent visitors bringing over flowers. McHattie's wife, Jane, who is a retired registered nurse, helps at Lyngblomsten by doing patient evaluations. She also travels to Poland about four times a year to work with people over there through a Doctors Without Borders type of program.

"That's what she does in her retirement," McHattie said. "I hope to keep growing roses."

He said the roses he grows are very fragrant.

"My favorite rose is Sheer Bliss. It is white with a lot of pink in it and it opens

up real big. It has a strong fragrance, and one flower can bring scent to an entire room."

Gwen Moulton, the receptionist at Lyngblomsten, said "Rob is one of the good guys. We so appreciate Rob and his flowers. If someone is having a bad day, they stop to smell the roses. And if someone is having a great day, they stop and smell them, too. It is just such a blessing what he does for Lyngblomsten."

Know someone aged 50+ that contributes to the Midway/Como/Frogtown community and inspires those around them? Send your nomination for our Living 50+ Good Neighbor series to [tesha@monitorsaintpaul.com](mailto:tesha@monitorsaintpaul.com). Please include your contact information, their name, age, and contact information, and a paragraph about what they do that you find amazing about them.

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*Through weekly gatherings at Episcopal Homes, people share written memories*

By JANE ST. ANTHONY

“What do you do when your car is stolen?” Milan Mockovak, 93, wrote in his story, “Life As We Know It.”

“A published story was on my bucket list,” he said. “Before I joined the writing group at Episcopal Homes, all I could write were reports.”

In May, Milan’s short story appeared in “Sunday Bulletin Board,” a feature in the St. Paul Pioneer Press. He is one of the residents at Episcopal Homes Senior Housing at University Ave. and Fairview in St. Paul whose story has been in print.

The authors have something in common: They meet on Friday mornings. Throughout the week, they write.

Andrea Erickson, Director of Service Coordination at Episcopal Homes – and her recently retired colleague, Julie Niewald – launched the writing group 15 years ago. Erickson’s friend, Mirella Heimpel, graciously volunteered to assist with the writing group after Niewald retired.

Milan rarely misses a meeting. Neither do the other committed writers, half of them over age 90. The group of 10-15 writers per week bring their writing to share with each other. They are encouraged to comment; negative feedback is not welcome.

On Friday mornings, the session begins with coffee and a reading of the group’s charter: Betty, whose story was also in print, reads the charter aloud:

In Writers Workshop, we agree:

- To listen closely and give respect to the speaker.

- To honor each speaker by not interrupting, commenting or giving feedback unless asked for.

- To honor confidentiality.

- To share the time we have in an equitable way; to be mindful of how much time each person takes.

- To remember the purpose of the writers group: to grow individually and as a community through the sharing of our written stories, to make connections to one another and to encourage one another’s creative expression.

During a recent workshop, one writer added a suggestion after the charter was read: “Send this to Congress!”

The writers look forward to Friday mornings. Comments include: “I value the members of this group and their commitment to show up prepared on Friday mornings.” “I find myself challenged to grow beyond my mindset.” “I have rave reviews for the group experience, the deadlines and the great feedback from all of the writers.” “There’s something special about this group.” “I was brave enough to attend the group. We have a bond of trust.” “This is the highlight of my week; many others have said this.”

One group member, Ben-Li, was born

# SENIORS WRITE RICH STORIES



Back row left to right: Mirella Heimpel (volunteer), Richard Marple, Don Palmgren, Christine Butter, Laurel Winsor, and Milan Mockovak. Front row left to right: Betty Salber. (Photo by Emily Allgeyer)



Richard Marple, Ben-Li Nie, Mirella Heimpel (volunteer), and Christine Butter participate in a recent writing group at Episcopal Homes in St. Paul. (Photo by Emily Allgeyer)

in China and lived in Russian before coming to the U.S. Her two “hi-tech” grandsons translate her stories into English so that she can read them to the group. Her English continues to improve.

Each story read aloud brims with heart, humor and, sometimes, a drop of nostalgia.

### EXCERPTS

- The remains of several steam engines sit in the backwoods behind a boy’s home in Southern Minnesota. With his brother, the boy climbs up on the big wheels and plays there. He doesn’t remember ever getting hurt. A local man made a hobby of the steam engines and holds an annual celebration, starting up the engines so that the locals can experience a bit of history. It is thrilling. The boy, now a man, holds on to the haunting sound of the engines.

- Feeling very adult, a 12-year-old girl waits in a cafe for the bus that will take her to her aunt and uncle in western Kan-

sas. A man approaches her, chats and asks if she would like to go for a ride with him, see the town. She has no experience to draw from; she was raised to be polite to adults. But fear grows inside her and she remains seated, shaking her head “No,” until the man leaves the café.

- Another author’s story is inspired by his father’s experience. As a soldier returning from WWII aboard a ship, the father hears the sublime jazz of Thelonious Monk. He is enthralled. On this voyage, he also realizes that White soldiers like himself sleep below deck while Black soldiers spend the night on the deck above. “I never thought my father felt one way or another about civil rights until he told me that story 50 years after the war,” said the son. “It made him so angry.”

- Outside of Moscow, two middle-aged women arrive for a tour. Two young men approach and introduce themselves. The hotel was for foreigners – Russians forbidden – and the men ask to borrow the women’s foreign passports; they

### A NOTE FROM JANE ST. ANTHONY

Years ago, while doing research at the Gale Family Library, I read the journal of a young woman who lived with and cared for her ailing mother near the beginning of the 20th century. The daughter wrote that it was time to wheel her mother to the butcher shop. A mercy killing? No. Her mother was weighed on the meat scale. Her weight had fallen.

Once, as I waited for a librarian, I randomly picked up a slim volume that contained all the deaths in Hennepin County from 1880-1920. I flipped through it. And there, by coincidence, was my great-grandmother, who died in childbirth at age 27.

Thank you, Gale Family Library in the Minnesota History Center St. Paul as well as other institutions that collect stories.

Thank you, writers - Ben-Li, Betty, Christine, Dan, Delton, Don, Laurel, Milan, Pat, Richard and the others who share the stories that take us to other times and other places.



Milan Mockovak (in orange) rarely misses a Friday meeting. In May, his short story appeared in the Sunday Bulletin Board in the Pioneer Press. (Photo by Emily Allgeyer)

want to smuggle two Russian women into the hotel. The Americans hand their passports to the strangers and then freeze, horrified at their own stupidity. Would this be a flash point in the Cold War, life in a gulag? After an eternity, the co-conspirators reappear, passports in hand.

### AN UNDERSTANDING

“There are fewer people to talk to who understand about what life was like years ago,” said one of the writers. “So many memories.”

Milan agrees. “Where do memories go?” he asked.

Maybe the memories are held by generations for a long, long time. Maybe librarians will give the memories a home. Maybe diaries will hold them. Maybe they’ll be in the Cloud.

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# Three Rivers Fibershed connects people with local fiber

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

Marigolds, hollyhocks, cosmos, and black eyed Susans. These are just a few of the late-summer flowers bursting into bloom right now. While many are cutting them for bouquets, farmer Maddy Bartsch is steeping their petals, leaves, and seed heads in boiling water to produce a rainbow of natural dyes for yarn and fabric.

Bartsch is co-founder and president of Three Rivers Fibershed (TRF). A resident of southeast Minneapolis, they've been farming at Get Bentz Farm near Northfield for the last three years. They first started experimenting with natural dyes from plants grown in their south Minneapolis community garden plot and apartment window sill in 2016. Growing local color on a larger scale at Get Bentz Farm is their way of contributing to the local fibershed.

### WHAT IS A FIBERSHED?

A fibershed develops regional, regenerative fiber systems through responsible carbon farming, rebuilding regional manufacturing, and connecting customers to farms and ranches through education and programming. The center of TRF is in Minneapolis, extending out in a 175-mile radius to include portions of Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, and South Dakota.

Within a fibershed, fibers are considered from a soil-to-soil perspective. That means that fiber-bearing animals graze on local land as they grow their coats, instead of some faraway place. Items made from their fiber (sweaters, mittens, socks, etc.) are worn until the end of their durability and then composted – completing the soil-to-soil cycle.

Bartsch explained, "At TRF, we're developing regional fiber systems that build soil and protect the health of our environment." The goal is to create just, local economies that honor all participants: local labor, local fiber, and local natural dyes.

### FIBER MOVEMENT GROWING

It wasn't that many years ago that the organic food movement was considered fringe. Bartsch said, "As consumers, we've



Holding harvested marigold blossoms, farmer and educator Maddy Bartsch said, "We're land stewards really, those of us who are working to develop our local fiber system." (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

become much more aware of where our food comes from and how it's grown. These same ideas can and should apply to what we wear. In general, people are learning more about the consequences of their clothing choices. People are realizing they don't want to buy clothes that contain micro-plastics, and they care that synthetic fibers don't break down in landfills.

"People are searching for products that mirror their values. We need to have as local a footprint as we can with what we wear. We need to make or purchase things that last, so we're buying fewer pieces of clothing over time."

### GET TO KNOW YOUR FIBERSHED

The first step in understanding how a fibershed works is to get to know your own. Bartsch shares a booth once each month with Northfield-based farmer/mill

owner Theresa Bentz: Saturdays at the Mill City Farmers Market and Sundays at the Linden Hills Farmers Market. The two sell their yarn, natural dyes, and roving (the bundles of wool used by spinners to make yarn), among other things. Find them by looking in the market vendor listings for Get Bentz Farm.

Each month they have several products to sell that are reasonably priced, and can introduce customers to the soil-to-soil cycle. One of the products Bartsch sells is needle felted wool sponges made from "trash" wool that would otherwise end up in a landfill.

Everybody knows that wool comes from sheep, alpacas, llamas, and rabbits. But did you ever wonder what happens to the fiber of animals raised for meat? The animals have to be shorn before butchering, and their wool is typically thrown

*Like locally-grown food, people are seeking locally made clothing*

away. Bartsch uses it to make their biodegradable sponges – which, given the low price point of the wool, they can sell for just \$6.

If you want to try your hand at working with natural fibers, consider taking one of the classes Bartsch teaches regularly at the American Swedish Institute on natural dyeing, mending, garment repair, and mindful stitching.

On Sept. 14, ASI is hosting Cocktails at the Castle from 6-11 p.m. At this event, Bartsch will be demonstrating how to make flower pounded felt coasters. Explore ASI's historic Turnblad Mansion and festival grounds, featuring top local musicians, ASI's first drag show, interactive art demos, make n' takes, food, curated cocktails, and craft beers.

### WHY NATURAL DYES?

The industrial manufacture of clothing destroys water systems with by-products of chemical dyeing and finishing processes, while consuming enormous amounts of water on a thirsty planet.

Bartsch said, "We're working to build alternative models within our fibershed. These regional textile communities will improve soil and water quality, build relationships, and strengthen regional economies."

"Future fibershed communities will rely on renewable energy-powered mills in proximity to where fibers are grown. Through strategic grazing, conservation tillage, and soil carbon enhancing practices, our supply chains will create 'climate beneficial' clothing."

"In rethinking fashion, this has to become the standard for mitigating the effects of climate change. We see an emerging connection between the wearer and the local field where their clothes were grown."

Bartsch teaches and speaks on the topic of local fiber systems and sustainable textiles to learners of all ages throughout the Midwest. They can be reached at [hello@threeriversfibershed.org](mailto:hello@threeriversfibershed.org).

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**FROGTOWN GREEN**



BY RENNIE GAITHER

# 2024 MINNESOTA STATE FAIR'S ECO EXPERIENCE

The Minnesota State Fair conjures up scenes of copious crowds, generator-humming eateries, and layering heat. Add to that a palpable ocean of sensory stimulation, spectacle, and awe. Aptly nicknamed "The Great Minnesota Get-Together," this annual tradition is also a kind of pilgrimage, in my mind, to a host of gathering signs, symbols and sensibilities around community. Fairgoers share ideas and conversations around communal and individual ways of being. I found this year's Eco Experience at the Fair such a gathering place for community-building around sustainability.

I took in some cool exhibits, as well. After all, this was the place to "[g]et inspired to lead a more sustainable life with easy, everyday reduce-reuse-recycle how-tos and engaging, interactive exhibits," as touted on the Fair's website. Exhibit designers utilized inclusive practices utilizing space and creating activities appropriate for a range of ages and abilities.

A curious sight drew me like a magnet: I'd come upon "Bagnado," a giant, spinning tornado comprised of plastic bags! The installation stretched to the rafters. Many captivated children encircled the mesmerizingly colorful behemoth, staring wide-eyed, all smiles.

Information about plastic waste accompanied the gargantuan whirlwind. Apparently, Minnesotans dispose of 600 tons of plastic packaging, including grocery bags every day. That's 14 pounds every second! An estimated 22 million pounds of plastic pollutions make their way to the Great Lakes yearly. It's costly, too. A study found each plastic bag cost taxpayers 14 cents. De-



Patricia Ohmans (right) of Frogtown Green checks out the "Water Resource Recovery: Removing Poo for (Nearly) Pure Water" exhibit. (Photo by Frogtown Green)

contaminating the recycling stream, disposal and landfill processing adds up!

I sauntered to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's e-bike exhibit. A smattering of e-bikes for awaited saddling by visitors. E-bikes provide lots of benefits as an alternative to many other forms of transportation. Importantly, e-bikes extend the cycling distance range over traditional bikes - which can reduce dependence on motor vehicles. E-bikes use lithium-ion batteries with zero emissions, reducing air contaminants. Comfort and increased speed over traditional bikes also add pluses.

The Minnesota Department of Health's

medication disposal site exhibit proved interesting. My spouse is a pharmacist, so I wanted to learn more. I found instructions to access information about take-back locations for leftover medications. Such medications can source accidental poisonings, overdoses, and environmental contamination. I linked to [www.pca.state.mn.us/unwantedmeds](http://www.pca.state.mn.us/unwantedmeds), entered my zip code, and received various disposal site locations within set mileage radiuses of my home.

The exhibit on electric vehicles (EVs) and electric-powered tools garnered much interest this year. Visitors lined up to glance at a Tesla's 2024 Cybertruck model. With a

11,000-pound towing capacity and 340-mile range per charge this futuristic-clad beastie was a crowd favorite. Also on hand was a line-up of electric lawn mowers and lots of information about benefits and care.

Other appealing, exceedingly-educational exhibits leaned in on areas such as soil health, solar energy (including information on solar installers, financing/tax credits, and community solar gardens), pollinator gardens, local food initiatives, and the Minnesota GreenCorps.

The 2024 Eco Experience created a decidedly warm sense of community. Vibrant displays and inviting activities for all ages helped fairgoers along on their journey towards sustainable living and practices. I would suggest adding an area for showcasing more local green non-profits. Opportunities to learn about positive environmental actions visitors can successfully build at the neighborhood level would add to shared goals of community-building around sustainability.

**OTHER RESOURCES:**

- EV's and alternative fuels (Minnesota Clean Cities Coalition), <https://www.cleanairchoice.org/clean-cities/minnesota-clean-cities-coalition/#/resources>
- Soil health (Minnesota Soil Health Coalition), <https://www.mnsoilhealth.org/technical-information/>
- Tax credits and rebates to help kick carbon (fresh energy), <https://electrificationandyou.org/>
- Growing and sustaining local food systems (FEAST! Local Foods Network) <https://www.local-feast.org/>

Rennie Gaither is a Frogtown Green volunteer. Frogtown Green is a resident-led and volunteer-powered environmental initiative in St Paul's most diverse neighborhood. If you'd like to know more, browse [frogtowngreen.com](http://frogtowngreen.com) or call 651-757-5970.



## CITIZENS GATHER TO ADVOCATE FOR CLEAN ENERGY

Ward 5 neighbors and SP350 climate advocates Claire Klein, Tom Lucy, Chelsea DeArmond, Aaron Kerr, Rachael Rivard, Jacob Ristow, and Drew Harper met with St. Paul City Councilperson HwaJeong Kim in August to collaborate on Thermal Energy Networks (TENs) actions.

TENs use water source heat pumps and underground pipes to repurpose thermal energy for heating, cooling, and hot water. The heat is moved throughout the system and balanced to create comfortable atmospheres. This process can be done through deep boreholes that access consistent temperature ground temperatures or by redistributing waste heat from large refrigerated buildings such as ice rinks, industrial buildings, or grocery stores. This reduces dependence on oil and gas for heat. TENs

and geothermal systems are already underway in St. Paul at The Heights housing development and several buildings at Como Zoo. The Saint Paul school district has committed to transitioning its school buildings to geothermal heating and cooling, starting with Johnson High School. SP350 and Unidos are working to implement TENs in neighborhood sites

To share this vision for community-scale climate action with neighbors and elected officials, SP350 and Unidos will be hosting a "People's Climate Action Summit" on Saturday, Oct. 5, 10:30 a.m.-noon, at Academia Cesar Chavez (1801 Lacrosse Ave.). Registration and further details can be found at: <https://secure.everyaction.com/2vr5a7dHIU-Alb2q-Nw7ZA2>

## Volunteer In Your Community

Lutheran Social Service of MN is seeking volunteers age 55+ in your area to provide companionship to older adults or mentor school-age children. Volunteers commit to regular weekly hours for a tax-free stipend and mileage reimbursement. Please contact Tina at 651-310-9425 or [Tina.Voss@lssmn.org](mailto:Tina.Voss@lssmn.org) for more information and to make an impact in your community.



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Field Day host Nura Ahmed (above) is a Go Farm Connector and a farmer/advocate with Kilimo MN incubator farm in Cambridge. The Youth in Urban Ag Field Day featured a tour of the Urban Roots Rivoli Bluff Farm and Restoration Site

Go Farm Connect partnered with Urban Roots to host a free Youth in Urban Ag Field Day, dinner and resource sharing program on June 29 at Rivoli Bluff Farm, (749 Arkwright Street) for young people between the ages of 10 and 20.

A tour of Rivoli Bluff farm showcased the work of Urban Roots in engaging youth in growing food, cooking, practicing conservation, and exploring agricultural careers. This event also provided an introduction to local United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) staff, who explained the USDA Youth Loan program, along with other helpful resources to support young agricultural entrepreneurs.

Hosting the event were Nura Ahmed, who works at Kilimo MN incubator farm

## YOUTH IN URBAN AG CONNECT

and is an Arabic language specialist, and Matthew Barthelemy, farmer support specialist with Renewing the Countryside. They are Connectors with Go Farm Connect, trained to help new and experienced farmers of all kinds access helpful federal programs.

"The USDA has done a lot to support youth initiatives in rural spaces, helping to support learning, growth and development of dreams around farming, food production and working with the land. Now that we have an Urban Ag office in

St Paul that will serve the Twin Cities, I'm eager to see what's possible in supporting urban youth as well as the organizations that serve them," says Barthelemy.

One person drove for an hour and a half from Mankato to be there and was excited to learn about youth programming, as she works with youth and farming in her organization.

With USDA being so new in Urban Spaces this was a great opportunity for them to visit an urban farm, particularly one working with youth," said Kriss Mari-

on of Go Farm Connect. "The USDA people all said how important it was for them to be there to not only show the community that they are a resource for them, but to also listen to the needs and learn about how they can better shape programming to meet the needs of youth and youth educators in urban spaces. The youth that were there were interested in learning more about youth loans, but were not as excited to do it alone. They were interested in doing it as a collaborative project. A couple of the youth educators said they wish there were resources to help them facilitate this kind of programming. One of the youths asked if there were loans to start a service / program to help other farmers."

### PEACE BUBBLES

BY MELVIN GILES  
peacebubbles@q.com



"It meant that we were a part of what we considered a historical movement, so it was of great sense. Think of that; nothing had been done like that before." Josie Johnson

"We may not have chosen the time, but the time has chosen us." John R. Lewis

"There are times when fighting is the only way to keep love alive." Starhawk

Hello Monitor readers,

The months of July and August felt like a non-stop rollercoaster ride that I expected in 1999 during our transitioning year into the new century. For instance, at that time many people thought that world would turn into chaos, that computers would malfunction, that our financial system would crumble and that the red or blue pill of the Matrix movie would become reality. And, the year 2000 was a moment in time for testing America's democracy; I definitely wasn't happy that presidential nominee Al Gore letting-go of his majority We the People votes win over democracy electoral votes, as well as the Supreme Court final election result/decision; however, it wasn't until the 2020 election could I appreciate the principles and values of our democracy. I feel 2024 is another rollercoaster moment in time

## GREEN SCREEN, MINI FOREST PLANT WITH HELP OF STUDENTS

that we are experiencing living in a weird, crazy, and exciting time that will test our great experiment of democracy and that history will share that we passed the test in flying blue, red, and purple colors!

### NATE ON PILGRIM'S COMMUNITY GARDEN

This month, I asked my community friend, Nate Galloway, to provide a brief update on an environmental justice project (mini forest/green screen) that we and others have been working on. Nate is a former St. Paul Public School administrator and educator, a member of Pilgrim Baptist Church, and an Urban Farm & Garden Alliance (UFGA) garden leader.

"We accomplished the goal of Pilgrim Baptist Church's Community Garden 2024 project by bringing a natural green space to the Old Rondo neighborhood, which creates access education opportunities for our community. The Garden Project used the Miyawaki Method of planting a Green Screen / Mini Forest and establishing a home for 20 native species, along the northeast corner of Pilgrim's Community Garden at 732 W. Central Ave. St. Paul.

On Friday, May 3, the fifth grade Science Students from Maxfield Elem School planted 150 tree seedlings. We felt it was important to involve young people from the community and form long-lasting relationships with this space. This was a great opportunity to nurture a relationship between the future mini forest and the elementary students three blocks away.

Another important part of this project was the connection with the University of

Minnesota Engineer Without Borders students. They added a rainwater catchment system from new gutters on the garden shed, and constructed new composting area, accessible pathways and six raised garden boxes. We are looking forward to seeing the green screen build the soil, cool the immediate area, support pollination at the community garden, be beautiful, and more, as it grows.

A special thanks to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources for financial, technical, planning, volunteer, and moral support for Pilgrim's Green Screen, and for documenting the event with pictures and video. Thanks to Great River Greening for providing the tools, facilitating soil prep and mulching, volunteer support, and for ongoing watering support. Many thanks to Urban Farm Garden Alliance for their continued encouraging support, along with Ramsey County Master Gardeners and many others who showed up showing up in force on a rainy May 4 for Community Planting Day, where 300 tree seedlings found a new home. We have also been truly blessed with the steady rain we have been receiving that has help our Community Garden thrive during our growing season." - Nate Galloway

Thank you, Brother Nate. The fifth graders at Maxfield Elementary School also planted a time capsule that they will dig up in seven years to read messages of their hopes and dreams for themselves, for All Our Relatives, and for Mother Earth! I look forward to being present as the then graduating high school students unearth

their future visions.

### THANK YOU, ELDER LATIMER

Finally, I have to acknowledge that Minnesota has reaped good and honorable political leaders, like Herbert Humphrey, Wendell Anderson, Randy Staten, Walter Mondale, Paul Wellstone, Sharon Sayles Belton, and other notable lawmakers (Toni Carter). However, in my lifetime, it is the late-George Latimer that will always have a special place in my heart and mind for being an outstanding and authentic champion of justice and truly a person who walked and worked with integrity, empathy, and joy. R.I.P, Mayor Latimer; you were a wonderful mayor and cared for the best for St. Paul residents, for our state, and for our country. Thank you, Elder George.


Let's stay optimistic: Governor Coach Tim will be the vice-president of our great United States. Cultivate and be hopeful within yourself and with others; Joyful Peggy Flanagan will be Minnesota's governor. And, I hear that Minnesota will have a Black person as Lt. Governor! This has been a strange, weird, and crazy leap year, as well as an exciting, energizing, and embracing empathy leap year! Enjoy the light of the Harvest Full Moon Season. Be well, all and hold on!

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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**COMO PARK SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL**



BY ERIC ERICKSON  
Social studies teacher

# PRINCIPAL HONORED, DUMAS TENNIS COURTS COMPLETE



Como Park Senior High School Principal, Dr. Diana Brown. (Photo submitted)

## CAPITOL DIVISION PRINCIPAL OF THE YEAR

Como Park Senior High School principal Dr. Diana Brown has been named the Capitol Division Principal of the Year by the Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals (MASSP).

There are eight divisions within the MASSP. The Capitol Division includes St. Paul and the entirety of Ramsey, Washington, and Dakota Counties. In January of 2025, the MASSP will select one high school principal as the state's Principal of the Year.

The nomination in support of Brown recognized her work as a leader in developing an equitable and engaging educational environment while also highlighting her characteristics and attributes. "Showing up unapologetically authentic, as a strong black woman she brings work ethic, compassion, joy, and trust to the Como community."

The nomination also noted that Brown is a lifelong learner and teacher, "strongly believing that you get out what you put in."

While surprised by receiving this honor after her first year, Brown is en-

thused for her school. "I am very happy to bring this honor to the Como Community because we are doing great things here. Our students are my priority, and I will continue to work on making this an environment where everyone belongs, succeeds, and flourishes."

## TENNIS COURTS DONATED BY KATHY DUMAS

Construction of eight brand-new tennis courts at Como Park High School was completed in late August thanks to a \$400,000 donation from retired teacher and coach Kathy Dumas.

The girls' team is thrilled to be playing on the pristine surface this fall – a massive improvement from the dilapidated courts of recent years. A dedication ceremony is scheduled for Sept. 13 with Dumas in attendance.

Since the announcement of her gift, Kathy's former colleagues, students, and athletes have been reminded of the dedication and unselfish service she displayed daily.

"I'm fortunate. I have a little bit of money we saved. I always told the kids, someday when you have money you can give back," Dumas said. "If you give to

something, you really have to believe in the cause to which you're giving."

Dumas' belief in the Como tennis programs stretches back to the fall of 1980 when she began coaching the Cougar girls team. In the spring of 1982, she started coaching the Cougar boys team, as well. Dumas led both programs through 2007 when she retired from a total of 40 years teaching English in St. Paul Public Schools.

Her coaching partner during all those years was her husband, Dick Dumas. He was a mathematician and software engineer at UNISYS for his entire professional career. Dick passed away in 2009.

The courts are being named in honor of the coaching duo – the Kathy and Dick Dumas Tennis Courts. The current members of the Como girls and boys teams, along with alumni and Como staff, will gratefully gather for the dedication.

The community has been united and inspired by the generosity and selfless spirit of the Dumas duo. Their extraordinary gift will benefit an entirely new generation of Como tennis players.

# Ballot question: Odd to even elections

The St. Paul residents who sponsored a petition to amend the St. Paul City Charter received certification in August from the St. Paul City Clerk that they have obtained a sufficient number of registered voter signatures. The Charter Amendment petition seeks to move St. Paul City elections from their current odd year settings to the same year as presidential elections.

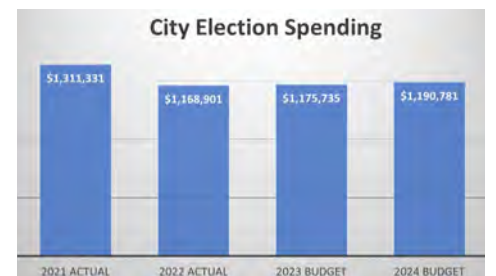
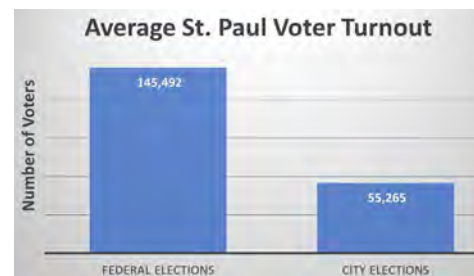
For a number of years the city of St. Paul has held elections for its mayor and its city council in alternate odd years. The turnout by the registered voters of St. Paul has been significantly lower in the odd year elections than it has been for the even

year elections. Combining city elections with the presidential year election should increase voter participation and eliminate more than \$1million in costs associated with each of the odd year city elections.

The city attorney has approved the title and language of this ballot question as follows:

**Title: Changing City Elections to Presidential Election Years.**

Shall Chapter 7 (Elections) of the City Charter be amended as follows: Sec. 7.01.-City elections. The election of city officers and such other officers as are required by law to be elected at a city election shall



be held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November in odd numbered presidential election years. Notwithstanding Section 2.02 of this Charter setting four-year terms, and to transition to presidential election years, councilmembers elected on November 7, 2023, shall serve a five-year term and a mayoral election shall

occur on November 4, 2025, for a three-year term.

Currently, city elections take place in odd years. A "yes" vote changes City elections to take place in presidential election years, which occur in even years. A "no" vote keeps City elections in odd years.

More at [www.odd2evenstp.com](http://www.odd2evenstp.com).

# Community members ask for traffic safety

## Capital Improvement Budget committee members approve two local projects

By JANE MCCLURE

Two area projects made the cut when the St. Paul Long-Range Capital Improvement Budget (CIB) Committee wrapped up its work on 2025-2026 neighborhood projects. The recommendations approved Aug. 12 were sent on to Mayor Melvin Carter to be included in the 2025 city budget.

Final decisions on funding will be made by the mayor and city council by year's end.

This year is a community projects year in the city's capital budget cycle. The city is

to fund projects for 2025 and 2026, splitting \$1 million over two years.

More than dozen people, most of them parents and children from the West End, attended the committee hearing at Rondo Community Outreach Library. A few carried "20 is plenty" signs to make their case for safety. They won a small victory Aug. 12 as the committee recommended that \$102,153 be taken from a Mounds Park project and reallocated to safety improvements on Jefferson Avenue in the city's West End.

CIB Committee Chairman Darren Tobolt said, "In the three (cycles) we have done (community projects), traffic calming is the number one thing people want."

The amendment and amended list passed anonymously, but not without comments from CIB committee members about the 2025-2026 projects' process.

CIB committee members said that while they agree with the need for equity and more projects coming in citywide, they'd have liked more information on process changes.

"In the future, we have to re-examine the process in general," Tobolt said.

Committee members agreed with community concerns that the recent process was confusing. One suggestion is to contact all 17 of the city's district councils to see what improvements they want. Another is to give applicants more time to make requests.

The application process was reopened last spring after fewer than two dozen projects came in. Two council wards had no projects funded at all. Reopening the process citywide was seen as a way to provide equity for all parts of St. Paul, but groups that meet the original deadline were unhappy that the rules were changed.

Having two online polls, for original projects and then all projects, also met criticism.

Twenty-seven projects made the final cut for committee review this year. More than 30 were submitted. That compares to 86 projects for the 2023-2024 cycle. Another change was from a shorter suggestion process to a questionnaire.

The top-ranked request going forward is from Union Park to install flashing pedestrian safety beacon lights between Skyline Tower and Midway Peace Park. At \$65,000 it is the smallest project.

Another area project recommended for funding is safety improvements of the Thomas-Griggs intersection, at \$225,000.

The six recommended projects, plus money for public art and contingency, totaled \$1,567,847.

Area projects shut out include renovations of Horton Park, Robbins/Transitway lighting improvements, Westgate Commons park shade structures and bicycle connections along Pierce Butler Route and a bike improvements along Wabash Avenue in West Midway.



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### EGGROLL CHAMPION

The Frogtown Arts Festival kicked off a delicious new tradition this year – a thrilling Egg Roll Contest. “We want to extend a huge thank you to all the participating restaurants: Bangkok Deli, Tay Ho, Mandalay Kitchen, Hoa Bien, Basil Cafe, Thai Boat 89, Cheng Heng, and I Pho,” said organizers at 825 Arts. Thai Boat 89 was crowned the 2024 Frogtown Arts Festival Egg Roll Contest winner. Their egg rolls impressed judges with outstanding flavor, texture, and sauce. Over 500 people attended the festival, which included vendors, performers, workshops and more at the newly opened venue at 825 University Ave. W.

## Pop-Up Arts Memory Café at Lyngblomsten

Lyngblomsten, a Minnesota nonprofit senior services organization, has launched the Pop-Up Arts Memory Café for those living with memory loss and their care partners to come together in a friendly environment to connect, laugh, express their creativity, and receive helpful information about caregiving.

The program is led by Lyngblomsten staff at 1415 Almond Ave. who are specially trained to understand the distinctive needs of people experiencing memory loss. The event is held twice per month on Wednesdays from 10–11:30 a.m. through Dec. 11, 2024. Participants will be asked to make a contribution, if they're able.

“The Pop-Up Arts Memory Café is

a great addition to our programming,” said Julie Pfab, Director of Lyngblomsten Community Services. “We’re excited to offer an informal time for those living with memory loss and their care partners to socialize and do an art activity. Plus, care partners have the opportunity to share with each other and learn about resources. And there’s no long-term commitment required; they can attend as many sessions as they’d like.”

To learn more and to register online, visit [www.Lyngblomsten.org/MemoryCafe](http://www.Lyngblomsten.org/MemoryCafe). Or, contact Lisa Brown with Lyngblomsten Community Services at [caregiving@lyngblomsten.org](mailto:caregiving@lyngblomsten.org) or (651) 632-5320.

## EVENTS

### BASIC INCOME WEEK SEPT. 16-22

With Minnesota emerging as the epicenter of the national guaranteed income movement, a series of art exhibits, comedy shows, community workshops, and family activities will bring the economic justice policy to life in St. Paul and rural Fergus Falls from Sept. 16-22 as part of International Basic Income Week. At 262 University, check out the opening reception for the “EXHALE” Exhibition Tuesday, Sept. 17, 6-8 p.m. and Family Day on Sept. 21 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Springboard for the Arts is spearheading the weeklong series of events aimed at advocating for guaranteed income programs. The organization’s Guaranteed Income for Artists pilot program, launched in 2021, provides \$500 monthly subsidies to 75 artists in St. Paul and rural Otter Tail County. Initial data from the Springboard for the Arts program shows funds directed to critical needs: 36% for essential purchases, 30% for food, and 10% for housing.

### CROP HUNGER WALK OCT. 13

The Annual St. Paul CROP Hunger Walk will be on Sunday, Oct. 13, 1:15 p.m. walk. Meet at Macalester Plymouth United Church, 1658 Lincoln Avenue. Go to [www.crophungerwalk.org/saintpaulmn](http://www.crophungerwalk.org/saintpaulmn) for registration and more information on how to raise funds to support the work of Church World Service and the Department of Indian Work Emergency Services.

### HAMLIN MIDWAY TOWN HALL OCT. 17

The Hamline Midway Coalition and the Hamline Undergraduate Student Congress have invited every elected leader who represents Hamline Midway to join in a neighborhood town hall to discuss key issues that impact the community. It will be Oct. 17 at Hamline University’s Bush Ballroom (1537 Hewitt Ave.) from 6-8 p.m.

### ST. PAUL LAUNCHES MOBILE LIBRARY

In August, St. Paul launched the brand-new Mobile Library – a traveling library that provides new and expanded services based on community feedback, including access to mobile hotspots, computers and Wi-Fi, and referrals to community resources and notary services.

## TIDBITS

### GOLD BRT TO OPEN IN 2025

The METRO Gold Line – the state’s first Bus Rapid Transit line to operate primarily within bus-only lanes – will open on March 22, 2025, project leaders have announced. The new line will connect Woodbury to downtown Saint Paul.

The Gold Line is one of three new BRT lines Metro Transit will open next year, expanding the region’s network of METRO lines that provide reliable, all-day service and stations with amenities like heated and lit shelters. The METRO B Line, which will largely replace Route 21, is scheduled to open on June 14, 2025, and the METRO E Line, which will largely

replace Route 6, is scheduled to open in December 2025.

By the end of next year, the region will have eight BRT lines in service and several more in various stages of planning, design, and engineering.

Learn more about the Gold Line at [metrotransit.org/gold-line-project](http://metrotransit.org/gold-line-project).

### ZONING CHANGES ON EAST GRAND AVE.

On Aug. 14, 2024, the Saint Paul City Council voted unanimously to adopt zoning amendments that will improve development flexibility, support small businesses, and enhance neighborhood walkability along the East Grand Avenue corridor. The vote follows a multi-year study and a community advisory process.

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Ads must be received by the Monitor by Monday, Sept. 30 for the Oct. 10 issue. Call 651-917-4183 or email Denis@MonitorSaintPaul.com for more information. Classified ads will also be automatically placed on the Monitor's website at www.MonitorSaintPaul.com. Contact Tessa to place a Help Wanted ad at 612-260-7967, tessa@monitorsaintpaul.com.

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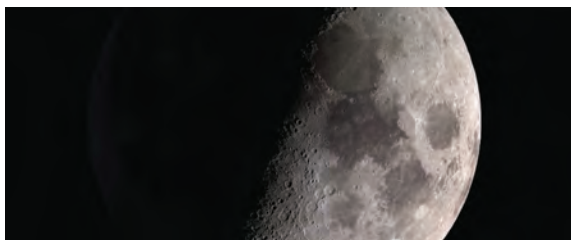
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## Party among the stars at the Bell Museum



### Statewide Star Party International Observe the Moon Night

The Bell Museum hosts its fifth annual Statewide Star Party, September 14, 8–10 pm. This year the community sky watching event invites audiences to honor cultural and personal connections to the Moon, learn about lunar science and more! Join fellow Minnesotans in taking a look at our closest companion in the skies at the same time as people all around the world!



### Sensory Friendly Saturday September 28, 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.



### Spotlight Science: FungiFest September 28, 10 am–2 pm

Spotlight Science is a regular program that shines a light on current science conducted at the University of Minnesota. Join the Minnesota Mycological Society in celebrating 125 years of this educational organization. Explore unique mushrooms, identify common edible species and more!