



We build Pride on the Southside

NOKOMIS EDITION

SECOND MONDAY OF THE MONTH

February 2020

VOL. XXX, ISSUE 5

This newspaper is recyclable. It is made with renewable resources--pulp wood and soy ink.

Race, sex and policing



BY TONY BOUZA

I had lunch the other day with a bright, educated liberal. He fulminated over the Left's excesses, going overboard on race, etc., etc.

I disagreed with him vehemently. We have made progress: 1619-1865: slavery; 1865-1965: Jim Crow; 1965-present: incarceration. White society uses its cops to keep blacks under control. Black leaders call the cops the enemy and defeat recruitment. Poverty exacerbates the problem. Just look at the net worth of black families vs. white ones. Addiction offers escape from awfulness.

America's No. 1 problem is racism.

When I left the lunch, I stood next to a black guy waiting for the elevator. I recounted the conversation—he scoffed. Yes, to some progress; No, to the notion that much has changed.

I repeated the agenda with my bright, black guy, and he agreed with me. Racism is America's No. 1 problem.

What is to be done?

We solve our prob-

See Bouza, page 3



Image: Bob Millea

Pennies for the poor, big bucks for the rich

The city is taking money out of poor neighborhoods and giving it to the rich

BY ROBERT THOMPSON

In late 2019, Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA), a department of the University of Minnesota, announced that it had been hired by the City of Minneapolis in response to the City Council's call for a consul-

tant to "complete the resident-led process of furthering the Neighborhoods 2020 framework and developing program guidelines at the 'Collaborate' level of engagement based on the International Association of Public Participation Spectrum."

In response to recent pub-

lic reporting by CURA and recent statements made by CURA spokespersons to media, we conducted an analysis to test several findings reported by CURA:

- Historical allocations were not based on a racial equity premises [sic].
- The primary benefactor

See CURA, page 2

Go to your precinct caucus on February 25

BY ED FELIEN

There are four important dates to remember:

Feb. 25, Precinct Caucuses
March 3, Presidential Primary
Aug. 11, Primary Election Day
Nov. 3, Election Day
Precinct Caucuses:

On Tuesday night, Feb. 25, the four recognized parties in Minnesota for the 2020 ballot are:

Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party
651-293-1200
Grassroots-Legalize Cannabis Party
651-280-7922
Legal Marijuana Now Party
763-742-6198
Republican Party of Minnesota
651-222-0022

Call them or check their websites to find location and time.

The precinct caucus is the smallest unit of government for political parties. It's a neighborhood meeting of people who are probably going to vote the same way you do. It's a chance for you to talk about neighborhood problems and offer solutions. Anyone in attendance can offer a resolution on city, county, state or national issues. The resolution is voted on, and if it passes, then it is sent to the legislative district convention, or the county or congressional district conventions for consideration.

Your precinct caucus will elect delegates to the district, county and congressional conventions, and those delegates will elect delegates to the state and national conventions.

Jean Wagenius is retiring as representative for Legislative District 63B. She has been a steadfast champion of the environment. Thank you, faithful public servant.

Delegates chosen at the February 25th precinct caucuses will convene sometime in March or April to endorse a candidate to replace her. The DFL sponsored a candidates' forum last month. See page 6 for story.

Minnesota decided it wanted to be included in the early mix of states with presidential preference prima-

See Caucus, page 2



Valentine's Day Section

Pages 7, 8 & 9

Celebrate Mayday update

BY ED FELIEN

“Hey, all of Minneapolis, Mayday is happening,” says Jason Heisler. He organized a fundraiser at Palmer’s Bar: “Feb 2. Noon - 9 p.m., The Super Puppet Bowl. Several bands, a Palmer’s puppet show, raffle, silent auction, contraptions, street performers, T-shirts, and special guests.”

David Senn wrote on the Mayday2020 blog: “As a musician I have a good working relationship with

Brock at Mortimer’s and have secured the evening of Sunday, March 8, for a Mayday 2020 benefit there:

Mortimer’s Bar and Restaurant, 2001 Lyndale Ave, 9 p.m.:

Beau Koo Jacks

Tufawon

The Boot R&B

The Blood Shot

And the Uptown VFW, 2916 Lyndale Ave., 8 p.m. on March 29:

Mojo Roots feat. King Ras John

Brass Messengers

Pretendians



Howlin’ Andy Hound

Envisioning bands, clowns, MCs, DJs, maybe raffle or silent auction and tributes to Dahnn.”

Jason Heisler has formed a non-profit corporation, Mayday2020. They need to raise about \$40,000 for porta-potties and permits.

The initial meeting had 72 Mayday veterans show up to get organized.

There will be the parade starting at 11 a.m. Sunday, May 3, and the Mayday Flotilla will be bringing the



Tree of Life, the Maypole, to the western shore of Lake Powderhorn. There will be music in the park, porta-potties and probably food trucks and political groups trying

to recruit.

If you want to participate or contribute, go to their Facebook page: 2020 MayDay Parade and Festival.

CURA, from page 1

[sic] of this work is white homeowners.

- The outcome of the work is racial inequity (institutional racism) largely driven by the Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP) allocations.

- The City of Minneapolis Community Participation Program (CPP) for neighborhood organizations is more equitable than NRP.

Our analysis relies on a more complete data set than that apparently used by CURA, including demographic data from Neighborhood Housing Services (NHS), NRP PlanNet data for neighborhood allocations, and

NRP PlanNet data for contracts and expenditures. We also reviewed previous studies of the NRP program. Our analysis finds that:

- NRP allocations were more heavily weighted to the most diverse and low-income neighborhoods in Minneapolis;

- CPP allocations were not more equitable than NRP allocations, and were, unlike NRP allocations, neutral in regards to neighborhood diversity or average household income.

- CPP allocations represented a major disinvestment in the most diverse and low-income communities when compared to NRP allocations.

- White affluent homeowners were not the primary beneficia-

ries of NRP home loan and grant programs. More complete data shows that, particularly in early years of NRP, black and low-income homeowners were major beneficiaries of NRP home loans.

- Many other types of neighborhood NRP housing programs directly benefited communities of color, low-income communities, and special needs communities (addiction, living with HIV/AIDS, seniors and disabilities as examples).

Our examination finds that CURA was negligent at best in their use of data and subsequent analysis of facts. Their use of data raises concerns about cherry-picking of data, and bias in their analysis. Because CURA apparently did little to verify the

accuracy or completeness of their data, or to show any independence from the city in collecting data, their study is neither valid nor reliable. We believe CURA’s conclusions, particularly about the primary beneficiaries of NRP home loan programs, and racial inequity of NRP allocations, are simply not supported based on all of the evidence available.

Why the attack on NRP? Because it is not just an attack on NRP. It is an attack on the idea that NRP represented.

NRP was based on the idea that residents are valuable partners in identifying the needs and shaping solutions for their communities. But the city has long embraced the idea that, to be as efficient as possible, community decisions

should be left to the “experts” at City Hall. In that model, residents are reduced to the role of “customers” or “clients.” This model puts most, if not all, of the power in the hands of the city.

Interestingly, CURA’s recommendations say nothing about actually changing the relations of power between the City and the community. Their recommendation: Keep the “experts” (like themselves) in charge.

Robert Thompson has a master’s degree in public administration, a master’s degree in nonprofit management and 30 years’ experience serving nonprofit organizations and community engagement practices. www.rtthompson.net

Caucus, from page 1

ries, so this year, for the first time, we will have Presidential Preference Primary Tuesday, March 3. You can go to your regular polling place, ask for a ballot for your political party and vote for a candi-

date for president.

Minnesota Primary Election Day is Tuesday, Aug. 11. If there is a contest in any political party for an elected position, then the leading candidate in this primary will go on to the general election, Nov. 3.

Claiming Our Voices Caucus Training

Wednesday, Feb. 12 - 7 p.m. - The Center (Edina) - hosted by same & ISAIAH

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Claiming Our Voices Caucus Training

Thursday, Feb. 13 - 4 p.m. - Muslim Student Assoc. U of M - hosted by same & Muslim Coalition of ISAIAH

Taqwa Caucus Training

Friday, Feb. 14 - 6 p.m. - Masjid al Taqwa MN - hosted by same

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Caucus & Conventions Training

Saturday, Feb. 15 - 2 p.m. - Rondo Community Library - hosted by Twin Cities DSA (Democratic Socialists of America)

Caucus for Climate Training

Sunday, Feb. 16 - 12:45 p.m. - Edina Community Lutheran Church - hosted by church & Interfaith Power & Light (limited spots - reserve on Facebook)

**FIND YOUR
Voice**



**CareerForce
South Minneapolis
Career Fair**

February 19, 2020

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

**South Mpls CareerForce
777 East Lake Street**

- Update your resume
- Network with employers
- Apply to open positions
- Engage with a Career Coach
- Discover CareerForce Resources

For reasonable accommodations or alternative formats please contact marie.larson@minneapolismn.gov. People who are deaf or hard of hearing can use a relay service to call 311 at 612-673-3000. TTY users can call 612-673-2157 or 612-673-2626. Para asistencia 612-673-2700, Yog xav tau kev pab, hu 612-673-2800, Hadii aad Caawimaad u baahantahay 612-673-3500.

Dahnn Polnau

BY ED FELIEN

Mike Hazard probably wrote the best obituary for Dahnn. It's on Facebook:
Dhann Polnau reveled in puppetry.
Daniel Polnau was Dan Dan the Puppet Man, Magick Man,

chievous misfit who seeped into the pores, and soul, of everyone he met, utopian radical clown critic, crazy dude, one of the most magical, hilarious, dangerous, messy, daring, generous, and excellent people we will ever know, fantastical truth-teller, master prankster puppeteer, ringleader, stinking hippy,

one of the purest incarnate forms of creativity that ever lived, transcendent and infernal being, breaker of all rules, Dr. Stromboli.
Dahnn wrote to me after my article "Celebrate Mayday" appeared in the November Southside Pride editions:
Hello,
So HOBT is taking a year off from mayday???

Nobody thinks this is a good idea!
HOBT crowdsourced for money last year at the 11 o'clock hour and made over 50k in the black for the first time ever.
One couple had a pancake breakfast that made 3 g.
Many many people who donated feel duped, angry by the cancellation of Mayday.
Are saying publicly they will never donate again.
But,
To be clear, it's not HOBT that decided to cancel Mayday
Or the descision of an informed and savvy board of directors that decided—

It is one man, Corrie zoll.
He says, as a mantra, that it's "not a sustainable business model" (45 years is not evidence of sustainability?)
50k surplus is not sustainability???)
Zoll has been very enthused about selling the building since day one of taking the job.
He has talked of hobot not doing puppets anymore since day one.
He has wanted hobot to not be burdened w mayday anymore.

He is the man who fired the entire artistic staff and most of admin staff, including Sandy Spieler.
At any rate,
Upon the announcement of cancellation Jason Heisler somehow created a non profit
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 cafe,
And, is incidentally the father of the 21 yr old man Kobe that cops emptied their guns into his back when he ran away in Brooklyn center recently
The cops have twice busted down this grieving father's door and held a gun to his head to intimidate him. And have been harassing the wheelchair bound grandmother, telling her it is her fault.

ganizing music for the same stages and areas.
This could be a giant cluster fuck, possibly w sparks flying, if we don't somehow join forces and fathom how to make this all work.
We all want basically the same thing.
Thoughts????

I wrote back:
My personal prejudice is against amplification, against police "protection," and against permits—but I'm willing to adjust. I also think the long Mayday parade is a waste of time. Nothing could happen in the Park until the Parade was over and HOBT set up for the Tree of Life. I think it would be better to let everyone into the Park, listen to music and political speeches and, at some point, have a parade around the Lake (and maybe the ballfields). Otherwise we're waiting for three hours on Bloomington Avenue for something to happen.



Dahnn Polnau, from sometime unknown to 2020 and into our hearts

Decolonizer of Darkness, Wizard's Magician, a weirdo, a saint, and a fabricator of tall tales of the highest caliber, a beautiful creator and wonderfully wild soul, street magician, a Knight of the Imagination, wild man, wise man, fool who traversed the worlds, master of no one, who knew the profane is sacred, making puppets a threat again, kind, kind magician, a mis-

an American shaman in the Siberian mold, big heart, Emperor of Babies, a pusher of limits, of respectability, subverting expectations and piercing through our socially constructed barriers to our/a point of connectivity, with all creatures and energies, Garbagiano who dreamed of a plastic-free world, supreme example of an evolved human, progenitor of Baba Yaga,



Tobias, Dahnn and Ariana

Bouza, from page 1

lems through debates. Not with discussions, but with picketing, sit-ins and, I'm sorry to say, even riots. Why is Colin Kaepernick—a talented quarterback in a field crying for such—unemployed? Because he respectfully knelt during "The Star Spangled Banner" to protest police brutality, while draft dodgers demonized him.
And who supports the brutality—in dog whistles and other codes? Imagine our Chief Executive encouraging brutality ("Don't be so nice" to those people) and praising Nazis in Charlottesville ("some very nice people"). The cops, I promise you, get it. Superpatriot, who avoided

service through five deferments, attacked a war hero (McCain) and maligned the family of a fallen warrior. Is there, finally, no decency?
America is in trouble.
It's not just the president—look at those he enables. Fascists, rednecks, draft dodgers, minimally educated, bikers, gun nuts, misogynists and such. How they love him. They have their predecessors in The American Bund, Father Coughlin and their ilk.
Yes, we've progressed.
And, yes, we've regressed.
We need to start rowing harder.
And sex?
The only thing I want to say is that there is no museum anywhere in the world that exhibits

any work of art that esthetically equals a casually beautiful woman.
As for policing, let me conclude by citing the Chief's appearance at the Minneapolis Club recently. He swooshed in with an impressive entrance, spoke and received a standing ovation. Minnesota Nice. How nice.
And the gargantuan judgments; four-day work weeks; petting zoo treats like a mounted patrol; public information costs to massage the media; bloated supervisory levels; delayed 911 responses and on and on—all succumb to that harmless pursuit smugly labeled Minnesota Nice. Yet, I confess, it is nice, because within, it encompasses kindness.

Okay—irrelevant sidebar I realize!
But I am cannot resist mentioning this.)
Anyhow,
I am sympatico with all of your sentiments about the politics of assembly and Mayday and all of it.
But the governmental permission slip has already been granted and the fees and all the hoops that have to be jumped thru.
Whatismore,
Many parties from near and far are planning to claim that space on that day and make shit happen—
This includes the hobot 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?
Hobot said "cancelled"
Not— "a slightly truncated version will happen"
And,
It seems various parties are or-

What do you think?
Dahnn answered back:
Could not agree with you more about long parade!
Love opening up festival.
There was talk of a parade around the lake as well.
If there is a parade on Bloomington it will not have the usual lengthy Hobt puppet section. I know the punk battle train is onboard.
But again,
There is no puppet parade proper being built.
I will be pageant/ceremony focused— something strong and powerful and relevant to come across that lake and on that field. But hopefully not too long and over complicated and abstract.
I love non amplification for music!
But fear it might be a losing battle at this point— but let's try!!
Facebook page is in order.
This will get interesting
I am in India til January
Daniel, "Dahnn," Polnau left this world on Friday, January 10.

WE BUILD PRIDE
ON THE SOUTHSIDE!!

• COMMUNITY CALENDAR •

Southside Pride / NOKOMIS EDITION

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.sean-hillpoetry.com. Book signing and reception to follow.

Art at Augsburg: Works by Faculty, Past and Present Reception: Thursday, Feb. 13, 6 to 8 p.m. **A**

Welcome at 6:30 p.m. by Norman Holen and Kristin Anderson
Exhibition Jan. 13–Feb. 18
Augsburg University
Gage Gallery, Oren Gateway Center
2211 Riverside Ave., Mpls.
As part of Augsburg's Sesquicentennial celebrations, Gage Family Art Gallery and Christensen Center Gallery will

display works by Augsburg art faculty, dating back to the origin of the department in the 1950s. The exhibit will include works by early faculty like Hans Berg, Ivan Doseff, Robert Friederichsen, Mikelis Geistauts, August Molder and John Mosand. We will also highlight art by longtime department stalwarts Norman Holen and Phil Thompson, along with selected work by current and recently retired faculty, including Susan Boecher, Lynn Bollman, Stephen Geffre, Chris Houlberg, Dan Ibarra, Regula Russelle, Tara Sweeney, robert tom, and Lyz Wendland. Curated by Kristin Anderson.

Renegade-ism: Artists on the Edge

Thursdays - Saturdays T
Feb. 13 - 29, 7:30 p.m.

Pillsbury House Theatre
3501 Chicago Ave. S., Mpls.
renegade-ism (n): The creation of art outside of an institutional setting, or three weekends of performances featuring local independent artists. In this series, nothing is off the table. You'll experience art outside the box, including puppetry, dance, improv and more.
Feb. 13 - 15: "Crucial Excursions" by Monkeybear's Harmolodic Workshop, created and directed by Chamindika Wanduragala.
Feb. 20 - 22: "Call to Remember" by Leslie Parker and collaborators Amara T. Smith, mayfield brooks and Vie Boheme.
Feb. 27 - 29: Blackout Improv Troupe
This series opens Pillsbury House's 2020 season. More info at pillsburyhouseandtheatre.org.

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. 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 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 will be joined by local music standouts, as well as special guest Ali Selim. Tickets are \$25-\$29 with discounts for students, seniors, military, MPR, TPT and groups. Tickets available at theoshaughnessy.com or 651-690-6700.

Ruby: The Story of Ruby Bridges

Feb. 15 – March 1 T
Saturdays, 7:30 p.m.
Sundays, 2 p.m.

The Conn Theatre
1900 Nicollet Ave. (corner of Franklin & Nicollet)
For a show that combines thrilling true-life stories and inspiring Motown hits of the day, don't miss Christina M. Ham

FIND YOUR EVENT:

M - MUSIC

D - DANCE

T - THEATER

A - ART

and Gary Rue's story and music in Youth Performance Company's exciting Black History Month production.

In 1960, Ruby Bridges became one of six black children to integrate all-white schools in the city of New Orleans. With songs inspired by The Shirelles, Sam Cooke and Smokey Robinson, this musical explores a little girl's unbeatable courage in the face of adversity as she helped lead the Civil Rights Movement into the classroom. The show is recommended for third grade and older.

Youth Performance Company fuels the creative spirit of youth by developing, empowering and advancing young artists. Through direct programming that includes productions, classes, in-school residencies, community appearances and a leadership development component, YPC provides affordable and meaningful arts experiences for Twin Cities families, children and teens. For more information: youthperformanceco.org or 612-623-9080. Tickets are \$7 to \$15.

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

Neighborhood Night—Everyone Welcome!

Wednesday, Feb. 19 T

7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Holy Name Church

Garvey Hall

3637 11th Ave. S., Mpls.

Join us for a viewing and discussion of the documentary "Sustainable." This vital investigation of the economic and environmental instability of our food systems looks at soil loss,

water issues, big agribusiness issues, etc. It includes interviews with leaders who are working on solving these issues and is a story of hope and transformation. Come, learn and get to know neighbors! Coffee included. Bring a friend! No cost/no registration. For more info: www.churchoftheholyname.org; 612-724-5465.

February at Bryant-Lake Bowl
Bryant-Lake Bowl

Cabaret Theater T
810 W. Lake St., Mpls.

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.

Songs That Let Me Rage: An Evening of Catharsis at the Top of My Lungs

Sunday, Feb. 23, 7 p.m.

Colleen Somerville's "Songs That Let Me Rage" was born of a particularly trying 2019 and a therapist's advice to find "more productive" ways of channeling an emotional intensity that was maaaaybe less than ideal for raising a 5-year-old and waiting tables and just... existing in the world. She needed to scream without screaming at someone. The only thing that helped? Singing her damned heart out. Join Colleen, backed by a full band and sharing the stage with a cast of Twin Cities musical luminaries, as she belts out some of her favorite musical theatre and pop tunes and maybe purges a demon or two along the way. Tickets \$10/advance, \$12/door. Ticket link: <https://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/4486371>.

"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.



• COMMUNITY CALENDAR •

SouthsidePride / NOKOMIS EDITION

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.

The Edina Chorale Beyond the Veil: Songs of Love, Loss and Life Saturday, Feb. 22 3 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. **M**

Calvary Church
5300 France Ave., Edina
The Edina Chorale will present “Beyond the Veil: Songs of Love, Loss and Life,” celebrating the love and legacy of those who have gone before and our continued life after loss. The concert begins with a love story, revealing the limits of time and the importance of connection. The central work, “Lux Aeterna” by Morten Lauridsen is a stunning requiem setting that finds light and consolation in grief. The final set is the realization that the loved one’s legacy lives on in us. This beautiful set features works by contemporary composers such as Stephen Paulus and Shawn Kirchner. There will be two performances on Feb. 22nd, at 3 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. at Calvary Church on France Avenue in Edina. A brief reception will follow each concert. Tickets: Adult \$20, Seniors \$15. Students K – 12 are free. Visit Edinachorale.org for more information.

LoLa’s 2020 Winter Fine Art Exhibition Opening: Saturday, **A** Feb. 22, 5 to 7 p.m.

Exhibition: Feb. 22-23 and Feb. 29-March 1, noon to 5 p.m.
Squirrel Haus Arts
3450 Snelling Ave., Mpls.
The League of Longfellow Artists (LoLa) welcomes everyone to the third annual Winter Fine Art Exhibition at Squirrel Haus Arts in Longfellow. Meet the artists and enjoy refreshments and music at the opening, Feb. 22, 5–7 p.m., during which a DJ from Solsta Records will spin vintage vinyl. Libations at the reception include wine, beer, and nonalcoholic beverages, and the table will be spread with an array of sweet and savory snacks. Gallery hours are noon to 5 p.m. each day. All events are free, family friendly, and open to the public. Artwork will be for sale at the discretion of the artists, who set their prices and receive all proceeds from any sales. Exhibited works span a wide variety of media and styles, including paintings (oil, acrylic, watercolor) on canvas, board, and paper, photographs on paper and metal, printmaking, mixed media, mosaics and sculpture. More info at <https://lolaartcrawl.com/>.

Louise Erdrich at Literary Witnesses **L** Sunday, March 1, 4 p.m.

Plymouth Congregational Church (sanctuary)
Franklin & Nicollet, Mpls.
Louise Erdrich, internationally

acclaimed author (and Plymouth neighbor), will premiere her highly anticipated new novel, “The Night Watchman.” The event is free, with a reception and book signing following the reading. Copies of her book will be available for the first time anywhere in the country. We expect a large attendance so consider arriving early. Erdrich is the owner of Birchbark Books, the founding book-selling partner of Literary Witnesses.
“The Night Watchman” is based on the extraordinary life of Erdrich’s grandfather, who worked as a night watchman and carried the fight against Native dispossession from rural North Dakota all the way to Washington, D.C. This powerful novel explores themes of love and death with Erdrich’s trademark mastery of lightness and gravity, elegant prose, sly humor and depth of feeling. In “The Night Watchman,” Erdrich creates a fictional world populated with memorable characters forced to grapple with the worst and best impulses of human nature.

Sick Lit: A Writing Workshop Saturday, March 21 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. **L**

Nokomis Library
5100 34th Ave. S., Mpls.
An open writing workshop for artists and writers interested in writing and reading around chronic illness. No previous experience needed. FREE. Workshops will be lead by writer, editor, and teaching artist Lara Mimosa Montes in the library meeting room. For more info and to RSVP, please write: MplsWritingWorkshops@gmail.com
Lara Mimosa Montes is the author of “Thresholds” (Coffee House Press, 2020) and “The Somnambulist” (Horse Less Press, 2016), and is a senior editor of “Triple Canopy.” Lara is a fiscal year 2020 recipient of an Artist Initiative grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board. This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.

ONGOING

Joshua Cunningham and Charles Lyon Through March 7 **A**

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. For more information please call 612-377-7800 or visit www.grovelandgallery.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.

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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
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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.

MMIW 2020: Missing & Murdered Indigenous Peoples March



February 14, 2020 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Minneapolis American Indian Center

1530 East Franklin Ave. Minneapolis, MN

The Song we sing on the Walk has multiple names: The MMIW Song, the Indigenous Women’s Warrior Song, and others. To honor our Herstory, we share the origins, as we know it.

We came to learn the song through Karlee Fellner (Cree/Metis) from Devon, Alberta. She came to know this song through Young Leon (Cree & Anishinaabe) and Dorothy Christian (Secwepmec). They taught her that the song came through ceremony to the women of the St’at’imc (pronounced “stat-leum”) Nation in 1990 during the Oka crisis, when the Mohawk people were defending their territories against the Canadian military.

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Students from Anishinaabe Academy, Sanford Middle School, Northeast, Harding, South High, and Bdote Learning Center will lead us on the Walk! Please make room for them at the FRONT!

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11 am
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*Informational Tables are free.
Contact Cristine at cdavidson@miwsac.org or text 612-849-4684 to reserve a table.

Route: Depart Indian Center, to Cedar, to 26th, to Bloomington, back to Indian Center
Vehicles will be available for Elders and Children

11 am to 12:30 pm:
Opening Blessing
Welcome Songs
Guest Speakers
Prepare to depart on Walk

1:30 pm to 2 pm:
Honor Song for those who have lost loved ones
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63B candidate forum

BY STEPHANIE FOX

While most of the country is focused on upcoming presidential caucuses and primaries, voters in parts of South Minneapolis and Richfield had a chance to meet the five candidates who are hoping to fill the legislative seat of retiring DFL State House Representative Jean Wagenius, who has served since she was first elected in 1987.

The candidates showed up at the Richfield Community Center on Jan. 27 to seek the DFL endorsement in the District 63B precinct caucuses, scheduled for Feb. 25.

The five candidates, Emma Greenman, Tyler Moroles, Husniya D. Bradley, Eric Ferguson and Jerome Evans, were each presented with five questions during five rounds, moderated by Tom Anderson and Amy Livingston. Candidates also had a chance to present their backgrounds and the problems they hoped to tackle if they were to be elected.

Emma Greenman said that if elected, she hoped to first focus on repairing our democracy, starting with automatic voter registration, requiring financial disclosure of campaign money and fighting reoccurring Republican efforts to bring back voter ID.

“Our district is a little bit of the city and a little bit of the suburbs. We have an 83 percent voter turnout, but we can do better,” she said.

She also plans to work to improve the lives of kids. “We must invest in our schools. We need to pass the teachers of color act,” she



Emma Greenman, Tyler Moroles, Eric Ferguson and Jerome Evans (Husniya D. Bradley, photo not available)

said. “And, we need to support early education starting with universal pre-K.”

Greenman said she supports housing programs that ensure safe and affordable housing for all. Having shelter improves almost every other problem from health to education to crime rates, she said. In addition to subsidized rental housing, Greenman hopes to increase home ownership, especially among minorities.

“We have a unique opportunity to do bold things in the district and at the Capitol,” she said. “We need to harness this energy across the jurisdiction.”

Greenman got her start in Minnesota politics working with the Wellstone campaign. As a youngster, she lived in the Towers at Cedar-Riverside, which she said gave her insight into the struggles of lower income Minnesotans. She is a graduate of Berkeley Law School and received a master’s in public policy from Harvard. When she moved back home to Minnesota, she worked as a human rights lawyer, fighting against voter suppression and for immigrant rights.

Attorney General Keith Ellison:

“Emma is the real deal. She was an organizer for Senator Wellstone, and she’s built her career as a voting rights lawyer around fighting for people pushed to the margins of our society. Emma doesn’t take short cuts or back down from a tough struggle.”

Tyler Moroles said he supports investing money in more housing, transportation and senior centers. “Everyone needs a home,” he said. He plans to reduce property tax, especially for lower income senior citizens, many of whom, he said, are being driven into poverty by high taxes on their homes.

He wants to increase opportunities for people of color to buy a home. Currently, he said, 41 percent of people of color own their own homes, more than 30 points behind white Minnesotans. “These people don’t have access to the middle class,” he said.

To help solve the problem of rising rents, he wants to allow local governments, not just the state, to pass rent control regulations.

He also champions public schools and wants to make it easier for paraprofessional education support specialists, many who

are people of color, to become licensed teachers. “We need to bridge the gaps in ESL and special education and we need to fully unionize all staff, from teachers to bus drivers and cafeteria workers.”

Moroles supports a single payer health plan and wants to see more funding for addiction treatment instead of criminalizing addiction.

Moroles was born and raised in 63B. His father was a Mexican-American migrant worker. His mother was raised in Minnesota, the child of a physician and the first city councilwoman in New Ulm. He graduated from South High School and went on to obtain a master’s degree in political science. He currently manages the Hennepin County Community Development Block Grant Program and is co-chair of the Fair Housing Implementation Council. Doing this work, he said, has given him unique insights on how to craft housing policies at all levels of government.

Husniya D. Bradley (who usually goes only by her first name) said she is running for the state house to advocate for funding for Early Childhood Development

programs and for increasing training for paraprofessional educators that would allow more of them to become licensed teachers.

Husniya would also like to find solutions to the crisis in health care. One idea she put forward is to hire more crisis nurses. “People should be able to call a nurse to come to their homes during a crisis. This would relieve the pressure in emergency rooms.”

And, she said she wants to restore and increase investment in the public school system. “I want all students to have access to quality education. When people are being left behind, they can’t get good jobs, can’t afford health care or homeownership.”

One way to help solve the housing crisis, she said, is to create housing alternatives, such as letting cities allow developers to convert vacant commercial properties to affordable housing. “There are 30 families in Richfield who are homeless,” she said, “and this plan could give them a place to live.”

Husniya was raised in South Minneapolis and attended Min-

See 63B, page 14

Curvy Girls

BY ISABELLA MORDEN-WHEELDON

Curvy Girls is a global network of peer-led support groups for girls up to age 18 suffering from scoliosis. For those unfamiliar with the condition, scoliosis is a lateral curvature of the spine that tends to occur in girls during adolescence. Treatments usually involve a plastic back brace that covers the entire torso which is worn anywhere from 7 to 24 hours a day. The emotional weight of the disease is extremely taxing at such a breakable point; it takes the teenage experience to a different level of emotional turmoil. As a patient, you start to ask yourself questions. The list of treatments is extensive and daunting: bracing, physical therapy, surgery, tethering—but they all sound the same when you are

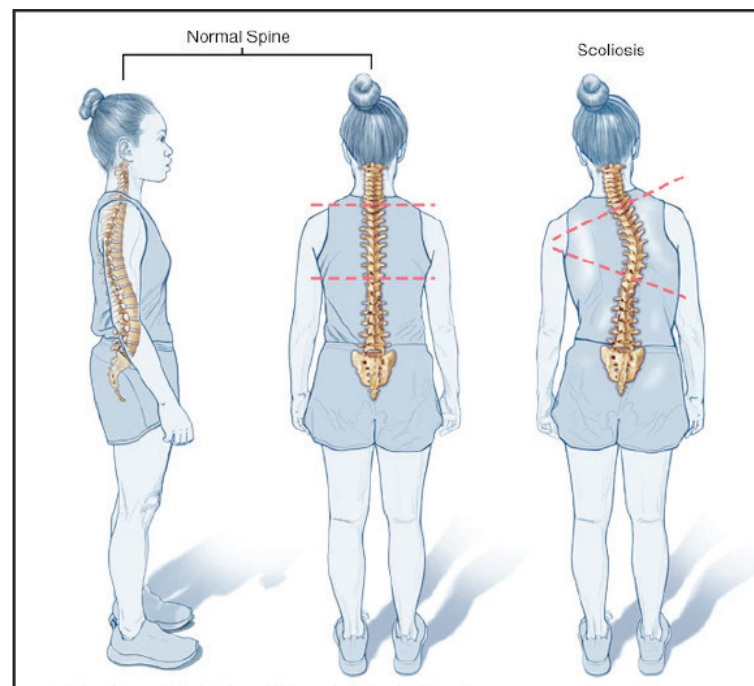
submerged headfirst into an unfamiliar diagnosis.

I was 11 when I was first diagnosed, and 12 when I got my first brace. My ability and willpower to wear the brace dwindled as I began to gain social awareness and those questions kept emerging.

I have since ceased bracing (three braces and four years later), but the weight of it still seems to be there. This is but a fraction of a story nearly identical to hundreds of other teenage girls with scoliosis. An experience such as this is not something you can just put behind you. Here at the Minnesota chapter, we meet once a month in the Nokomis neighborhood to recollect and ask questions about our treatments, coping mechanisms, and diagnoses. We come from a myriad of wildly differing lifestyles, homes, and ways, but the story we have to tell is the

same. Our link is clear-cut, but not visible, and conflict is what brings us together. The emails I receive from parents with daughters newly diagnosed are often calls for help, desperately seeking support—a sort of safe space. The girls who enter our doors are apprehensive, sometimes reluctant. I relive my own experiences every time a new family is welcomed, and that is what is so incredible about this position. This is a hand-me-down story. I know what happens next.

“Having once led Curvy Girls I learned more not only about myself but also about other girls,” says member and former leader Sheridan Follis. “While I had never been too worried about my scoliosis (for better or for worse), I learned many girls were. I wanted to not only help them but in the same way, it helped me break



out of my shell and push myself to meet new people.”

From the start of this chapter in 2015, we have gained more than just members. We are answering questions, living up to what our motto truly means: “You are not

alone.” We need not question ourselves, but instead ask, what can we do for others?

Questions, or in need of support? <https://www.curvygirlsscoliosis.com/>

Valentine's Day Section

Show Some Love!

Give yourself to love: A no-pressure Valentine's Day experience

BY DEBRA KEEFER RAMAGE

I was “moaning” (what the Brits say instead of “bitching”—just sounds nicer) to my friend about having to come up with yet another fresh take on Valentine's Day and mentioned it wasn't really my favorite holiday. She said, “Oh, really? It IS my favorite.” When I asked her why, she said it was low-pressure, com-

pared to all the other major holiday, with the light inducement to buy gifts restricted mostly to cards, chocolates and restaurant dinners. “And it's all just about love, and everyone loves love, right?” Surprisingly, no. Some people beat themselves up about love. All the damn time. Just like Christmas and Thanksgiving make them feel bad because they don't have the perfect

family to exchange gifts and overeat with, Valentine's Day seems to judge them for their failure at perfect romantic love. But my friend's take is decidedly the better one, and the one I am adopting from here on out. I never bought the ideal of perfect romantic love in the first place, and I am a militant non-perfectionist, so previously I was just grumpy that there seemed to be a holiday, and yet another line of capitalist merch, based on a concept I didn't accept, but my friend is right, I do love love. As long as it's freed from the taints of patriarchy, heteronormativity and cursed perfectionism.

The great spiritual traditions of the world have a lot to say about love. There is a paradox at its heart—that the ability to love is founded first on loving one's self, but not on dwelling within one's ego, which is the false self. So, for those who want emotional and spiritual health, this self-love thing is essential, but tricky. My friend Howard Kranz (whose wonderfully quirky yet profound music can be accessed online at howardkranz.com) has writ-



Produce box from Imperfect Foods of San Francisco, Calif.

ten a humorous song about this conundrum. Now you know the story of Oedipus, and that old Marquis de Sade And other persons who seem like us, whose love is excessive, or odd: For horses, or Porsches, or chocolate, or shoes, or computers, or wealth. I make confession to my own obsession—I love myself!

Howard's song goes on to play around with the tropes of egotism, and the tropes of romantic love but turned inward (“I love to flirt with that sweet introvert”) and thus to dance around the challenge of self-love vs. the ego trap. Like all spiritual projects, it sounds simple when proposed, but is

See Valentine's, page 8

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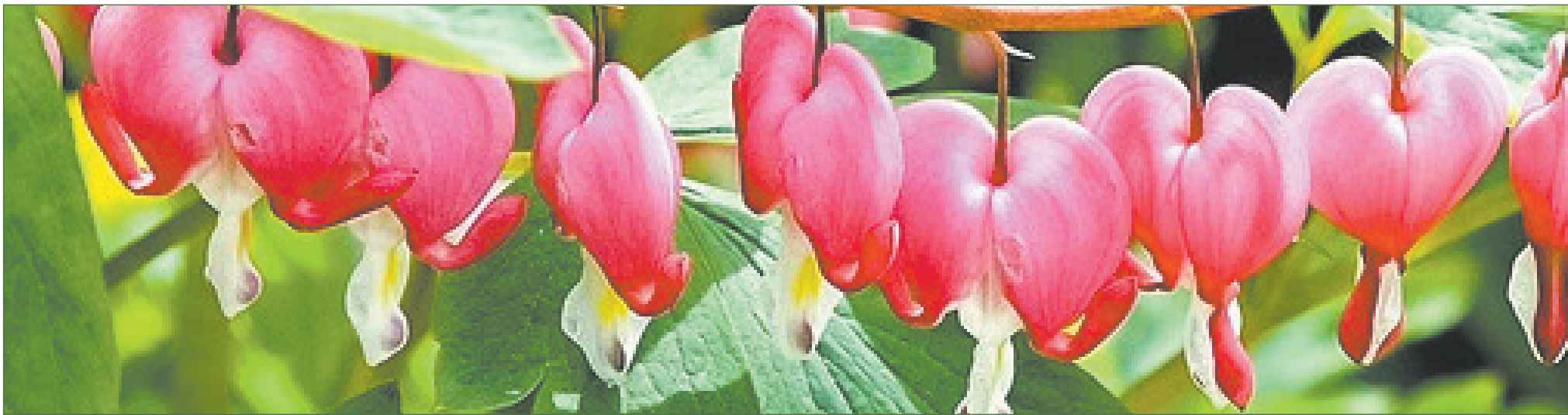
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Valentine's from page 7

actually the work of a lifetime. So, if you haven't got 40 years to spare taming your ego, how can you safely practice self-love, say this year around February 14? Here are a few suggestions, that rely on simple human nature and basic good intention, in lieu of deep metaphysical study. These are all ways, to quote another profound song on the subject, to "give yourself to love."

Love your family. The trick here is to realize who your family is. You may be childless or the parent of one or many. You may be orphaned by circumstance or age or in the midst of caring for an aging parent, or still trying to become independent of parents. But truly all children are your children. All elders are your elders. Looked at this way, you see that focusing on your own genetic kin or lack thereof is simply ego and bio-determinism. I often think of this in my mostly failed crusade against child slavery in chocolate. What if everyone on every continent could truly see that the 2 million children



Reading to children — all children are your children!

in slavery producing chocolate were their own children? I think once you see this, you can't help but seek justice for them. But here are ways to give love to your family that can work for blood relations or family of choice. Write memoirs for future generations. I have been using an online app (storyworth.com) that sends me prompts every week. It's not perfect, but it helps. Stay in touch with distant family. Use FaceTime or Google Hangouts to video chat with, for instance, grandparents or grandkids, who don't get a chance to see you in person that much. Read

to little children. If you don't have any nearby, use video chat, and if you don't have any kids or grands, borrow someone else's. Teach your family's and your culture's foodways to another generation and/or another culture. Learn some yourself. The food co-ops and community education offer lots of classes like this. Many people include non-human beings in their idea of family. Don't feel sheepish about this! Shower your guinea pigs with Valentine's goodies! Take your puppy out to a brewery for a date! Here's a guide to taprooms that allow dogs inside: [https://www.](https://www.sidewalkdog.com/twin-cities-breweries-that-welcome-dogs-inside/)

[sidewalkdog.com/twin-cities-breweries-that-welcome-dogs-inside/](https://www.sidewalkdog.com/twin-cities-breweries-that-welcome-dogs-inside/)

Love your planet. A meaningful way to spread the love is to love the endangered spaceship we're all on together: Planet Earth. Lately I have been working on various waste reduction initiatives in my life. I have been getting a biweekly box of food, mostly produce, from Imperfect Foods (imperfectfoods.com). It's cheaper and more customizable than a CSA and

uses food that would be wasted due to esthetic or other minor flaws. I highly recommend it. We have written before about Tare Market, just one of the many local zero-waste initiatives you can support. I have also discovered an online seller of dye-free, plastic-free, laundry pods, shipped in a simple cardboard box, and another company that sells near-zero-waste dish and house cleaning and personal care products, such as super concentrated dish soap in a little paper tube,



Building a bread oven at the North House Folk School in Grand Marais

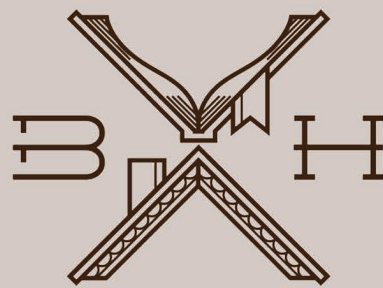
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Happy Valentine's



Fat Babes Pool Party from the show "Shrill" on Hulu

and loofah or coconut dish scrubbers, and bamboo paper products. Beyond your own needs, if you have money to spare, consider paying to plant trees, rescue wildlife, support those fighting against pipelines, fracking, or open pit mining, or fighting to preserve national parks and wilderness. Or maybe just spend V Day loving the earth directly, by taking a meditative walk or retreat in a beautiful place, alone or with quiet close friends, to renew your dedication.

Love your body/mind. I have a little homemade inspiration poster with a quote from Aldous Huxley: "You don't have a soul. You are a soul. You have a body." Sometimes people, even I, identify not with their body, but with their mind. They think they are a mind, which makes sense, since it's the mind that's thinking. But this too is a false dualism. Huxley was right in that your "being" is your soul, while the body is a temporary possession. But the mind is not really separable from the body, so it too is a temporary possession. Realizing this deeply is a

powerful antidote to egoism. St. Francis of Assisi called his own body "Brother Ass" (but in Italian, presumably). That's a nice way to frame it so that you give your body/mind proper care and attention. Feed your body real food, nurse it when it's sick. Nourish your mind too, with delicious and healthful books, films, music and conversation. One book on my to-read list right now is "How to Do Nothing: Resisting the Attention Economy" by Jenny Odell. I would also recommend binge-watching "The Good Place" if you haven't already seen it. Join the body-positivity, or fat-acceptance if it seems relevant to you, movements. Dress up your body lovingly and playfully. Try "cosplay," the art of costume + playing a part, purely for fun. Visit the Really Really Free Market (check their Facebook page) if you don't have a lot of money, or one of the many vintage clothing shops in the Twin Cities, including plus-size shops Cake in Minneapolis and Stacked in Shakopee. Visit a hot tub, sauna, or heated swimming pool. Exchange amateur massages with a platonic friend.

Surrender yourself to your passion. Even if your passion is horses or Porsches, don't feel guilty if you have passions. You're only human; it's OK to love some things more than other things. As long as they don't dominate us, or distract us from other life essentials, or hurt other people, our passions can enrich our lives and those of others we touch with them. Indulge your passion but don't hoard it. No matter how quirky

politics, find a group you can organize with. If your passion is religious devotion, you're in luck, you can do that in a group or completely solo. You can write a book about it, or maybe just a blog. Turn your passion into a mission by giving. Embrace the ancient concept of tithing, but instead of just money, try to give a fixed percentage of your time and attention to your passionate project. Whatever you do, if you do it



Dog with beer, from sidewalkdogs.com

it is, someone else might love to hear or see it. Give of your gifts rather than disparaging them with false humility. Tell your story from a stage, read your poetry at a slam, bring your strange tater tot creation to a potluck. If your passion is

kindly, generously, honestly and without judgment, you are giving yourself to love.

* Lyrics from "I Love Myself" used with permission

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Eastern journey leads Powderhorn resident to formation of Siberian Bridges

BY ELAINE KLAASSEN

Tom Dickinson is a multi-faceted person who lives in the Powderhorn neighborhood. Friends and neighbors know him as a concert pianist, a Buddhist (Kwan Um School of Zen), an activist (WAMM committee Tackling Tor-



Tom with English students Diana, Leonya and Ilya, 2019

ture at the Top), a cat-lover, and/or as the founder and president of an organization called Siberian Bridges, which links people in the Zabaikalsky region of Siberia (toward the eastern side of Russia)

with people in the Upper Midwest.

Everything that led to Tom's connection with Siberia is intertwined with the other facets of his life. It started ... Well, where did it start?

While Tom was studying piano performance at Yale (where he later got his doctorate), he started playing concerts. He played in London, England; in Taiwan; in Alaska; almost in Korea. Next, the idea of a tour in China came up. A good friend from Yale, Craig, who lived in Taiwan and was familiar with Chinese culture, convinced Tom to set up the tour in person, face to face, and not through the mail.

When Tom went to China, in 1988, he was scared. The airport was yellow and gray, dingy, scary and bleak. He was going off the map—into Communist China. He had never done anything so “foreign.”

Mr. Yang, the guide/interpret-

er Craig recommended, was with him, though, supportive in every way. He even took it upon himself to also become Tom's concert tour agent.

On the train between Shenyang and Harbin, Tom met six men from the remote Siberian city of Chita, about 250 kilometers from the border with China. Just four months earlier, in August, the border between China and Russia had opened after being closed since 1922. Reagan and Gorbachev had signed the INF Treaty nuclear arms control accord in 1987, and now the U.S. military had been to Chita, a major Soviet military base, to remove the nuclear warheads.

Now Siberia could do business with China. Free to cross the border, the Siberians—five sales reps along with their interpreter—were giddy with excitement and kept showing off their international passports.

They never dreamed that on top of everything else, they would meet an American, and Tom also



Piano concert at Library No. 5, Chita

never dreamed he would meet a group of Russians.

The Siberians and their interpreter, Sergei, with whom Tom is still friends, invited Tom to play a concert in Chita.

Growing up in a middle class, white, suburban, mainstream U.S. environment, Tom had always heard Russia and Communism presented in a negative way. Tom was saying to himself, “These guys are Russians. Aren't they supposed to be the enemy?” But they didn't seem like enemies.

As a result of his trip through China, Tom made arrangements to play concerts the next year in

Chita, Siberia, as well as in four Chinese cities: Harbin, Shenyang, Beijing and Shanghai.

In 1989, after his China tour was over, Tom set off for Chita, this time without Mr. Yang. He took the slow train from Harbin, which only went as far as the border. There, he expected to catch the Russian train to Chita, but there was nothing there, no buildings, no platform, no tracks, no town—only a flat, dusty plain, hot and bright. Really tired, he stood there staring at the vast expanse of land.

Suddenly, he was surrounded by

See Dickinson, page 13

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The high cost of gentrification

BY JOE HESLA

If you rent in Minneapolis, times are bad and getting worse.

Since the light rail and the phase 2 of the Greenway were completed in 2004, a lot of market rate (read gentrification) apartment buildings have been built along both corridors. Three examples:

The Station 38 apartment building stands near the light rail stop at 38th Street and Hiawatha Avenue. Rent is \$1460/month for an 863 square foot one-bedroom; and \$1700/month for a 1700 square foot two-bedroom.

Another example lies at Hiawatha and Lake on the Blue Line, prime real estate. Four years ago, developers began to push to “develop” at Hiawatha and Lake Street. After much public input insisting on including affordable housing, the developers were allowed to go ahead and build. “The Southsider” now stands across from the YWCA. Apartments rent from \$1100 - \$1700 per month for units from about 438 square feet to 1014 square feet.

The high-end apartments at SOPHI (south of Phillips) rise above the Greenway at Chicago and Lake Street. When you go to the first page of their website, you will see available apartments of

463 square feet for \$1450.

Clearly, most of these units are not sized for families. But are they affordable for the poor and working-class people who live in the area? I have several friends who work in food service in the Minneapolis Public Schools. Their average hourly wage is \$15 an hour.

“Cost-burdened” is considered having to spend any more than 30 percent of your income on housing. To pay \$1400 per month to rent an average Southsider apartment, my friends would have to pay more than half their salary on housing. To rent a one-bedroom apartment at Station 38, they would have to spend more than 60 percent of their salary for housing.

Consider that the Average Median Income (AMI) in Minneapolis is \$50,767. Fifty percent of AMI households would pay 80 percent of their income for the \$1700/month units. Even 80 percent of AMI households will pay over half of their income for a \$1700/month apartment. All of these households would be “cost-burdened.” Even with the average Minneapolis income of \$50,767, half of the apartments mentioned above would leave you “cost-burdened.” The unaffordability is shocking.

This just seems like the wrong

kind of development. There is no sense in having this expensive class of housing built here in this part of Minneapolis. Unless developers, investors and planners want a different class of people here in our neighborhoods.

It gets worse. These upscale developments create what is called a “rent gap.” When enough individual buildings are brought up to their highest potential rents, the rest of the properties in the neighborhood manifest a rent gap. Other landlords may then try to close that gap, to also rent their apartments for that high rent. Landlords do this through evictions, demolition and emptying their buildings by letting properties go unrepaired.

How did this happen? These new upscale developments did not happen by accident. Development is always planned. And how it happens is either with help from or lack of action by City Hall.

In November, the Minneapolis City Council did take action with an “inclusionary zoning” policy for new housing projects of 20 or more units. The policy requires a certain percent of newly constructed apartments to be affordable. Percentages required range from 8 percent to 20 percent affordable for incomes from 60 percent to 30 percent of the average

median income.

In response to the chilling statistics above, why not require 30 percent or even 50 percent of new housing built to be affordable? When I asked city staff this, they said they worry that developers

Toward higher rents, and greater profit.

The city is already unaffordable. A household income of \$50,000 can afford only 14 percent of the apartments on the market. A family of four with a \$30,000 house-



will take their money to other cities if we require too high of a percentage of affordable housing.

But here’s the rub. Our City Hall is presented with two options by big real estate: gentrification or disinvestment. This threat leads city planners to set low percentages of affordable housing for new construction, fearing capital flight. Developers and real estate influence our city planners always in one direction. To make land and property more expensive.

hold income will find nothing available to rent on the market.

So when City Hall says they must set low levels of affordable housing, our response should be to demand bold thinking that isn’t hampered by the usual cozy relationship the city has with big developers and profiteers.

We need to take control away from the partnership of city planners and big real estate developers and imagine a different world.

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Minnesotans go to anti-imperialist congress in Venezuela

BY BRAD SIGAL & SARAH MARTIN

The World Anti-Imperialist Congress held in Caracas, Venezuela, Jan. 22 to 24, brought to-

The congress brought together a broad range of anti-imperialist organizations, movements and governments. At the congress we exchanged views and experiences and strategized about strengthen-



Jim Byrne, Brad Sigal, Gladys Requena, VP National Constituent Assembly and VP of the Women’s Commission of the PSUV, and Sarah Martin

gether hundreds of delegates from over 50 countries. Brad Sigal from MIRAC (Minnesota Immigrants Rights Committee) and Sarah Martin from WAMM (Women Against Military Madness) were a part of the U.S. delegation.

ing the struggle against U.S. imperialism, to create a more peaceful world where the national sovereignty of countries is respected. The congress was hosted by the United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV), Venezuela’s lead-

ing party, which has been under sharp attack by U.S. imperialism.

Venezuela has been in the crosshairs of U.S. regime change since 1998 when Hugo Chavez was swept into power and the struggle for Venezuelan self-determination and sovereignty was begun. Chavez was supported by movements from all sectors of the society—workers, campesinos and students, as well as others who had fought for years against a repressive regime, which had only benefited rich oligarchs and foreign oil companies. In the years prior to Chavez, 86 percent of the people—the majority of whom are brown or black—had lived in poverty even though Venezuela is an oil and mineral rich country.

Once in power, the people, with Chavez as their president, wrote a new constitution based on equality and human rights, which lifted the lives of all the people, particularly the poor.

See Venezuela, page 13

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Medical advances in socialist Cuba

Last August, 2019, I wrote “Contrast between real world and the movies” in Southside Pride criticizing cineaste aficionado Tony Bouza for his lack of appreciation for the medical achievements of Cuba since the revolution of 1959. That island nation implemented its Universal Medical Coverage for its own people, and also extended its medical services to many other countries in Latin America, in Africa and in Asia, as the need was recognized.

Through its Latin American School of Medicine in La Havana, Cuba has extended medical school education to people in many countries, who needed more physicians for the people in their own countries. That training has been provided at NO COST to those medical students who attend this academic institution. And YES, that includes students from the United States of America, in spite of the Embargo by the U.S. against Cuba. Over 70 graduated physicians from the U.S., and educated in Cuba, are now practicing medicine in the U.S.

This socialist Republic of Cuba has done much more humanitarian work than the training of men and women from many countries of the world. After the nuclear disaster at Chernobyl, in April 1986, Cuba offered its medical facilities to help more than 20,000 Ukrainians affected by the exposure from the failed nuclear reactor, in spite of the United States Embargo on Cuba.

The Minnesota Cuban Film Festival will be held on Thursdays, Feb. 27 through April 2, 2020, at St. Anthony Main Theatre, Mpls. Among the films to be presented is one called “Un Traductor” (or “A Translator”), which relates the medical actions Cuba took to help over 20,000 people exposed to the radiation from Chernobyl. Cuba was the only country in the world to take in victims from Chernobyl, at no cost to the victims.

Please consider attending this showing, to become more aware what this island nation, Cuba, blockaded by the U.S. government, is doing for people in need of medical help.

Enrique Gentzsch

EVENTS

Taizé Service
Friday, Feb. 14, 7 p.m.
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.

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>.

Beyond the City: Hunger in Dakota County
Sunday, Feb. 16,
9 to 9:50 a.m.
Nokomis Heights Lutheran Church
5300 10th Ave. S., Mpls.
Food insecurity is not limited to the urban setting. As part of Nokomis Heights’ Sunday Forum series, Jason Viana, Executive Director of The Open Door, the largest food shelf in Dakota County, will dive into the realities of suburban poverty. From employment and wage trends to broad health disparities, he will provide a glimpse into the challenges facing hunger relief efforts.

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.

Organ Recital:
Scott Turkington
Sunday, Feb. 16, 2:30 p.m.
St. Mark’s Episcopal Cathedral
519 Oak Grove St., Mpls.
Scott Turkington, Concert Organist and Organist and Choirmaster of Holy Family Catholic Church, St. Louis Park, makes his first appearance in St. Mark’s concert series, performing works of Bach, Widor, Langlais and Franck. Free admission.

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper
Tuesday, Feb. 25
5:30 to 6:30 p.m.
Nokomis Heights Lutheran Church
5300 10th Ave. S., Mpls.
Join us for all-you-can-eat pan-

cakes and sausage, piled high with Mardi Gras Fun! Freewill offering.

Ash Wednesday at Faith
Wednesday, Feb. 26
Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church
3430 E. 51st St., Mpls.
7 to 9 a.m. Private Confession, Absolution, and Distribution of Ashes
5 p.m. Soup Supper
7 p.m. Communion Worship and Distribution of Ashes

Ash Wednesday Worship
Wednesday, Feb. 26, 7 p.m.
Nokomis Heights Lutheran Church
5300 10th Ave. S., Mpls.
Join us as we usher in the holy season of Lent, with song, prayer, Holy Communion, and the imposition of ashes.

Ash Wednesday Masses
Wednesday, Feb. 26
8:15 a.m. and 7 p.m.
Church of St. Albert the Great
E. 29th St. at 32nd Ave S., Mpls.
Ash Wednesday Masses at 8:15 a.m. and 7 p.m. with distribution of ashes. Church of St. Albert the Great, at the corner of E. 29th Street and 32nd Ave. S. in Minneapolis. Accessible entry behind statue.

St. Albert’s Famous Fish Dinners
Fridays, Feb. 28—April 3
4:30 to 7:30 p.m.
Church of St. Albert the Great
E. 29th St. at 32nd Ave S., Mpls.
St. Albert’s Famous Fish Dinners on the six Fridays of Lent, Feb. 28 through April 3. Full dinner of baked or fried, responsibly-sourced tilapia, potatoes, meatless spaghetti, coleslaw, rolls, desserts and beverages for just \$15. Children ages 6-12, \$7. Kids 5 and under free. That night’s volunteers can also eat for \$7 – call 612-724-3643 if you’d like to volunteer. Bingo from 5:30 to 7:30 pm, plus raffles and live music. Additional parking one block north at Anne Sullivan School, served by shuttle bus. www.saintalbert-thegreat.org.

Lenten Prayer Service
Saturday, Feb. 29, 1o a.m.
St. Mark’s Episcopal Cathedral
519 Oak Grove St., Mpls.
“I come into the peace of wild things who do not tax their lives with forethought of grief ... For a time I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.” Please join us for a Lenten Prayer Service with the poetry of Wendell Berry and song offered by St. Mark’s own Devin Malone. If you wish, bring a poem to share by your favorite poet.

Lent Procession Service of Lessons and Hymns
Sunday, March 1, 4 p.m.
Mount Olive Lutheran Church
3045 Chicago Ave. S., Mpls.
Join Mount Olive Music and Fine Arts for a contemplative service of lessons and carols—for Lent! Typically associated with Advent and Christmas, this

service is designed especially for those caught up in preparations for the coming Easter and spring seasons. It provides an opportunity to withdraw from the busyness of life to pray, sing, listen, smell—an opportunity to fully enter into the season of Lent, a time to renew our lives as baptized children of God. Presented by Mount Olive Cantorei, David Cherwien, director and organist. Free and open to the public. For more information, email cantor@mountolivechurch.org, or go to www.mountolivechurch.org.

Midweek Soup Suppers and Lenten Worship
Wednesday, March 4, 11, and 18
6 to 6:30 p.m. (soup) and 7 to 7:30 p.m. (worship)
Nokomis Heights Lutheran Church
5300 10th Ave. S., Mpls.
Come for a hearty supper of soup and bread and stay for contemplative worship of scripture readings, reflection, hymns, and Holden Evening Prayer.

ONGOING

Events at Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church
3430 E. 51st St. (kitty-corner from the Nokomis Library)
Ash Wednesday, Feb. 26—7 to 9 a.m. Private Confession, Absolution, and Distribution of Ashes; 5 p.m. Soup Supper; 7 p.m. Communion Worship and Distribution of Ashes
Blind Ministry Outreach—Saturday, March 14, noon to 2 p.m. Includes dinner, devotions and fellowship.
Book Club, Saturday, March 7, 10 a.m.—“The Zookeepers Wife” by Niki Caro
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.

Sharing Food

New Creation Baptist Church
1414 E. 48th St.
Mpls. 55417
612-825-6933
Food Shelf
Saturdays (except 5th Saturdays) 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
(Brown door on the corner of 48th St. and 15th Ave.)

Living Spirit United Methodist Church
4501 Bloomington Ave. S.
Mpls. 55407
612-721-5025
Community Supper
Wednesdays, 5:45 to 6:30 p.m.

Minnehaha United Methodist Church
3701 E. 50th St.
Mpls. 55417
612-721-6231
Food Shelf every Tuesday 1o a.m. to 2 p.m.

The Nokomis Religious Community Welcomes You

Christian

BETHEL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
4120 17th Ave. S.
612-724-3693, www.bethel-mpls.org
Education for All Ages 9:20 am
Sunday Worship 10:30 am
Pastor: Brenda Froisland
Accessible Off-Street Parking
In gratitude, Bethel amplifies God’s grace, nourishes all creation, reaches out and builds community.
**A Reconciling in Christ Congregation*
**Bethel CYF Ministries: Bridging generations to model, equip, encourage a foundation of trust in God’s story*

CATHOLIC CHURCH OF ST. ALBERT THE GREAT
E. 29th St. & 32nd Ave. S.
612-724-3643
Mass M, T, TH, F at 8:15 am
Saturday 5 pm & Sunday 9:30 am
Sunday Morning Liturgy of the Word for Children
www.saintalbertthegreat.org

CATHOLIC CHURCH OF THE HOLY NAME
3637 11th Ave. S.
612-724-5465
Masses Saturday 5 pm
Sunday 8:30 & 11 am
Reconciliation Saturday 4-4:30 pm
Pastor: Fr. Leo Schneider
A welcoming Roman Catholic community

FAITH EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
3430 E. 51st St.
612-729-5463
www.faithlutheranmpls.org
Sunday Worship 9 am (Holy Com-

munion 1st & 3rd Sundays)
Fellowship 10 am
Education hour 10:30 am
Midweek Bible Study, Wednesdays 11 am
Midweek Lenten Services, Wednesdays 7 pm
Pastor: Rev. Jesse Davis

FIRST FREE CHURCH
5150 Chicago Ave. S.
612-827-4705
www.firstfreechurch.org
Worship 9 am & 10:30 am
Fellowship Time 10 am
Christ-Centered, Christ-sent

HOLY CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH, LCMS
1720 E. Minnehaha Pkwy.
612-722-1083
www.holycrossmpls.org
Worship 9:30 am
Sunday Bible Study
“Read Through the Bible” 10:45 am
Pastor: Bruce Laabs

HOPE LUTHERAN CHURCH
5728 Cedar Ave. S.
612-827-2655
www.hopempls.org
Bible Chat 9 am
Sunday Worship 10 am
All are welcome, no exceptions

LIVING SPIRIT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
A Multicultural, Intergenerational Church
4501 Bloomington Ave.
612-721-5025
www.livingspiritumc.org
Sunday Worship at 10:30 am
Community Supper Wed. 5:45 pm

MOUNT ZION LUTHERAN - LCMS
5645 Chicago Ave. S.
612-824-1882
Sunday Worship 9 am
Browse our outdoor lending library!
www.mtzioninmpls.org

NEW CREATION BAPTIST CHURCH
1414 E. 48th St.
612-825-6933
Sunday School/New Members Class 9:30 am; Devotion 10:45 am
Worship & Praise 11 am
Tues. Youth & Adult Bible Study 7 pm
Pastor: Rev. Dr. Daniel B. McKizzie

NOKOMIS HEIGHTS LUTHERAN CHURCH – ELCA
5300 10th Ave. S.
612-825-6846
www.nokomisheights.org
Sunday Worship 10 am
Forum/Sunday School 9 am

ST JOAN OF ARC CATHOLIC COMMUNITY
www.stjoan.com, 4537 Third Ave.
Masses: Saturday 5 pm (Church)
Sunday 7:45 am (Church)
Sunday, Family Mass, 9:45 & 11:45 am (Church)
Sunday 9 & 11 am (Gym)
Weekday, Tue. & Thu. 8 am (Orleans Chapel)
We Welcome You Wherever You Are On Your Journey



All Directory Churches are Wheelchair Accessible

The Church responds to war

BY AMY BLUMENSHINE

As the drums beat once more to rev up the nation for war with Iran, the moral, religious and psychological consequences get little consideration. As a deacon called by the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) to address the suffering of military veterans and their families, I will attempt to briefly address these issues.

War is evil. “War is the greatest plague that can afflict humanity; it destroys religions, it destroys states, it destroys families,” said Martin Luther, the unintentional namesake of my religious denomination. From his perspective in 16th century Europe, he proclaimed, “Any scourge is preferable to it {war}.”

Christian military chaplain William Mahedy from his perspective in the American War in Vietnam wrote, “War is a moral sewer.” In war, combatants are encouraged to excel in activities that are crimes in civil society. In lawful societies, we criminalize these activities because they rupture the harmony of how we live together. Our capacity to love and trust and flourish is impaired by violence.

In recent years, we have begun to identify lasting moral injury that stems from violating these “laws of the heart.” I encourage

you to read more at <https://www.warandmoralinjury.org/faq>.

While war-making also destroys homes, psyches and livelihoods, taking life is an irrecoverable consequence. Here I stand in the midst of countless popular fictions to proclaim a counter-narrative: Killing can’t be undone. Rarely does our entertainment community tell the truth about the consequences of taking life; the truth is too painful to be popular. We pretend as though killing is without consequence in fictions such as Rambo and James Bond.

Countless military veterans have struggled with the aftermath of doing what they were trained and sent to do—as have their families and communities. Indeed, there have been little-understood ramifications for all of us. Having been targets and perpetrators of lethal violence, one of the common ramifications is never feeling safe again.

As individuals trying to be moral actors in our world, we turn to our religions for guidance for doing what is right. Clearly there are great differences in our religions and within our religions. As ELCA, we have a long and thorough process of developing social statements: well-researched and thoughtful documents about how our theology applies to daily life that are then voted on by

assemblies—always asking for God’s guidance.

Additionally, ELCA Lutherans gather in annual congregational meetings and send representatives to our local synod assembly—here the Minneapolis Area Synod—and resolutions are brought forward. To accurately speak on behalf of our church, I refer below to such a particular resolution addressing U.S. war efforts. In our deliberations, we refer constantly to the Bible and to the leadership of Jesus, but space does not permit including that here.

In our resolution on U.S. war efforts, our synod assembly called for these actions:

First, we called on the congregations and people of this synod to a time of communal soul-searching on the moral impact and societal consequences of expanded U.S. war efforts. Specifically, we need to reflect on what reacting to violence with more violence has achieved.

We further made three requests of our congressional delegation:

1) To follow the U.S. Constitution’s insistence that only the Congress can authorize war;

2) To remove consent for the Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF), passed by the Congress in the immediate aftermath of the 9/11/01 tragedy, so that it is not applied indefinitely

and indiscriminately to all countries and targets;

3) And that Congress hold hearings evaluating the consequences of U.S. military action since 1990 on global violence and instability and issue a report.

I will note that Representative Ilhan Omar’s War Powers resolution, passed by the House of Representatives on January 9, 2020, is in accord with the requests to require congressional approval for war and to limit use of the old AUMF’s granted in such different circumstances.

Overall, the issue is to discern when it is legal, permissible, to kill—the irrecoverable consequence.

In the Lutheran synod assembly’s explanation for the “Soul-Searching on Expanded War Efforts” resolution, it talks about our current situation: “Our world finds itself simultaneously dealing with promoters of religious war and of war between nuclear powers. Since 1990, U.S. policy has expanded our targets for lethal military action to many global settings. In waging war, harm to the next generations in environmental destruction and genetic mutation is caused as well as much acute human misery. In waging war, great public expense is incurred removing resources from life-sustaining and vital so-

cial needs. In waging war since 9/11/01, nearly half of American military personnel have identified themselves as suffering from chronic disabilities impairing life for themselves and their families/communities and causing an epidemic in suicide and early deaths.”

Our synod passed this resolution before the most recent assassination of an Iranian general (along with nine others), but the resolution has been recently affirmed as still appropriate. Lutherans have long supported the primacy of conscience. The large tent of our belief includes supporting those who conscientiously object to all war killing.

Side note: We celebrate the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. at this time on the calendar. He and his father share the name of the Protestant reformer because after learning more about Martin Luther, MLK Jr.’s father legally changed both their names. Both MLK father and son were Baptist Protestant pastors. MLK Jr. preached against all forms of injustice. He preached that, as the Poor People’s Campaign states, “the interlocking injustices of systemic racism, poverty, ecological devastation, the war economy/militarism and the distorted moral narrative of religious nationalism must be ended.”

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Dickinson, from page 10

a group of men who showed him the way to a nearby town. In a restaurant, they crowded around a small table and ordered him northern Chinese food, thick and substantial, like beef stew. The men, from Kazakhstan, were determined to show Tom the maximum in hospitality. Potent alcohol was flowing, spirits were high and everyone was singing. Tom felt pretty wiped out. They put him up in their dormitory room in an adorable hotel. In the morning, Sergei, the interpreter, was there to get Tom onto the train to Chita.

Tom was in Chita for four days. People he met asked him why he was in Chita (which is “nowhere”) instead of in Moscow (which is “somewhere”).

He played a concert on a bright red “Moscow” piano in a music school packed to capacity with people hanging out the doors. He was the first Western artist to cross the Sino-Russo border since 1959.

He was invited to a picnic outside the city at a friend’s dacha, or cabin. It was their custom to go to the country-

side, make shishkebobs, hang out and have a Russian banya (sauna).

Amid much toasting, everyone agreed that they never thought Russia and China would ever be friends but they were, and they never thought they’d meet an American.

Tom felt the same awe. His parents had never talked politics exactly, but he had always received the message about “the evil enemy,” on TV, in the culture, in the air. He can’t believe how much he had been indoctrinated against the “Commies,” whether Chinese or Russian.

In Chita he discovered that, “I had missed so much by not knowing there are people in the world living full, rich lives and they have nothing to do with my view of the world.”

Since Siberian Bridges was formed, in 1993 (first as Musical Bridges), Tom has been back to Chita many times, staying there once for a stretch of 10 months.

He believes that the inherent bias of Americans (from the U.S.) is to think their country is superior and can “help” others. He feels it’s important to cultivate mu-

tuality in Siberian Bridges, where both cultures propose projects they want to work on and both cultures are open to learning from each other. He wants ideas to come from both sides and both sides work on them. It is important that we U.S. Americans not impose our ideas. People in other cultures are equally valid. He likes to get news about Russia from his friends in Chita—to see the international panorama through their eyes.

Siberian Bridges is trying to establish regular tours of the Zabaikalsky region. In past years, Dickinson has led groups of people from the U.S. on tours in Siberia. Hopefully there will be a tour in 2020 or 2021. It will be for travelers from the U.S. together with Siberian travelers who are learning English—and others of any nationality are welcome.

For more detailed information about Zabaikalye, please go to Siberian Bridges’ stunning website at siberianbridges.org. (Go to thomasdickinsonpianist.net for information about creative piano study.)

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Venezuela, from page 11

Since 1998, the accomplishments of the “Bolivarian Revolution,” ushered in with Chavez and named after Simon Bolivar, who liberated the region from colonial Spanish rule in the early 19th century, are impressive. Poverty has been cut in half and abject poverty has disappeared. Three million affordable homes have been built. Contrast this with the growing homelessness in this country.

Venezuela now ranks sixth in the world in terms of enrollment in primary education and has increased its coverage of secondary education to 73 percent of the population. College is free.

Venezuela also saw gains in the civil rights of historically oppressed sectors of Venezuelan society, like women, Afro-Indigenous people and the LGBTQ community. Its labor laws are among the most progressive in the world.

The electoral system is internationally recognized as one of the fairest, freest, most transparent and secure in the world, with incredible safeguards through every step of the process. Voter fraud is virtually impossible. The right to vote is in the constitution. After the government’s aggressive and thorough search in malls, neighborhoods and on street corners to register voters, now only 3.8 percent aren’t registered. Compare this with continuing attempts to disenfranchise black and brown people

in the U.S. By law, every political party on the ballot must have 40 to 60 percent women as candidates. Trans candidates register as their preference.

Chavez revolutionized the health care system, and life expectancy climbed to age 74. Using the Cuban-style system, he built 13,000 popular neighborhood clinics; community doctors work shoulder to shoulder with Cuban doctors. Pregnant Colombian women who live near the border often come over to Venezuela to have their children delivered without charge.

Since the death of Chavez in 2013, when Nicholas Maduro, Chavez’ protégé, became president, the U.S. has ratcheted up pressure on the Venezuelan government by implementing draconian sanctions and an economic war. Oil exports have fallen drastically, Venezuelan money in global banks has been frozen and the U.S. manipulates the global money system to destabilize Venezuelan currency. The Venezuelan economy has shrunk by over 50 percent.

The extreme sanctions have led to a drastic decrease in the availability of essentials—especially those needed to treat the most frequent health conditions: heart, cancer and kidney failure.

However, in the last couple of years, China, Russia, India, Cuba and Turkey have stepped in and found their way around the sanctions by buying Venezuela’s oil and sending medicines and supplies to the country.

Longfellow visits Minnehaha

BY ED FELIEN

Minnehaha Senior Living, an assisted-living community located in South Minneapolis, has recently added a new library for its tenants and dedicated it to Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, the poet famous for writing “The Song of Hiawatha.” Doug Ernst, a local historian and Longfellow reenactment presenter, came to Minnehaha Senior Living to talk with Molly Blomgren, Community Life Director about a re-enactment presentation.

Longfellow was born of privilege, the son of Mayflower emigrants and a Revolutionary War general. His father founded Bowdoin College, and Bowdoin College offered him his first job as librarian, requiring one hour a week attendance to duties. He refused and demanded a higher salary. The college relented and Longfellow began his long, tethered relationship to academe.

Much was made in the 19th century about Longfellow’s “Song of Hiawatha” borrowing from the Finnish saga “The Kalevala.” Both



A new Longfellow Library opened at Minnehaha Senior Living. Pictured is Molly Blomgren, Community Life Director at Minnehaha Senior Living and Doug Ernst, historian (portraying Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, writer of “The Song of Hiawatha”).

epic poems share the same narrative outline and moral. The heroine dies, a victim of starvation and a harsh winter:

“O’er this cold and cruel country,

O’er the poor soil of the Northland.”

— from The Kalevala.

Longfellow had studied in Finland. He knew “The Kalevala,” and he probably understood the threat of extinction that hung over the Finnish people. The Finns and the Hungarians share a language unlike others in Europe. They were the two most western outposts of the Mongol Empire in the 13th century. Natives of the regions also share a Mongolian fold, a slight slanting of the eyes—common to Finns, Hungarians and neighboring regions (e.g. Melania Trump).

When Nordic and Goth tribes invaded from the south, the Mongols moved out of the way, farther north. Enough remained to intermarry and leave their mark upon their Nordic conquering tribe, and leave a tragic memory of a culture lost and destroyed.

Longfellow must have seen the parallels to the Finns mourning the loss of their Indigenous peo-

ples with the contemporary genocide of the American Indians.

“The Song of Hiawatha” was written in 1855. The memory of the Trail of Tears in 1831, the forced resettlement of Cherokees that resulted in 4,000 dying from cold and hunger, was still fresh in people’s minds.

Something even more fresh in people’s minds was the installments of “Uncle Tom’s Cabin,” or “Life Among the Lowly,” written by Harriet Beecher Stowe beginning in 1852. Her book inspired such deep sympathy with the struggles of African Americans that it motivated a nation to go to war to end slavery.

Longfellow, no doubt, hoped “The Song of Hiawatha” would inspire similar sympathies for the First Americans.

Doug Ernst will do a reading of “The Song of Hiawatha” and give a talk about Longfellow’s life on March 13 at 2:30 p.m. in the Activity Room, Minnehaha Senior Living, 3733 23rd Ave S. The talk will be open to the public. Everyone is welcome. Doug will be in costume. He is the executive director at the Richfield Historical Society and is a regular speaker there as well.

63B, from page 6

neapolis Public Schools. She attended Spelman College in Atlanta, graduating with a degree in chemistry and later got a law degree from Mitchell Hamline College of Law. She served as the human rights commissioner in Richfield and is currently a member of the Richfield Foundation Board and the city’s transportation commissioner. She was a Fifth Congressional District chair and has held a number of other DFL leadership roles.

Eric Ferguson said that he will focus his campaign on what he calls “Big Ideas” that he said might seem out-of-the-box but could help to solve large societal problems in the long term.

Ferguson believes that the current housing crisis started more than 40 years ago, when Minneapolis had a population of 500,000 people. Today, there are 70,000 fewer people but, “As freeways cut huge swaths through neighborhoods, they removed hundreds, if not thousands of housing units,” he said.

Highways could be bridged over and housing could be built there on the area, he said. He pointed out that there already exists a section of Hiawatha Avenue that has been bridged over and has been converted to parkland and a public flower garden.

Ferguson admits that this idea might take time, but said that creating more housing, supporting mass transit and reconnecting neighborhoods would make this worth the effort.

Ferguson supports a state-wide single payer health plan that would cover all Minnesotans for all their medical needs. “There is

no use for private health insurance,” he said.

In education, he proposes an idea he called the “Commit to Minnesota” plan, where post-secondary school would be free for anyone who qualified, if they committed to living and working in Minnesota for five years after graduation. These newly educated citizens would stay here and bring in more taxes, he said. It would be an investment in Minnesota.

Ferguson also wants to require liability insurance for gun ownership. “If you need liability insurance to drive a car, you should be required to have it for a gun,” he said.

Ferguson is a freelance web designer and served as the chair of DFL District 63 for three terms, a position that gave him the experience needed in a legislator. “You have to organize. You have to get people to work together. There was never a guarantee that we’d get a turnout of DFL voters, but we never had to start from scratch,” he said, crediting his organizing district volunteers who worked to get DFL voters registered and then to the polls on election day.

Jerome Evans said that his campaign would focus on education, health care, and environment.

He is concerned about the lower quality education that black kids get in Minneapolis, but thinks this can be improved by government investment in schools, community organizations, child care and preschool programs including expanding before, after and summer school programs.

“Currently, the education system does not produce people who can get good jobs,” he said. “We should be investing in students so they want to stay in Minnesota,”

which would bring in more taxes that could fund programs for the elderly.

“If you ask how we’ll pay for that,” he said, “we gave Delta [Airlines] an \$800 million dollar tax break. We pay for a stadium and for wars. We can pay for this.” He said that some funding could be raised through legal marijuana sales and a lottery.

Evans is an advocate for single payer health care and supports greater investment in public health. “There’s a lack of attention to public health in Minnesota. On the hyper-local level, we are dealing with issues that should be on the state level.

“Climate change is a public health crisis. There are solutions and they weave into all the other issues. We need to teach environmental science in the schools. We need to have an electric vehicle grid throughout Minnesota, and create renewable energy, especially in rural Minnesota.”

Change, he said, takes more than emotional arguments. “You can talk racial justice until you are blue in the face, but to reach the GOP Senate and House, you have to start talking about data.”

Originally from Atlanta, Evans attended law school in Georgia and soon after, moved to Minneapolis. “I was lucky to find a community where values align with my own,” he said. He is the chair of the Nokomis East Neighborhood Association and the co-chair of the Public Health Advisory Committee for the City of Minneapolis.

Joel Burns, the District 63 Republican chair, says Frank Pafko, retired from State of Minnesota Department of Transportation, is confirmed to be running for 63B.



NOKOMIS EDITION

Southside Pride Nokomis Edition is a monthly community newspaper delivered on the Second Monday of the month for free to over 100 locations in and around the Nokomis 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.

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Fire!

BY ELINA KOLSTAD

As we enter a new decade, Australia is burning, and in Minneapolis two fires killed residents in affordable housing units in recent months.

While bush fires are a common occurrence in Australia, climate scientists have long warned that fires would get worse and here we are. The Australian government has been criticized for not being more proactive about climate change and maintaining its dependence on coal even in the face of the catastrophic fires. The scale and horror of the fires have jolted many to awareness of the future we have cooked for ourselves, but those in power cling to business as usual.

The Australian bush fires have displaced thousands of people, even trapping 4,000 people on the beach in Mallacoota as the new decade dawned. As of Jan. 13, around 2,000 homes had been destroyed. Even those living in cities that are “safe” are experiencing

severe air quality issues: “Kristy McBain ... instructed those who flee to come here to Canberra. ... Meanwhile, I have taped up every door and many of the windows of our house, but it still smells like smoke in every room. ... ‘Australia’s present is the world’s future. Global warming continues, and it’s terrifying.’ “ (<https://theintercept.com/2020/01/01/banal-ty-apocalypse-australian-fire/>)

Meanwhile, in Minneapolis, two fires struck affordable housing options within a month of one another. The first, a fire that killed 5 and made at least 9 units uninhabitable, struck just before Thanksgiving. The second, luckily, saw no fatalities but displaced about 250 homeless people on Christmas Day. Fortunately, the displaced, who included families with children, were connected with new housing options within days of the fire.

A major factor in the devastation of these fires was the lack of sprinkler systems in these buildings. While these buildings were built before sprinkler systems were required by code, this is a



pathetic excuse when you consider that “The St. Paul Public Housing Agency began installing sprinklers in high-rises in the late 1990s and completed the work in those 16 buildings by 2013, said Louise Seeba, PHA deputy executive director and general counsel. Between the sprinklers and the fire alarm systems being replaced, the cost was \$8.3 million.” (<https://www.twincities.com/2019/11/29/in-minneapolis-fire-that-killed-5-apartment-building-was-too-old-to-require-sprinklers-whats-the-situation-in-st-paul-high-rises/>). To put that in perspective, U.S. Bank Stadium cost state and

local taxpayers nearly \$500 million dollars and Minneapolis pays an additional \$7.5 million each year for operations and maintenance.

In Minneapolis we are failing to house all of our residents with a basic level of safety and security. Our city government needs to start taking real action to house our homeless, maintain and create more truly affordable housing, and examine the resilience of our infrastructure for an ever-closer climate change future. If we can’t house all of our people now, what chaos is possible when climate refugees begin fleeing an East Coast under water or a West Coast ravaged by fire and drought?

Some might say that the best way forward is to tear all the old outdated buildings down and build new ones. But how can we

trust the city with shiny new toys when they destroy what they currently have through negligence? Especially when much of the new construction is “five-over-one” balloon frame buildings with five stories of apartments over a ground-floor “podium” of parking and/or retail. This type of construction is highly flammable and presents other potential fire safety problems.

We need to invest money and time into making sure that all of our buildings are as safe as possible, whether they are historic or new construction. As we ensure fire safety, we would also benefit from analyzing the resilience of our buildings within the framework of potential catastrophic climate change. It might not be the easiest or most profitable thing to do, but it will save lives.

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