



We build Pride on the Southside

RIVERSIDE EDITION

THIRD MONDAY OF THE MONTH

February 2020

VOL. XXX, ISSUE 6

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.

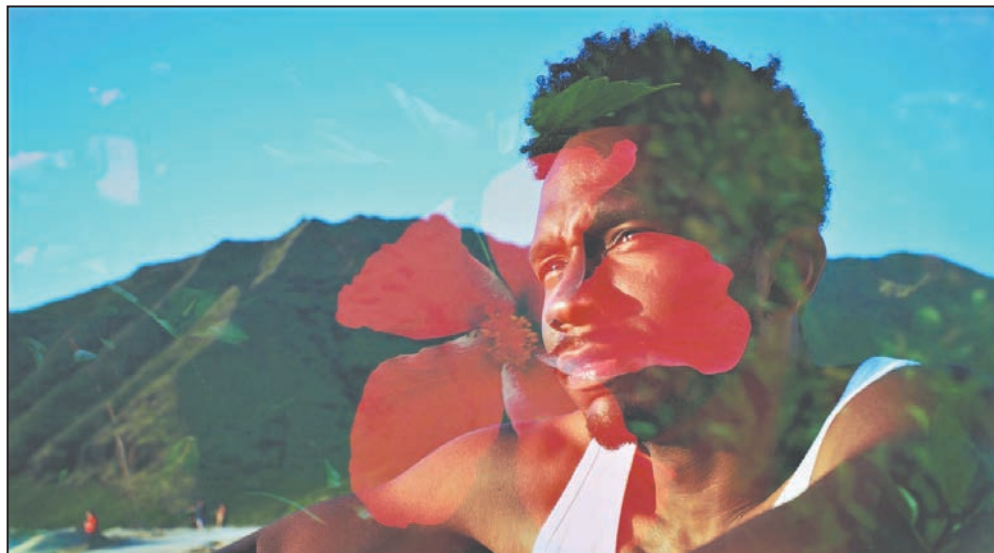
America's No. 1 problem is racism.

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?

See Bouza, page 9



MaLLy and The Journey To A Smile: If you are familiar with hip-hop music then you are familiar with MaLLy. The Minneapolis rap artist returns with a new music video, Flying, from his new album, The Journey To A Smile. FLYING is colorful, uplifting and triumphant, shot on the beautiful island of Oahu, Hawaii. The Journey To A Smile was released in September 2019 and is available on all streaming platforms, Electric Fetus, Down In The Valley, Cheapo and Urban Lights. Direct link to video: <https://youtu.be/XqaFU0jbvys>

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 Minne-

sota
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.

People in Ward 6 should be having a special endorsing convention because their City Council member, Abdi Warsame, is resigning to accept the position of executive director/CEO of the Minneapolis Public Housing Authority. The Minneapolis City Council can appoint whomever it chooses to fill Warsame's seat; however, when I was on the City Council and John Derus resigned to take a seat on the Hennepin County Board, the council determined to wait for the endorsement of the Ward 4 DFL special convention and, instead of appointing John's brother as he wanted, we appointed his aunt, Alice Rainville, the

See Caucus, page 7

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 consultant to "complete the resident-led process of furthering the Neighborhoods 2020 framework and developing program guidelines at the 'Collaborate' level



Image: Bob Millea

of engagement based on the International Association of Public Participation Spectrum."

In response to recent public 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 [sic] of this work is white homeowners.

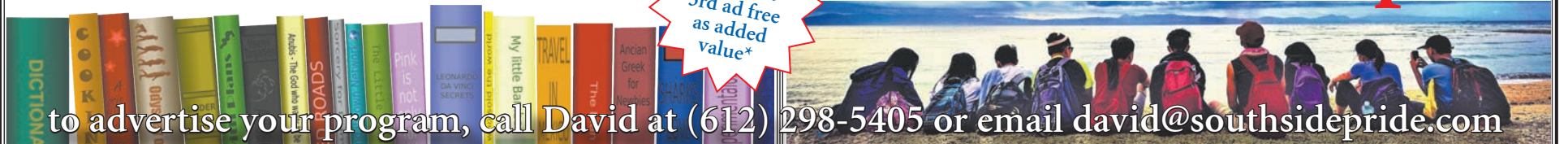
See CURA, page 7

Special Southside Pride Sections Coming out in March!

Education

Summer Camp

run 2 ads and get a 3rd ad free as added value



to advertise your program, call David at (612) 298-5405 or email david@southsidepride.com

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 nonprofit 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 Flo-tilla 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.

Join us on leap day
at Minnehaha Senior Living!

Leap Year Party



Enjoy an assortment of delicious snacks, sip on a Grasshopper, play games for your chance to win great prizes and leap on over to Providence for the ice sculpture competition & prizes.

Saturday, February 29th
from 1-3 pm

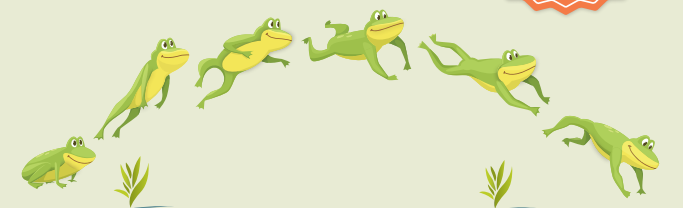
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CAP-HC's Energy Assistance Program (EAP) provides financial assistance to eligible Hennepin County residents, including the city of Minneapolis, to help with home energy costs and heat related repairs.

Energy Assistance Program offices are now open in St. Louis Park and 3 Minneapolis locations: Minnesota Council of Churches, Sabathani Community Center and Minneapolis Urban League

For more information, call 952-930-3541
visit us online at www.caphennepin.org
E-mail: eap@caphennepin.org
or text 4WARMTH to 555888



A program of Community Action Partnership of Hennepin County, sponsored by:
The Minnesota Department of Commerce & The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Call us today - You shouldn't have
to choose between having heat or food!

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,



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 mischievous 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, 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, 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 cancella-

cellation 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.

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 hobt sun canoe flotilla wants to paddle as well as the tree of life puppet crew wants to raise the tree!

So,

I was asked to create a community puppet pageant on that same footprint at the same time—

Are there going to be 4 or 5 "ceremonies" each vying for that spot?

Hobt said "cancelled"

Not— "a slightly truncated version will happen"

And,

It seems various parties are organizing 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

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.



Tobias, Dahnn and Ariana

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.

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

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.

tion 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 decision 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 hobt not doing puppets anymore since day one.

He has wanted hobt 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 can-

join us at

Tapestry

Stay active this winter, meet new friends, and learn how to dance!

Tapestry Folkdance Center offers a wide range of dance classes from all around the world - **no partner required!** Whatever your skill level, you're bound to find a class that fits your needs. Visit our website to explore our array of dances, classes, and events!

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EVENTS

Minnesota Bach Ensemble
"Emperors & Tyrants"
Monday, Feb. 17, 7 p.m. **M**
 MacPhail Center for Music
 Antonello Hall
 501 S. 2nd St., Mpls.
 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/>.

Neighborhood Night—
Everyone Welcome!
Wednesday, Feb. 19
7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. **T**
 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.churchoftheholynam.org/; 612-724-5465.

February at Bryant-Lake Bowl
 Bryant-Lake Bowl
 Cabaret Theater
 810 W. Lake St., Mpls. **T**
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
 maaaaaybe 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? Sing-
 ing her damned heart out. Join
 Colleen, backed by a full
 band and sharing the stage with
 a cast of Twin Cities musical lu-
 minaries, 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)
Friday, Feb. 28 and March 6,

7 p.m.
Saturdays, Feb. 29 and
March 7, 7 p.m.
Sunday, March 1, 7 p.m.
Monday, March 2, 7 p.m.
 This 90-minute play follows
 Sebastian and Claryssa, two
 friends brought together by
 their mutual misfit status. They
 take a warped journey through
 their past, re-living their most
 horrifying memories. This play
 isn't your standard kitchen-sink
 drama—it's more like a wild
 fever dream on a playground.
 Produced by Ben Lohrberg and
 Sophina Saggau, directed by Ben
 Lohrberg, featuring Luke Myers
 and Sophina Saggau. More info
 and tickets:
https://www.bryantlakebowl.com/theater/moth/?mc_id=1680.

Poetry & Prose with Kris
Bigalk, Heidi Czerwiec, and
Sonia Greenfield **L**
Friday, Feb. 21, 7 p.m.

Magers & Quinn Booksellers
 3038 Hennepin Ave., Mpls.
 Join us for a reading of poet-
 ry and lyric prose from three
 local authors! Kris Bigalk is
 a writer and professor based
 in Minneapolis. Her second
 collection of poetry, "Enough,"
 was released in fall 2019 from
 NYQ Books. Essayist and poet
 Heidi Czerwiec is the author of
 the recently-released lyric essay
 collection "Fluid States," selected
 by Dinty W. Moore as winner of
 Pleiades Press' 2018 Robert C.
 Jones Prize for Short Prose. Sonia
 Greenfield's collection of prose
 poems, "Letdown," is forthcom-
 ing in March of 2020 with White
 Pine Press as part of the Marie
 Alexander Series. More info at:
<https://www.magersandquinn.com/event>

FIND YOUR EVENT:

M -MUSIC

D -DANCE

T -THEATER

L -LIT **A** -ART

Black History Month Celebration

Saturday, Feb. 22
12:30 to 5:30 p.m.
 Midtown Global Market
 920 East Lake St., Mpls.
 Commemorate Black History
 Month at Midtown Global Mar-
 ket with "Blacks in Environment,
 Music & Media," a free public
 event featuring live music by Joel
 Shapira and Charmin Michelle,
 and a screening of the documen-
 tary "Half Past Autumn: The Life
 and Works of Gordon Parks,"
 followed by a panel discussion.
 Panelists will include Craig
 Laurence Rice, adjunct faculty
 at MCAD and award-winning
 producer and director; Debbie
 Moore, local artist and national
 violinist; Yordonose Samson,
 Artist & Equitable Engagement
 Manager of Metro Bloom; and
 Dr. Mary Winston, PhD, life
 coach and Executive Director
 of Bridges of Hope Leadership
 Institute. Seating is limited and
 will be filled on a first come, first
 served basis.

The Edina Chorale Beyond the Veil: Songs of Love, Loss and Life

Saturday, Feb. 22 **M**
3 p.m. and 7:30 p.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 con-
 tinued life after loss. The concert
 begins with a love story, reveal-
 ing 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 compos-
 ers 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 Edi-
 na. 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, Feb. 22,
5 to 7 p.m.
Exhibition: Feb. 22-23 and **A**
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 Ex-
 hibition 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, printmak-
 ing, mixed media, mosaics and
 sculpture. More info at <https://lolaartcrawl.com/>.

Challenges for the United States and Iran and the Middle East

Saturday, Feb. 29
9:30 a.m. (social)
10 a.m. (presentation and Q&A)
 St. Stephen Lutheran Church
 (chapel)
 8400 France Ave. S., Bloomington
 Since World War II, the Unit-
 ed States has had a troubled
 relationship with the states of
 the Middle East, especially Iran.
 American involvement with Iran
 began with mutual cooperation
 against the Soviet Union during
 the Cold War, but ended abrupt-
 ly with the Iranian Revolution
 of 1978-79 and the ensuing
 "Hostage Crisis." Since that time,
 U.S. administrations have had a
 continuing decline of relations
 with the Iranian government,
 culminating in current open
 hostilities between the two states.
 In this talk, Professor Bill Bee-
 man, professor of anthropology
 at the U of M, will explain how
 we have come to this point, and
 what the United States might do
 to ameliorate this situation.
 William O. Beeman has con-
 ducted research in the Middle
 East for more than 40 years with
 special expertise in Iran. His
 expertise has been widely sought
 as advisor to the U.S. State
 Department, the Department
 of Defense, the United Nations,
 and the European Union. He is
 author or editor of more than 100
 scholarly articles, 500 opinion
 pieces and 14 books, including
 "Language, Status and Power
 in Iran," and "The 'Great Satan'
 vs. the 'Mad Mullahs': How the
 United States and Iran Demonize
 Each Other."
 Organized by Middle East Peace
 Now.

Louise Erdrich at **L**
Literary Witnesses
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 any-
 where in the country. We expect
 a large attendance so consider
 arriving early.
 Erdrich is the owner of Birchbark
 Books, the founding book-selling



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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.

"Interstate"

March 6 – 29

Wednesday-Friday, 7:30 p.m.

Saturdays, 4 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

Sundays, 2 p.m.

Mixed Blood Theatre

1501 S. 4th St., Mpls.

Mixed Blood Theatre will premiere the new musical "Interstate" as the headliner of its 44th season. Written by Kit Yan and Melissa Li, and directed by Jesca Prudencio, "Interstate" is a Queer Asian-American pop-rock musical about two trans people at different stages of their journeys, navigating love, family, masculinity, and finding community in the era of social media. It charts Dash, a transgender spoken word performer as he goes on a cross-country tour with Adrian, a lesbian singer-songwriter, as the activist band, Queer Malady, fueled by the allure of fame and a desire to connect with the Queer Asian community. The band's fiercely political and deeply personal music touches Henry, a transgender teenage blogger living in middle America, who finds solace in their art as he struggles with his own identity and family.

Tickets can be obtained in two ways: 1) Through Radical Hospitality, admission is FREE on a first come/first served basis starting two hours before every show, or 2) Advanced reservations are available online or by phone for \$35 per person. Visit www.mixedblood.com or contact 612-338-6131 or boxoffice@mixedblood.com for more information.

Dan Pfeiffer presents

"Un-Trumping America"

Tuesday, March 10, 7 p.m.

The Parkway Theater

4814 Chicago Ave., Mpls.

Dan Pfeiffer, New York Times bestselling author and co-host of "Pod Save America," comes to the Parkway in celebration of his new book, "Un-Trumping America: A Plan to Make America a Democracy Again." Join us for this energizing reading and book signing! Each ticket includes a copy of Pfeiffer's new book. "Un-Trumping America" is a sharp political playbook for how Democrats can take on Trump, McConnell, Fox News, and the rest of the right-wing circus dominating American politics. The book dismantles toxic Trumpism and offers a

way forward. The event will be moderated by special guest Alyssa Mastromonaco. Sponsored by Magers & Quinn Booksellers. For more info and tickets: <https://www.magersandquinn.com/event>.

"Redwood"

March 11-April 11

Tuesdays-Saturdays, 7:30 p.m.

Sundays, 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

The Jungle Theater

2951 Lyndale Ave. S., Mpls.

The Jungle Theater is excited to present "Redwood," an astute new play brimming with comedy, wit and dance. Written by Brittany K. Allen and directed by H. Adam Harris, this singular American story is about learning to live and love in a present that's enmeshed in a dark past. In this razor-sharp, humor-filled tale, a Hip-Hop dance class Greek Chorus and opinionated long-dead ancestors help guide the relationship between Meg and Drew, an interracial couple whose lives are rocked when Meg's Uncle Stevie discovers Drew is from the family that enslaved her relatives in antebellum Kentucky. Tickets and more information are available at 612-822-7063 or www.jungltheater.org.

Sick Lit: A Writing Workshop

Saturday, March 21

11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

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 led 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

Renegade-ism: Artists on the Edge

Thursdays - Saturdays

Through Feb. 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.

Ruby: The Story of Ruby Bridges

Through March 1

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 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. For more information: youthperformanceco.org or 612-623-9080. Tickets are \$7 to \$15.

Joshua Cunningham and Charles Lyon

Through March 7

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.

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An intimate puppetry experience intertwining stories of the Jews Crossing the Red Sea and the Cherokee Trail of Tears



Z Puppets Rosenschnoz

4054 Chicago Ave. South, Minneapolis, MN

Saturday, March 21 at 7 p.m., Sunday, March 22 at 2 p.m.

Saturday, March 28 at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m., Sunday, March 29 at 2 p.m.

A Watch it, Make it, Take it Event

Z Puppets welcomes people to take a place at the table for a uniquely intimate puppetry experience intertwining stories of the Jews Crossing the Red Sea and the Cherokee Trail of Tears. Sliding across centuries and continents with the live global music fusion of Greg Herriges, these stories travel the rich emotional landscape from struggle to triumph.

Award-winning puppetry artists Shari Aronson and Chris Griffith, a Cherokee Tribal member, share stories inspired by their own ancestry. A 3500-year-old Jewish woman and a 6-year-old Cherokee boy fill in parts of history that often go missing. Directed by Laurie Witzkowski.

After the one-hour performance, Z Puppets leads the audience step by step to make "power figures" — small puppets to represent someone to call on for strength when facing hardship.

People take their power figures out into the world to find the next steps through life's narrow passages!

Each event is limited to 25 seats and advance tickets are encouraged. Last year's performances sold out quickly. Tickets available at zpuppets.org.

FREE ADMISSION for all Tribal Members

Pay-What-You-Will Admission (\$10-\$25 suggested)

"Through the Narrows" features intense subject matter and vivid descriptions of historically accurate violence. Recommended for adults and youth ages 9+.

Questions? Call 612-724-1435 or e-mail Shari@zpuppets.org

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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

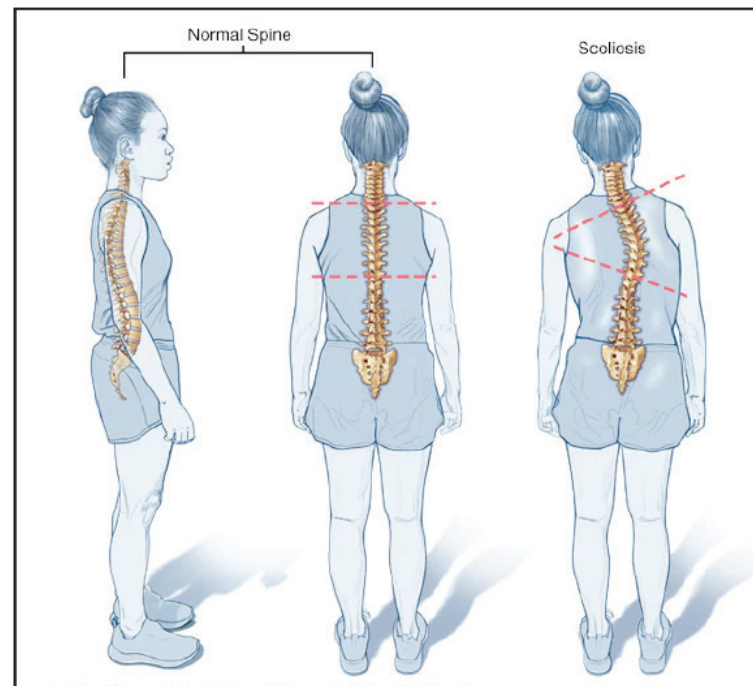
submerged headfirst into an unfamiliar diagnosis.

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/>



Caucus, from page 1

choice of the convention.

Minnesota decided it wanted to be included in the early mix of states with presidential preference primaries, 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 candidate 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.

There are rumors that Michelle Bachmann and civil rights activist Phil Willkie, a Dump Trump Republican, might challenge Jason Lewis for Republican endorsement in the August primary.

Getting About!

Send us notices of meetings, activities and events for seniors that we can post in our new monthly column: Getting About
editor@southsidepride.com



CURA, from page 1

• 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 beneficiaries 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.rthompson.net

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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 together hundreds of delegates from over 50 countries. Brad Sigal from MIRAC (Minnesota Immigrants Rights Committee) and Sarah

and strategized about strengthening 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 leading party, which has been under sharp attack by U.S. imperialism.



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

Martin from WAMM (Women Against Military Madness) were a part of the U.S. delegation.

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

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.

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 disease, 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.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Bernie for all of us

Why didn't the anti-racist movies get any attention at the Oscars and other awards? “Harriet” was certainly one of the best if not the best movie of the year. “Queen and Slim” is so timely and well done, and “Just Mercy” is just being ignored. It seems that, like the U.S. Senate, the critics are not interested in any more evidence.

The President gives a medal to Rush Limbaugh, ejects the grieving father of a Parkland victim, fires people who respond to a congressional subpoena, and for good measure, their brother too, why not? Children are still in cages and dying in custody; Truth is scarcely an important political value anymore as we gear up for the most dishonest misinformation-filled campaign this world has ever seen. Trump is poised to spend over \$1 billion on social media.

I believe we need the politics of love. The politics of inclusion, hope, welcoming, honesty, truth and integrity. Not only do I think that Bernie can win, not only do I believe that he has the best chance to win, I feel in my gut of guts, the bottom of my heart, that a victory won with young, old, white, Latino, black, red, brown and welcoming human beings who care about our planet, each other, and all living beings is what we need right now. It is the campaign that I can't stay away from—that campaign I give my future to—because without it, what future do we have anyway?

This ad made me cry. Check it out: <https://youtu.be/OythsfCi6JA>

—David Tilsen

Lynne Alpert and Pam Sherman honored and remembered

I was eating in a restaurant on East Lake Street last week and happened to notice a stack of Southside Pride newspapers with the lead article on the New French Bakery. I worked as a chef at the New French Café in its earliest days and am always moved by the strong affection that memories of this restaurant still provoke for so many people.

No doubt you work hard to state the facts accurately in the stories you choose to write. Just for the record: Lynne Alpert and Pam Sherman were the two visionary founders of the New French Café in 1977. There were several silent partners as well, but Sam and Sylvia Kaplan were not among them. I know the Kaplans, and they would never claim that. Sam and Sylvia did indeed buy the restaurant at a later point. They also created a side-business called the New French Bakery when they purchased the restaurant, since there was a demand for the baked goods that the Café and the New French Bar were serving their diners.

Getting this story right is hardly the most important issue of the day, but honoring two path-breaking woman business owners in what used to be an overwhelmingly male profession seems important. The restaurant was never a financial powerhouse, but most locals agree that it played an impressive role in shifting the dining culture in the Twin Cities in the 1970s and '80s.

—David Harris

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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 work-

ing-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 de-



velopments 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 con-

structed 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 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. 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 household 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.

Bouza, from page 1

We solve our problems 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.

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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 Torture 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/interpreter 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 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



Piano concert at Library No. 5, Chita

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”).

“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 mutuality 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.)



Tom with English students Diana, Leonya and Ilya, 2019

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 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

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 countryside, 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

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

California Fires

I find that in order to understand the news behind the news I usually have to seek sources beyond the usual sources. Thus, mainstream media too often glosses over information vital for real understanding. The recent fires in California are an example. In November 2018 a spark from

a transmission tower operated by the Pacific Gas and Electric company, PG&E, set off a conflagration that destroyed the town of Paradise, Calif. At least 85 people, mostly poor and elderly were killed; 14,000 homes were obliterated; and all plant life on 240 square miles was burned down. When 2019 rolled around, more fires were generated and PG&E responded by repeatedly shutting off power to millions of people resulting in the closure of schools, gas stations, food markets, etc. A massive fire erupted in Sonoma County.

Meanwhile the company's shareholders and investors have prospered greatly, reporting \$4.5

billion in dividends. The firefighting state budget has been underfunded. Twenty northern California mayors have demanded that the state take over management of the company. California prison inmates have been used as firefighters. Climate change, rising summer temperatures, and lengthening fire seasons are factors in the growing number and intensity of wildfires. These realities have to be factored in. If California does not address this issue in a meaningful way, then the problem should be assumed by the Congress. A step in that direction has been made in the use of prison inmates as firefighters. Who knows—maybe a class in

firefighting in vocational schools?

Imprisonment

I'm fascinated with jails. I certainly don't want to be in jail and I must say that my reaction when I was once jailed was far from fascination. At that time, it was wishing that the other inmates would stop talking so loud, depriving me of sleep. It was quite a few years ago, when Rudy Boschwitz was in the U.S. Senate, representing Minnesota. A group of several people (including me) were in his office, protesting the war in Vietnam. He, of course, wanted us to leave, which we refused to do. He called the police and the result was we were incarcerated for several days. What I most remember was how noisy it was—clear up to midnight and beyond.

Since then, I have read that the United States has more prisoners than all the other countries in the world combined. Does that mean there are more criminals here? I don't think so. A recent article in The New York Times gives another aspect of the situation. The prison is the Louisiana State Penitentiary, where each prisoner is given three meals a day, and some personal items such as toothpaste and soap. Food, in addition to that provided by the prison, is available in the commissary as are e-mail access and telephone services, all of which are charged to the prisoner.

The Bureau of Justice statistics estimates that the United States spends more than \$80 billion each year to keep roughly 2.3 million people behind bars. Many experts say that the figure is a gross underestimate because it does not cover expenses that the prisoner must pay. In many facilities, basic items are sold by private vendors, often with sizable markups. In many facilities, private vendors furnish needed items to prisoners (with a percentage add-on). The Prison Policy Initiative, an organization working to reduce mass incarceration, estimates that families spend \$2.9 billion a year on commissary discounts and phone calls. Families are also often responsible for paying court fees, restitution and fines when a member goes to prison.

This is but a brief look at this system. National data on how much families pay into the corrective system is rarely gathered. Until there is more study and attention given to human services and prevention, it appears that not much will change in the prison system. There is growing interest in what

is called UBI, Universal Basic Income, based on supplementing incomes that do not meet a specific sum. Sounds good! Suppose that could ever happen?

U.S. Gun Violence

I have been interested for some time in the relationship of the National Rifle Association (NRA) to gun deaths in the United States, which has the 28th highest rate of gun violence in the world. In the U.S. there are 443 deaths per 100,000 people, according to the University of Washington's Institute of Health Metrics and Evaluation, which tracks lives lost in every country, in every year, by every possible cause of death. I wanted to know how NRA members (both locally and nationally) voted on gun violence issues.

Let me repeat: THE UNITED STATES HAS THE 28th HIGHEST RATE OF DEATH FROM GUN VIOLENCE IN THE WORLD. On a state-by-state calculation, the rates can be even higher. In the District of Columbia, the rate is 16.3% (the highest in the U.S.). There are a few countries where gun violence is a substantially larger problem than in the United States. In Central America and the Caribbean area, drug traffickers and gangs fight among themselves for territory and against the police. Citizens who are not involved are caught in the crossfire. The U.S. gun violence death rate is higher than in nearly all countries in sub-Saharan Africa, including many that are among the world's poorest.

Following are some of the anti-gun organizations in this country: Everyone for Gun Safety; Coalition to Stop Gun Violence; Moms Demand Action; Giffords Law Center, Gun Violence Archive; and Upworthy. Six months after a gunman shot 26 people, nine fatally, in Dayton, Ohio, lawmakers are still at odds over the next steps to take to ameliorate the problem. There are many astounding statistics—too many for this small article. It would be interesting to know, for example, how many people were arrested annually for gun violence offenses, at what age is gun usage most popular, etc. In the state of New York, out of 100,000 individuals, 10.3% are gun owners. In Alaska, 61.7% are gun owners, and in Minnesota, 36.7% are gun owners.

None of this information, however, is going to reduce gun ownership (or gun use).

Take action on nuclear disarmament

BY STEVE MCKEOWN AND MARIE BRAUN

The year 2020 marks the 50th anniversary of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NNT), which includes Article 6 indicating that the nuclear nations agree to reduce their nuclear arsenals to zero. 2020 also marks the 75th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the 65th anniversary of the St. Paul-Nagasaki Sister relationship.

One of the most heartfelt times in Minnesota history, the nation, and indeed the world happened in the Twin Cities on June 3, 1990. The occasion was the then-Soviet Premier Mikhail Gorbachev and his wife, Raisa, gracing our state with a visit. It was a time of hope, and led to nuclear disarmament of no small matter between our two countries. At the height of the Cold War, the world had over 66,000 nuclear warheads held mainly by the United States and Russia; now worldwide there are about 14,000.

Today we are faced with the prospect of our government not renewing the New START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty) treaty. At the same time, we are seeing unrestrained nuclear development on the horizon in an ever-increasingly polarized world, prompting the Atomic Scientist to reset the Doomsday Clock at 100 seconds to midnight. Derek Johnson, executive director of Global Zero, reminds us that, "The loss of this treaty would set the U.S. and Russia on a path to nuclear

anarchy: a state of affairs where legal constraints of nuclear arsenals has ended and norms of voluntary restraint are weak or nonexistent. We'd all be flying blind into a nuclear arms race."

The good news is that on Dec. 5, 2019, President Putin again offered to immediately extend New START without preconditions. This treaty, signed in 2010 by U.S. President Barack Obama and then-Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, limits each country to no more than 1,550 deployed nuclear warheads and 700 deployed missiles and bombers.

We also have the U.N. Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons agreed to by 122 nations on July 7, 2017. Unfortunately, none of the nine nuclear nations (United States, Russia, China, France, England, Pakistan, India, Israel, North Korea) have signed on; however, when 50 nations ratify this treaty—35 already have—it becomes international law. While it will be binding on only those countries that sign and ratify, it is hoped that this new powerful international legal standard will have the effect of stigmatizing nuclear weapons and compelling nations to take action on disarmament.

Many leaders around the world are speaking out against the threat of a new arms race. Former Soviet Premier Mikhail Gorbachev is again warning that "nuclear weapons need to be destroyed to prevent World War III." Pope Francis has also been a strong voice in condemning not only the possession of these weapons, but also the very

premise of nuclear deterrence.

We, too, believe that it is imperative that the U.S. join with other nations banning these horrendous weapons. Veterans for Peace, Chapter 27, and Women Against Military Madness have collected more than 23,000 signatures of people from all walks of life around the state of Minnesota. The Veterans' Peace Bus has traveled to some of the most remote areas of the state to collect signatures from each of the 851 incorporated towns and cities in our state.

We are currently in the process of making appointments with members of the Minnesota Congressional Delegation in order to deliver these signatures to them and to call on them to speak out publicly in support of ratification of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons by the United States. We are also asking them to encourage others in Congress to support the coming together of the nine nuclear nations to work for the total elimination of these horrendous weapons, which, if ever used, could destroy civilization and put at risk the future of humankind and all life on earth.

If not now, when?

Steve McKeown is a member of Veterans for Peace and Marie Braun is with Women Against Military Madness. For information about the local WAMM 2020 Campaign to Ban Nuclear Weapons, contact the WAMM office at 612-827-5364 or WomenAgainstMilitaryMadness.org.

EVENTS

Spiritual Exploration Opportunities
Plymouth Congregational Church
19th and Nicollet, Mpls.
612-871-7400, plymouth.org
For the complete Winter-Spring lineup and to register: www.plymouth.org/explore/adult-spirituality/

Meditation Matters
Tuesdays, Feb. 18–March 3 (intermittently)
7 to 8:30 p.m.
Tuition: Free, please register. Facilitator: John Bennett. Try meditation methods with six practitioners on all or any of these Tuesday evenings: Jan. 28, Feb. 4, 11, 18, 25 and March 3. Scheduled presenters so far are: Todd Tsuchiya and Gail Wong, who will instruct us in Japanese Buddhist chanting; Emily Jarrett Hughes in wisdom dance; John Bennett in guided imagery; and Su Ying in a blend of Tai Chi and Qigong. Please sign up for individual evenings by the Friday before each event. Classes are not sequenced.

Forced Into Camps
Tuesdays, March 10–31
4 to 6 p.m.
Room 205
Instructors: Joan Thompson, PhD; Seth Patterson, MDiv, MFA. Lise Yasui’s documentary “Family Gathering” and Julie Otsuka’s novel “When the Emperor Was Divine” examine Japanese internment, family separation and their aftermath. We will discuss these artworks alongside current journalism on immigration and families. Articles on family separation, incarceration, deported parents and government policy are all possibilities. What positions did the church and citizens take regarding Japanese internment? How might this inform our calling as church members and citizens today? Sponsored by the Immigrant Welcoming Working Group. Tuition: Free, please register at the link above. For information: joanethompson@comcast.net.

The Gregorian Singers
Sunday, Feb. 23, 4 p.m.
Mindekirken, the Norwegian

Lutheran Memorial Church
924 East 21st St., Mpls.
Norway House’s Edvard Grieg Society of Minnesota presents an evening of enchanting choral music of the bygone eras in music history. The Twin Cities’ own Gregorian Singers, who are known for their performances in Early Music, are a well-researched and finely-tuned company of musicians who have dedicated the past months to studying hymns, folksongs, chants, and opuses from Scandinavia and Iceland spanning almost a thousand years. “The Vikings and Beyond: Choral Music of Scandinavia” will include a song from the Viking era; Gregorian chant originating from Nidaros Cathedral in Trondheim; music of the Danish Renaissance composer Mogens Pedersen; music by “the Swedish Handel,” Johan Helmich Roman; choral works by Edvard Grieg; Norwegian and Swedish folk songs and hymns; the beloved Icelandic hymn “Heyr himna smiður,” with lyrics dating from the twelfth century. Tickets: \$20 general admission. Free for students.

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 pancakes 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.saintalbertthegreat.org.

Lenten Prayer Service
Saturday, Feb. 29, 10 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 busy-ness 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.

Taizé Service
Friday, March 13, 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 March 13 at 7 p.m. or any second Friday of the month. Child care is provided.

Sofia presents “Chambers of the Heart”
Sunday, March 15, 7 p.m.
St. Joan of Arc Chapel
4537 3rd Ave. S., Mpls.
Healing through song. Song through healing. Giving. Receiving. Nourishing. Transforming. The Beatitudes of Jesus, the poems of Rumi. These are the language and inspiration of this transcendent trio: vocalist Carin Vagle, singer-songwriter Tim Frantzich and guitar wizard Dean Magraw. Tickets available at www.stjoantickets.com or 612-823-8205.

CTUL’s Annual Pancake Brunch
Saturday, March 28
9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Holy Trinity Lutheran Church
2730 E. 31st St., Mpls.
Join us for the Annual Pancake Brunch Fundraiser on Saturday, March 28, to sustain our organizing for yet another year! 2019 was a year of strategic thinking, legal wins, and ongoing organizing against wage theft and exploitation at CTUL (Centro de Trabajadores Unidos en la Lucha). We held a subcontractor accountable for trafficking workers on the job site, won a wage theft law at the Minnesota State Legislature, celebrated our Future Fighters committee one-year anniversary, and prepared to scale up even bolder campaigns in 2020. Adelante! For tickets, go to <https://ctul.net/pancake> and donate on a sliding scale, \$5 to \$15. You can also pay at the door.

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.

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

Adoption Support Group for Teens and Parents
First Tuesdays, 6:30 to 8 p.m.
Minnehaha Communion Lutheran Church
4101 37th Ave. S.
The Adoption Support Network holds monthly support groups for parents and teens who have been adopted. Adoptive parents are provided with a confidential, nonjudgmental environment where they can support each other and share resources. Teens are invited to meet with other teens who understand what it’s like to be adopted. The teen group is not a drop-off group—parent(s) must attend the parent support group. For more info and to RSVP contact Ginny Blade at 651-646-5082 or gabbyblade@nacac.org (parents).
*Meetings are usually the first Tuesday of the month, but call ahead to check.

Sharing Food

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Cedar Commons
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612-333-2561
Wednesday Evening Suppers from 6 to 7 p.m.
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2511 E. Franklin Ave.
612-332-2397
Soup for You serves a free community meal every weekday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. The meal is open to everyone—no exceptions! Volunteers will take your orders and serve you at the table. This is not a soup kitchen, but rather a space to build community! Donations are of course welcome!

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612-724-3643
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Sunday Morning Liturgy of the Word for Children
www.saintalbertthegreat.org

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Pastors: Jane Buckley-Farlee & Alem Asmelash
Office: 2001 Riverside Ave.
Reconciling in Christ



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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 AUMFs 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 social 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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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

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



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”).

“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 peoples 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 though 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 statewide 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 though 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 renewal 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.



RIVERSIDE EDITION

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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 cit-

ies 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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