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Voilà, a vacancy



BY TONY BOUZA

The sitting (and I use the term advisedly) Chief of Police capped a distinguished police career with his greatest feat—the announcement of his departure.

Mirabile dictu!

In my insufferable hubris (“That Tony Bouza, he sure is full of himself, isn’t he?”—overheard one wag to another) I hasten to add my suggestion.

First, hire a personnel firm to concoct a want ad, advertise in police journals, and consult the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the Major City Chiefs Association, and the Police Executive Research Forum.

Reduce the many resumes to 30 or 40, and then winnow these down to 10 serious prospects.

Appoint a citizen’s committee of about nine: police-interested; LGBT; women; people of color; and, yes, one or two white men. This pro bono group would interview the candidates over five days. Three hours each.

Suggested questions should include views on police unions; control of thumpers; race shootings; bloat; accountability; police tactics—decoys, stings, stakeouts;

See Bouza, page 6



Congratulations, Mr. Mayor

BY ED FELIEN

You survived a pretty rough first term of office.

Standing up to the president of the United States, sending him a bill for the added security necessary to guarantee him a safe environment to hold a political rally, was the easy

part. You were getting good marks from the media on your handling of the coronavirus. Then, George Floyd! And the world watched Minneapolis Police Officer Derek Chauvin choke the life out of George Floyd on a schoolgirl’s iPhone, and we saw the historic retribution by an

angry people demanding justice, thousands of them, standing in the streets, driving the police out of their fortress and burning it to the ground.

You demonstrated remarkable courage in ordering the police to abandon the 3rd Precinct. It was an important historic pre-

See Mr. Mayor, page 5

Lake Street is coming back

BY KAY SCHROVEN

A year or two from now, can you picture yourself waltzing into the Longfellow neighborhood’s Coliseum Building at 2700 E. Lake St. for a cocktail, to shop for goods and services, secure a job, or view an art exhibit? Taylor Smrikárova, project manager for Redesign, Inc. (aka Seward Redesign) can. “The Coliseum has good bones, it just needs help,” she says.

Smrikárova, who has a background in architecture and real estate, envisions an open, wel-



coming lobby, a rooftop space, as well as a varied and diverse renter population. She is excited and hopeful about the redevelopment of East Lake Street following the 2020 civil unrest when 150 buildings were set on fire and dozens burned to the ground after the murder of George Floyd.

The Coliseum has had multiple lives: It was built in 1917 and opened as Freeman’s Department Store, successfully operated as a family business until the 1940s when it was sold to the May Department Stores Company based in St. Louis. This sale did not work out and by 1956 the property

See Lake Street, page 10



Winter Wellness

pages 2 - 3



Happy Holidays

pages 7 - 9



Winter wellness – healthy body and healthy planet

BY DEBRA KEEFER RAMAGE

The connection

For the past decade or so, I have been thinking a lot, and acting – a bit less, but still acting – on ways to reduce my personal harm to the environment in the process of consumption. As the four “R”s tell us (reduce, reuse, repair, recycle), a major way to do that is to consume less – to reduce. But breaking that down a little, you can also “con-



Bamboo electric toothbrush

sume less” even of things you have to consume to stay alive and healthy, by choosing things with less packaging, less waste, less harm in the disposing of what’s left. And this is nowhere so prevalent an issue for individual consumers as it is for health and body care products, household cleaning and maintenance products and, of course, food. So here are some of my thoughts and discoveries about balancing a healthy body and lifestyle with a less impactful consumption and hopefully a healthier planet.

Water is life

It’s vital to your health to drink enough water. (Although you can drink too much!) Ideally, you want purity and alkalinity in your drinking water. And, if you drink coffee, tea or broth, or make homemade lemonade, or eat a lot of rice or other grains, you should be using pure or at least filtered water to prepare those as well. Drinking a lot of

water and eating foods rich in water is especially important in winter, when our indoor air may be really dry and the cold air outside dries our skin and eyes and sinuses.

Unfortunately, the default consumerist solution to this is to purchase water in plastic containers. Part of the cruel irony of this is the staggering amounts of water required to produce the plastic containers holding the water, not to mention the pollution they cause in their afterlife, and the carbon poured into the atmosphere by shipping water from one place to another.

There are alternatives. A simple alternative if you still need to buy water is that now you can buy it in a cardboard box, like milk or juice, which is a small improvement. boxedwaterisbetter.com/ has more information; their products are available at the co-op, and there are some other boxed water brands out there as well.

Another solution, of course, is to “make your own.” We’re lucky in that our municipal tap water is neither lethally unhealthy nor criminally expensive, and you can get by with simply filtering water you use for direct consumption. This will probably involve plastic. But not nearly as much as single-use bottles. I won’t bother to recommend a reusable bottle – you probably already have at least one. The trick here is not to over-consume drinking water bottles! You only need one, but rare is the person disciplined enough to



Earth-friendly laundry pods - zero-plastic

buy only one.

Another solution, probably better than the filtering option if you’re using a lot of water, and have good local options for this, is to buy or rent a water dispenser and have 5-gallon bottles delivered to install on it. I used this for a few years a long time ago and, as I recall, it was great. Also, you can now buy or rent a water dispenser that is also a filtration device and uses your own tap water feed. A local company, Premium Waters, provides both services. See premiumwaters.com/.

Aiming for zero-new-plastic

There are several online sources of supplies I can recommend for helping you reduce

consumption of plastic in its most egregious form – which is new, single-use and, even worse,



Hair care products in solid bar form, zero-plastic

often not recyclable. Some of these or similar products can be had from Amazon, Walmart or Target. However, I would encourage you to buy from companies that are wholly dedicated to reducing unnecessary packaging, rather than these big-box behemoths, most of whose products are overpackaged in single-use plastic. It kind of defeats the overall purpose of doing your own best at reining in consumption if you’re supporting huge systems devoted to and dependent on just the opposite.

Etee (etee.com) sells various types of soap products either in bar form or in a highly concen-

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The perfect opportunity to get moving during the holiday season! Bring your friends and family, or come mix it up with new folks for some fun doubles, followed by light refreshments and drinks!

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Home water cooler, equivalent of 80 eight-ounce bottles, and they refill it!

trated liquid packaged in a beeswax tube. They also sell various alternatives to plastics such as bamboo toothbrushes, loofah and cellulose pot scrubbers, and drinking straws made of a choice of glass, steel or silicone. They sell multi-use containers which may have a small amount of plastic, such as a pump-lid for

scented. The packaging is just a small cardboard box. I love these things; laundry day is no longer a big guilt-fest.

In addition to these products, plastic-free or reduced-waste versions of almost every health and beauty product have become available. Stick deodorant in a cardboard tube, liquid spray deodorant in a glass bottle, shampoo and conditioner in a bar, non-plastic dental floss in a cardboard dispenser, tooth powder sold in bulk, lotions and makeup products in refillable glass jars, reusable makeup-up brushes and natural sponges, washable cotton menstrual or incontinence products; all of these are increasingly available. Check out our local zero-waste shop, Tare Market, for these and more.

Almost zero-carbon workouts

Workouts are good for keeping you healthy. The only thing that's really bad is if you drive

When the weather was nice, I walked briskly to the gym. The walk there was my warm-up, and a more leisurely walk home, maybe with a pit stop for a cool drink, was my cool-down. Since I used only human-powered machines, this was close to a zero-carbon workout. If you live too far for that, you could drive to within a set distance, park, and walk for your warm-up. Base this on your own fitness level and needs. This works for yoga studios, Pilates, and personal trainers in their homes as well.

Another option, though currently out of my price range, is to have a personal trainer come to your home and work out with you. I also did this in England, when I was working up to the point of joining the gym and going solo. It was great; I have fond memories of my personal trainer, who built clever impromptu obstacle courses in my backyard and made me run them.

Hibernate like the mammal you are

Have you ever noticed how bears look oddly human? Well, the bears think we look oddly bearlike. They can't understand, though, how we survive the winter, without either fur or hibernation. They have a point. Although we have lost the constitution to be able to sleep through the entire season, it is good for you to sleep more during the months when the nights are long and cold.

That's all there is to it. Just try arranging your schedule so you sleep more. Try to limit your sleep to the numerous dark hours and preserve the precious sunlight for activity. Following the lead of our fellow mammals, you may find you want to eat less as you sleep more. Or, if sleeping long hours doesn't work for you, try a daily meditation instead of a nap. Winter is signaling us to slow down; don't ignore it.



Zero-net carbon winter workout - one option

How to have a social life during a pandemic or other emergency, like winter

Ha ha. I don't really think winter is an emergency. I wouldn't live in Minnesota if I did. But sometimes winter brings emergencies - flu, snowstorms, waves of the pandemic - we may have all of these and more in a given winter. Thank God for Zoom, and Google Meet, and Facebook Live, and Discord, and FaceTime.

Another piece of attuning to the seasons is to stay in your den during the cold season. Socialize virtually, watch soothing

performances at home, listen to seasonal and calming music. If you live with other people in a household, have a quiet evening together playing games, sipping herbal tea or non-dairy fair-trade cocoa, and then go early to bed. If you live alone, do the same thing with your pod, your posse, or your family, but virtually. Family Zoom get-togethers, book clubs on Facebook Live, and games night on Discord are all possible.

It's no use being in the most perfect of health if we allow our planet to become uninhabitable. That would be the ultimate waste. Be well, and be thoughtful.



Holding a family game night? techboomers.com/zoom-tips-family-game-night

a glass jar, but are designed for years of use rather than just one or two.

Etee has great products, great customer service, a blog with loads of information, and an affiliate program if you want to try selling for them. They offer free shipping over a certain threshold, and all their packing and shipping materials are paper, cardboard or other compostable material.

Another similar company, although with a narrower focus, is Dropps (dropps.com). Dropps makes concentrated pods of detergents for laundry or dishwashers. The pods themselves are completely soluble and non-toxic, no plastic microparticles. The detergents are the most environmentally friendly you can find, in natural scents or un-

a long way from your home to your gym. One way around that is a thing I did when I was younger (but not young, I was in my early 50s) and living in England. I belonged to a small gym about a mile from my house.



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Basil, Brussels sprouts, and restaurant news and reviews

BY DEBRA KEEFER RAMAGE

Restaurant news

Have you heard of Goldbelly? I first heard of it last week, when I did a search to find where I could get good latkes without having to make or cook them myself. Of course, I meant to be searching for a local deli selling latkes to go or a supermarket with frozen ones or maybe even ready to eat. Anyway, I didn't specify "local." In my results were tons of options from Goldbelly, but they were from non-Minnesota cities. And consequently, way out of my price range.

And then, as so often happens with me (I think Google is spying on me. No, do

neapolis, so, like e-Democracy in the neighborhood online forum world, it just looks bigger from here because it's close to home. They aren't even on Wikipedia's list of restaurant delivery services.

On the other end of the spectrum, Goldbelly is not on that list either, because they don't deliver food from a restaurant ten minutes away that you can eat immediately. They deliver food (ship would be a better term) across the country, in various forms, such as frozen, chilled and ready to cook, in family meal size, or even larger quantities. The reason DoorDash is said to be going into competition with them is that they recently announced they were gearing up

spotty quality, why do they think branching into other services on top of all that is a way to improve?

Ratatouille's Anton Ego, the ultimate restaurant critic

I have to see this fairly old Disney film about restaurants. I have a deep and visceral resistance to most Disney films. I broke down and watched "The Lion King," but I hated it. But I'm sure I will love "Ratatouille." For one thing, although the theme of this film is food (and Paris and the modern version of the haute monde), its subtext is words. It is full of clever linguistic (ahem - one of the characters is named Linguine) and stylistic in-jokes, making it a literary trivia quiz on top of a heartfelt movie in the Disney tradition of "Cinderella" and others that elevate the lowly and school the know-it-alls.

What brought this on? Ryan Sutton, food critic for The Eater, on being compared to Anton Ego, the food critic character in "Ratatouille," responded with a savvy essay about how Anton Ego is actually the hero and not the villain. <https://www.eater.com/22702839/disney-anton-ego-ratatouille-restaurant-criticism>

How to grow a monster basil plant indoors

There are numerous YouTube videos, articles and books about growing edible things indoors. If you just want an unlimited amount of great basil for the rest of your life (and who wouldn't?) I think this is one of the best. It's all in the pruning, plus maybe choice of pot and just basic plant care. But mainly if you're getting spindly basil that eventually dies, you're pruning it wrong. Check this out: <https://www.ruralsprout.com/prune-basil/>.



Monster basil

Ranking roasted Brussels sprouts

With the advent of fall, I start craving Brussels sprouts, preferably roasted or stir-fried. My new Cuisinart convection toaster-oven does excellent Brussels sprouts on both the "air-fryer" and the "broil" settings. Restaurants like to stick roasted Brussels sprouts on their seasonal menus, so I had lots for comparisons. Here are my rankings of four of the best:

- #4 - Reverie Cafe + Bar. Actually smoked Brussels sprouts with a vegan creamy condiment. Quite good, but lowest of the best probably because I'm not that crazy about smoked vegetables and they don't get crispy.
- #3 - Northern Fires Pizza. These are fired quickly in the woodfire oven. It appears they keep changing the recipe, but when I had them, they had a light vinegary but sweet dressing, a ton of Parmesan cheese, and some pickled onions or leeks or something. Very good, but a challenge to me with all those additional flavors.

- #2 - Pizza Luce. My original passion, before I ever tried making my own. They used to have a lovely sauce on the side - ca-

per aioli. Now they have a chili mayo of some sort - not as good. If I remember to order them well done, and make my own caper aioli, they're nearly perfect. They also come with some excellent garlic bread and are a huge portion, enough for two or three sides for future meals.

- #1 - My own custom-made. Made in the air-fryer, just olive oil and Spike for seasoning, with an aioli accompaniment. Home-made for the win.

Mini-review #1 - Reverie

I rejoiced at the return of indoor dining at two of my favorite hangouts in South Minneapolis, one of which is Reverie. They were only in their "new" space on 35th Street just west of Bloomington Avenue for about a year when COVID hit, and were



Reverie

totally closed longer than most, takeout-only longer than most, and then offered patio dining as long as they could while fixing up the interior for more space.

I was one of their crowd-funders for the new space, so I still had some free meal perks on a card to use. I had their signature burger (delicious but a little soft and, as is the normal case in restaurants, way too big and sloppy to actually eat like a burger). I had a side of fries and also ordered the above-mentioned smoked Brussels sprouts. I took home leftovers of both of those. I had a clever drink (iced, non-alcohol) which I liked, but can't remember the details of.

Mini-review #2 - Modern Times

Modern Times pre-COVID was more than just my favorite lunch spot. It was my refuge, my reading room, my introvert's social contact point, my office if I needed to meet with some-



Anton Ego

you think?) not 24 hours later, I came upon this article in The Eater (<https://www.eater.com/2021/11/8/22764624/door-dash-national-delivery-nationwide-shipping-goldbelly-competitor>) which asked if DoorDash was trying to compete with Goldbelly. This led me not only to look into Goldbelly (I had already been tracking DoorDash's shenanigans. See last month's "The Dish") but also to look into all the restaurant food delivery services I am familiar with.

I learned a lot. We'll start with Bite Squad. Except for self-delivery by Pizza Luce, Bite Squad is my go-to for to-go without going anywhere. They seem to have more of the kind of places I like, and less of the junk. But it turns out that in the vast internecine struggle that is U.S.-based restaurant delivery, Bite Squad isn't even a player. It's just that it was founded in Min-

neapolis, so, like e-Democracy in the neighborhood online forum world, it just looks bigger from here because it's close to home.

And my reaction to that was the same as The Eater's. Their headline and subhead read "Even Though It Still Hasn't Mastered Local Delivery, DoorDash Is Debuting Nationwide Shipping. The on-demand delivery app will now ship 'iconic eats' all across the country. Why though?" Which is, in fact, very similar to my reaction to Goldbelly. Goldbelly can ship you frozen latkes from the most popular maker in Los Angeles for about \$70! But why would you want them to? Can they possibly be \$50 better than the same quantity of frozen latkes from your local supermarket?

The real issue here, in my opinion, is that the competition between restaurant delivery services is warlike and ugly. Given the fact that DoorDash is currently winning that war by a mile, despite massive problems including lawsuits, tip theft, and



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Modern Times

See *The Dish*, page 5

Modest steps to stopping violence

BY CHARLEY UNDERWOOD

The other day on a forum that I read and contribute to, a former Minneapolis police officer linked a report at https://protectmn.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/The-Economic-Cost-of-Gun-Violence_FINAL-1.pdf, citing a study that showed that gun violence causes economic harm to cities as well as suffering for victims and those who love them. Statewide, it comes to \$764 million a year. I was suspicious that here was yet another argument for valuing money and property over human life. Being curious, however, I read on.

What I found astounded me. The optimistic part of the report is that both the carnage and the business costs have solutions, including:

- Universal background checks (to eliminate the private-seller

loophole).

- Community investment strategies (to lower the poverty/hopelessness causes).
- Hospital-based violence intervention programs (a public

looked in this report, but at no point did I find that the solution to gun violence was more armed or more heavily armed police officers. It was remarkable to me that this report began with ap-



health approach to intervene during victim treatment, reducing both future revenge shootings and recurrence shootings for the initial victims).

Please note: I looked and

proaches that right-wingers typically call “gun control” and continued with programs that look very much like the language in Amendment Question #2, which Minneapolis voters just defeat-

ed.

I want to be very clear here. I am not personally advocating for an abolition or complete defunding of the Minneapolis police department. Nor am I trying to “re-litigate” the defeat of Question #2. Nor am I suggesting that police officers are universally or even mostly bad actors. Rather, I firmly believe that most probably have noble civic impulses, motivated by a deep desire to serve their fellow citizens.

What I DO want to point out is that this particular study does not conclude that the solution to gun violence lies in more authoritarian, armed and lethal remedies. What I DO want to advocate is that Mayor Frey and the City Council members get serious and begin dealing with the actual causes of violence, outlined so well in “The Economic Costs of Gun Violence.” And

what I very much DO want to argue is that we have not actually solved a single bit of the lack of police accountability which has led to so much mistrust, civil unrest, huge liability exposure, massive police resignations and PTSD and disability claims. These problems have been festering for decades, with no real solutions. It is time to stop posturing and start addressing this unacceptable situation.

Some who read the original forum post but neglected to read the link might conclude that we simply need to support the police more, with more funding, more recruitment, more praise, less criticism. That’s not what the report says, however. It is well worth the read. The problem of gun violence is real, critical, urgent. But it will not be solved with more guns.

Mr. Mayor, from page 1

edent—an elected official, the mayor of Minneapolis, told the police they should surrender to the mob. Abandon ship! The cops got post-traumatic stress disorder as a result of you overturning the accepted order of rank and privilege. The cops thought you rushed to judgment. You had already found Derek Chauvin guilty. You were taking the mob’s judgment as final. This was the end of the uninterrupted history of slave-catching that was the tradition of municipal police departments.

People were finally saying it was wrong for a white cop to murder an unarmed Black man.

But the mob was starting to go out of control. Some Boogaloo Bois were firing automatic rifles into the station house, trying to provoke return fire from the cops into the mob. Some right-wing nutcase carrying an umbrella was smashing in store windows with a hammer, encouraging looting.

You had to act. You had to do something to stop the protest.

They want the precinct station? Fine. They can have the precinct station.

But it was too late. Right-wing agent-provocateurs got gullible demonstrators to join them in ultra-left adventures that destroyed the offices of MIGIZI, a Native American nonprofit that helped kids stay in school, and Gandhi Mahal, an Indian restaurant that was a left-wing favorite, and they looted Target, and they destroyed Latino businesses up Lake Street to Hennepin. Most of it focused around Lake and Chicago.

And, finally, it was over.

But the protesters, the ones who started the demonstrations against the precinct station, were still coordinated and organized by Black Visions Collective. It was their organizing that got the city to begin an Office of Violence Protection. They were in contact, and they held a rally, and they marched to the street below your apartment, and they ordered you down to meet with them, and it didn’t go well. You came down in casual dress, tried to talk to the crowd, but

the crowd would hear none of it, and hecklers drove you back upstairs. You were probably relieved. It was terrible optics for the demonstrators. It excited their base, all that talk about abolishing the police, but it also excited resistance to change.

As a testament to her organizing and dedication to making the mayor accountable, Sheila Nezhad got more than 50% of the votes for mayor at the DFL City Convention—just short of the necessary 60% for endorsement.

Then, Black Visions Collective pushed it further. They organized the Powderhorn Manifesto—a meeting in Powderhorn Park on the stage at the bandshell. They got nine council members, a veto-proof majority, to agree to change the City Charter to transform the MPD into a Department of Public Safety. They had “Defund the Police” on a banner across the front of the stage. They wrote an amendment to the Minneapolis charter creating a Department of Public Safety to replace the Police Department. It was vague, con-

fusing and incomplete. Black Visions had a competing amendment they had written. It was vague, confusing and incomplete. The City Council went with the Black Visions version.

The amendment didn’t do well at the polls. It was well-meaning, but the lack of an actual concrete vision by Black Visions scared the hell out of Black voters in North and South Minneapolis. It was ultra-left and, as a result, it alienated the progressive base but motivated the opposition to vote for you and for a strong mayor reorganization of city government. That charter amendment will probably have an even more profound effect on our future than changing the name of the Police Department.

You seem like you genuinely want to get along with the progressives who opposed you in the election. You appointed former political rivals, Nekima Levy Armstrong and Sheila Nezhad, to a committee that will recommend changes to the MPD; and you appointed Kathy O’Brien, former City Council member and former University

of Minnesota administrator, to reorganize city departments—two committed progressives and a thoroughly competent moderate. Good choices.

I opposed the drift toward a strong-mayor form of city government. There’s not much danger of abuse of power with you as mayor. You’re a good liberal with a strong sense of fairness and justice. But what happens when we elect someone like Trump or Charlie Stenvig? Spreading the power among the many is messy and inefficient, but it makes the abuse of power less likely.

But I digress.

Congratulations, Mr. Mayor.

You survived a first term borne from the bowels of hell, and the voters have chosen you to lead them out of the present wilderness.

We wish you the best of luck. It can’t be as bad as it was. It’s got to get better.

We’re all pulling for you.

We’re all in this together.

The Dish, from page 4

one. I can barely express how much I missed them for about 20 long months. I did get some takeout meals, but that did not assuage my need to go there.

So, I was finally back, and instead of getting one of my old favorites, I got something new to me, a sandwich called Kate Bush. This contains scrambled egg, beet mayo, avocado, and some other things, on grilled sourdough bread. Recommend. I had a side of garlic fries and a Leland Palmer (lemonade and hibiscus iced tea). For old times’ sake, I read a library book while I ate. Bliss.

Mini-review #3 – The Bad Waitress on Eat Street

I visited the Bad Waitress diner on 26th Street and Nicollet Avenue for the first time ever a little over a week ago. I had a quick check-in type of appointment at the Whittier Clinic at 1 p.m., then a longer more serious one at 4 p.m., so I left my car in their lot and perambulated up and down Nicollet, stopping at the Bad Waitress for a planned lunch. (I was actually going to lunch at Quang but it was packed with people at 1:30 p.m., so no.)

The Bad Waitress has been there for years and is pretty popular, so I don’t need to say much; they’re a known quantity. It looks like their drinks are one of their main selling points.

Their food is good but not adventurous – diner food, whatever’s popular, well-made and

quick. I had the Trash Browns: hash browns cooked with a wide array of vegetables and a thick

topping of good cheddar, then two eggs in your chosen style (over medium for me). Sourdough toast was colorless, but hot and pre-buttered, and with more than enough jam on the side. I had coffee to drink; it was fine, but I was surprised that the menu didn’t say anything about it. Nowadays you expect to learn the roast and the roaster, if not the country or even the plantation of origin.

The Bad Waitress offers the option of using an app at your table to order, instead of the usual counter order. Similar to what J. Selby’s has, it’s the wave of the future, I expect, and will outlast the pandemic which sparked it.



The Bad Waitress

Scholar coaches are needed in the Twin Cities to help bridge the Minnesota educational gap

BY STEPHANIE FOX

Minnesotans can boast about being number one in a lot of positive categories, but having some of the largest educational disparities among minority and low-income students in the country is no reason to brag. One factor in this disparity is that where white parents have higher incomes and more education than Black parents, they can provide more educational support for their kids. This is true in the Twin Cities.

The Minnesota Reading and Math Corps wants to change the outcomes for these students. Right now, they are looking to expand the number of scholar/coaches to attend classrooms in Minneapolis and St. Paul, working alongside licensed teachers in kindergarten through third grades, beginning in January 2022. They hope to recruit 25 people for schools in Minneapolis and 22 in St. Paul. The program is asking those who are interested to apply by Dec. 15.

Scholars need to be 18 years old and have a high school diploma or equivalency. But older

people, even those retired, are welcome to apply.

This is not a volunteer position. Scholar/coaches work 40 hours a week, making \$16.66 an hour, and those who haven't already earned an associate degree can complete a degree in early childhood or elementary education at little or no cost, as part of a new Education Fellowship in partnership with PNC Bank and Minneapolis Community and Technical College. Scholars also qualify for individual health insurance at no cost. Scholars who are age 55 or older may choose to gift the money they earn for tuition to a child, to help them cover their college costs. Those who are accepted to the program will receive two weeks of paid training.

Each scholar will work one-on-one for 20 minutes a day with a minimum of nine students, helping to improve literacy skills. They will also work with groups of students, partnering with the classroom teacher.

"This experience is valuable for the kids when they get to have an adult focused and interested in them," said Laura

Isdahl, the Corps program manager. "Across the country, the program has helped 30,000 students. We are looking for people who are passionate about working with the community, particularly for people interested in getting into the education field or other kinds of public service."

"The need is great in the met-

Minneapolis/St. Paul sites looking for Scholar Coaches

- Anne Sullivan STEAM Magnet
- Ascension School
- Benjamin E. Mays IB World School
- Jackson Elementary School
- Maxfield Elementary School
- Nellie Stone Johnson Community School
- Phalen Lake Hmong Studies Magnet
- Sojourner Truth Academy

South Minneapolis Schools looking for Reading & Math Tutors

- Anishinabe Academy
- Anne Sullivan STEAM Magnet
- Bancroft Community School
- Barton Community School
- Bryn Mawr Community School
- Field Community School
- Folwell Community School
- Friendship Academy of the Arts
- Green Central Dual Language Magnet
- Hiawatha Academies - Kingfield
- Hiawatha College Prep - Northrop
- Hiawatha Community School - Hiawatha Campus
- Seward Montessori Magnet
- Universal Academy Charter School

ro area," said Gary Young, media relations director with the Corps. "This has been an especially tough year for school staffing. And, while COVID has impacted learning for all students, the impact has been disproportionate for populations already experiencing educational disparities. The Corps is looking for people who students can identify with as they work on building their own success stories."

National experts are study-

ing the opportunity gap in Minnesota. "What's exciting is we have a solution that works to bridge this gap. Independent research shows that by providing students a tutor for extra practice and skill building, students make incredible progress, more than their peers who don't receive tutoring," Young said.

Anyone who is interested in applying should go to readingandmath.org and then click on "apply."

Bouza, from page 1

traffic stops; one-person patrols; documentation; press relations; 911 calls; code of silence; relations with public officials, etc. I recommend my son Dominick to chair the committee. Nepotism—in pro bono, onerous tasks—it ain't, but he knows the issues and is competent.

The committee would prepare a list of three finalists for the mayor and Council to consider.

The mayor appoints the finalist.

A clear science it ain't.

A chief's job is really simple—organize things to fight street crime (more arrests, cops don't prevent crime), respond to emergencies and regulate traffic. The chief is management; the union is labor. It is an adversarial rela-

tionship. The union has done a really poor job of managing the MPD.

The challenge this represents is to establish whether the city leaders actually retain the good faith necessary to pursue this difficult task. The Donald Frasers are in short supply.

My guess—based on long and tortured experience—is that the city parents will choose the safe, convenient, lazy, business-as-usual path. After all, what's \$27 million here and \$20 million there. Easy come, easy go.

Does anyone really care?

My informed guess is no.

You are all screwed.

And, in all likelihood, so am I, but not for very much longer.

Special thanks to Jennifer Volkenant for transmitting this document.



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Getting dark and philosophical about the holidays

BY DEBRA KEEFER RAMAGE

The title of this article is meant to gently lead you into a dark place. If I had titled it “Dying During the Holidays” you probably would have skipped it, right? Sorry about that. But now that you’re here, let me explain.

If you’re one of my regular readers or friends, it probably won’t sur-

prise you to learn that I was a deeply weird kid. It’s considered cute nowadays, but it wasn’t at all cute in the 1950s. One of the ways I was weird was that I thought about death a lot. And not because I had much experience with it – it just arose from somewhere deep in my childish soul, usually when I was supposed to be falling asleep at night.

thought the entire world celebrated Christmas.)

It turns out that some social scientists pondered this too, but from a public health perspective rather than from an insomniac sentimental child perspective. And they didn’t start with Christmas at all, but with three other times that constitute “ceremonial” events.

The earliest study I found (in a very lengthy but not at all academ-

ically informed search) was a 1973 study by two sociologists of death trends around the decedent’s birthday, around the presidential election in election years, and around Yom Kippur, also known as the Day of Atonement. I’ll say more about that below, but for now, let me mention that the authors of this study were David Phillips and Kenneth Feldman of State University of New York (SUNY) Stony Brook.

The first study I found, however, was quite recent – from 2010 – and did concern Christmas, as well as New Year’s Day and the interim week. The authors of this study were David Phillips, Gwendolyn Barker and K. Brewer, of UC San Diego, and this study found a spike rather than a dip in certain types of deaths on the target dates.

Noticing the same name leading both studies, and that the David Phillips of UCSD was earlier at SUNY Stony Brook, I surmised this might be the same person, and it was. I eventually found a piece from the Los Angeles Times in 1992 about Phillips, who even then had the nickname of “Dr. Death,” and had published numerous, often controversial, studies on what he was postulating was a behavioral timing of death in various populations and for different cultural reasons.

Among the many correlations Phillips studied over the years, was a spike he found in suicides following any highly publicized celebrity suicide (1974), that more Ameri-



can women die the week after their birthday than normal, while American men do the same but the week before (1992), that Jewish men (but not women) “postpone their death” until after Passover (1988), that elderly Chinese women (but not men) do the same in relation to the Harvest Moon Festival (1990) and that there was a big spike in fatal medication errors every year for decades around the first of every month (2004).

In the Passover study, Phillips’ co-author was Elliot King, also of UCSD, and a 2014 piece in The New Republic stated, “Phillips and King conclude, ‘that the “will to live” is associated with reduced mortality, and that communal social events can have a beneficial impact on the course of disease.’” This seems to be the driving factor in Phillips’

research and academic career. He began with the simple question of whether being embedded in communal life, which is characterized in part by placing meaning in public ceremonies, whether religious or secular, made a difference in health and mortality, and he ended up focusing on trends in the timing of death.

To go back to that 1973 study as promised, recall that data processing technology was still more or less in its infancy then. The worldwide web was a decade in the future, and “computer” meant a large room filled with hard-wired components that took an hour to do what your cell phone can do in a nanosecond.

Thus the data selection will seem impossibly crude by today’s standards. For determining whether



Yom Kippur in Israel, 100% car-free



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Holidays, from page 7

there is a “death-dip” before the birthday, the researchers used data from an almanac of famous Americans (bet you anything they were 90% or more white males) and a sample size of just over 1300 subjects. They justified using “famous” Americans because it was not even possible to gather birth and death dates for a large, random sample of people.

For data selection on the presidential election’s hypothesized “death-dip,” at least here they could use public statistics, and from the entire U.S., since they were interested only in the death date, and not birth date or any demographic factors. The years examined were presidential election years and the years before and after each one, as controls, from 1903 to 1969. In both of these cases, a “death-dip” of significant size was found.

But the one we’re most interested in, because it’s a holiday (albeit a fall one, not a winter one) is the Yom Kippur data set. Note that Dr. Phillips collaborated on another study of a major Jewish holiday

somewhat later, when he tested whether Passover was associated with “postponed death.” In both studies, the ideal would be to have a large sample of people who were 1. Jewish, 2. noting whether they observed the holiday, and 3. divisible by gender and age. We can compare the data selections of the two studies to see how data tools had progressed in the intervening 15 years. (In neither case was the data he wanted easily enough obtainable, although items 1 and 3 probably would be today, and a global average could be used for item 2.)

In 1973, Phillips and his collaborators solved the problem of Yom Kippur being specific to Jews by using statistics from New York City only, which was at an average of 28% Jewish during the years sampled, 1921 through 1969. They then added an extra layer of validation by seeing if results using Budapest in the years 1875 to 1915, where the proportion of Jewish residents to all residents was similar, corresponded closely. (It did.)

Another problem with data in the early 1970s was its lack of



Clarence (Henry Travers) helps George Bailey (Jimmy Stewart) when he contemplates a Christmas suicide in ‘It’s a Wonderful Life.’

granularity. Death statistics were only compiled monthly, whereas the holiday “moves around” due to the use of a lunar calendar. To remedy this, they had to cut the data more. They counted only years where Yom Kippur fell within a week either way of the end of

September. The rate of deaths in September of these “Y years” could be expressed as a fraction of the number for the whole year. And finally, the control, since Yom Kippur comes every year, to “eliminate” any merely seasonal effects, was to compare a similar rate for the U.S. to the rate for just New York City. A definite “death-dip” was discovered.

In 1988, when Phillips and Elliot King studied death rates around Passover, things were a bit easier. Personal computers were still a relative rarity but at least you didn’t have to submit massive decks of punch cards to run your statistical package on the university mainframe. For this study, they went to Israel, where the proportion of observant Jews is much higher than that found anywhere else. Also, increases in the granularity of public databases meant they could study all occasions of Passover, no matter where it fell on the Gregorian calendar, and by cutting the data along gender lines, they discovered an interesting thing. Although there was a very significant “death-dip” overall, the data for women showed no significant dip at all, so the “overall” rate was actually all men.

This gender divide also played a part in the very interesting findings of Phillips et al.’s 1992 study of the birthday effect on mortality. In response to the finding that men tend to have a death spike before their birthdays while women tend to have a death dip, Phillips, in an interview, speculated that men in a capitalist



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As Joy, on no account, will be
If we never learn how to sha

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CHEER UP

Christmas is coming
New Year ahead
Where did grief go
No-one has heard
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Keep up the laugh
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Holidays

and individualist society see their birthdays as “deadlines” while women tend to see still being alive for each birthday as a “lifeline.”

Although the senior author of the 1973 study, Phillips was only a few years beyond attaining his doctorate (where his unpublished dissertation was “Dying as a form of social behav-



A Minnesota Hindu celebrating Diwali 2021

ior”). When he was nearing the end of his active professorship at UCSD (he’s currently Emeritus Faculty there), he was already quite well known due to the intervening publications, some of which spawned much media coverage and many follow-up studies and even policy changes, particular his work on suicide. So, his last major paper, the one on Christmas death trends, gained a lot of attention.

By 2010, Big Data and big tools

I reside in our souls
ve and to forgive,
e felt by our hearts
re and how to give!

CHRISTMAS TIME

-
-
- A time to love
- A time to care
- A time to give
- A time to share
-
- To think of the needy
- To think of the poor
- To think of the homeless
- To think of the cure
-
- To hug the lonely
- To attend the sick
- To cheer the hopeless
- To cuddle the meek
-
- Christmas is coming
- It’s time to be reborn
- Our hearts we to open
- Our souls must adorn!
-
- © Demetrios Trifiatis
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were available to the social scientist. The Christmas study of that year is still being discussed in the Big Media today. Contrary to popular belief at the time, it was found that deaths from suicide and homicide dip dramatically from mid-December through January 1.

However, other death increas-

different death rates and causes. In terms of causes of death, the big three are heart ailments, traffic accidents, and accidents in the home. Cancer death rates overall appear neutral, but deaths of cancer patients in the home exhibit the same “death-postponement” dip as Yom Kippur, Harvest Moon, and women’s birthdays. However, cancer deaths in hospital and institutional settings have an off-setting spike.

I tried to find some studies on other winter holidays such as Diwali. (Just this year, Diwali gained recognition as an official American calendar holiday, although it’s not a U.S. federal holiday.) Now I’m running into a data problem of the current day, the tendency of big media and monetized sources to overwhelm search engines. I am considered a Google search expert, but the COVID disaster in India means that any search containing the words “Diwali” (which was early November this year) and “death” is going to be all COVID news.

I did find a major study on death rates during Ramadan, which, not surprisingly, spike in a similar way to Christmas. There are some major differences in the size of the spike, by geography (Muslims are probably the

most geographically spread religion now), gender, age, cause of death, and where on the Gregorian calendar Ramadan falls.

As at Christmas, both suicide rates and homicide rates during Ramadan in areas where the population is predominantly Muslim go way down. Also as at Christmas, a lot of the natural-cause deaths are probably because of the subject postponing care until after Ramadan. Some of the deaths are simply due to the rigors of ob-

servation, especially for a male adult (with their extra pre-dawn prayers) in a time and place where the daylight hours are very long.

I guess this is a lot to digest. I guess I’m still a weird kid, looking at solemn public holidays and wondering if this is a good day to die, statistically speaking. I hope I haven’t ruined your Christmas. You should be fine as long as you get a checkup now, avoid alcohol, cars, travel, and hospitals, and remember to take your medicine.



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Lake Street, from page 1

fell back to the Freemans. In 1975, Freeman sold to Roger Podany, who sold used office furniture and renamed the building for himself. While Podany did not invest much in the property, he preserved the ballroom on the third floor and rented it to rock bands, including The Suburbs, for practice space. When Podany sought to sell to a known slumlord, the Longfellow Community Council (LCC) stepped up and searched for a community-based developer. Enter Fred Lehman. Lehman forged a partnership with a wealthy physician who eventually pulled out of the deal. The LCC came to the rescue in conjunction with the Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP). This, along with bank and additional city and neighborhood funds, allowed Lehman to purchase and rehab the property. In 2001 the building reopened with tenants such as Denny's Restaurant, a Latino health clinic and the 3rd Precinct police station in the basement. The 3rd Precinct moved after a torrential rain flooded the basement. An out-of-town financial group then bought the building and managed it until 2020 when civil unrest upended

the building. Enter Chris Romano, executive director of Seward Redesign.

Redesign is a nonprofit community developer with 50 years of experience in the Seward and Longfellow neighborhoods. It is also one of 16 nonprofits that received access to an acquisition loan program called CAT (Community Asset Transition) created by LISC (Local Initiatives Support Corporation) in partnership with Hennepin County, JPMorgan Chase, and the Minneapolis, Bush, and McKnight Foundations, to assist with the recovery from the riots and the ongoing pandemic. Redesign and its partners are also seeking funds from We Love Lake Street grants, PACE Equity, New Markets Tax Credits, tax increment financing, historic tax credits, the Minneapolis Commercial Property Development Fund and Xcel Energy rebates.

Redesign also purchased the Elite Cleaners property at 3101 Minnehaha Ave. Smrikárova and others have a vision of what these properties can be, and well-laid plans. Smrikárova describes not just a restoration of buildings, but a "resurgence and revitalization" much like H Street in Washington, D.C., where the 1968 riots following

the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. burned the neighborhood to the ground. Following that event, businesses faced disinvestment (in the 1970s and '80s) and ultimately fled to the suburbs until the early 2000s, when a renewed interest in city living and a resurgence took place making it the vital destination it is today, known for its nightlife, festivals, restaurants, pop-ups and communal atmosphere. "We do not want this iconic building to sit empty for long. Bringing the Coliseum back online is part of the healing process happening across Lake Street," Smrikárova said.

Smrikárova and Redesign are energized by the challenge and enjoy working with other organizations, coalitions and individuals who share their vision. "This time it will be different." This time it will be an organic process "not happening to the community but being of the community," Smrikárova said. This time, plans are being built on cultural assets, equity and transparency. There will be coalitions, community involvement and investment with a focus on opportunities for business and talent in the Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) communities. That is, entrée for people who may have been shut out in the past for a variety of reasons, including financial ones. The goal is community ownership and wealth building, especially for those who have been shut out due to prejudicial lending practices and systemic racism.

The Coliseum will welcome diverse entrepreneurs. Former tenants, as well as new ones, will be invited in and offered affordable leases. Already three anchors have been established who will co-own and operate the 70,000-square-foot building – a new bar, restaurant and event space from the owners of Du Nord Social Spirits; Urban Design Perspectives, a Black woman-owned architecture firm; and Commonsense Consulting@Work, a Black woman-owned consulting firm. Redesign is also in the process of registering the Coliseum with the National Register of Historic Places. The first step of making the application has been completed. Step two is in process and involves design approval. If approved, this status allows for state and federal tax credits.

Peter McLaughlin, former Hennepin County commissioner and Minnesota state representative, has been the executive director of LISC since 2019. LISC is dedicated to supporting projects to revitalize communities and bring greater economic opportunities to residents. This is done through capital, strategy and know-how. LISC is funded by foundations, businesses and governments. With respect to East Lake Street, McLaughlin said the goal is to "gain local control of damaged properties" rather than allow outside investors to come in who would not have an understanding of, or commitment to, the communi-



ty. This is done using financial lending to community members, particularly BIPOC members seeking to become stakeholders. "It's not just about financing, it's about place-making," McLaughlin said, which may be described as preserving and nourishing the soul of the community. Now that the Coliseum building has been secured, LISC is raising funds for the renovation, which is estimated at \$16 million. Construction is expected to take a year and will be done by two local community-oriented companies, minority-owned TRI-Construction and Watson-Forsberg, with a goal of opening the summer of 2023.

Redesign is also buying the Elite Cleaners property just south of Lake Street and Minnehaha Avenue, thanks to an \$827,250 loan from LISC. The property was heavily damaged during the same civil unrest and now sits amongst other vacant buildings including the former post office, the Odd Fellows building and the Coliseum. Within a day of the destruction, the Lake Street Council was on site to help secure the building and a disaster grant, but Samir and Pinky Patel, who own the cleaning business, could not afford to rebuild without assistance. A \$1.1 million renovation/expansion began in November 2021, a small fraction of the estimated \$350 million in commercial destruction wrought in the riots. Redesign will eventually sell the dry-cleaning property to the Patels for approximately \$475,000. Redesign will also retain an adjacent piece of land with the intention of developing what's known as "missing middle housing."

When Samir and Pinky Patel contacted the Lake Street Council for assistance they were referred to Nancy St. Germaine. St. Germaine, a member of the Turtle Mountain Ojibwa of North Dakota, has a college background but said, "that has little to nothing to do with what I do today. I learn by doing and started by laying tile in bathrooms throughout college." Today she is the owner of six-year-old Raven Construction and Jack's Hardware on Franklin Avenue (the former Welna II

Hardware store). With the assistance of the Community Property Development Fund (CPDF), Raven was able to secure a 40-year, forgivable loan with 0% interest. Raven Construction has joined Elite in the reconstruction plans and will relocate warehousing and offices into the back of the Elite property. St. Germaine, along with her team of 10, is working with the Patels on the redesign, expansion and construction of the Minnehaha Avenue property.

Ironically, the hollowing out via riots of neighborhoods with many immigrant-owned businesses has created opportunities for minority-owned businesses as rebuilding takes place. Raven has been growing rapidly, often through networking and community engagement, and has plans to branch into the mechanical and electrical areas. Unlike large projects with one owner, this type of reconstruction involves hundreds of small business owners with their own goals. Smaller, minority-owned construction firms often have difficulty obtaining bank loans; barriers still exist, access to capital is still a challenge, and competition, especially with large construction companies, is tough. Only 2.8% of state procurement in the construction field goes to minority-owned businesses and just .02% to Black-owned businesses. As St. Germaine said, "This is why we need cooperatives, partnerships and shared services." She is also in the process of developing an internship/mentoring program to give BIPOC and women a fresh start – an opportunity to learn the skills and business of construction.

In the meantime, as construction gets underway, watch for art projects in and around the Coliseum, designed to alert us to the coming changes and inspire us toward a better day. Redesign is working closely with fivexfive Public Art Consultants. Robyne Robinson is the principal of fivexfive, whom you may remember from her career as a TV journalist. fivexfive will engage local BIPOC artists to create a tangible invitation for the community and a message of hope regarding what's to come.



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- Wednesday, Dec. 29, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. – Surly Brewing Co., 520 Malcolm Ave. SE, Mpls.

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506 E. 24th St., Mpls.
Audience favorite Bradley Greenwald celebrates winter's beauty, the holiday blues, and the soul's need for rebirth in an eclectic program of words and music as kaleidoscopic as the season. First presented in December 2013, Bradley Greenwald, along with pianist Sonja Thompson, create a meditative and joyful performance of music and poems

embracing the longest and darkest night of the year. Full performance schedule and tickets at <https://www.openeyetheatre.org/the-longest-night>.

Best Of the Fest: 'Divine Intervention'
Wednesday, Dec. 22, 7 p.m.
Trylon Cinema
2820 E. 33rd St., Mpls.
For the final pick of the 2021 Mizna Film Series, we continue to celebrate the "best of" Mizna's film festival with a blast from TCAFF's past. Bringing back one of our audience favorites from the first Arab film festival in March of 2003, we're excited to screen Elia Suleiman's "Divine Intervention" in-person at the Trylon Cinema. This film screens IN PERSON ONLY at Trylon Cinema on Wednesday, Dec. 22, at 7 p.m. Don't miss this rare opportunity to see the remastered version of this classic, absurd comedy on the big screen. Reserve your tickets at <https://www.trylon.org/film/divine-intervention/>.

Women's Prison Book Project Fundraiser
Wednesday, Dec. 22, 3 - 10 p.m.
Indeed Brewing Company - Minneapolis
711 15th Ave. NE, Mpls.
Indeed Brewing Company Minneapolis will donate all proceeds from their taproom on Wednesday, Dec. 22, to the Women's Prison Book Project. Since 1994, the Women's Prison Book Project (WPBP) has provided women and transgender persons in prison with free reading materials covering a wide range of topics from law and education (dictionaries, GED, etc.) to fiction, politics, history, and women's health. They seek to build connections with those behind the walls, and to educate those of us on the outside about the realities of prison and the justice system. www.indeedbrewing.com.

'Holidays on the Hill'
Thursdays through Sundays

Now through Dec. 31
James J. Hill House
240 Summit Ave., St. Paul
Experience Christmas in 1910—both upstairs and downstairs—in the sumptuous Gilded Age mansion of railroad titan James J. Hill. Admission includes self-guided access to holiday-themed exhibits and a 60-minute guided tour highlighting holiday stories and memories from both the Hill family and their staff. Tours are limited in size to accommodate social distancing. Visitors are required to wear a face covering indoors at all times. Reserve tickets at <https://www.mnhs.org/hillhouse/activities/calendar/8905>.

Sibelius Festival: New Year's Celebration
Friday, Dec. 31, 2021, 8:30 p.m.
Saturday, Jan. 1, 2022, 2 p.m.
Orchestra Hall
1111 Nicollet Mall, Mpls.
Hailed as "our greatest living Sibelian" by the U.K.'s Sunday Times, Osmo Vänskä continues his final season as Minnesota Orchestra Music Director by leading the Orchestra in a three-week Sibelius Festival in January. Commencing on New Year's Eve, the festival highlights the music of Finnish composer Jean Sibelius and celebrates some of Vänskä and the Orchestra's most inspired and critically acclaimed collaborations. The New Year's Celebration program showcases Sibelius' Seventh and Second Symphonies and features three works for voice and orchestra, performed by Finnish soprano Helena Juntunen, who collaborated with Osmo Vänskä and the Lahti Symphony for the 2006 world premiere recordings of the orchestral versions of the "Höstkväll (Autumn Evening)" and "Hertig Magnus (Duke Magnus)" on the BIS label. These concerts mark the first Orchestra Hall performances of "Höstkväll (Autumn Evening)" and "Hertig Magnus (Duke Magnus)." More information and tickets at <https://www.minnesotaorchestra.org/tickets/>

calendar/2122/new-years-celebration/

Holiday Flower Show and Reindeer Cam
Through Jan. 9
Como Park Zoo,
Marjorie McNeely Conservatory
1225 Estabrook Dr., St. Paul
The Holiday Flower Show, now on view in the Marjorie McNeely Conservatory, is a visual sensation to behold, featuring hundreds of poinsettias. Red, orange and yellow novelty poinsettias will fill the Sunken Garden with warmth and light. Several new varieties of poinsettias will be on display including "Orange Glow," the first truly orange poinsettia and "Christmas Mouse," a red poinsettia with rounded bracts that resemble the shape of mouse ears. The Holiday Flower Show tradition began in 1925 and continues to be the most anticipated flower attraction at the Conservatory today. The Holiday Flower Show will run from Dec. 4, 2021, to Jan. 9, 2022. Plus, Reindeer Cam is back and LIVE! Get to know Mabel, Abby and Forest, the three reindeer that call Como Zoo their ho-ho-home! Enjoy a 24/7 peek into the daily details of their lives through Como Zoo's Reindeer Cam. Count down to the holidays while watching the reindeer feed, interact with one another, and socialize with their neighbors – a few arctic foxes that peep into the reindeer habitat from time to time. The reindeer holiday habitat includes a Christmas-themed barn complete with a live advent calendar and a map detailing Santa's delivery route on Christmas Eve. Visit <https://comozooconservatory.org/reindeer-> or Como's YouTube Channel <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCYWayS1GVktu4bMld4dyd-Q> for all the reindeer games and holiday merriment you'll need. Reindeer Cam is a great alternative to the yule log on a phone, laptop, tablet or big screen TV. For more information, visit <https://comozooconservatory.org/>.



RIVERSIDE EDITION

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

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

Southside Pride
3200 CHICAGO AVENUE SOUTH
MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA 55407
CALL US AT 612-822-4662
email us at editor@southsidepride.com or edfelien@southsidepride.com

PUBLISHER/EDITOR	Ed Felien
ACCOUNTANT	Bridgit Jordan
ART DIRECTOR/GRAPHIC DESIGNER	Rebecca James
MANAGING EDITOR	Katherine Schaefer
WEBSITE MAINTENANCE	Rebecca James
SALES DIRECTOR	David Goldstein
AD EXECUTIVE	Katherine Schaefer
COMPUTER CONSULTANT	Celia Wirth
MAINTENANCE	Ron Crawford
PRINTER	ECM
DELIVERY	Metro Periodical Partners LLC



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MPLS. - ST. PAUL - THE WORLD



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

The soldier and the peacenik

I am a voracious reader and years ago when I read of the coming birth of a college in Marshall, Minn., where I was living, I decided to apply for the position of bookstore manager. Never mind that I had no experience in running a store of any kind. I love books, and the president of the college and his wife were friends. I'm certain when he said yes to my inquiry that he didn't realize I had a reputation as the town radical, proved by my presence in several protest action against the Vietnam War. (Several years after he had made the decision to hire me, he received many telephone calls objecting to his decision.) So it was that, early in my bookstore career, I was sitting at the desk in my office when a young man walked in and asked if he could speak to me personally. I would have classified him as a hippie, which his appearance suggested – long, stringy hair, too-big overcoat and shoes that had never seen a shoeshine brush.

He began to talk: "I was told you are a pretty open-minded person and I need some help," he said tentatively, looking closely at me for some hint as to my feelings. "I try to be," I said. Relief began to immediately flood his face. He pulled at his hair and off came a wig. "I'm an AWOL soldier," he said. "I'm on my way

to Canada where I have a friend and plan to live there till this war is over." I nodded. He continued. "The wig thing is to indicate I'm a soldier even though I'm not in uniform. I hitchhiked here from Fort Leavenworth, but I've run out of money."

"So," I said, "you need bus fare?" Relief again flooded his face. "How much?" I asked. He told me but it was so long ago I've forgotten how much. I know it was somewhat less than a hundred dollars. It didn't take long for me to make up my mind. I never carried much money in my purse, but I could cash a check using the bookstore's cash register. This I did.

I don't remember the soldier's name, why should I have? The war is long gone. The soldier is probably back in the U.S., and I remain a fervent peacenik.

JFK and the nuclear bomb

The New York Times recently ran an article about the nuclear bomb which, in my opinion, pretty much sketched where this country is with regard to nuclear weapons. It clarified so much for me. A new study, based on recently declassified documents, offers insights into how President John F. Kennedy resolved a comparable dilemma. "It went all the way to the top," Andrew Cohen, a nuclear historian at the Stevens Institute of Technology in Hoboken, N.J., and the study's author, said in an interview. "It's clear that Kennedy was on the fence. But he decided not to go in the bomb direction." Mr. Cohen's book, "Two Days in June: John F. Kennedy and the 48 Hours That Made History" lays out the president's 1963 pivot

to diplomacy that helped make the groundbreaking arms treaty possible. He added that the disclosure of Kennedy's calculated response to the Soviet's demonstration of dropping a nuclear bomb showed his "deep revulsion for nuclear weapons."

The explosive force of the Soviet device (set off on Oct. 30, 1961) was 50 megatons or equal to 50 million tons of conventional explosives. Recently the Russian nuclear energy agency, Rosatom, released a 30-minute, formerly secret documentary video that showed preparation and detonation of the mega-weapon. According to the Times article, "The blinding flash and churning mushroom cloud hinted at its gargantuan force. Its radioactivity shot into the stratosphere and circled the globe for years."

Today, this is all history, and this is what we desire – nuclear weapons as past history.

Alex Wellerstein, a nuclear historian at the Stevens Institute of Technology, in a study published in the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, states that the Soviets were not the only power to contemplate using nuclear power. Edward Teller, one of the main scientists working on nuclear weapons, announced at a meeting that he was working on two super bombs – one would be 10,000 megatons, or 20 times as destructive as previously known. However, later, scientists and even the president, began to question the use of the bomb and called for a treaty to support him. In 1963 President Kennedy signed a treaty with Moscow.

Am I a racist?

We never had a conversation about racism when I was growing up. We always had what we called "the maid," a Black woman who helped clean the house and did whatever chores were assigned her. I especially remember Nettie and Idella, Idella because she was always jovial and laughing, at herself as much as anybody. Nettie was also jovial but not quite as much and it was during her time with us that she proclaimed that our black pet cat was her brother. She would scuff around in her flat house shoes when explaining this fact. "He my brother," she would say as she bent down to pet him, laughing all the while.

I don't remember the names of the washerwomen who came once a week, did the washing in the basement using two deep cement tubs and a hand-operated wringer to remove the excess water. The clothes were hung on wires that occupied almost all of the back yard. After all, it was a family of nine – my grandmother and grandfather, their five children, one of whom was my mother, her four sisters and

Barbara and me, the grandchildren.

This process took two days – one day for the washing and the hanging of the clothes and bringing them in when still moist, and the second day for the ironing. We had an electric iron, but the maid used flat irons, several of them, switching them back and forth on the gas grill as they lost heat, which was provided by several flat irons.

Long ago I asked my grandmother why the maid had to use the flat irons instead of the electric iron. She stopped what she was doing and searched my face as she explained the situation. She said, "Black people don't know how to use electric irons." I somehow knew better than to question her.

My grandmother is long gone but I think her attitude lives on in so many of us.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Response to Tony Bouza's criticism of Arradondo

First, let me thank you for continuing to publish the Southside Pride. For more than 30 years, you have provided a consistent forum for local news, strong advocacy and a place where local businesses can advertise.

When I became police chief at the airport in 1985, Tony Bouza was the police chief in Minneapolis. His willingness to tackle tough issues impacting policing in Minneapolis was inspirational. His command of the language and his wit allowed him to communicate with a wide range of constituents. I admired and respected the police chief who would bring donuts to his wife Erica at protests outside Honeywell's headquarters. I also was proud of his willingness to stand up to the police union in the interest of providing better police services and wiser expenditures of the MPD budget.

I was, however, disappointed in his piece "The MPD Budget" published in the October Southside Pride. His choice of words seemed designed to tear down the current police chief at every opportunity and build himself up for how he operated when he was police chief. Instead of being thoughtful in his criticism and offering constructive changes, he relied on charged words to inflame the reader. That style of writing is, unfortunately, in no short supply either locally or nationally.

I am reminded of an early essay I wrote as a freshman in high school. The piece was filled with criticism and cheap shots at the school's administration. My professor suggested I had taken the easy way out by using harsh and colorful words but failing to reflect on and offer constructive changes.

Regards,
Jim Welna

New City Council must act on ADA initiatives

2022 is just around the corner, which means a whole different looking City Council in Minneapolis is about to take over, albeit with a little less power. That does not mean that their voices won't be heard. With all the new faces and perspectives, now is the perfect time to listen and discover fresh ways to make all residents feel that their voices are being heard in the City of Lakes. One of the many things on their list should be to revamp services and amenities that support the 11% of residents with disabilities that currently live in Minneapolis.

With that being said, the City Council should look at making the Advisory Committee on People with Disabilities more prominent and rejuvenate it so that the group can be more useful. In addition, they should consider enhancing services to improve the lives of all residents with impairments: create more recreational activities, transportation and housing options, job opportunities, and improve the city's pathways for those who use wheelchairs and other mobility devices. Now would be a great moment to start anew and really listen to all residents to see what they need to thrive in everyday life.

One of my projects that I started this year was founding the Minneapolis Sidewalk Repair Hunters (mplssrh.org). The community-led effort asks residents to locate sidewalk and curb cut deficiencies and then report them to the city for repairs once every month or so. The newly elected City Council should find a way to improve city paths without having residents pay the bill for new sidewalks.

This is the opportune moment for Minneapolis to go in a better direction. This must involve council members communicating with all their constituents to find out what is important to them!

Michael Sack,
Minneapolis

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EVENTS

The Longest Night Service – A Blessing Amidst Loss Tuesday, Dec. 21, 2 p.m.

In-person and live-streamed

Saint Mark's Episcopal Cathedral
519 Oak Grove St., Mpls.
The Longest Night service observes the moment when the sun is exactly over the Tropic of Capricorn and contains the endless reassurance that we can count on God's presence in suffering and loss, and on the Incarnation and the Resurrection. This will be a service of scripture, prayers, psalmody and music. <https://ourcathedral.org/longestnight2021/>

The Longest Night: A Solstice Service of Remembrance Tuesday, Dec. 21, 7 p.m.

Plymouth Congregational Church
1900 Nicollet Ave., Mpls.
The Longest Night offers a tender time to reflect and recognize that for many, this is a time of year when grief rises to the surface. Through candlelight, music, prayer and reflection we offer a safe space to honor that grief and feel surrounded in comfort as we continue our healing path. Beth Hoffman Faeth, Seth Patterson and Philip Brunelle will lead us in worship.

Annual Epiphany Service of Carols and Candlelight Sunday, Jan. 2, 4:30 p.m.

In-person and online

Old Salem Shrine
Inver Grove Heights, MN
The Old Salem Shrine Annual Epiphany Service of Carols and Candlelight will be held Sunday, Jan. 2, 2022, at 4:30 p.m. Join us for an experience reminiscent of days gone by at historic Old Salem. Your heart will be warmed by the hymns of the season, beautiful special music and a timely message in the candlelit setting. Given ongoing Covid concerns, at this time, we ask that only vaccinated persons attend in-person and everyone wear masks while inside Old Salem. If you're unvaccinated or are ill, please participate in the

service via the publicly available live stream on Facebook (no Facebook account needed). Simply go to our page (<https://www.facebook.com/oldsalemshrine>) at the service time to access the live video.

JRLC Housing Webinar Series First Thursdays, Jan. 6 and Feb. 3, 6:30 to 8 p.m.

Online

Are you concerned about persons impacted by homelessness, the high cost of rent and the scarcity of affordable or supportive housing? Do you want to understand these issues from a variety of perspectives – and make a difference? Then join us for one or more of the monthly Housing Webinar Series offered by the Joint Religious Legislative Coalition. Register now for the program and small group discussion at <https://us02web.zoom.us/join/register/tZcucOigrTIsHdWaRONrsnxNmYUW7PYaVuUO>. For more information or to RSVP by email contact Joan Miltenberger, JRLC Organizer at jmiltenberger@jrlc.org, (612) 230-3232.

Mindekirken Centennial Program Saturday, Jan. 8, 3 p.m.

Mindekirken, the Norwegian Lutheran Memorial Church
924 E. 21st St., Mpls.
You are invited to a special program celebrating Mindekirken's Centennial in the church sanctuary on Saturday, Jan. 8, at 3 p.m. The program will include greetings from the Hon. Consul General of Norway in Minneapolis and from the Minneapolis Area Synod; presentation of a brief history of Mindekirken by Gracia Grindal; and music by the Mindekirken Choir, vocal and instrumental solos. Open to all; a freewill offering will be received.

Taizé Service

Friday, Jan. 13, 7 p.m.

In-person or online

Minnehaha United Methodist Church
3701 E. 50th St., Mpls.
It's easy to get caught up in the daily demands of life. In our busyness, we can lose track of ourselves, and of what God is calling us to be and

to do. Take an opportunity to slow down, to rest in silence and music. On the second Friday of each month at 7 p.m. from October through May, Minnehaha United Methodist Church offers a Taizé service; a time of sanctuary, a time for prayer, a time for community, and a time for silence. As we sing and pray, our hearts are opened so that we may hear God speaking to us. Please join us next month on Jan. 13 (masks are required). You can also catch a live-stream of the service by finding the Taizé button on our website. <http://www.minnehaha.org/>

Saint Mark's Music Series Christopher Jacobson Organ Recital Sunday, Jan. 16, 2:30 p.m.

Saint Mark's Episcopal Cathedral
519 Oak Grove St., Mpls.
Saint Mark's Music Series returns with live performances! Join us on Sunday, Jan. 16, at 2:30 p.m. for an organ recital by Christopher Jacobson, Duke University Chapel Organist, Durham, N.C. <https://ourcathedral.org/concerts/>

Gift cards for recent arrivals

From the Minnesota Council of Churches: We are incredibly grateful for the abundance of donations coming in from our communities! We are currently in the midst of distributing donated items to new arrivals. At this time, we are holding off on donation drop-offs until later in January. If you are interested in donating items, please contact us starting Jan. 4 to schedule an appointment.

If you are still looking for an opportunity to help out our newest arrivals, please consider a donation of gift cards to Cub Foods, Target, and/or Aldi as families are experiencing delays receiving EBT cards and SNAP benefits. These can be mailed directly to our offices at Minnesota Council of Churches, 122 Franklin Ave. W., Ste. 100, Minneapolis, MN 55404, Attn. Refugee Services.

'Sundays at Five'

Every Sunday, 5 p.m.

Plymouth Congregational Church
1900 Nicollet Ave., Mpls.
Plymouth invites you to a new worship offering each Sunday evening at 5 p.m. Rooted in contemplative practices, "Sundays at Five" will feature a slightly different focus and style each Sunday evening at 5 p.m. This worship service is designed to be quieter and more intimate than our Sunday morning services. These opportunities will include: Evensong (first Sundays) – worship that features thoughtful singing, periods of brief silence and contemplation, and a series of contemporary and scriptural readings for reflection. Sensing the Sacred (second Sundays) – a time for resting in centering

prayer/meditation; participating in the sacred reading (Lectio divina) of word, art, or nature; and the sharing of group prayer.

Celtic Weavings (third Sundays) – a service that celebrates the cycles of land, sea, and sky, affirming our connection to and the presence of Mystery within it.

Testimonies: Transformation through Stories (fourth Sundays) – an opportunity to explore the narratives of our lives as pathways for growth or hindrance and the spiritual freedom found in sharing them.

Taizé Worship (fifth Sundays) – a gathering focused around simple melodic singing that also includes readings, prayers, and periods of quiet.

We invite you to join us for any or all of these services. Please invite your friends to join us! "Sundays at 5" represent a way of connecting with the Holy that will appeal to many. <https://www.plymouth.org/worship/>

SHARING FOOD

Soup for You! Café at Bethany Bethany Lutheran Church

2511 E. Franklin Ave., Mpls.

612-332-2397

Soup for You! UPDATE: We are still spreading the love! The Soup for You! Café will be closed to normal dining, but we plan to distribute bag lunches at the regular entrance to the Café, to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. <https://soupforyou.info/>

Du Nord Foundation

Community Market

3140 Snelling Ave., Mpls.

612-460-8123

We are a community-supported food shelf that is a welcoming place for neighbors to find free, healthy food for their tables and supplies for their homes. We invite neighbors to order online and choose the day and time that works for you for curbside pickup.

Mondays and Wednesdays 3 to 6 p.m.

Thursdays noon to 2 p.m.

All are welcome, no restrictions or proof required.

To place an order, visit <https://www.dunordfoundation.org/get-food>.

Groveland Emergency

Food Shelf

1900 Nicollet Ave., Mpls.

Plymouth Congregational Church

612-871-0277

Monday – Friday

9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Entrance on Groveland Ave. between Nicollet and Lasalle. <https://www.grovelandfoodshelf.org/>

Greater Friendship Missionary Baptist Church and Friendship Community Service

2600 E. 38th St., Mpls.

Food Hub

Free food, hygiene products, and some household goods.

Tuesday and Thursday,

1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

2nd and 4th Saturdays,

9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Please bring ID and wear a mask.

Social distancing guidelines are in place.

Minnehaha United Methodist Church

3701 E. 50th St., Mpls.

612-721-6231

Yes, the food shelf is still open! In order to fight food insecurity in our neighborhood, the Minnehaha Food Shelf is open on Tuesdays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. We have moved our operations outdoors, meter the flow of clients to help ensure social distancing, periodically clean our surfaces, and wear face masks. Should we have foul weather, we plan to move the distribution indoors, though still meter clients and encourage distancing. <https://www.facebook.com/MinnehahaFoodShelf/>

New Creation Baptist Church

1414 E. 48th St., Mpls.

612-825-6933

We're still here to serve you on the first through the fourth Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. or until we run out of bags. We require clients to have their temperature checked, wear a mask, and follow social distancing. Be safe and God bless! <https://www.facebook.com/NCBC-foodshelf>. Saturdays (except 5th Saturdays) 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. (Brown door on the corner of 48th St. and 15th Ave.)

Calvary Lutheran Church

3901 Chicago Ave., Mpls.

612-827-2504, ext. 205

The Calvary Emergency Food Shelf is available for area residents on Saturdays from 9 to 11:30 a.m. We will hand out pre-packaged bags of food with a Walk-Up table on 39th St. and Drive-Thru model at the parking lot entrance. Please stay in your car, and we'll bring the food to you! Volunteers will be available outside to help you. There are eligibility requirements. On our website, <https://www.clchurch.org/>, click on the "Food Shelf" link in the "Outreach" tab, or call the food shelf office at 612-827-2504, ext. 205.

The Riverside Religious Community Welcomes You

CATHOLIC CHURCH OF ST. ALBERT THE GREAT

E. 29th St. & 32nd Ave. S.
612-724-3643
www.saintalbertthegreat.org
Weekend Masses with limited seating
Saturday 5 pm
Sunday 9:30 am (also live-streamed on Facebook)
Sunday 12 noon
Front door entry preferred
Weekday Masses M, T, TH, F at 8:15 am in the Chapel, east door and elevator entry

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LUTHERAN CHURCH

4101 37th Ave. S., 612-722-9527
Interim Pastor Steve Olson

12/24 at 4 pm – Christmas Eve Worship

9:45 am Sunday Worship in

person & livestream
Go to church website for info
12-step groups Tuesday through Friday evenings

TRINITY LUTHERAN CONGREGATION

Augsburg College, Hoversten Chapel
Riverside & 22nd Aves.

612-333-2561

www.trinitylutherancongregation.org

Christmas Eve Service 4 pm,

Hoversten Chapel

Sunday Worship 11 am

Pastors: Jane Buckley-Farlee &

Alem Asmelash

Office: 2001 Riverside Ave.

Reconciling in Christ



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Understanding Groundhog Day and the myth of Persephone

BY ED FELIEN

“When he comes out of the hole and sees his shadow, then it’s six more weeks of winter.”

It makes sense. If the groundhog comes out of his hole on Feb. 2 in Minnesota, and he sees his shadow, that means there’s most likely still snow on the ground, so it probably wasn’t the shadow that caught his eye. It was probably the snow, and that snow would cause him to think, “Well, that means six more weeks before that stuff melts. I’m going back to sleep.”

Like all important rituals passed down to us, there’s no doubt some elementary wisdom behind it. It’s probably a Northern European agrarian myth, begun to signal farmers when to plant. It’s not a good idea to put anything in the ground around Feb. 2. Best to wait six weeks—around Easter—the time of sacrifice, death, burial and resurrection. That’s the time to start planting things in the ground.

It is possible that the farmer in Pennsylvania who made up that story knew something about Ancient Greece and the stories the Greeks told farmers 3000 years ago about when to plant.

For the Greeks, the time to start planting was midway between the winter solstice and the spring equinox—around six weeks after the winter solstice, around Groundhog Day. But, for the Greeks, that day was one to celebrate—not the ugly groundhog, but the beautiful goddess Persephone, returning to earth from her conjugal bed with Ha-

des, the ruler of the underworld, the land of the dead. In Rossetti’s lovely painting of her, she emerges from the cave and turns back in longing and memory to taste one last pomegranate seed. But she does emerge from the cave, and she does help her mother, Demeter, grow things in the ground. And the planting begins. Midway between winter solstice and the spring equinox was the best time to plant in the Mediterranean cultures from North Africa to Greece. Farmers could harvest their crop before the late August sun burned everything.

I like to imagine it was some hippie farmer who lost his job teaching Greek in the local high school in Pittsburgh in the 1870s when the school board decided teaching Greek wasn’t practical enough. He moved to the country and had to learn when to plant, and once he learned, he became an expert at it. As a joke he transposed Persephone with Punxsutawney Phil.

That’s some transposition—to turn a beautiful goddess into a fat rodent.

Was this some Christian bashing of the agrarian traditions that developed into paganism? Was it the Christians saying, “Beautiful goddesses don’t come out of the ground in February. Fat rodents come out of the ground in February. A true religion would worship a god who comes out of the ground at Easter, a much better time for planting.”

And the Pope might conclude, “And there’s no celebration of a goddess descending into the



earth to an unholy reunion with her lover in hell at some time in August, midway between the summer solstice and the autumnal equinox. There is, however, the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin bodily into heaven at about that time.”

The Emperor Constantine figured all that out. He put the Christian holidays at the same time as the pagan holidays, so we celebrate the birth of Jesus and a week later we celebrate the birth of the New Year. And we celebrate the death and res-

urrection of Jesus at the same time the ancients celebrated the Osiris and Dionysus myths of resurrection and fertility.

Constantine isn’t generally acknowledged as the one who collected the stories of Jesus and made them into Mark, Mathew, Luke and John, but it was he who in 325 created a Holy Roman Catholic (as in universal) Church. It was loyal to Rome, Roman law and Roman custom.

Ever since Jesus tried to drive the money changers out of the temple, every do-gooder in his-

tory has dreamt of leading a mob against the centers of oppression. Constantine recognized the threat. He sanitized the stories of Jesus by taking out most of the negative references to Rome and released his new, revised book, the New Testament.

The Protestant faith broke off from the Catholics on class lines. The craftspeople and small burghers wanted more control of their towns and guilds and more control over the value of their work. The Catholic Church aligned with the feudal classes. It was for the divine right of kings and papal infallibility, and against these new small businesspeople in towns who wanted to question everything.

The very public conflicts within the Catholic Church today are the struggles between the authoritarian old guard and the more socially progressive forces around Pope Francis. The College of Cardinals no doubt figured that there is no future with the old guard, and it’s time to try a little Liberation Theology. That struggle was crystallized in the recent meeting between Biden and the Pope. The reactionary bishops wanted to deny Biden communion, participation in sharing the body and blood of Christ, because Biden supported a woman’s right to an abortion. The Pope said Biden is a good Catholic. That means being a good Catholic is different than it was just a few years ago. The Catholic Church is changing. It’s so old that when it moves it creaks and makes a lot of noise. But it wants its sheep to stay in their flocks and knows it may have to climb steep hills to round up the faithful.

And we moderns have adopted a groundhog to repudiate the myths of antiquity. All across the northern part of North America, a very secular ritual is played out on Feb. 2. It’s not religious. The groundhog doesn’t represent a redeemer or a Greek goddess. It’s just a groundhog, and, if he turns away and runs from the sight of the snow, he’s just saying wait another six weeks before planting.

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Sen. John Kennedy, King of the Trolls

BY ED FELIEN

Democrats are being seriously trolled by Republicans.

Paul Gosar sent out a crudely modified anime cartoon depicting him cutting the head off Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (AOC).

Marjorie Taylor Greene, during the 2020 campaign, posted an image on her Facebook

Kennedy of Louisiana has all the charm of a Southern gentleman and the venom of a rattlesnake.

He's smarter than the brawlers. He graduated magna cum laude from Vanderbilt, president of his class, got a law degree from the University of Virginia, was executive editor of the Virginia Law Review, earned a Bachelor of Civil Law degree

tary school-age children in the Soviet Union were automatically enrolled in Komsomol, the Communist Youth League.

Omarova is supported by progressives because she favors stricter regulation of banks to prevent another 2008 credit collapse, so the Wall Street Journal called her "A Banking Regulator Who Hates Banks."

When it came time to ask his questions, Kennedy said, "You have the right to believe every one of these things. You do. This is America, but—I don't mean any disrespect—I don't know whether to call you professor or comrade?"

He effectively accused her of being a communist and forced her to deny it. She withdrew her nomination a few weeks later.

When LBJ was president, a young man came to see him. He was interested in running for a congressional seat in Texas, and he was asking for advice about how to run against a popular incumbent. LBJ told him, "Accuse him of sleeping with hogs." "But," the young man protested, "he doesn't sleep with hogs." "Of course not," LBJ said, "but he'll have to deny it."

Once you start denying something, some people will believe there must be some truth in the accusation.

The last time Kennedy prefaced one of his zingers with, "Now, I don't mean any disrespect," he was talking about Nancy Pelosi, and he continued, "but it must suck to be that dumb."

Kennedy's attack on Omarova probably doomed her candidacy. Some moderate Democrats said they couldn't support her, and there was no expectation that any Republicans would have, so it's likely her nomination was fated to fail—a singular victory for Republicans in a Congress run by Democrats and a personal victory for John Kennedy.

It's possible that the farce

about communists in the banking regulatory agency last month was just a tryout in the auditioning for vice president that seems to be going on in the Republican party. The governor of Texas versus the governor of Florida versus the governor of South Dakota. Maybe Kennedy thought, "There's room in that clown car for one more act. I can scare the hell out of them with stories of elitists who think they're better than we are and who want to take our money and give it to minorities and immigrants and people who haven't worked and don't want to work."

Nobody has commented on the striking congruency of the Senate hearing with the QAnon conspiracy theory at about the same time that John F. Kennedy (or maybe John-John, JFK's son) would reappear in Dallas in November and run as vice president on the 2024 ticket with Trump. What an amazing coin-

cidence. Or was that Kennedy's clever way to plant the idea in QAnon that John F. Kennedy, or maybe his son, or maybe, just maybe, a reincarnation of John F. Kennedy (or someone with the same name) would be Donald Trump's running mate in 2024?

It's a long way to 2024. Most of us haven't recovered yet from 2020. But it is interesting to see Republicans race to the bottom and throw mud. The trick is to throw mud at the Democrats without getting too much of it on yourself. Gosar, Greene and Boebert dirtied themselves throwing mud, but Kennedy, sounding like hominy grits and biscuits and gravy, comes off as homespun and sincere. It played well for his voters, and it played well for his funders—the banks.

At this point, you'd have to concede Sen. John Kennedy is the leading candidate for vice president on a Trump ticket next time around.



page of her holding an automatic rifle alongside photos of AOC, Ilhan Omar and Rashida Tlaib, saying she was going on "offense against these socialists."

Lauren Boebert made up a story about being in an elevator with Ilhan Omar and remarking to a security guard or an aide (depending on which version of her story she is telling), "Well, she doesn't have a backpack; we should be fine," implying that Omar is a suicide bomber and a terrorist. One of Boebert's fans was so inspired by her "joke" that he sent this voicemail to Omar: "I would love the opportunity to take you off the face of the f*cking Earth, you Muslim piece of sh*t jihadist. We know what you are, you're a f*cking traitor. You will not live much longer, I can almost guarantee you that."

The reason these Republican members of Congress do this is because it excites and delights their base. Trump has shown there's money to be made in going as low as you can with fear and loathing: "Brown people are coming across our borders to take our jobs. Send me money!"

The attacks are crude and stupid. They aim for the lowest common denominator, and they hit it. They have all the elegance of a street brawl.

On the other hand, Sen. John



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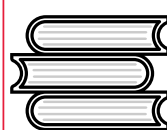


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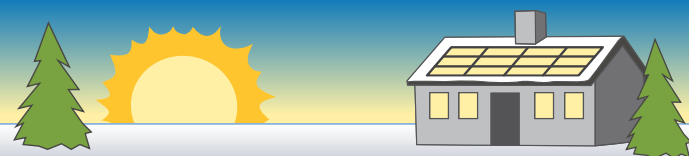


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