



We build Pride on the Southside

**RIVERSIDE
EDITION**

THIRD MONDAY OF THE MONTH

**JANUARY
2020**

VOL. XXX, ISSUE 3

Sartorial splendor

BY TONY BOUZA

By 1975 women were entering police ranks in great numbers. They'd been piling up at the gates for years and then the dam broke. I am very proud of my role as an expert in demolishing the barriers.

The Southern Poverty Law Center sued to eliminate the obstacles, largely artificial and intended to keep women out. I served as their expert witness and we won every case. The revolution was one of feminism's greatest successes, but it remains unheralded, unremarked and unacknowledged.

I was in charge of the Bronx (pretty arrogant construction) and had about 100 policewomen. It was the age of the miniskirt.

Michael Codd was the commissioner, and my boss. "Old school" would scarcely describe him. "Fossilized" might approach. Very Irish. Very Catholic. Very limited educationally and intellectually, but he masked it effectively behind a tall, imposing ramrod-straight mien. The image he invoked in my febrile imagination was of a Wooden Titan. I did not fear him, but always observed the obeisances.

One day a delegation of women cops came to see me to ask if they

See Bouza, page 4



Despite frigid temperatures, 50 activists rallied on Wednesday, Jan. 8, from 4 to 6 p.m. for the weekly anti-war vigil on the Lake Street Bridge to oppose the assassination of General Soleimani. Women Against Military Madness sponsors a Bridgil every Wednesday from 4 to 6. Everyone is welcome. Photo: Emma Fiala

Big changes for little kids

BY TRACY MCCORMICK

The Minneapolis Public School District is weeks away from unrolling three models as part of their Comprehensive District Design. They have said that 60 percent of students (14,000 kids) will move schools under the boundary changes they have considered, and, as director Kim Ellison shared at a recent meeting, they expect half of current families will not be happy with the final plan, perhaps unhappy enough to leave for charter schools or neighboring districts. All of this with scant input from families and staff and no demonstrable improvements to our schools.

Here is a quick recap of the changes being looked at for Riverside schools:

Seward Montessori: Currently a K-8 magnet school that's been modeled to change to a K-5 magnet school.

Anne Sullivan: Modeled to change from a K-8 community school to a K-5 magnet school with a STEM focus. Only those students who want that focus and can get in will be able to attend this school.

Dowling: Currently a K-5 environmentally-focused magnet school, poised to become a community school under the boundary proposal. So, it will lose the programming focus and only be open to students who live within the subscribed boundaries.

Hiawatha-Howe: Currently a split campus with K-2 at the Hiawatha campus and 3-5 at Howe. The district is

still looking at how to handle such split campuses but there will likely be changes.

Shifting attendance boundaries is poised to leave many schools vastly under-enrolled. The district already has too much real estate for the number of students it serves. Closing schools is inevitable and recommendations on school closures is coming next.

The only remaining Listening Session in South Minneapolis will be Monday, Feb. 3, at Justice Page Middle School, 1 W. 49th St., from 6:30 to 8 p.m.

Light refreshments will be served. School-aged childcare and interpretation will be available. If accommodations are needed, contact Sharifa Urey, 612-668-0128 or sharifa.urey@mpls.k12.mn.us.

The New French Bakery is closing

BY ED FELIEN

The New French Bakery is closing its retail store at 26th and 26th.

Hillary Oppmann of the Seward Civic and Commerce Association says, "The good news is the business itself is not closing, just the retail outlet. The company will continue to make their frozen breads for sale (and keep those jobs in the neighborhood). It's too bad to lose all their delicious fresh breads, though!"



Forty years ago, Peter Kelsey was a college dropout and busboy at the New French Café. Sam and Sylvia Kaplan began the New French Café in 1977 as a hipster bar and café in the warehouse district downtown. They wanted authentic croissants and baguettes, so they rented the shop next door to the café and partnered with their busboy to start the New French Bakery. Peter eventually bought them out and started making desserts and breads for a wider audience.

He built his wholesale operation into a \$40 million a year business with 300 employees. Their frozen bread is available at Lunds, Target and Cub Foods, as well as Surdyks and The St. Paul Hotel.

Kelsey had a bout with cancer, which he won, and six years ago he sold the business to a Chicago-based equity firm for enough money to retire and send his kids to college.

Today, lots of bakers know the secret to making a good croissant and a good baguette, but if you want to taste the original pathfinder for Minneapolis, the Bodhissatva (the one who brings Buddha over the mountain) of bread, then you should make it over to the New French Bakery before it closes March 6.



Enjoy our New Senior Section

Gracefully

Pages 8 & 9



Celebrate Mayday

Dear Ed Felien, Deb Keefer Ramage, and Dave Tilsen:

I saw the heading “Celebrate Mayday,” so of course I had to pick up this issue: the November 2019 Nokomis edition.

I am glad that you wish to see Mayday celebrations continue, and that you wish to uphold the Free Speech and Worker tradition of Mayday, and the “sacred ritual of Mayday dating back thousands

of years.”

From someone who cared for these roots and tended this gathering for 45 years, I challenge these things:

—If YOU invite people to the

park, it is common courtesy for YOU to provide for their well-being. The puppet theatre assured restroom facilities from the very first year, and listened to voices from neighbors and participants asking for more toilet facilities year after year. Or perhaps those of you who live along the park are able to open your homes to people who need to pee? Is that a possibility? Maybe you want to reconsider “We will not set up porta-potties.”

—It is also common courtesy to respect the workers who tend this beautiful park by applying for a permit. There is lots of invisible work that goes into taking care of this Park, and the workers love this place and care for it as much as you do.

Thanks for listening and thank you for the many years of support of In the Heart of the Beast Theatre and Mayday.

Respectfully,

—Sandy Spieler, Lover of Mayday, Powderhorn Park and all of its kin (and former director of In the Heart of the Beast Theatre’s Mayday for 45 years)

Debra Keefer Ramage wrote:

I didn’t get Sandy’s letter, so I am not sure of the context, but let me share my vision for the future of MayDay, which I did share with the consultant they hired in a one-to-one interview, but I felt ever so slightly condescended to and dismissed. I think MayDay’s problem is it’s way too big for its restricted venue, and I think the solution to its being too big is to do cell division and grow. But grow in separate spaces.

Perhaps my idea was dismissed because it just sounds too hard to get from here to there, but I would love to see another 45 years of MayDay, but in say 10 separate Minneapolis locations. We could still have the original MayDay at Powderhorn, but how about if there were similar smaller festivals in North Minneapolis, Northeast, Prospect Park, Seward by the Mississippi, Loring Park, Diamond Lake, MLK Park and marching along Nicollet? All of which would draw people away from Midtown, so there would be more room for parking, less exhausting walks for elders and disabled and little toddlers, fewer porta-potties required, more room for food vendors to branch out and not be intensely competing in a single space, opportunity for kids in other Minneapolis neighborhoods to have “their own” parade.

I don’t really see a downside, and many upsides. After seeding these celebrations in other areas, HOBT could step back and give each one to another arts nonprofit to manage, perhaps some created just for MayDay. In a way, it would be like Open Streets, except I think it would be important that they all occur on the same day, or at least the same weekend. Because the point would be for attendees to pick only one and go to it, preferably the one closest to them, so that total driving around is reduced even as total attendance goes up, and one neighborhood doesn’t have to take the entire strain of accommodating 60,000+ people.

—Debra Keefer Ramage

David Tilsen wrote:

Thanks for your letter.

I remember back in 1973, at a meeting in an attic in what I remember as a church building near 24th and Cedar. You and Ray St. Louis and a few members of The Alive and Trucking Theater were in attendance. You presented your vision to create a new regular community traditional holiday for South Minneapolis. You (or Ray) talked about the importance that celebrations play in building and strengthening communities. This discussion led to the first May-

See Mayday, page 5



Sandy Spieler (photo: In the Heart of the Beast Theatre)



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Minneapolis joins with cities nationally to say NO to U.S. wars in Iran and Iraq

BY MEREDITH ABY-KEIRSTEAD

On Jan. 4, over 700 people took to the streets of the West Bank in Minneapolis to protest the Trump administration's attempt to provoke a new war with Iran by assassinating Qassem Soleimani,

a top Iranian military leader, and by sending more troops, further prolonging the U.S. occupation in Iraq.

The protest was a part of the ANSWER (Act Now to Stop War and End Racism) coalition's call for national protests on Jan. 4.

Over 50 cities in the U.S. had protests that day, including actions in New York City, Chicago, Los Angeles and Washington, D.C. The Minneapolis protest was one of the largest in the country.

Wyatt Miller, an activist with the Anti-War Committee, was the

first to address the crowd: "Iran didn't destabilize Iraq, the U.S. did! And when Iraqi people try to protect their homes and fight back against U.S. occupation forces, ultimately that's not Iran's fault, that's not Qassem Soleimani's fault, that's the fault of there being an ILLEGAL, UNJUST U.S. occupation in the first place! The blood of millions of Iraqis is on the hands of Bush, Cheney, Obama, Clinton, Biden AND Trump."

He continued: "Entire generations of Iraqis have now seen their country destroyed multiple times. We have a moral duty to stop this from happening, not to Iraq (again), not to Afghanistan

(again), and not to Iran, not to Venezuela, not to Nicaragua, not to ANYWHERE.

"I truly believe that the U.S. military and the imperialist system it enforces is the greatest obstacle to the progress of humanity. And that includes people fighting for freedom inside U.S. borders, too."

The protest was organized by the MN Peace Action Coalition, the Anti-War Committee and Women Against Military Madness. Organizers expect that there will be future days of national action and more local and national protests to stop the growing drumbeats for war within the Trump administration.



Photo: Brad Sigal



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Manipulations and deceptions

BY KATHRYN KELLY

How does the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board get what they want? One way is to twist and change input from their Community Advisory Committee (CAC) members to suit their agenda. And, according to Commissioner AK Hassan, referencing the 2020 budget, it is also through “a series of backroom deals and amendments that were put forward by some commissioners after TV cameras were off.”

As a member of the Hiawatha Golf Course CAC, I was told by a member of a previous Park Board CAC that the Park Board would solicit input from the CAC members and then ignore it and do what they wanted to do. I was skeptical. I am no longer skeptical. I have found out through person-

al experience how the Park Board Planning Department manipulates and changes the CAC members’ input to suit their purpose.

On Dec. 13, 2019, the Park Board publicly published a list of Hiawatha Golf Course CAC Design Priorities. How well did it reflect the input from the CAC members?

The worst omission was the CAC’s No. 1 item: protect the nearby homes from flooding with an engineering analysis. Everyone on the CAC agreed that this was to be the most important design item, but it was not on the list.

I had three items that I requested to be on the list. In the original published list to CAC members, one was omitted and two were modified by the Planning Department to change the meaning. After a back and forth with the

project manager, he agreed to add the item that was omitted and return the other two items to their original language. In the recently published list, the one item was, again, omitted from the list. And, the Park Board added their language back to the other two items. These three items are:

Item 1: I wanted the Park Board to answer the question, “Why does the Park Board want to reduce pumping?” Twice they have omitted this question from the list. Is it because they don’t want to answer this question?

Item 2: I asked for a plan for the 37 memorials that currently exist on Hiawatha Golf Course for people. The Planning Department changed this to a plan for “people of significance,” which would likely exclude most of the people currently memorialized. The project manager agreed to remove “people of significance” from this

item, but then it was back again.

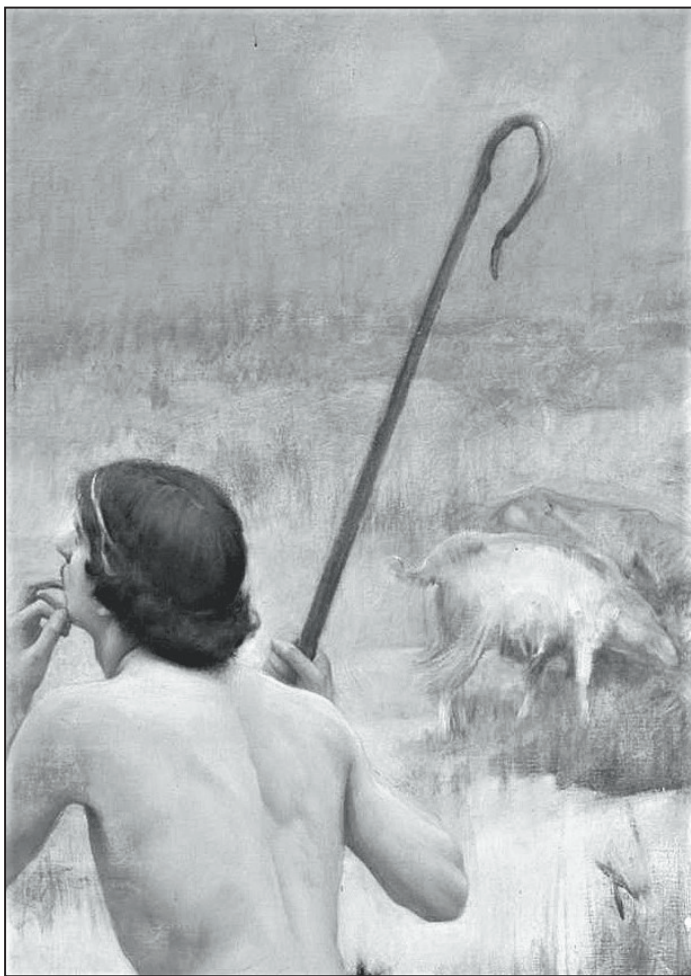
Item 3: I asked for a “New Parking and Traffic Analysis” for the neighborhood. The Planning Department changed it to “Update the current parking and traffic analysis.” There is a subtle, but important, difference between “new” and “update.” I asked for a “new” plan because I found basic flaws in the original planning and analysis, so a new plan needs to be done to correct these flaws. Also, the effect of the new Bergan’s development needs to be investigated and included.

In reference to AK Hassan’s statement, he recently voted against the 2020 budget because, as he wrote, he felt that some commissioners “stole nearly \$100,000 in funding for some of the most underserved youth in the Somali community” in a “final formal vote at a backroom in the City Hall.” He went on to say,

“I’m particularly disappointed in Commissioner Jono Cowgill and Commissioner Steffanie Musich for having one position when the cameras were on and another behind closed doors. This is not the type of representation that our community deserves and our Somali youth deserve to know when [people in] our community are being used as bargaining chips in dark rooms.”

Community input should be exactly what the community members stated, not a modification to suit the Park Board’s agenda. The Park Board doesn’t have to like the community input, but they should be honest enough with the public to accurately publish the real feedback. Plus, we need public servants whose private agenda matches their publicly portrayed agenda.

Golf



BY ED FELIEN

Obnoxious plutocrats and Donald Trump have given golf a bad name. That’s too bad, because it really has an honorable history.

It’s probably the oldest game played with a stick and a ball.

Our ancestors in Egypt, thousands of years before they crossed the Sinai Desert into the Promised Land, were farmers and shepherds. Shepherds carried a long stick to prod sheep back into the fold if they strayed too far. Sometimes they would use their stick to try to hit a stone into a sheep’s butt to negatively reinforce bad behavior. If they had a friend with them, they could compete to see who could hit the sheep, and then, who could hit the tree. And then, much later, Scottish shepherds got very solemn about it, and they eliminated the sheep and gave it written rules.

Sometimes, in the morning, just before dawn, when I’m standing over a silly golf ball with a club in my hands, I wonder, “What am I doing here?” And I smile, and I think, “I am honoring my ancestors.”

Bouza, from page 1

could wear pants.

Codd was a stickler for protocol and a slave to traditional ways.

The women said that every time they emerged from a squad the corner hang-outs whooped and hollered in their version of I got beaver.

The request seemed eminently reasonable, and I sent a memo recommending its adoption to the police commissioner.

Silence.

After a couple of weeks, I inquired as to the status of my request.

“It’s been sent to the Uniform Committee for evaluation.”

No pharaoh, entombed in a large pyramid’s interior crypt, was ever more securely buried than any idea sent to the Uniform Committee. It was a place to which ideas were sent to die.

The ladies asked for an update and my conscience was pricked.

What to do?

I thought the status quo was intolerable, but I was afraid to

affront the P. C. By then my sins were many.

After several days of internal agony, I swallowed hard and told my staff to telephone (nothing in writing) each of the 11 precincts and tell them that henceforth pants or miniskirts were optional.

A remarkable transformation—overnight.

When Bronx policewomen (we’d abandoned the title in 1973 for “police officer”—an androgynous term) traversed to other boroughs they sparked a scandal.

Trousers? How come? Just the Bronx? What’s the authority?

In a wink all the females in the NYPD were in trousers. The corner louts were defeated.

And the P. C.?

I cowered cravenly in anticipation. I thought I knew Codd and felt he’d swallow my mutiny if I didn’t make a thing about it—and I certainly didn’t.

It worked. Not a single word was ever said—not even by the women who’d sought my intervention. A quiet revolution—the

best kind.

As time passed, I reflected on what I alone thought was a signal event. One real regret emerged.

In the telephone message I had transmitted I had carefully parsed the language, but I neglected—I discovered later—to include the option of pants or miniskirts for everyone, even male cops. The imagery really captivated me.

Today, half a century later, all is buried and forgotten, including Codd and, soon enough, me. But for one unheralded moment the women of the Bronx blazed the trail now plodded by millions.

An essential postscript—the next year, 1976, I supervised the policing of the Muhammad Ali—Ken Norton heavyweight championship in Yankee Stadium. The cops rioted (no contract in three years) and I was accused of mishandling it. Codd forced me to leave the NYPD. So, ultimately, he got to pay me back.

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Equity is the root of it all



This ghost bike stands as a monument at the lethal intersection.

BY ELINA KOLSTAD

The other day while crossing the street with my family (including my 2-and-a-half-year-old) an oncoming car slowed to a stop. The car behind that one, however, sped up and aggressively passed the first car on the right. Luckily, my family had just made it to the opposite curb, but the reckless driver was definitely too close for comfort.

The intersection we were crossing is a notoriously dangerous one. Visibility is difficult for both pedestrians and drivers owing to cars parked tightly on both sides of the street, and cars are almost always speeding through. It's also one of the few routes through the neighborhood to the freeway (other routes were largely closed off during the '80s and '90s as part of neighborhood "traffic calming" measures). A ghost bike stands as a monument to how lethal this intersection truly is.

The City of Minneapolis has adopted "Vision Zero: A Plan for Safer Streets in Minneapolis" (<https://www.visionzerompls.com/>). "Vision Zero" originated in 1990s Sweden and has spread across Europe and now into American cities. At its heart it is a new perspective on traffic safety, where traditional road system design assumes perfect adherence and emphasizes individual responsibility. "Vision Zero" designs roadways with the assumption of user error and uses a systems approach to design roadways that decrease fatalities (<https://visionzeronetwork.org/about/what-is-vision-zero/>). As a part of this, the City of Minneapolis has included traffic enforcement as a potential action within their plan. Open Streets has criticized this part of the plan, given the danger police pose to people of color in our communities (https://www.ourstreetsmpls.org/vision_zero_action_plan_launch).

Immediately after the asshole sped past us, my first thought was, "If we could trust the police, having a car stationed at that intersection would solve/improve the safety of this intersection." But we CAN'T trust the police. Open Streets rightly points out that increased police enforcement is problematic so long as the police are given carte blanche with the lives of our residents. So, we need to go further.

If we as a city, and as a greater society as well, don't tackle police brutality head on, we will never be able to have complete streets that are safe for all modes of transit in walkable, livable communities. If we don't place equity at the center of all we do, we won't be able to avoid the greater catastrophes of climate change.

And can I just point out the obvious irony of using the police as a tool to save lives when they so regularly take them without consequence.

Mayday, from page 2

day March and gathering, (which I performed at). I have never missed a Mayday since. My children actually travel from wherever they live to be here for Mayday every year. This celebration is part of our family lore, discussion and arguments.

Your (PPT and HOBT) work on birthing and nurturing the festival through its infancy, youth and adolescence has been epic, artistic, courageous, and we will always owe you a great debt of love and appreciation. Like all children who outgrow their parentage, Mayday will have a different life going forward.

None of us knows what will happen. HOBT's process envisions some new organization that will continue to shepherd the celebration and take care of both the artistic expression and the administration of the details of the celebration.

I believe these two roles are different, and actually inhibit each other.

I believe the Park Board needs to recognize that the community flocks to the park on Mayday and they need to be ready with porta-potties, dumpsters, etc. We pay a lot of taxes to them and we don't even get fireworks. How often do 70,000 people gather in 12 square blocks for a day in the inner city with joy, fun, and no violence?

—David Tilsen

Ed Felien wrote:

I agree with Deb's vision of smaller and more Mayday celebrations:

Let a Hundred Flowers Blossom, Let a Hundred Maydays Contend.

I agree with David that it is the Park Board's responsibility to provide porta-potties. Before I read Sandy's letter I had sent the following to the Park Board:

Seasons' Greetings:

Southside Pride readers would like to know what sort of plans the Park Board has for Mayday 2020. For almost half a century, around 50,000 people have gathered on the first Sunday in May to celebrate Mayday. Although Heart of the Beast Theater is not organizing the event this year, it is reasonable to assume thousands will still want to celebrate in Powderhorn Park. Have you made plans for that? Will you provide adequate sanitary facilities?

—Ed Felien

I received this reply:

Hi, Ed.

We have a number of staff out over the next few weeks for the holidays, but we should be able to get back to you in January 2020.

Best,

—Robin Smothers, Communications and Marketing

So, we are in discussions with the Park Board about porta-potties.

Sage Berglund wrote and said that she and her sister would be making papier mache puppets by the lake at the site of the Tree of Life.

Dhann Polnau wrote:

Upon the announcement of cancellation Jason Heisler somehow created a nonprofit and

procured a parade and festival permit. His intention is just to ensure Mayday happens. He has no other agenda and wants anyone and everyone to join the table. Just the catalyst. Jason is one of the founders of the Hard Times Café.

Many parties from near and far are planning to claim that space on that day and make shit happen. This includes the HOBT sun canoe flotilla wants to paddle as well as the tree of life puppet crew wants to raise the tree! So, I was asked to create a community puppet pageant on that same footprint at the same time--are there going to be 4 or 5 "ceremonies" each vying for that spot?

—Dhann Polnau

I contacted Jason Heisler. He wrote:

Just waiting to hear from two people before I give out the date and place of the Board Meeting. We are applying for a Park permit. It's only \$1200. The food vendors will pay the Park Board 10 percent of sales. We hire the porta-potties. Our meetings have been at Hosmer Library. Board elections have been postponed till January.

—Jason Heisler

I haven't heard back from Jason since the holidays, but it seems like an organization is being formed and people are intent on re-creating Mayday in the familiar tradition. And they will take responsibility for providing porta-potties.

Southside Pride will continue to follow these developments.



RIVERSIDE EDITION

The Southside Pride Riverside Edition is a monthly newspaper containing neighborhood news, religious events and a community calendar delivered on the third Monday of the month to over 100 locations in and around the Riverside community. We are proud of the racial and cultural diversity of the Southside, and we oppose racism and other efforts to keep us apart as a community.

If you want to share some news of your church, school or organization, please write us at:

Southside Pride

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EVENTS

Holy Diversity: Celebrating Cultural Difference
Saturday, Jan. 25
9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Brooklyn United Methodist Church
7200 Brooklyn Blvd., Mpls.
Minnesota has seen a 29 percent growth in its population of people of color since 2010, ranking us 9th highest in the country for increasing diversity. Yet achievement gaps and racial tension in Minnesota show how far we have to go to celebrate cultural difference as an expression of God in the world.
Join us Saturday, January 25 as Dr. Grace Pak, pastor, teacher, and professional certified coach specializing in religion and race relations, facilitates a conversation to bring people together across cultural differences in order to live fully into God’s Kingdom. Hosted by Minnesota Methodists, Brooklyn United Methodist Church, and Hennepin Avenue United Methodist Church. To register, go to <https://mnumc-reg.brtapp.com/HolyDiversity>.

“We Care” Pizza Fundraiser
Saturday, Jan. 25, 6 p.m.
Church of St. Albert the Great
2836 33rd Ave. S., Mpls.
“Pizza Papa” is back! St. Albert’s own Jim Curran used to operate his own Pizza Papa restaurant, and his handmade pizzas were delicious. This year’s fundraising dinner for our “We Care” Outreach Ministry will feature Jim’s all-you-care-to-eat pizza, along with appetizers, antipasto salad and dessert—all for just \$15 per person. All the food will be made from scratch from Jim’s recipes. Make a freewill offering for diners aged 12 and under. Beer and wine will also be available for a small extra cost. Make plans to join us in the Social Hall on Saturday, Jan. 25 at 6 p.m. In addition to great food, tickle your taste for adventure with the popular “Mystery Silent Auction” of wrapped packages to bid on! www.saintalbertthegreat.org.

Nordic Contemplative Worship
Sunday, Jan. 26, 6 p.m.
Pilgrim Lutheran Church
1935 St. Clair Ave., St. Paul
Pilgrim Lutheran invites you to Nordic Contemplative Worship, “Stepping Fearless through the Night.” Special prelude recital by guest musician James D. Hicks, organist, 6 p.m. Service at 6:51 p.m. <https://www.pilgrimstpaul.org/nordic-contemplative-evening-prayer-1>, or 651-699-6886.

Spiritual Exploration Opportunities
Plymouth Congregational Church
19th and Nicollet, Mpls.
612-871-7400, plymouth.org
For the complete Winter-Spring lineup and to register: www.plymouth.org/explore/adult-spirituality/
The 1619 Project
Mondays, Jan. 27–Feb. 24
6:30 to 8:30 p.m.
Limited to 22; Tuition: Free, please register; Instructor: Ann Ludlow.
Last summer, the New York Times Magazine published The 1619 Project on slavery in America, which now is being widely used in high schools and college classrooms. The series builds on research by distinguished black academics, journalists and writers.
Meditation Matters
Tuesdays, Jan. 28–March 3
(intermittently)
7 to 8:30 p.m.
Tuition: Free, please register; Facilitator: John Bennett.
Try meditation methods with six practitioners on all or any of these Tuesday evenings: Jan. 28, Feb. 4, 11, 18, 25 and March 3. Scheduled presenters so far are: Todd Tsuchiya and Gail Wong, who will instruct us in Japanese Buddhist chanting; Emily Jarrett Hughes in wisdom dance; John Bennett in guided imagery; and Su Ying in a blend of Tai Chi and Qigong. Please sign up for the series by Jan. 24, or sign up for individual evenings by the Friday before each event. Classes are not sequenced.
Better Angels: Families and Politics
Saturday, Jan. 25
9 a.m. to noon

Jackman and Nancy Baltins Room
Limited to 52; Tuition: Free, please register; Instructor: Bill Doherty, PhD. Note: Prior participation in a Better Angels “Depolarizing Within” session (held last fall and announced in these pages) is required.
If our toxic political environment is affecting family bonds, this workshop will offer you:
• Insight into why family differences over politics are uniquely challenging;
• Recognition of common roles that family members play in political conversations (e.g., the Gladiator, the Defender and the Sniper);
• Skills for constructively handling family political differences.
We’ll laugh and have some fun in this workshop—it won’t be all serious. After all, we all come from quirky families.

Peter Pan, Jr., a musical
Friday, Jan. 31, 7 p.m.
Saturday, Feb. 1, 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.
Saturday, Feb. 8, 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.
Sunday, Feb. 9, 2 p.m.
Minnehaha United Methodist Church
3701 E. 50th St., Mpls.
The Minnehaha Players present “Peter Pan, Jr.,” a musical based on the play of J. M. Barrie’s book “Peter Pan.” \$12 adults; \$6 children and seniors; family cap of \$30. Proceeds from this production go to benefit UMW Missions which work to improve the lives of children and women in our local and global communities. For more info: www.minnehaha.org.

Children’s Choir Concert by Choirs of Angelica Cantanti
Sunday, Feb. 9, 4 p.m.
Mount Olive Lutheran Church
3045 Chicago Ave. S., Mpls.
Mount Olive Music and Fine Arts presents three of the nine choirs of Angelica Cantanti—Con Brio (grades 2-4), Michele Gehrz, director; Cantabile (grades 4-6), Rachel Lucius, director; and Concert Choir (grades 6-9), Beth Egger, director—in an afternoon of diverse choral music.
Angelica Cantanti Youth Choirs (ACYC) is an award-winning

Twin Cities children’s choir program dedicated to providing high quality choral music education with excellence in performance. ACYC’s four conductors are professional music educators and artists who nurture and challenge the 275 boy and girl singers in grades 2-12. Young singers come from across the Minneapolis/St. Paul metro area to weekly rehearsals at the Bloomington Center for the Arts. For more information about Angelica Cantanti, visit www.angelicacantanti.org.
A reception in the church’s Chapel Lounge will follow the concert. This event is free and open to the public; a freewill offering may be received to support the Music and Fine Arts program. For further information, call 612-827-5919, or go to www.mountlivechurch.org.

First Talks about Last Things: Housing Options
Saturday, Feb. 15
10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Community Healing Hub at Minnehaha Communion Lutheran Church
4101 37th Ave. S., Mpls.
Are you overwhelmed by the myriad of paperwork, terms, and options around senior care? Are you navigating, or helping your parents navigate, this maze? If so, then you may be interested in “First Talk about Last Things,” a three-part educational series to be offered at MCLC. Each class includes lunch, and is offered free of charge, thanks to a grant from the Fairview Interfaith Health Collaborative. They are open to the community, so invite your neighbors or friends. Please register to ensure there is enough food and materials for everyone. You can attend one or all of the classes in the series. Saturday, Feb. 15 will cover Housing Options. What do the letters IL, AL, SNF mean? How do you evaluate sites without touring each one? To register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/first-talk-about-last-things-tickets-87454048413?aff=efbevent-tix>.

Thomasina Petrus:
A Concert for Black History Month
Sunday, Feb. 16, 7 p.m.
St. Joan of Arc gym
4537 Third Ave. S., Mpls.
Thomasina Petrus presents a concert for Black History Month: “Are We There Yet? Tales from the American Journey.” Thomasina leads a group of musicians and actors in an evening of music and stories, with special focus on women trailblazers Toni Morrison, Billie Holiday, Bessie Smith and more. With T Mychael Rambo, Brittany Delaney, Tonia Hughes, Aimee Bryant, Dan Chouinard, the SJA Choir and more. Tickets at www.stjoantickets.com or 612-823-8205.

612-333-2561
Wednesday Evening Suppers from 6 to 7 p.m.
A free weekly meal sponsored by Trinity and our community partners. All are welcome—neighbors, students and visitors!

Bethany Lutheran Church
2511 E. Franklin Ave.
612-332-2397
Soup for You serves a free community meal every weekday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. The meal is open to everyone—no exceptions! Volunteers will take your orders and serve you at the table. This is not a soup kitchen, but rather a space to build community! Donations are of course welcome!

Events at Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church
3430 E. 51st St. (kitty-corner from the Nokomis Library)
Blind Ministry Outreach - Saturday, Feb. 8, noon to 2 p.m. Includes dinner, devotions and fellowship.
Book Club, Feb. 1 at 10 a.m.
Exercise class for seniors - Monday mornings at 10 a.m.
NA groups - Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. and Fridays at 7 p.m.
Call 612-729-5463 for questions and more information.

Taizé Service
Minnehaha United Methodist Church
3701 E. 50th St., Mpls.
With all that is going on around us, it is important to slow down and make sure we are feeding our souls and listening for God periodically. Take an opportunity for renewal through prayer, song, and silence at our monthly Taizé services. Join us on Feb. 14 at 7 p.m. or any second Friday of the month. Child care is provided.

Pathways Faith-Based Life Skills Class
Thursdays, 6 p.m.
Basilica of St. Mary School Room LL7
1601 Laurel Ave., Mpls.
Make a positive change in your life in just 10 weeks! Did you know that every Thursday evening from 6 to 8:15 p.m., a team of dedicated volunteers hosts “Pathways,” our faith-based series of life skills classes? Stop by anytime! All are welcome and no registration required. Questions? Contact Julia at 612-317-3413.

AA AND NA Meetings
Minnehaha Communion Lutheran Church
4101 37th Ave. S.
Every Monday night there is an AA meeting at 7 p.m.
Every Tuesday and Wednesday night there is an AA meeting at 7:30 p.m.
On Thursday night, there is an NA meeting at 7:30 p.m. All are welcome to attend.

Gamblers Anonymous
Wednesdays, 6 to 7 p.m.
Living Table United Church of Christ, Hope Room
3805 E. 40th St.
Anyone with a desire to stop gambling is welcome.

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www.saintalbertthegreat.org

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Feb. 12, 6 pm – Meal & Songs of My Life Service
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Minneapolis Public Schools and the Tower of Babel

BY ED FELIEN

Last year the Minneapolis Public Schools (MPS) District lost 1,500 students, more than 80 percent of them students of color. Enrollment was 45,011 in 2000. Today it's 35,717. How does the School Board react to this obvious vote of no confidence? They want to eliminate six more schools. They want to further centralize, eliminate the small schools and make the big schools even bigger.

Don't they know that's exactly what's driving parents away from public schools? Schools are already too big and too scary. Parents look at the size of those schools and they don't believe their child will get the attention and education they need.

It is extremely difficult to get accurate information from the MPS. I have written asking for current budgets and have received no response. The last year for which I could get data was fiscal year 2012 - 2013. The Superintendent's Office got \$1,192,291. The chief executive officer got \$675,083. The total expenditures for administration and maintenance were \$167,882,825. The total allocation for teaching was \$286,477,985. Administrative costs were 36.9 percent of the total. Generally, in evaluating charitable or government programs, any administrative costs over 15 percent are considered a waste of money. Charities are generally not funded if their costs go over 30 percent. Federal programs specify a 15 percent administrative overhead. 36.9 percent means bloat and waste and a more impenetrable bureaucracy.

Bureaucracies are a natural result of the concentration of power. The king or superintendent of schools decides they need more help doing some of the mundane stuff so they can be free to do the really more important stuff. So, kings establish a class of nobility and superintendents create area superintendents. The more layers of government one can create means the one at the top is more and more important. And, since it's efficient to have everyone under one roof, they build bigger and bigger palaces to broadcast their magnificence.

King Nebuchadnezzar ruled the very advanced Mesopotamian Empire in the 6th century BCE. He built a tower in Babylon to house his government that was the grandest structure of its kind anywhere in the known world. He had the world's greatest library, a collection of Sumerian literature

that contained the early telling of the story of Adam and Eve. He had to tax everybody to pay for it. Most countries went along with it, but the Jews in Israel refused.

In 597 BCE he besieged the city and carried away the rich and powerful. Ten years later he had to do it again, and he carried away Ezekiel and Ezra. Five years after that, he destroyed the Temple and carried away most of the people of Jerusalem.

By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down

Yeah, we wept, when we remembered Zion

There the wicked

Carried us away in captivity

Required from us a song

Now how shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?

—By Brent Dowe and Trevor McNaughton

The Jerusalem royal families and their court were probably kept in the Tower in the center of Babylon. It was probably in the library there that Ezekiel and Ezra wrote the first five books of the Bible, and where Ezekiel saw the wheel inside another wheel and, probably, the story of the captivity in Babylon inside the story of the flight from Egypt.

The Persian king, Cyrus, defeated the Babylonians in 539. He freed the Jews to return to Israel, and he gave them money to rebuild their Temple. It is tempting to believe he was generous because he was grateful for the assistance the Jews might have given



The Tower of Babel (Vienna), Pieter Bruegel the Elder, Google Art Project

him in overthrowing the Babylonians. If the Tower of Babel is a description of current events as well as a criticism of the dangers of a mountainous bureaucracy, then perhaps the seven plagues in Exodus that forced the Pharaohs of Egypt to free the Jews could be seen as a metaphorical description of the resistance of the Jews in Babylon and a handbook for guerrilla tactics.

See MPS Babel, page 11

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BY DEBRA KEEFER RAMAGE

In 2008, at age 55, I lived in a small town in England. I had recently been diagnosed with high blood pressure, and my blood glucose and cholesterol numbers were high too, though not demanding treatment. I started an exercise regimen at a private gym in an old stocking mill about a mile from our house in Hinckley (UK). For over two years, until the lingering effects of the global banking crisis finally took my job and led to my return to the States, I religiously worked out. I often walked to and from the gym as a warmup, and I felt really good most of the time, at least until the stress piled on from my life's chaos. Back here in the Twin Cities in December 2011, I struggled to find stability—looking for a job in my field, fixing up the trashed condo that was the only thing I could afford with no stable income, navigating the hellcape of U.S. health care—so I never made good on my “resolution” to get back into a routine of physical fitness. I do some sporadic stuff—walking, yoga, exercise, even take a class here and there. Occasionally I get a long and exhausting walk as a side effect of political activism and I'm grateful I can still

do that—sometimes. But I know that I need routine, habit, persistence. When I was tasked with producing this new series on aging gracefully, I felt that the first topic had to be the things that express gracefulness—our bodies. Here are some tips gleaned

Silver Sneakers (SS) is a program you can join as part of a Medicare Advantage plan. It doesn't cost anything extra beyond the premiums you pay for the plan. You can take your SS member card to the Y, Anytime, or many other fitness



Literally anyone can do guided meditation

from my searches, struggles and successes, as well as some anecdotes from friends on their healthy body routines. And by the way, if you are still under 60, this is for you as well. It's never too early to start building a graceful aging program.

studios and get a free membership there. These clubs offer exclusive SS classes, but you can also use all their member resources. Silver Sneakers classes cover a variety of intensities. The “classic” class is a mix of stretches and body-weight resistance combined with non-impact aerobics, all performed with a chair and other simple aids. Nokomis Healthy Seniors also provides free SS classes that you can take even if you're not on a Medicare plan that includes it. Check out both the SS home page for details at <https://www.silversneakers.com/learn/classes> and the NHS page at <https://www.nokomishealthyseniors.org/>.

If you're more of a purist, or maybe already familiar with yoga, simple yoga practice, alone, with friends, or in a class may be your preferred route. Yoga comes in a variety of flavors nowadays. Some may be better suited to our youthful comrades—hot yoga, Bikram (a proprietary form of hot yoga), Iyengar, core yoga, power yoga—while there are also new yoga adaptations specifically for seniors, older beginners, or people with physical challenges. These include chair yoga, water yoga and restorative yoga, all of which can be found in Silver Sneakers classes, at the Y, and in low-cost community education at parks and schools. Also, some varieties of yoga are inherently more gentle, such as kripalu, vinyasa flow, kundalini, and ashtanga. Another very popular exercise style is Pilates. This has some historical

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borrowings from yoga, and also from dance training, and was actually invented as a restorative practice for ballet dancers with injuries, so it's easily adaptable for any body type or condition. There are so many

ways to do this are massage and other bodywork, acupuncture, and passive stretching. For massage, the resources are many and all you need to do is a computer search or ask a friend. For acupuncture, you can go with a sole

also walks his dog every afternoon for a mile or more.

- Jennifer, age 72, doesn't have a formal "exercise routine," doesn't like to "work out" or take classes. She thinks physical work or play is easier and more effective if it's just part of one's everyday life, walking to the co-op, parking farther away when driving, etc. She has always liked to do both housework and yard work and in winter shovels snow and does projects in the house such as painting the kitchen. She does enjoy going for walks with friends but wouldn't make it a constant practice.

- Elaine, mid-70s, is another who enjoys snow-shoveling and gardening. She also exercises at home using routines she has learned over the years from physical therapy, personal trainers and classes. Unlike Jennifer, who finds exercise machines boring, Elaine (like me) finds them meditative and inspiring. "For a while I was really hooked on exercise [at the YW]—not to get stronger, not to get better looking, not for any reason except that I liked going to the gym. It had become my ... meditation time ... I especially liked walking the track at sunset because the light in the gym is so spectacular at that hour." Although not her express purpose, she has noticed that exercise makes her feel better, controls pain and prevents falls.

- KC, looking younger than her 80 years, is a widow who had a long and impressive career as a health care administrator. She does a three-day-per-week Fit and Tone class, a well-paced class for active elders, at the YW, which for her is a social occasion as well as a workout. She also walks her little dog three times a day, and tracks her steps, aiming for 6,000 or more daily.

- Carolyn, a little past 80, single, with grown kids and grandkids, wrote an



A Silver Sneakers classic class somewhere in Minnesota

essay. Here's an excerpt:

"In my 40s I put together a program of stretches, weight-lifting, aerobic walking—all activities I could do with reasonable consistency and not much cost, along with an occasional yoga class, tai chi, etc. My favorite part of all this was the longer weekend walk that I started 20 years ago. About seven years ago, scoliosis of the spine, breast cancer, semi-blocked arteries, and a 'shower of small strokes' each took its little bite out of my stamina, my flexibility, my stability, my determination. My exercise program took a number of hits. Let's just say it has not disappeared but has shrunk. The long weekend walks are gone, to my immense dis-

appointment."

- Jesse, age 90, is a widower with three adult children who lives at the former Augustana senior care housing complex near downtown. Jesse's career was journalism, and he is now a blogger. He works out 20 minutes four days a week in the fitness studio, divided between a gentle walk on the treadmill and three strength-building machines. He also tracks steps and gets in about a mile of indoor walking daily. Read his blog at <http://augustanacare.org/get-know-us/blog/>.
- Also check out my own blogpost about my exercise routine in the UK at <https://deboramaskitchen.blogspot.com/2008/05/workouts-work-play-and-music.html>.



Mall-walking — easy, cheap, and a lifesaver

resources—TV shows, online videos, magazines, etc.—to facilitate creating your own yoga or Pilates practice at little or no cost, that this is a viable option. However, some styles include a big breath-control component, and some postures are contraindicated for those with high blood pressure, so if you have COPD, HBP or related conditions, consult your doctor first. If you're a novice or have any of these conditions, it's probably not a great idea to exercise completely alone; it might be more advisable—and safe—to at least find a buddy to practice with. The Twin Cities is awash with both yoga and Pilates studios, group trainers, personal trainers and clubs. I promise if you Google either one, you'll be inundated with possibilities.

Another way to go is to nourish the body passively. Some popular

practitioner, or you can check out community acupuncture, a network of very low-cost, low-frills, but credentialed practitioners in shared spaces. There is a very good one at the corner of Cedar and 38th Street. Passive stretching is relatively new to the area. Check out StretchLabs, which has several franchises in Minnesota, including one on West Lake Street near Bde Maka Ska.

I surveyed a few randomly-chosen, over-60 friends of mine to see what they do. I got more responses than I have room for in this piece, but here are a few samples:

- Dan, age 66, is a retired steelworker, single, with no kids. Like many retirees he travels quite a bit, including yearly long trips to Costa Rica, where he hikes and bikes, but when home he runs 4.5 miles every morning at about a 12-minute mile pace, and

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Notes from the desk of peace activist Polly Mann (b. Nov. 19, 1919)

How About a Teeny Tax on Wealth?

For several years I've been receiving a monthly four-page (that's front and back) periodical called "The Hightower Lowdown" which politically is somewhere between radical and progressive. It's well-researched and well-written and I trust its information. The September edition was entitled "It's time for a (teeny) tax on Wealth."

During the past half century, myriad corporate and governmental decisions have methodically slanted America's economic

and political systems so that money and power flow from the many to the few. America's tax code no longer adheres to the principle of ability to pay. Nearly 70 percent of capital gains are made by America's richest 1 percent so they, obviously, would be the target of a campaign to make this a reality and not "pie in the sky."

As the average U.S. worker's real wages have stagnated for more than a decade, income disparity has become enormous. Today, such a worker most likely would pay the top tax rate of 30 percent on an average income while America's richest will pay 1 percent.

This country has a moral and ethical responsibility to tax its citizens fairly. The proposal should be for a bold, unabashedly progressive wealth tax based on income.

Should legislation be proposed to enact a program to bring the plan to fruition, we middle-income taxpayers would have to really campaign to make it a reality.

Guns and Common Sense

The topic of guns is ongoing in this country—whether pro or con, among individuals or corporations. Recently the Supreme Court cleared the way to allow relatives of victims of gun violence to sue perpetrators of the violence. Prompted by a plethora of gun violence, 145 corporate executives, including Levi-Strauss, Twitter, Uber and Citigroup, wrote the U.S. Senate urging stricter background checks and laws to prevent people who pose a threat from buying guns. Edward Skyler, the vice president of Citigroup's Public Affairs,

explained: "This isn't a question of keeping guns away from legal customers; this isn't a challenge to the Second Amendment. This is trying to put in place best practices about trying to reduce risk."

Guns—Again

The U.S. Attorney General William Barr is and has been concerned about growing gun violence in this country. He plans to combat it with an initiative, Project Guardian, which will consist of representatives from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, and state and local law enforcement. It will also create partnerships with community organizations aimed at preventing gun violence and increase scrutiny of people convicted of violent felonies or domestic violence,

potentially reducing their access to firearms. At a news conference he explained that Project Guardian is intended to "better target offenders who use guns in crime and those who try to buy guns illegally."

The reactions from organizations supporting gun usage generally would question Project Guardian. Kris Brown, the president of Brady, a gun control advocacy group, responded, "An initiative that focuses on enforcement and increased policing makes no serious effort to address the supply of guns and how they fall into the hands of individuals who have proven themselves a danger to themselves or others." I suspect that the relatives of people who have been killed by gun violence would ask for more details from the Brady group.

Iceland—Almost Violence Free

According to the 2011 Global Study on Homicide by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Iceland's homicide rate from 1999 to 2009 never went above 1.85 per 100,000 population in any given year. (The U.S. had homicide rates between 5.0 percent and 5.8 percent per 100,000 population during that same period.)

No. 1) There is virtually no difference among upper, middle and lower classes in Iceland and so tension among those economic groups is non-existent.

No. 2) A study done by a University of Missouri student found only 1.1 percent of participants identified themselves as upper class, while 1.5 percent saw themselves as lower class. The remaining 97 percent identified themselves as upper-middle class or working class.

Babies in Iceland are often unattended, left in a carriage alone, for a few minutes. GunPolicy.org estimates there are approximately 90,000 guns in a country with a population of just over 300,000.

Police are also unarmed. The only officers permitted to carry firearms are the Viking Squad, and they are seldom called out. There are few hard drugs in Iceland. A 2012 study of people from the ages of 15 to 64 found that users of cocaine were 0.9 percent. In the past, when drugs seemed to be a burgeoning issue in the country, the parliament established a sep-

See Polly Mann, page 11

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Donald, the cornered rat

BY ED FELIEN

The walls are closing in on you. Everybody knows your game. It's all coming out now, your connections to the Russian Mob. How they bought condos at Trump Tower and had them repossessed by the feds for money

laundering. How they gave you tons of money when no bank would lend you anything. How they bailed out your bankrupt casinos. How you became their American brother. They had omerta, loyalty, to you and you to them. And everyone knows the Rus-

sian Mob is an agency of the Russian government, in much the same way the CIA has been working with the Sicilian Mob ever since they sprang Lucky Luciano from federal prison to help with the invasion of Sicily in 1943.

The big money in a Mob is in selling drugs. The Iran-Contra Affair illustrates perfectly the smooth connection between the U.S. government and the Mob. George H. W. Bush and Ollie North cooked up a scheme in the basement of the White House to get around Congress's prohibition on selling arms to the Contras in Nicaragua. The Contras shipped cocaine from Honduras to a CIA air base in Florida. The Mafia bought it for the U.S. market, and the money went to Iran to buy weapons that went to the Contras. It was a neat triangle. It should really be called the Iran-Contra-Mafia-CIA Affair to give credit to all the players.

The money that powers the Russian Mob comes from heroin, and that heroin comes from Afghanistan.

Everyone knows you've been using the U.S. military to deal opium out of Afghanistan. You had the U.S. Army protect trucks driving it to Pakistan to be turned into heroin and then drove the heroin back across Afghanistan to Turkmenistan to the Russian Mob who took it to Europe and the streets of New York City. It's

a \$5 billion-a-year racket in Afghanistan. That's why Michael Flynn was your first hire, and that's why you made him your national intelligence director.

He knew the territory. He was head of U.S. Army Intelligence in Afghanistan. His primary responsibility was to protect the opium crop from the Taliban who wanted to destroy it. He knew how to protect the convoys of contraband. He was at state dinners in Moscow, sitting with Putin. He had to quit after 24 days because he got caught lying about his Russian contacts to Vice President Pence. [Is Pence that far out of the loop that he really doesn't know what's going on?]

When Hamid Karzai refused to play ball with you and cut you into the \$5 billion pot of honey, you dropped the MOAB (Massive Ordnance Air Blast, commonly known as "Mother of All Bombs") in his backyard in April of 2017. It was such a Mob thing to do—blow out his shop to sell him protection. Karzai shrieked to Al Jazeera, Afghanistan should not be used as a "testing ground" for weapons. He's quieted down lately, so he must have begun to appreciate the value of U.S. military protection.

John Bolton knew what was going on. He resigned after telling Fiona Hill, "I don't want to be part of that Ukraine drug deal."

What was that "Ukraine drug deal"?

Isn't the "Ukraine meddling in the 2016 elections" just a smoke-screen?

Wasn't the Ukraine drug deal

when the Mob Boss, Putin, put the pressure on you to put some pressure on Zelensky to sit down with the Kremlin Crime Boss and make a deal about Crimea?

You know, all this is becoming common knowledge, and eventually you will be tried for treason for betraying your country.

Let's make a deal.

You plead guilty now and you get to keep Mar-a-Lago, or rather, we get to keep Mar-a-Lago, and we keep you in there. You can have your old room, run of the place, your golf course, your old golf cart. And you can have visitors, and even conjugal visits. We'll turn it into a federal prison palace. We will screen all your visitors because we'll be protecting you from vengeance from the Mob.

You'll love it. You'll be safe and still be the center of attention.

And you'll be a hero for sparing the country a painful ordeal.

This is a good deal for you.

We're giving you respect. We're giving you a decent place in history. People will love you for it. People will remember you for hundreds of years. Everybody loves a story about a redeemed thief. You'll be a greater president than George Washington.

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If you keep acting like you're going to get away with it forever, then, when the crash comes, when everyone finally figures out what went on, you're going to hate it.

Get out now and let everybody love you.



Image: Rebecca James

MPS Babel, from page 7

The dangers of a swollen bureaucracy are even more apparent in the example of China. For almost 2,000 years the Chinese developed a civil service exam that produced a scholarly class that ran the government, but by the middle of the 19th century, the exam had lost touch with reality. It didn't take into consideration the industrial revolution or the interference of foreign imperial powers. French, German, English and American financial interests ruled China, and in their Foreign Concession in Shanghai the sign read, "No Chinese or dogs allowed."

The Minneapolis Public School system needs to think smaller, not bigger. They need to develop child care and early childhood education within a block of a child's home. They need to have elementary schools small enough so every child can meet and know every other child. The middle schools and high schools should be much smaller, too. We don't need a school large enough to field a great football team because, thankfully, schools aren't playing as much football as they used to.

Bigger is not better. Small is beautiful. The scale of a building and an educational program must be measured from the perspec-

tive of the intended object. Young people need to believe their learning environment is knowable and within their control.

Unfortunately, the Minneapolis Public Schools system seems determined to go in the opposite direction and continue its death spiral into extinction.

"Let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven"; but the LORD condemned them for their arrogance and pride and "did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the LORD scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth."

—Genesis 11:1-9

groups that deny the existence of climate change.

Kert Davies, the director of the Climate Investigation Center, a group funded by organizations seeking to limit the impacts of climate change, said, "I cannot name another single funder of this scale in this time period. None of this is transparent. It's a breakthrough on who is keeping the light on these major climate deniers."

Polly Mann, from page 10


arate drug police, and in the first 10 years of its existence, roughly 90 percent of cases were settled with a fine.

Is it possible that other countries could adopt the same measures?

Are the Climate Scientists You Are Relying on Really Scientists?

Robert Murray, coal mines owner and climate change de-


nier, paid himself \$14 million, handed his successor \$4 million and earmarked \$1 million for casting doubt on man-made climate change, an event important enough to make a column in The New York Times. His company, Murray Energy, filed for bankruptcy in December, reporting \$2.7 billion in debts and more than \$8 billion in obligations., mostly pensions, etc. Murray also funded conservative political action



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directed by TAIBI MAGAR

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Southside Pride / RIVERSIDE EDITION

EVENTS

Info Night at Minneapolis College—School of Nursing, Health Sciences and Wellness
Wednesday, Jan. 22
5 p.m. to 7 p.m.
Minneapolis College
1501 Hennepin Ave., Mpls.
 Come to the Info Night for the School of Nursing, Health Sciences and Wellness on Wednesday, Jan. 22. Explore future education and career opportunities with faculty, campus staff, and future employers that will be on hand to provide information, answer questions and conduct tours of the facilities. At the event, check out the following programs: Central Services Technician, Dental Assistant, Health, Herbal Studies, Medical Scribe, Medical Office Administration, Nursing, Nursing Assistant/Home Health Aide, Personal Trainer and Group Exercise Instruction, Pharmacy Technician, Sleep Technology, and Yoga Teacher Training. The event will be held on the 5th floor of the T building on the Minneapolis College campus, 1501 Hennepin Avenue, downtown Minneapolis. Free parking is available in the Minneapolis College parking ramp. To RSVP and for more information, visit www.minneapolis.edu/infonights.

“Healing Beloved Community”
MLK Event at Minneapolis College
Thursday, Jan. 23
8 a.m. to 3 p.m.
 Minneapolis College
 1501 Hennepin Ave., Mpls.
 Minneapolis College invites you to join us in Celebration and Engagement, in observance of the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday, on Thursday, Jan. 23. The schedule for the day is as follows:
 - Continental Breakfast: 8 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.
 - Workshop: 9:30 a.m. to noon
 - Truth and Transformation: Healing a Beloved Community - Samuel Simmons, LADC
 - Service Projects and Resource Tables: 8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m., 3 p.m. to 4 p.m.
 - Lunch: Noon to 1:30 p.m.
 - Keynote Address: 1:30 p.m. to 3 p.m. - Dr. BraVada Garrett-Akinsanya, PhD, LP, LICSW, Psychologist
 The event will be held on the first floor of the T building on the Minneapolis College campus, 1501 Hennepin Avenue, downtown Minneapolis. This event is free and open to the public. Free parking is available in the Minneapolis College parking ramp. For more information, call 612-659-6471 or visit www.minneapolis.edu/MLK2020.

Senior Living Information Sessions
Wednesday, Jan. 29

10 a.m. The Pillars of Prospect Park Seminar
12 p.m. Noon Lunch
12:30 p.m. Plan the Perfect Move/Downsizing Seminar
 St. Frances Cabrini Church
 1500 Franklin Ave. SE, Mpls.
 Come to one or both Seminars!
 RSVP: Jay at 612-623-7000.

Joshua Cunningham and Charles Lyon
Feb. 1 – March 7 **A**
Opening Reception:
Saturday, Feb. 1, 2 to 5 p.m.
 Groveland Gallery
 25 Groveland Terrace, Mpls.
 Groveland Gallery is pleased to announce the opening of “Getting There,” an exhibit of new paintings by Joshua Cunningham, and “Out West,” an exhibition of new paintings and pastel drawings by Charles Lyon. The artists will be present at the opening reception Saturday, Feb. 1 from 2 to 5 p.m. Both shows continue through March 7. For more information please call 612-377-7800 or visit www.grovelandgallery.com.

February at Bryant-Lake Bowl
 Bryant-Lake Bowl **T**
 Cabaret Theater
 810 W. Lake St., Mpls.
The Hourglass Series (IMPROV)
Wednesday, Feb. 5, 8 p.m.
 Created by Joshua Lorris, performed by Pop-Up Improv with special guests each night. The Hourglass Series comes

FIND YOUR EVENT:
M - MUSIC **D - DANCE** **T - THEATER** **A - ART** **L - LIT**

to Bryant-Lake Bowl Theater the first Wednesdays of the month starting in February. Pop-Up Improv is joined by guest performers each night rounding out a star-studded cast of improvisers. It will be an evening of spontaneous new work that audiences can't miss. More info and tickets: https://www.bryantlakebowl.com/theater/the-hour-glass-series/?mc_id=1673.

Dykes Do Drag (PERFORMANCE)
Thursday, Feb. 20, 8 p.m.
Friday, Feb. 21, 8 p.m.
Saturday, Feb. 22 at 8 p.m.
 Produced by Heather Spear, The Gentleman King. Dykes Do Drag are queers of all genders and orientations, celebrating an expanding continuum of gender expression and performance in the Upper Midwest for two decades. This edgy performance art cabaret features the Twin Cities' best as well as newcomers in traditional Drag, burlesque, live music, boi-lesque, modern dance, video and visual art, and lip synching in enticing and exciting hilarity. More info and tickets:

https://www.bryantlakebowl.com/theater/dykes-do-drag-52/?mc_id=1690.

“Moth,” Written by Declan Greene (THEATER)
Fridays, Feb. 28 and March 6, 7 p.m.
Saturdays, Feb. 29 and March 7, 7 p.m.
Sunday, March 1, 7 p.m.
Monday, March 2, 7 p.m.

This 90-minute play follows Sebastian and Claryssa, two friends brought together by their mutual misfit status. They take a warped journey through their past, re-living their most horrifying memories. This play isn't your standard kitchen-sink drama— it's more like a wild fever dream on a playground. Produced by Ben Lohrberg and Sophina Saggau, directed by Ben Lohrberg, featuring Luke Myers and Sophina Saggau. More info and tickets:

https://www.bryantlakebowl.com/theater/moth/?mc_id=1680.

Women's Prison Book Project Annual Pancake Breakfast and Book Sale
Saturday, Feb. 8 **L**
8 a.m. to noon

Walker Community United Methodist Church
 3104 16th Ave. S., Mpls.
 All you can eat buttermilk, vegan, and gluten-free pancakes; Southern-style grits; Fruit salad; Coffee, tea, and juice. Adults \$6-\$10 sliding

scale; Children: \$3. After filling your belly, visit our book sale to fill your mind. Books \$2-\$3.

The Women's Prison Book Project is an all-volunteer organization that sends free reading material to women and transgender prisoners all over the country. Our project depends on donations of free books, volunteers filling book orders, and fundraisers like the pancake breakfast to pay for book postage. For more information: <http://wpbp.org>; Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/womensprisonbookproject/>; email womensprisonbook-project@gmail.com.

Poet Sean Hill at Literary Witnesses **L**
Monday, Feb. 10, 7 to 9 p.m.
 Plymouth Congregational Church
 1900 Nicollet Ave. S., Mpls.
 Poet Sean Hill reads for the Winter 2020 Literary Witnesses and he brings along writers from his Minnesota Northwoods Writers Conference. Sean Hill is the author of “Dangerous Goods,” a Minnesota Book Award winner, and “Blood Ties & Brown Liquor,” named one of the Ten Books All Georgians Should Read. His poems have appeared in such journals as The Oxford American, Poetry, Tin House, and the Harvard Review, and several anthologies, including “Black Nature: Four Centuries of African American Nature Poetry,” “The Art of Angling: Poems about Fishing,” and “Villanelles.” Hill is currently the director of the Minnesota Northwoods Writers Conference at Bemidji State University and makes his home in Montana. Visit him online at: www.seanhillpoetry.com. Book signing and reception to follow.

The Love Show: Skyway to Heaven

Kevin Kling & Friends **T**
Friday, Feb. 14, 7:30 p.m.
 The O'Shaughnessy
 St. Catherine University
 2004 Randolph Ave., St. Paul
 The O'Shaughnessy is proud to present a new edition of Kevin Kling's annual celebration of love and romance, “The Love Show, Skyway to Heaven” on Valentine's Day, Friday, Feb. 14. When it's deep cold in the Twin Cities, we need more than layers of Smartwool and GoreTex to keep us warm. That's why there's Valentine's Day, when our sensual selves resort to memory and imagination, and



• COMMUNITY CALENDAR •

Southside Pride / RIVERSIDE EDITION

kindle up visions of a romantic “Venice of the North” – where people stroll along elevated canals, like promises of love, stretching between worlds, cultures, borders, on air between heaven and earth. Boasting new songs and special stories for 2020, Minnesota’s own storyteller extraordinaire Kevin Kling and local music standouts Marc Anderson, Dan Chouinard, Bradley Greenwald, Prudence Johnson, Simone Perrin, Claudia Schmidt and Dane Stauffer return to the warm environs of The O’Shaughnessy for the seventh year of the perennially-popular Valentine’s Day tradition. And back by popular demand, special guest film and television impresario, Ali Selim, joins the fun. Tickets are \$25-\$29 with discounts for students, seniors, military, MPR, TPT and groups. Tickets can be purchased online at theoshaughnessy.com or contact The O’Shaughnessy Ticket Office at 651-690-6700; open Mon.-Sat. 12-5 p.m. and located on the main campus of St. Catherine University at 2004 Randolph Ave., Saint Paul.

Minnesota Bach Ensemble
“Emperors & Tyrants”
Sunday, Feb. 16, 3 p.m.
Monday, Feb. 17, 7 p.m.
 MacPhail Center for Music
 Antonello Hall
 501 S. 2nd St., Mpls. **M**
 Handel – “Giulio Cesare in Egitto,” HWV 17 (selected highlights from the opera). Performed by Linh Kauffman, soprano (Cesare); Nerea Berraondo, mezzo-soprano (Cleopatra); Christina Christensen, mezzo-soprano (Cornelia). \$30 adults, \$10 students. <http://www.mnbach.org/>.

“How to be an Antiracist”
Book Discussion
Sunday, Feb. 16 **L**
11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
 St. Peter Claver Church
 369 Oxford St. N., St. Paul
 The Social Justice Committee is meeting in the Church Hall to discuss Ibram X. Kendi’s book, “How to be an Antiracist.” Kendi explores ethics, history, law, and science to discover how we can play an active role in building an antiracist society. This is part of the Social Justice Rising Book Discussion Series. While helpful, it is not necessary to have read the book. More info at https://www.facebook.com/events/1103156780074544/?active_tab=about

ONGOING

January at Bryant-Lake Bowl
 Bryant-Lake Bowl
 Cabaret Theater **T**

810 W. Lake St., Mpls.
Party in the Rec Room
Presented by Lorna Landvik
Through Saturday, Jan. 25
 Don’t make resolutions in the New Year – make reservations to PARTY IN THE REC ROOM! Join local author and actor Lorna Landvik as she throws another comedy bash, filled with characters created on the spot and margaritas created in a blender. Remember, if it’s 2020 – it’s time to party!
 Fridays, Jan. 3, 10, 17, and 24 at 7 p.m. (doors at 6 p.m.) and Saturdays, Jan. 4, 11, 18 and 25 at 7 p.m. (doors at 6 p.m.) \$20/\$18 in advance.

Too Much
Performed and Choreographed by Nic Lincoln
Sundays, Jan. 26 and Feb. 2 3 p.m. (doors 2 p.m.)
 “Too Much” is an abstract dance piece performed and choreographed by Nic Lincoln. It is a mesmerizing work that cleverly evaluates the outcome of effort and action versus the art of failure. Lincoln is a humanitarian, and his new work doubles both as a performance art piece and a call to action. “Too Much” speaks of one’s search to clarify what it means to be an individual at its purest state of being, and brazenly demonstrates one’s ugly yet beautiful experience of discovering the importance of self-love.

Sundays, Jan. 26 at 3 p.m. (doors at 2 p.m.) and Feb. 2 at 3 p.m. (doors at 2 p.m.) Ticket price \$15.

Cellular Cinema: CAVE Festival

Friday, Jan. 31 and Saturday, Feb. 1 7 p.m. and 9 p.m.

Please join us in the dark, cold depths of Minnesota winter for the Third Edition of the Festival of Cinematic & Audio-Visual Experimentation (CAVE4)! We have a fantastic lineup of visiting artists and curators again this year, coming from across North America and presenting a diverse array of screenings, performances and discussions.
 Friday, Jan. 31 at 7 p.m. (doors at 6:30) and 9 p.m. (doors at 8:30) and Saturday, Feb. 1 at 7 p.m. (doors at 6:30) and 9 p.m. (doors at 8:30) \$6-\$15 sliding scale, \$5 with student ID. Artists will be announced shortly! More info at www.bryantlakebowl.com.

Nature Connections

Jan. 7–Feb. 14
 Loring Park (downtown) - meet at Loring Community Arts Center
 1382 Willow St., Mpls.
 Jan. 7 to Feb. 13
 Indoors: Tuesdays, 2 to 3 p.m.

Outdoors: Thursdays, 2 to 3 p.m.
 Matthews Park (Seward) - meet at Matthews Recreation Center
 2318 S 29th Ave., Mpls.
 Jan. 9 to Feb. 14
 Indoors: Thursdays, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

This January, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) launches Nature Connections, a new program designed for adults 55 & up. Enjoy varied activities focused on nature, including bird-watching, winter tree identification and flower arranging. Get insights from an MPRB naturalist. Choose outdoor or indoor sessions – or both!

Outdoor Sessions: Enjoy a stroll or a snowshoe around the park and neighborhood. Walking poles and ice cleats available for use. Sessions focus on topics such as bird-watching and winter tree identification. Time outside depends on the weather, and we’ll warm up with a beverage afterward.

Indoor Sessions: Bring nature inside with activities like bird-watching, floral arranging and growing indoor plants.

All sessions for adults 55+ and FREE. Registration encouraged / Walk-ins welcome! Go online: bit.ly/MPRBNatureconnections. Call Matthews Recreation Center: 612-370-4950. Call Loring Community Arts Center: 612-370-4929. Questions? Email LBretheim@minneapolisiparks.org.

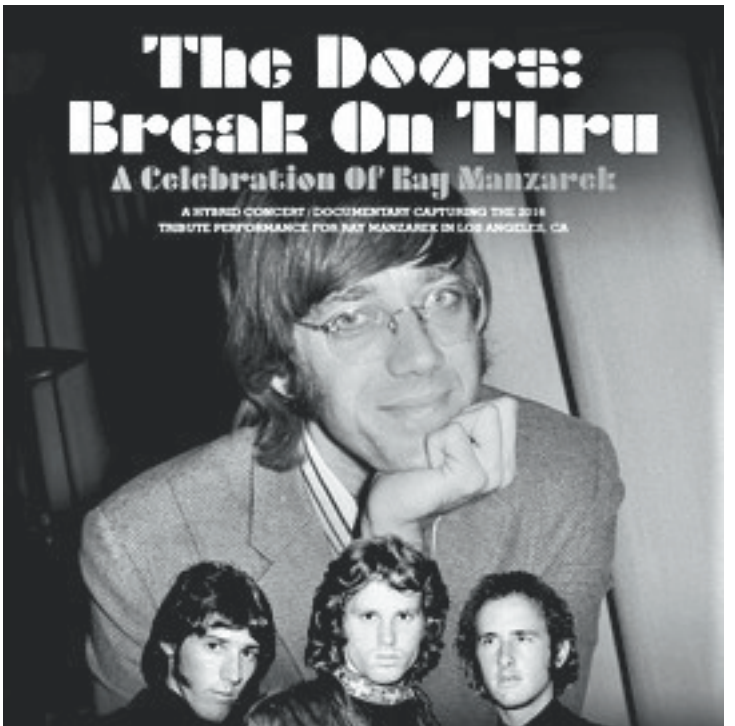
Safe Place: Homework Help

Monday – Friday 3:30 to 6 p.m.
 Trinity Lutheran Congregation
 2001 Riverside Ave., Mpls.
 Adult students and children are all welcome. Tutors are available for all levels. If you are interested in being a volunteer or tutor or if you need more information, contact tutoring@trinitylutherancongregation.org or 612-333-2561.

Makers Mornings

Tuesdays, 10 a.m. to noon
 American Swedish Institute
 2600 Park Ave., Mpls.
 Join other makers for this new weekly opportunity to work, share and learn in a relaxed, communal setting. Whether you knit, carve, weave, sew, spin, crochet or do some other fascinating thing with your hands, we invite you to bring a project to work on. All are welcome, regardless of level of ability or craft of choice! Come for as long as you like and bring your own works-in-progress, materials and tools. This group will meet in ASI’s Lindberg Stuga.

The Riverview Theater Presents
Screening of *The Doors: Break on Thru*
Wednesday, February 12, 7 p.m.
3800 42nd Avenue South in Minneapolis
Admission is \$10 in advance, \$12 at the door.



This one-time screening of a one-of-a-kind film about a unique musician and a legendary band is another in a series of special events hosted in recent years by the Riverview Theater. “We’ve done several music-concert documentaries, such as Coldplay, David Gilmour, the Grateful Dead, and Roger Waters,” said Loren Williams, longtime owner of the Riverview. “Seeing a film like this one in a large auditorium with great sound, along with other fans, makes it a real event.”

The Doors, one of the most influential and controversial bands of the 1960s, were born, as the story goes, when Jim Morrison met Ray Manzarek on Venice Beach in 1965. In addition to lead singer Morrison and keyboardist Manzarek, The Doors included guitarist Robby Krieger and drummer John Densmore. “The Doors: Break On Thru – A Celebration of Ray Manzarek” is a concert documentary of a 2016 all-star performance in Los Angeles that Densmore and Krieger, the band’s two surviving members, developed to celebrate what would have been Manzarek’s 70th birthday. In addition to the concert, the film includes rare footage from The Doors archives and fresh interviews from Densmore and Krieger. As architect of the band’s famous keyboard sound, Manzarek has been called the heart of The Doors. The setlist from the concert consists of Doors songs and includes a cast of guest musicians including, among others, Taylor Hawkins and Rami Jaffee (Foo Fighters), Robert DeLeo (Stone Temple Pilots), Stephen Perkins (Jane’s Addiction), Exene and John Doe (X), Warren Haynes (Gov’t Mule), Brian Ray (Paul McCartney), and Andrew Watt. The film also features rare archival footage of the band, and conversations with Morrison and Manzarek.

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Reflections

BY FRANCIS X. KRONCKE

"Your sacrifice in fighting against the war in Vietnam defined your life." Someone recently wrote that to me, and it is true. "Sacrifice"—I'm not sure about that word. At the time, I was young (mid-20s), now I'm old (mid-70s). Like the guys (some gals) who went to Nam, I was trying to be a Good American. Here's all I can say—*Follow your conscience and be true to yourself.* For me, after fulfilling two years of Conscientious Objector service at the U of MN's Newman Center under the inspiration of my peace hero, Father Harry Bury, I raided draft boards, went on trial, and then went off to federal prison ... so it went. But my most significant impact, and that of my fellow "Minnesota 8" draft board raiders, was nudging Dan Ellsberg as he made his final moral stand and released the Pentagon Papers, after being a witness at our trial (1971). For many, it was Dan's moral stand that flipped out President Nixon, who sent the future "Watergate burglars" to steal Dan's medical files ... all of which led to Nixon's self-destruction and resignation, and contributed to an eventual end to the Vietnam War.

Have conditions in America changed that much since the Sixties? Coleen Rowley (FBI) and Colonel Ann Wright are living heroes whom younger folk should meet and listen to, as is retired Minnesota State Representative Karen Clark. In many ways, things are better today in respect to the hope and courage these women represent. My own actions led to a greater awareness of the moral complexity of the ongoing social

and cultural challenges we face as "We, the People." In a sense, today, we know more of our communal Darkness ... which, somewhat ironically, enables us to see more of the communal Light that shines from every quarter of our nation. All people, especially the young (of heart!), should be strengthened by the contemporary peace-making actions of so many. Just know that *you will never be able to clearly see the impact of your witness and actions beforehand*—often only at your funeral will others properly describe your life! Possibly.

What is the legacy of the Sixties? *Look forward, not backwards!* Learn from the past but live for and into the future. That's how I survived prison. I learned to live raw and freely after a mostly stable Roman Catholic upbringing and "formation." There's little doubt that words like growing up, maturing, aging, and the like sound good, but they are fraught with growing pains, humility, self-denial, and the like. Looking forward takes grit and courage, which is ultimately rewarded with a deep sense of inner peace, *no matter what others say about you.* Remember, you only come this way once, so *kick some butt!* Especially your own. Ha.

Francis X. Kroncke, federal inmate 8867-147, is a seeker who has journeyed through the monastic life, the theological academy, federal courtrooms, a federal prison cell, and the byways of corporate America. In 1970, he took his Catholic theology into the American courts as he defended his draft board raiding crime, re: the trials of the "Minnesota 8."



Ram Dass passing

BY LAURIE SAVRAN

When Ram Dass (formerly known as Richard Alpert, sometimes known as RD), died on Dec. 22, 2019, at age 88 in Maui, I had recently returned from Maui, where I had gone to attend a retreat with Ram Dass entitled "Open Your Heart in Paradise." People considered me very lucky to have been with RD less than two weeks before his passing, and I was lucky indeed. It was my fourth time attending one of his retreats and each time was magical and uplifting.

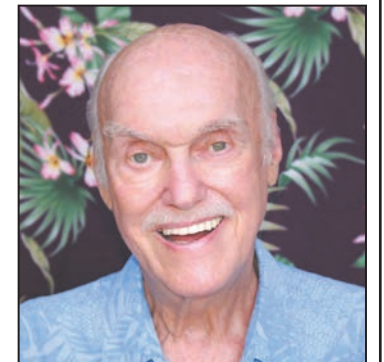
Back in 1972 when I worked at Savran's Paperback Shop (I was married to the owner, Bill Savran), we received the book "Be Here Now" by Ram Dass. I immediately read the book and it changed my life, just like it changed the whole generation of New Age hippies, seekers, meditators and yoga practitioners. Tim Leary had coined the phrase

"turn on, tune out, drop out" several years earlier and "Be Here Now" became the blueprint on how to accomplish Leary's message.

Ram Dass' life started with privilege, along with Leary. He experimented with LSD at Harvard, got fired, went to India, met his guru, Neem Karoli Baba, came back to the U.S., wrote "Be Here Now" and numerous books, was the subject of several films, started many service organizations and then had a debilitating stroke in 1997 and eventually moved to Maui. Despite the stroke and health issues, he continued to teach until the end.

Over the years, Ram Dass came to Minneapolis many times and I never missed seeing him here. I also travelled to workshops and retreats where Ram Dass was presenting. I considered him my guru. Since his passing I have read many, many tributes to RD. The most im-

portant teaching that RD shared with the world came from his guru, Neem Karoli Baba: "Love



Ram Dass

other people and serve them all." Based on the four retreats with RD that I attended, I can attest to the fact that he practiced what he learned from his teacher. His radiant presence made each and every person he encountered feel that unconditional love we all yearn to give and to receive. The last words I heard him speak were: "I am loving awareness."

Palestine in the classroom

BY ISSRAA EL-KHATIB

Last November, I was invited to speak at Darcy Samek's class at St. Mary's University to explain more about Palestinian culture and history. It was a marriage and family therapy class that was interested in better understanding the context and values of Arab (Palestinian) immigrants specifically, and Muslims in general. As you can imagine, this was a very large context to cover in one presentation, so I focused mostly on

my experience as a Muslim Palestinian American.

I walked the class through a lot of what it means to hold that identity. I started with the historical context of the Israeli occupation of Palestine, explained the difference between Zionism and Judaism, talked about conditions for Palestinians in the West Bank, Gaza and citizens of Israel. Then, I focused more on the cultural aspects and values, such as clothing, food, holidays, music, traditional dances like dabka, and val-

ues regarding marriage, divorce, parents and gender roles.

Finally, I went back to talk a little more about the occupation and how it impacts the Palestinian experience and shapes the cultural context due to the trauma. I talked about the restriction of movement, lack of access to water, the torture of children, and talked specifically about Hebron, Gaza and Jerusalem. Finally, I tried to bring it home by talking about the United States' relationship with Israel and how our government's continuous support has allowed the occupation to continue to this day.

In conclusion, I ended with symbols of Palestinian resistance and their determination to live with rights and dignity. I also provided the class with books and websites that they could use to learn more.



Dabka, traditional dance

The reaction was so positive! I felt the love and support from the students and I really felt like I made an impact by bringing Palestine to a space that probably has never heard about it (or cared about it) before. It really showed me the power of conversations like this and how little it can take to bring a better level of understanding of something that may

seem so foreign or complex. I did receive a little pushback from the professor who was trying to affirm that there is another narrative that is also valid. I tried to answer her questions to the best of my ability and kept the focus on the Israeli occupation and the human rights violations that affect Palestinians on a daily basis.



Millennials Gone Mad

BY ED FELIEN

What happened?

There are revolutionary changes happening in Minneapolis, and I don't remember voting on them. Robespierre had more of a mandate for his Reign of Terror than Bender and Frey do for their changes that are transforming Minneapolis.

The city's so-called "Inclusionary Zoning" has marked the inner city for extermination through gentrification. They are planning to eliminate the communities of color in the inner city in the name of integration, and they are sparing the neighborhoods that have historically discriminated against people of color. The communities included in the zoning change will be excluded and removed, and the communities excluded in the zoning change will be included in the new Minneapolis. What amazing doublethink. What a fraud.

They are raising our taxes more than they have in 10 years to pay for more cops and more bureaucrats. We have tried for months to get the city to show us a manning schedule of the Minneapolis Police Department so we could begin to hold them publicly accountable, but they have refused to send us the data.

They are reducing the lane widths on major city streets like

Park and Portland and 42nd Street.

The new lanes are only 11 feet wide, which creates more "side friction." They are deliberately making the streets more dangerous in the belief that will slow down traffic. Early last month I wrote to Council Member Andrea Jenkins, who represents the area around 42nd Street: "Are the reduction of lane width for autos and enhanced space for bike lanes on 42nd Street part of the 2040 Plan to 'Reduce speed limits'?" She hasn't answered.

But that wasn't enough for the Millennials Gone Mad (MGMs). They converted Lyndale Avenue from four lanes to three and reduced the lane width to 10 feet.

Yes, fossil-fuel-powered motor vehicles need to be phased out. There are, right now, more than 5 million electric cars on the road, an increase of 63 percent from last year. It's happening, and instead of subsidizing the fossil fuel industry, the government should be doing more to subsidize electric cars, and the city should be encouraging more charging stations. A war on fossil fuels shouldn't necessarily be a war against motorized vehicles. For seniors, families, and for shopping—a car may be a necessity. The actions by the MGM's on behalf of bikes make it seem like their bikes are aggressively trying to shove our cars off the road. Can't we have a truce and talk about this?

In Amsterdam they have separate streets for bikes with traffic signals. Instead of encouraging bikers to use Park and Portland, why don't we make Oakland a through street for bikes only? Cars could only drive for one block before hitting a diverter. That would calm traffic on Oakland and eliminate bike accidents on Park and Portland.

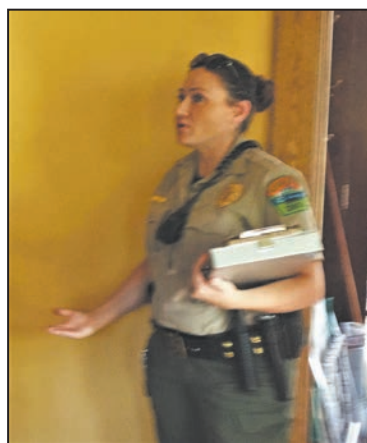
An incident in South Minneapolis last summer illustrates the overreach of these modern day Robespierres, these MGMs: A friend in South Minneapolis was having troubles with squirrels eating the soffit and fascia on their home and eating their garden. Squirrels are rodents, like rats and mice. The Minneapolis Code of Ordinances—Pest and Vermin Control, 229.70, says, "It shall be the responsibility of the owner of such property to exterminate the rats." So, rather than pass the vermin on to someone else by leaving them in a park, they were exterminating them.

Some MGM found out about it and reported it to Megan O'Brien, animal control officer for the city. She paid a visit to them in full battle gear and informed them that it was against the law in Minneapolis to kill any animal: Chap. 64.90, Prohibited Acts: "No person shall kill or injure any animal within the city unless it be in defense of himself or herself, another person or the threat of imminent death of another animal."

My friend was incredulous. "You mean you can't kill a mouse or a rat?" Officer O'Brien was insistent. "What you do inside your house the city won't bother you, but you are not permitted to kill a mammal outside your home."

Chap. 64.90, Prohibited Acts is an interesting chapter in City Ordinances. It also says,

"No person shall cage any animal for public display purposes



Megan O'Brien, Animal Control Officer, Defender of Rodents

unless the display cage is constructed of solid material on three (3) sides to protect the caged animal from the elements and unless the horizontal dimension of each side of the cage is at least four (4) times the length of the caged animal," and "It shall be a misdemeanor for any person who houses, possesses, or is in direct contact with an elephant to use a bullhook, ankus, baseball bat, axe handle, pitchfork, or similar device designed to inflict pain for the purpose of training or controlling the behavior of an elephant." These prohibitions seem to exclusively apply to preventing cruelty to animals in circuses, and it is doubtful that the intent of the ordinance was to prohibit control of pests and vermin.

It is true that a rodent is an animal, and it seems the city has taken the side of the rodents. Chapter 64.90 is at odds with 229.70, and the City of Minneapolis has chosen to aggressively enforce, with military khaki and a fearsome utility belt, the rights of rodents.

George Orwell said, "If you want a vision of the future, imagine a boot stamping on a human face—forever."

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