



**We build Pride on the Southside**

## RIVERSIDE EDITION

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### Cam's Corner



### City on fast track to restructure itself

BY CAM GORDON

The mayor and City Council are moving quickly to restructure city government.

Substantial ordinance amendments, which have yet to be shared with the public, could be approved by the end of August. The timeline presented by Mayor Jacob Frey in June called for the public hearing on August 4 and approval on August 20.

Some of it is already underway.

On June 30, the council approved two new executive positions: a community safety commissioner and a city operations officer to replace the city coordinator.

Ordinance amendments were approved to create the position of city operations officer, with a salary of \$269,943 to \$320,000, and the position of community safety commissioner, with a salary of \$295,250 to \$350,000. Both salaries exceed the cap of \$192,144 imposed by state law and will

See Cam, page 5



Rep. Ilhan Omar holding Dolan Emory at the Midtown Global Market

## Who won?

BY ED FELIEN

The DFL won the DFL primary last Tuesday.

DFL-endorsed candidates beat challengers up and down the ticket.

At the top of the South Minneapolis ticket, Ilhan Omar beat Don Samuels for a seat in Congress by a little more than 2%, in spite of her support for the ballot initiative last year to defund the police, in spite of her opposition to

aid to Ukraine in their war against Russia, and in spite of her support for Palestinians that angered Israeli Zionists and big donors in AIPAC.

Jordan Kushner, well-known criminal defense attorney and political commentator, observed: "Omar can continue to take positions that no other elected official at her level would take, but the tight margin will likely ensure another more conservative

challenge in two years. Ilhan will hopefully be even stronger in her progressive advocacy to keep her base, but still more careful to avoid statements or votes that make her an easy target for criticism without much benefit."

Ilhan Omar said, "Tonight's victory is a testament to how much our district believes in the collective values we are fighting for and how much they're willing to do to help

See Election, page 5

## A simpler Hiawatha plan

BY ED FELIEN

Ian Young, in a Star Tribune editorial published Aug. 5, said, "Those commissioners voting to advance the nine-hole master plan are the ones who have done their homework and understand the reality of the issue."

Really?

Young says any proposal to save Hiawatha Golf Course would "not be compatible with the other major goals for the site: managing flooding, reducing groundwater pumping and cleaning up pollution entering the lake."

The 2017 Barr Engineering study said removing the remains of the dam/weir at 27th Avenue and an unused gas utility pipe would reduce the level of Lake Hiawatha by one and a half feet. Lake Hiawatha is 53.5 acres. An acre is 43,560 square feet. 43,560 times 53.5 means 2,330,460 square feet, times 1.5 would equal 3,495,690 cubic feet. One cubic foot of water contains 7.48 gallons. 7.48 gallons times 3,495,690 equals 26,147,761 gallons of water.

**Your presence is requested**

**A public hearing on the  
Hiawatha Golf Course Area  
Master Plan is scheduled for  
Wednesday, Aug. 17, 6:30 p.m.**

**MPRB Headquarters  
2117 W. River Rd.  
Minneapolis**

Getting the Park Board to take down the remains of the dam/weir and getting CenterPoint Energy to remove their unused utility pipe would mean we would increase Lake Hiawatha's storm water capacity by 26 million gallons. That would go a long way toward "managing flooding" and "reducing groundwater pumping."

"Cleaning up pollution entering the lake" is the responsibility of the city. Most of the trash comes through the storm sewer system that takes gutter trash from Lake Street to 43rd Street, from Chi-

See Hiawatha, page 4



**Our 13th Annual  
Celebrate Summer on Grand Avenue**

**Pages 7, 8 & 9**



# The Hiawatha Golf Course Master Plan

BY KATHRYN KELLY

On July 20, the Planning Committee of the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board started the process of reconsidering the Hiawatha Golf Course Master Plan for the fourth time. This time Park Board President Meg Forney wasn't going to let this initial vote fail, so her first act of the night was to appoint herself to the planning committee so she could personally vote to pass the resolution.

During the public comment period, quite an array of comments was given about the plan.

The lengthiest was by Al Flowers, who compared the Park Board to the current U.S. Supreme Court. He said that the Supreme Court has just taken away a long-standing constitutional right. In a like manner, the Park Board is destroying a 90-year-old Black institution in the city of Minneapolis. Flowers also begged Superintendent Al Bangoura to stand up with the Black community in imploring the board to retain the 18-hole Hiawatha Golf Course.

One person asked the board to stop the racist tactic of pitting minority groups against each other (in this case, Blacks and Native Americans) and another woman asked the board to give the Hiawatha Golf Course property back to Native Americans. I found the latter rather ironic since, the next morning, I saw a Native American golfing in the group behind me at Hiawatha Golf Course. Maybe the Park Board should give the property back to the Native American community and the golf course could be added to the many golf courses in Minnesota owned and operated by Native Americans. Then we could still have our 18-hole golf course, and it would likely be better maintained.

I talked about the history of racism in the city of Minneapolis; how my grade school of 600 kids was all white because of racial covenants; how the building of I-35W destroyed part of the Black community in South Minneapolis; and how Solomon Park, named after the first Black Park Board Commissioner, Ed Solomon, is a disgrace. Now,



Al Flowers had to be pushed off the microphone at the July 20 MPRB Planning Committee meeting.

this heavily white Park Board wants to destroy Hiawatha Golf Course, another Black institution in the city of Minneapolis.

With the help of Park Board President Meg Forney, the Planning Committee voted to pursue the path of destruction of another

Black institution in this city. The racist legacy of Minneapolis, implemented by white privilege, continues.



*Old homes! old hearts! Upon my soul forever  
Their peace and gladness lie like tears and laughter;  
Like love they touch me, through the years that sever,  
With simple faith; like friendship, draw me after  
The dreamy patience that is theirs forever.*

Madison Julius Cawein

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# There's a bad smell somewhere

BY ED FELIEN

[Ed Felien's remarks to the Park Board on July 20]

In a promotional video having something to do with the Hiawatha Plan, Michael Schroeder is shown saying, "My mission is to de-Wirthify the Minneapolis Park System." The crown jewel of his plan is to turn the Hiawatha Golf Course into a swamp. It was almost a swamp a hundred years ago before Theodore Wirth dredged Rice Lake to a depth of 33 feet. Most of Minneapolis was a swamp a hundred years ago. Powderhorn Park was a swamp that crossed Lake Street to 28th Street. But swamps smell bad. People wanted to drain the swamps so they could build homes and parks and

playgrounds and golf courses.

But there is something swampy about the fixed determination of Park Board planners. Something about it smells. It's already cost the taxpayers over a million dollars in planning, and all it has produced is a stinking mess.

It's time to de-Schroederize the plan for Hiawatha.

The justification for the Schroeder plan is the amount of pumping done to keep water off the low land next to the lake. He told everyone at public meetings that the amount they were pumping was illegal. That was a stinking lie.

What is illegal is the dam/weir at 27th Avenue that is holding back five feet of water. You need a permit from the DNR to back up water into a wetland, and the

area around Lake Hiawatha and Lake Nokomis and Solomon Park is a wetland. The peat soil is like a sponge soaking up water and swampifying the whole area. Take down the dam/weir, dredge the creek so the water runs under the sanitary sewer lines, and you lower the lake level by five feet and drain the swamp. You would eliminate the collapsing infrastructure around Lake Nokomis, end flooded basements and eliminate pumping.

State regulations say, "Dams not subject to the dam safety rules will still require state and federal permits if they involve filling of public waters or wetlands."

It shouldn't take a writ of mandamus and a district court order to force the Park Board to follow the law and do what's

best for our parks.

We need to flocculate Minnehaha Creek before it gets to Lake Hiawatha. Like Richfield at Taft Lake, we need a system to filter the water and take out the phosphorus that is making us sick. And we need a flocculation system and a grit chamber filtering phosphorus and trash out of the city's storm sewer system that dumps poison and trash into Lake Hiawatha.

We all want the best for our parks. We all want to get past this stinking mess we keep coming back to. But first, we're probably going to have to find a strong de-Schroederant.



Jon Spurgeon with fish caught and released at Lake Hiawatha

## 3rd Precinct update

Third Precinct Advisory Council (3PAC) Minutes

July 11, 2022

Meeting was called to order by Co-Chair Gwen McMahon at 6:39 p.m. 17 attendees.

**Treasurer's report:** Doris Overby, Treasurer, balance of \$1457.73 in our checking account at Wings Financial. Check to reimburse Gwen McMahon will be written shortly for \$561.12.

**Minutes:** of the June meeting were approved as written.

**Summer Picnic:** will be August 11 at the temporary 3rd Precinct building. As in the past, 3PAC will be offering food for all three shifts. Serving times will be around the noon hour and then again around the supper hour and early evening. Phil Williams has volunteered to pick up food at Corcoran Park and deliver to the precinct as parking is at a premi-

um. Timing will be determined at the August meeting.

**Officer of the month:** This recognition has been brought back. Recognitions are being funded by the department budget. A request was made to have the Inspector share the write up with 3PAC each meeting. Inspector Gomez was going to check and see if he could do that.

**Updates from Inspector Gomez:** Retention incentives for MPD officers. A plan is before the City Council to provide retention bonuses to patrol officers. Some of the guidelines include good standing and employment as of December 31, 2022. A discussion of public services was had along with some of the current trends in the precinct. A more in-depth discussion of the Shot Spotter system was had and how that fits into the information at hand for investigations. Staffing has remained the same since last month. New hires seem to just

replace officers leaving.

**Question/answer opportunity:** Doris Overby made a motion: 3PAC supports an action of the City Council to offer incentives for both patrol officers and upper ranks - command staff. Motion seconded and passed.

Gwen McMahon and Phil Williams will meet with Inspector Gomez to discuss the types of information 3PAC would like to have at future meetings, i.e., crime statistics, more detailed trends, etc. With the new Depart-

ment of Public Safety information channels have changed.

The crime statistic dashboard link is public, but not necessarily easy to find. We will publish that link.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m. **Next meeting is Monday, August 8, at Corcoran Park, 6:30 p.m.**

Minutes respectfully submitted by Phil Williams, co-chair.

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# Andrew ‘Tekle’ Sundberg

BY ELINA KOLSTAD

After putting our 5-year-old to bed the night of Wednesday, July 13, I realized there was a helicopter flying around outside. It's not all that unusual to hear helicopters from our house, sometimes going to or from the nearby hospital, but this was persistent and constant. A little after 10:30 p.m., a neighbor posted to the Seward E-Democracy forum that 19 squad cars were at the Holiday Station on Franklin, and Pizza Luce had been told to close by the police – there was an active shooter situation. After seeing the email I checked in with our neighbor who is not on E-Democracy, and she quickly pulled up more information from Crime Watch. The most recent information was an hour old and as we texted I realized that the helicopter was no longer circling. At this point it was after 11 p.m., so I assumed that whatever



Andrew ‘Tekle’ Sundberg

was going on was pretty much over. The next morning I woke up to discover that at 4:30 a.m. on Thursday, July 14, the police had decided to execute Andrew “Tekle” Sundberg in what some are calling “suicide by cop.”

Those familiar with this case will be aware that Sundberg began shooting, apparently within his own apartment while alone,

at around 9:30 p.m. His neighbor, Arabella Foss-Yarbrough, called the police after a bullet flew through the wall and into her apartment as she and her two small children sheltered in the bedroom. She ran to let the police into the building; the police got her sons out of the apartment and evacuated the rest of the building. Many point to the imminent danger to Foss-Yarbrough and her children as justification to shoot and kill Sundberg, but they had been removed to safety for hours by the time Sundberg was shot. What the police did that was heroic that night had nothing to do with them shooting anybody, what they did that was heroic was that they rescued a mother and her young children from gunfire and evacuated the building and surrounding area. There are major questions as to why that broke down when it came to Sundberg himself; it's unclear if mental health profes-

sionals were even on the scene.

When the snipers shot Sundberg it was not a heroic moment. It was a cold, calculated execution. We as a society have the collective delusion that guns are heroic, guns are strong, guns solve problems. We would benefit greatly if we would recognize strength beyond weaponry; the heroes of this story are the police who risked their own safety to rescue those children and evacuate the building, not the snipers who took the shot from a building away.

The thing that stands out to me most about this situation is that Sundberg seems to have been in his apartment by himself. Admittedly I am not a medical expert but, based on my experience, it would seem that Sundberg was dealing with some form of psychosis or hallucinations at the time of his death. I think it is fair to question how much he understood of the situation he was in. This is very different from someone with severe depression who instigates an attack to achieve suicide by cop.

Many people want to highlight this situation as an example for why we need a strong, well-armed police force. Those of us in favor of defunding the police

would argue that better access to mental health resources before people start shooting up their own, and their neighbor's, apartments would be far more beneficial. When the Minneapolis teachers' union was striking, improved mental health services was one of their main demands, and yet our governor refused to support them, even as our state sits on a sizable budget surplus.

In addition to proactively funding more comprehensive mental health services, we really need to break down the stigma surrounding mental health issues. We need to make sure that people and their families are willing to seek out diagnosis and help without feeling that there is something wrong with them.

In the meantime we need to accept that we are choosing to live in a world of gun violence – gun violence that can, and increasingly will, happen anywhere. There will only be so much any amount of funding our police can do for us once the bullets start to fly. Uvalde, don't forget, budgeted over \$4 million dollars (37% of their general fund) to their police force and it neither prevented nor satisfactorily resolved the devastating attack on their school.

## Hiawatha, from page 1

cago Avenue over to 27th Avenue, and dumps it into Lake Hiawatha. Andrew Johnson, chair of the city's Public Works Committee, has shared with me that there is grant funding secured to implement a temporary litter catchment next year.

If for some perverse reason the Park Board refuses to take down the remains of the dam/weir, and CenterPoint refuses to remove their unused utility pipe, then people should write to Sarah Strommen, commissioner of the Minnesota DNR, and complain that the Park Board and CenterPoint are blocking the natural flow of Lake Hiawatha into Minnehaha Creek.

My understanding of regulations is that: “Federally-owned dams and dams determined by the DNR to be non-hazardous are exempt from the dam safety rules. Dams not subject to the dam safety rules will still require state and federal permits if they involve filling of public waters or wetlands.”

Backing up a foot and a half of water raises the water table in the surrounding protected wetlands. The peat soil conducts water easily and collapses side-walks and floods basements.

They must have a permit to do what they are doing.

Do they have a permit to flood a wetland?

If they don't have a permit, then they're in violation of State Law: 103G.141.

And, if necessary, they should

be prosecuted in a court of law.

“I believe the City has the responsibility to eliminate pollution entering Lake Hiawatha from our infrastructure. Litter comes through the storm water system from miles of roadway and dumps into the lake. We are exploring permanent infrastructure changes to address this, and once recommendations are before us we will be able to proceed with securing funding so that we can get permanent improvements implemented. In the meantime, we are implementing temporary improvements to help catch litter for removal.” – Andrew Johnson, Chair of Public Works & Infrastructure

## Sometimes simple is not better: a response

BY CAROL DUNGAN AND FRIENDS OF LAKE HIAWATHA

If you've been following discussions about the Hiawatha Master Plan involving the lake and golf course, you can be forgiven for feeling a bit of déjà vu. That's because some supposedly simple solutions keep being proposed as alternatives to an “expensive” master plan. You may have heard “do this one thing, it'll solve everything!” because, hey, who doesn't like a simple solution that costs almost nothing and solves everything? For some, the solution to the com-

plex problems at hand boils down to removing a weir at the 27th Street walking bridge, accompanied by claims that doing so will lower the lake and keep the golf course and adjacent homes flood-free.

Let's recap the problem with facts I think we all agree on: Hiawatha Golf Course was built in the late 1920s on a floodplain with dredged wetland material from historic Rice Lake. (I say “historic” because the lake and the land were part of the vast homelands of the Dakota people, from whom they were taken by deceit or by force.) The Minnesota Historical Society has photos of the area pre-dredging, showing a massive flat wetland stretching from 28th Avenue to Cedar. So all those rolling hills our homes and parks were built on? Man-made.

In the 1950s, as Hiawatha Golf Course gained a following among local Black golfers, its sodden foundation required pumping into adjacent Lake Hiawatha to keep the greens playable. Think of a sponge that is already soaking wet. The only way to soak up more water is to squeeze out the existing water. Pumping accelerated in 1992 but was permitted only to remove stormwater. At some unknown point in time, MPRB began pumping ground water of between 300-400 million gallons per year – the only thing that keeps the course consistently dry. In violation of environmental law, MPRB had vastly exceeded permitted levels and type of pumping. Then came

the flood of 2014, which cost an estimated \$4 million to fix. The illegal pumping was discovered, and the master plan process began.

In addition to remediating the flooding issues, the master plan diverts trash and polluted runoff into planned filtration and catchment areas, preserves nine holes of challenging golf, and introduces meaningful education and acknowledgment of the area's complicated history – for Black golfers who created a safe space for all, and the Dakota peoples from whom the land was forcibly taken.

A frequently mentioned alternative to the master plan is removing a weir under the 27th Street walking bridge. But this is only one piece of a multipart case scenario outlined by Barr Engineering in 2017, not a solution in and of itself. Barr's scenario would also require significant dredging of the creek from the outlet to Nokomis Avenue, reconstruction of bridges at 30th and Nokomis, redesign or lowering several sanitary sewers and a water main at 28th, and removal of an abandoned gas main. All of this would be at an unknown cost both to taxpayers and critical habitats to lower the lake by one to one and a half feet. Is this a significant amount? Not really. A quick calculation yields a total of approximately 37 million gallons of potential reduction in pumping into Lake Hiawatha but compared to the current level of 400 million gallons a year, it's less

than is pumped into Lake Hiawatha, on average, in a month.

One unfortunate aspect of the divisive dialogue around the master plan has been misinformation about how it will lead to flooding basements of adjacent homes. MPRB Commissioner Cathy Abene, who is a licensed professional engineer in Minnesota and has been working in water resources for the public sector for most of her career, confirmed to Friends of Lake Hiawatha that homeowners shouldn't be afraid that the nine-hole plan will fill in the floodplain. This is because the final version of the plan must and will accommodate flood storage.

The design for the nine-hole plan is only schematic at this point. I think that gets lost in all the back and forth between 18-hole advocates and those who support the nine-hole compromise plan. First, the plan must be voted on by commissioners. Once it's accepted by a majority, it goes into the process of securing funding. Once funded, a full engineering design process begins, and adjustments are made to ensure the desired outcomes. But those adjustments can't be made until we move ahead. The costs of further delay are only making the solutions more expensive and risking another flooding catastrophe – and FEMA will not help foot the bill. We should pass the master plan and secure the futures of both the lake and sustainable golf at Hiawatha Golf Course.



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Hennepin Avenue – the future

If the city is designing an avenue for the future, then why is it not including electric car charging stations? That is but one question we should be asking as this egregious project is being rammed down the throats of businesses along Hennepin Avenue.

Businesses who neither want, need nor approve of a plan that will kill them, yet they will be required to pay for through assessments.

And why? Mostly because a small but very vocal lobby has gripped our city government by the throat and holds us all hostage.

Yes, we need to address climate change. But traffic jams and angry motorists racing down once-quiet city side streets is not the answer. But that is what we get when we sacrifice every major corridor to BIKE LANES! Bike lanes with few riders ever in evidence.

Hennepin Avenue deserves

better.

The current “Hennepin Avenue Redesign for the Next 50 Years” plan is a colossal mistake. It is a plan based on a woefully inadequate parking study. One major issue, merely identifying parking lots along the corridor (private lots, by the way) does nothing to inform as to the loss of critical parking. These lots, at The Kenwood, Kenwood Isles Condos, Kowalski’s, etc., are not going to welcome the public. How does this help us?

It does not. It only obscures the issue. Intentionally?

It is a plan based on unacceptably inadequate public engagement (obvious by the ever-growing public backlash) conducted during a major pandemic when few could afford to pay close attention. Well, we are paying attention now and we are ANGRY!

It is a painful attack on needed small business. Why are we decimating the very community city government is purporting to

serve? Neighborhoods all along Hennepin rely on these small businesses. They form the backbone of our communities. They are the hub of neighborhood activity.

This plan turns Hennepin into nothing more than a commuter line, funneling people in and out of downtown. There will be no more small businesses.

There are those who believe that this is exactly what the city wants. Small business gone so developers can swoop in, tear down, build larger buildings with more expensive housing, no parking and limited retail on the first floor. Turn Hennepin into just another street that could be in any neighborhood anywhere. No distinguishing landmarks. No charm. No character.

Is this really what we want for our city? Can nothing be done to stop this? Are we just to watch as our neighborhoods disappear? Or do we somehow find a way to push back?

Fight to save our streets. Our landmarks, our hubs, our neighborhoods – the soul of our city.

It doesn’t have to be this way, if we are willing to fight.

There is another way. There is a compromise that serves all who wish to utilize Hennepin Avenue: A dedicated bus lane AND parking can coexist. IF the city can stand up to the bike mafia and move the unsafe bike lanes off of this major car corridor to a far safer option. Irving Avenue is one such, far less expensive option. Irving stretches from deep in Uptown to Douglas Avenue. It could then cross Hennepin into Loring Park and continue into downtown.

Doesn’t it make more sense for bikes to be in our neighborhoods with our children than angry drivers pushed off major thoroughfares by unsafe, under-utilized bike lanes? Can we not at least agree on THAT?

I need to make this perfectly clear. I have no hate in my heart.

I do not dislike actual bike riders. Some people in my family are avid riders.

My issue is with a lobby that screams down any voice that dares to disagree, that dares to offer a countering opinion, and has been known to viciously attack those who offer differing opinions. Making elected officials cower and chasing good people from seeking office for fear of being pilloried on social media.

That is what has happened. I am prepared for it. I have no plans for office. And my city, my avenue are worth it.

Think this can’t happen to your street? In your neighborhood?

They are probably already making plans.

Carin Peterson

Cam, from page 1

require a waiver. Both positions will report to the mayor.

The city operations officer will oversee the proposed new Office of Public Service which would include the 311/Service Center, City Assessor, Civil Rights Department, Communications, Community Planning and Economic Development, Finance and Property Services, the Health Department, Human Resources, Information Technology, Intergovernmental Relations, Minneapolis Convention Center, Neighborhood and Community Relations, Public Works and Regulatory Services.

Then, on July 7, Mayor Frey announced his nomination of Cedric Alexander for the new position of community safety commissioner. As proposed, the commissioner would oversee the new Office of Community Safety, which would include the fire and police departments, 911, the Office of Emergency Management, and a new Office of Neighborhood Safety that will replace, or possibly include, the Office of Violence Prevention now housed in the Health Department. [Alexander’s nomination was approved by the City Council at their August 4 meeting.]

The council also approved adding a city auditor position to the internal audit department and increased the department’s budget by \$75,000 to do so.

When Frey announced his selection of Cedric Alexander for the safety commissioner, he said that government restructuring is “the most important thing I will probably ever do as mayor.”

Council Member Linea Palmisano (Ward 13) has given notice that she is authoring the restructuring amendments to

repeal Chapters 17, 21 and 25 that relate to the offices of city attorney, internal auditor, and city coordinator and adding new chapters to “provide for the government structure and its Executive and Administrative Departments, including the offices of Public Service, City Attorney, and Community Safety” consistent with the mayor’s plan.

Presently, and historically, 10 departments report jointly to the mayor and council. The proposed reorganization reduces the number reporting directly to the mayor to four and limits the departments reporting directly to the council to two. The city attorney is one of the four who will report to the mayor but their relationship to the council is unclear.

Some council members are concerned.

Council Members Elliot Payne (Ward 1) and Jeremiah Ellison (Ward 5) said that they are concerned about a lack of resources to support the work of the City Council as the legislative body. Council Member Jason Chavez (Ward 9) said he “still believes the pathway forward is through a charter change.” Council Member LaTrisha Vetaw (Ward 4) said that she “is afraid some departments, like health, will be lost.”

“We have to be mindful that Council still plays a role in approving department heads and that we don’t have a dilution of financial oversight,” said Council Member Andrew Johnson (Ward 12). He wants to ensure that there is no change in the level of financial authority currently held by the council.

“Question #1 has been implemented for nearly seven months, there is no reason to rush this process,” said Council Member Robin Wonsley (Ward

2), who was the lone “no” vote on approving the new positions. “I know the public wants to be involved in charting a path forward for our city.”

At the June 18 council meeting, Wonsley asked the mayor about community engagement on the proposal, and he highlighted the 2021 campaign and his work group. That work group was established in late 2021 without a single current, or newly elected, council member serving on it. None of its meetings were open to the public. In 2021, Question #1 won with 52.4% of the vote and was defeated in six out of the 13 wards.

“The mayor could take the time to work with Council and the public to shape an equitable transparent restructure package, instead he is rushing through an ordinance process to

avoid public scrutiny,” Wonsley wrote following that meeting. “The current proposal lacks robust programs and resources on the legislative side that Council needs to best serve constituents.”

About lack of public participation, Wonsley said, “For comparison, the city did a multi-phased engagement process for the city’s Transportation Action Plan that received thousands of comments and created a process that allowed the public to see how their feedback shaped adjustments in the proposals. The guiding principles of this government structure were offered by the mayor’s Government Structure Work Group and the public safety plan was based on recommendations from the mayor’s Public Safety Work Group. Both work groups were handpicked by the mayor

and met behind closed doors with little to no opportunity for public comment. This is not how elected leaders should be making decisions when credibility and public trust is at an all-time low, the public deserves better.”

Wonsley also raised concerns about the lack of any independent legal counsel to advise council members.

Given the many concerns raised by council members about the potential significance of this restructuring to further divide and eliminate checks and balances in our government, the council could decide to take a slower and more inclusive process going forward. If not, it could be written, approved, and enacted into law by the end of the month.

become the youngest member of the state Senate (at 25) and the first Black female.

DFL-endorsed Omar Fateh beat Shaun Laden 60.7% to 39.3% for the state Senate seat in 62. Fateh faced down a Minnesota state Senate ethics investigation into campaign practices in the 2020 election. Laden joined the race late. Many insiders believe he entered the race to hold down the seat for progressives; he was a labor organizer for teachers’ aides and won contracts for them guaranteeing raises of 40% over the next six years.

DFL-endorsed Aisha Gomez easily beat Osman Ahmed 69.4% to 30.6% for House seat 62A.

Election, from page 1

us overcome defeat. This win is for them and everyone who still believes that regression will not be the legacy of the Fifth.”

In the messy municipal election last year, Omar supported challengers against the incumbent mayor, Jacob Frey: “I’m asking you not to rank our current mayor. Both of these women are qualified and passionate. One of them would make an excellent leader for Minneapolis, and both of them would be a better fit for the city than the current mayor.” Frey returned the favor by organizing a coalition of all 5th District mayors in

opposition to Omar.

DFL-endorsed Mary Moriarty, a former public defender, won twice as many votes as her nearest candidate, Martha Holton Dimick. Jordan Kushner: “This could be an epic contest and debate, but also could get ugly. A career public defender and strong reform advocate versus a former prosecutor and demonstrably prosecution-biased judge. The establishment and conservative force can be expected to immediately consolidate behind Dimick. No matter what, it should be interesting.”

DFL-endorsed Zaynab Mohamed beat Todd Scott two-to-one in their race in Senate District 63. She’s on track to

Catch up on what’s happening in South Minneapolis at southsidepride.com



# Get ready to VOTE

BY LYDIA HOWELL

For the last three elections, Minnesota was number one in voter turnout, at almost 80% participation.

One reason for such high participation is Minnesota's Election Day ("same day") voter registration, passed in 1973.

"It's not just the absence of obstacles, but the presence of good laws. I use the baseball call of 'the tie goes to the runner.' In Minnesota, the tie goes to the voter," says Minnesota's three-term Secretary of State Steve Simon. "Over the years, we cleared obstacles in the path of voting. The idea of access for the voter has been deeply bipartisan. Minnesota was only one of three states to pass Election Day registration. Now, it's still only 15 or 16 states. Same day registration is the jewel in the crown of voting."

"Voter registration simply means show me you are who you say you are and you live where you say you live," Simon explains. "There's a long list of things you can use to prove that at mnvotes.gov."

Requirements to vote: be a U.S. citizen, a resident of Minnesota for at least 20 days, and 18 years old by election day. Being convicted of a felony does not stop you from voting, as long as you've completed all your sentence and are not "on paper" – that is, you're not on parole, probation or supervised release.

Simon is part of a coalition working to end the "on paper" block to voting.

Minnesota recognized African American men's right to vote in 1869 – a year before the 15th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution did so. White women in

Minnesota won voting rights in 1920, while women of color still struggled (depending on the state they lived in). Indigenous people marginally won voting rights in 1962, strengthened by the 1965 Voting Rights Act. Obstacles remain, as a Native American Rights Fund 2020 report shows, including non-traditional addresses (on reservations) and no address due to higher levels of homelessness (outside reservations), and fewer opportunities for voter registration.

Since 2020 was a U.S. census year, districts may be redrawn and polling places for in-person voting might be changed. Check mnvotes.gov for up-to-date information.

In the wake of Donald Trump's Jan. 6 attempt to overturn the 2020 election of President Joe Biden, some are questioning Minnesota's voting system, expressing concern about election day voter registration. Simon is reassuring about the state's cross-referencing system. "We catch people who are double-registered. Double voters are very rare. Actual voter fraud in Minnesota is microscopic."

Simon's likely challenger is Minnesota Republican Party-endorsed Kim Crockett, who echoes false claims about voting and fans fears rooted in bigotry. At the Republican Party's state convention in May, Crockett referred to George Soros as a "puppet-master controlling elections" with strings attached to Simon, who is also Jewish. These are antisemitic slurs, common among right-wing conspiracy theorists.

Like other Trump Republicans, Crockett attacks how absentee ballots were more easily

available during the COVID-19 pandemic, calling it "an insecure chaotic absentee balloting system."

Before COVID, about 25% of Minnesotans voted by mail. In 2020, that rose to 58%.

"Vote by mail worked really well," Simon says. "We should be proud that people didn't have to choose between their right to vote and their health."

Vote by mail is a two-part process. First, ask for an application for an absentee ballot. (In Minneapolis call 612-673-3000 or email minneapolisabsentee@minneapolismn.gov. Fill it out and return promptly in the provided envelope. Ask for a ballot for the Nov. 8 general election.. (You must provide a postage

stamp for the application.) Next, when you get your ballot, carefully read the instructions. You will need to have a witness for your ballot (mate, family member, neighbor). Decide on candidate choices before you mark your ballot. (You can't cross out on a ballot.) Put your ballot in the "Witness envelope" and put that envelope in the official envelope. Postage is free for returning ballots.

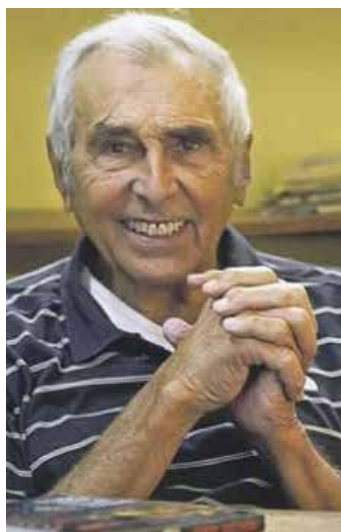
Joan Growe, Minnesota's secretary of state from 1975 to 1999, made voter access her mission. She helped push "motor voter" through the state legislature in 1987, so that people could register to vote at the same time they renewed their driver's license. Motor voter became national in

1995.

Growe's legacy continues with Steve Simon. In her inspiring and informative memoir, "Turn-out" (written with Star Tribune columnist Lori Sturdevant), Growe says, "If one believes voting is a right, it follows that few if any circumstances should disqualify a citizen from eligibility to vote. Screening requirements that deny eligible people access to the polls are unacceptable. Election policies should aim to facilitate voting, not impede it."

*Lydia Howell is a Minneapolis journalist, winner of Dallas Press Club and (Minnesota) Premack Awards for Public Interest Journalism.*

## Ugly truths



BY TONY BOUZA

The Floyd case is marvelously instructive for all the awful lessons it provides. A latter-day "Rashomon."

Racism is number one, but forgive me, not the issue that grabs me.

I monitored the Chauvin-types very carefully through Internal Affairs and gave the others ample room for caution in dealing with street events. It required close scrutiny and tough controls, but that's what running a police agency is all about—control. Police departments are dictatorships, not democracies.

I froze promotions for nine years and, at the end, still had too many supervisors. I cut overtime to the bone and

insisted that disabled workers be given appropriate assignments. Cops are very good at finding compliant medics who give them documents facilitating tax-free disability pensions. Bloat is not only evident in the number of cronies raised high but in the creation of such unnecessary—and ironically named—units as Public Information Officers. One-person patrols and eight-hour workdays were other defiant ideas—now abandoned. Our leaders seem to prefer treasury-busting settlements to actually managing.

Cases like the Cindy Gerdes murder are neglected, eloquently illustrated by the indifference to promising leads.

The city is smashed, burned and destroyed, and the band plays on. Looters, window crashers and arsonists are cosseted or overlooked. Precincts—yes, police houses—are burned. Burned, and no one lifts a finger. O tempora, o mores!

The police union rules—and everyone who matters knows it. The City Council spins wheels, wrings hands, turns over the people's treasure to eager hunters, and the public gets pissed on while being handed figurative umbrellas in the form of pieties. The citizens who pleaded with Chauvin to ease up are heroes. The cops who paid for getting along by going along

now know the cost.

I know. I go on and on. But I lived it, fought the union tooth and claw, served the people's interests and was amply rewarded—at least psychically.

A tiresome anecdote (how we geezers love 'em): Not long ago the ex-police chief to whom I turned over my expert witness business saw a documentary of my time in the Bronx and was impressed. He called to tell me so and said that he would share his views with our former colleagues in the NYPD. The chat room is very appropriately called "Rant." I advised him to eschew the effort, but he was adamant.

Soon thereafter he called again, incredulous over the vitriol heaped upon me some 40 years after my departure:

"Never did a cop's job in his life."

"Uses fancy words to impress."

"A charlatan and a joke." Most of the trenchant views more or less mirrored the lovable little old lady who muttered: "That Tony Bouza certainly is full of himself, isn't he?"

The cops would've added I was full of something else, too.

Cops do not want to be controlled.

That is the brutal truth.

Most do a good job, but no one loves leashes, least of all their wearers. For a time I entertained the notion of calling our agency Animal Control, but someone else stole the idea.

We all want admiration, rewards and prizes, and few of us like strife. Real public service means adherence to Cicero: "The good of the people is the highest law."

Good luck with that.

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# CELEBRATE SUMMER ON GRAND AVE.

## Summer on St. Paul's Grand Avenue

BY DEBRA KEEFER RAMAGE

Before the pandemic, there were a lot more restaurants on Grand Avenue. Grand Cafe, Dixie's on Grand, Saji-Ya, Emmett's Public House, Grand Catch: all have closed since 2020. One restaurant/bar that closed, and then reopened (twice!) under new management, is Billy's on Grand. Now Billy's is at the center of a controversy in the neighborhood that may impact its ability to get its own liquor license. (Since the second re-opening, in May of 2021, under the management of two experienced managers, Wes Spearman and Chuck Gilbert, the business has been "borrowing" the liquor license of RJMP Group, who managed the first re-opening in 2020, but lasted only a few months, partly due to COVID.)

As we go to press, the two current managers are facing a mid-August hearing that will determine whether the borrowed liquor license may be revoked, as well as whether they have to pay a \$1,000 fine imposed for alleged license

violations and other safety concerns. Billy's makes a case that they are being blamed for crimes that didn't happen, or that did happen but not on their premises and unrelated to their business.

Among neighbors, they have both friends and opposition. Billy's on Grand's customers are largely African American. "Some of the neighbors are proactively working with us, others think we're the worst thing. Anything on Grand Avenue involving a person of color gets associated with us," said Gilbert. "The bottom line," said Spearman, "is it's a Black crowd, and that's new to the neighborhood."

The Billy's kerfuffle is not the only controversy brought about by change. There was a time when Grand Avenue was known as a place where you could have something close to big city sophistication, but with affordable rental housing. Rents have been rising way too fast everywhere, and there is no exemption for Grand Avenue. New housing developments are almost always controversial, but Kenton House,



Owasso Guitars at Twin Cities Guitar Show, 2016

currently under construction at 695 Grand Ave., is getting more than its share. The website for the development unabashedly states that it will be "the only luxury apartment

destination along Grand Ave."

The site was previously occupied by three very popular restaurants: Dixie's on Grand, Emmett's Public House and Saji-Ya. The new housing complex will be a five-story building with 80 units of "luxury" housing - market rate rentals. Two of the temporarily closed restaurants, Saji-Ya and Emmett's Public House, will be reborn as the ground floor commercial tenants, along with two more to be announced. Although "tenants" is not really the right word here, since it is the owner of Emmett's (and landlord to Saji-Ya), Peter

Kenefick, who owns the site and is funding the development, along with west metro developer Reuter Walton.

Most in the Summit Hill neighborhood group have never really liked this idea. However, they did not have a big enough majority or a strong enough voice to prevent the approval of the Planning Commission. In July 2021, the commission "voted 9-1 to support a conditional use permit and three zoning variances related to the proposed redevelopment of the Dixie's on Grand

See Grand Avenue, page 8



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# CELEBRATE SUMMER ON GRAND AVE.

## Grand Avenue, from page 7

lot into a five-story residential and commercial building,” according to the St. Paul Pioneer Press. Permission having been granted, construction has now begun and is moving along, but the controversy is unabated. The main reasons for opposition include: the height (one of the zoning variances), which neigh-

bors say will block light and views; the density, which many fear will attract more traffic and crime; and the elusive gentrification factor.

Even with the losses, there are plenty of interesting restaurants along Grand Avenue, including a couple of new ones. One of the newest, just opened this summer, is Em Que Viet, at 1332 Grand Ave., an extension

of the small, family-owned Que Viet chain, famous for its State Fair egg rolls. “Em” means “little sister” in Vietnamese. Their menu is similar to other Que Viets, with all your favorites. They also have a great list of zero-ABV cocktails.

Another Grand Avenue restaurant with southeast Asian influences is the Thirty-Six Café at 949 Grand Ave. Owner Macy Lee, a Hmong American, was inspired by her 2017 trip to Thailand, where she had honey toast, to open a cafe featuring sweet delicacies such as that and souffle pancakes, along with coffee and tea drinks, smoothies, and other casual and fun breakfast/brunch fare. Lee named her cafe for the age she was when it opened in 2019.

Two restaurants farther to the east on Grand Avenue, one a small casual chain, the other quite fancy, are inspired by the dining culture of Italy. The fancy one is Hyacinth. There are a lot of fancy things there but one I’ll highlight is the option of “Amari” in place of dessert. Amari (bitters in Italian) are special dark, low ABV, bitter liqueurs typically consumed after dinner to aid digestion. How very civilized!

The casual chain restaurant



Grand Ole Creamery (Facebook photo/@dani\_c\_ryan)

is Punch Pizza. This is exactly the kind of pizza place I love – no gimmicks, and looking not to Milwaukee or even Chicago for inspiration, but to Naples, and maybe a little bit to Sicily. They’re all about the pizza – only one dessert on the menu, no pasta or hoagies. They don’t deliver, apparently, but for an extra \$20 you can get an impressive “pizza steel” with your

order that allows you to professionally reheat your pizza at home.

Apart from restaurants, Grand Avenue has some of the most interesting shopping options in the Twin Cities. One that stands out is Owasso Guitar Co. (OGC), at 407 Grand Ave. Opened in 2012, it embodies traditional artisanal values by building



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Souffle pancakes with Hmong sausage at Thirty-Six Café





acoustic guitars by hand. They have some stock models, or they can design and build a custom guitar to the artist’s specifications. Check out their website, especially the page on varieties of “tonewoods” used to make guitars.

If OGC can build tradition in just 10 years, what can a company like George’s Shoe, Leather, and Hockey Repair do in 117 years? Their current business



Kenton House under construction

grew out of a custom boot making shop that started in Lebanon in 1905 by family patriarch Joseph George. The George family tradition of craftsmanship is now in its fourth genera-



Accessories for Hmong American

tion, with a network of family-owned shoe repair shops in various parts of the Twin Cities. The George’s Shoe, Leather, and Hockey Repair store on Grand Avenue continues in that tradition, as well as branching out into repairing hockey gear.

In the 1970s, Jerry George expanded his shoe business to include sports equipment repair, working with everyone from kids’ teams to professional ath-

letes to Hollywood film productions. Their website tells the story: “When the producer of ‘Mighty Ducks II’ needed a genuine skate repair shop ... Jerry George moved his entire shop to a sound stage in Minneapolis for three weeks of filming and

generously acted as a technical advisor.” These days, George’s repairs hockey equipment nationally for professional NHL teams and individuals—both in their brick-and-mortar storefront on Grand Avenue and via their mail-in services.

Next Chapter Booksellers represents a case where the tradition is carried on but the ownership changes hands. The current name is owned by Nicholas Ballas, but the shop is still in the location of its predecessor (Common Good Books) at 38 Snelling Ave., just off the Macalester College campus. You can shop in person at Next Chapter for new fiction, nonfiction and poetry, as well as book-adjacent items such as fancy stationery, including the esteemed Blackwing pencils to go with your Moleskine notebook. Their book inventory is also available from their online shopping site for pickup, delivery or shipping. See their website for news of readings, book clubs and other hosted events.

We’ll finish up our 2022 survey of Grand Avenue with Golden Fig Fine Foods, a shop so iconic some people go to Grand Avenue only to shop there. Opened in 2006 by Laurie McCann Crowell, the shop nearly doubled in size in 2017 and is now a big draw for St. Paul. You



Blackwing pencils for stationery enthusiasts at Next Chapter

can shop online, but only a small selection of the items available in the store can be purchased online, as the store itself has many options like fresh produce and deli items.

A unique offering at Golden Fig, apart from the fact that literally everything in the store is produced in the U.S. and a huge majority in the upper Mid-


west, is Golden Fig’s own-label products, which include herb and spice blends, fancy salts and peppers, dip mixes, cocoa mixes, flavored sugars and infused vinegars. The Golden Fig also participates in the St. Paul Farmers Market and is a drop-site for a dairy CSA (Community Supported Agriculture).

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# Restaurant news, plus two mini-reviews

BY DEBRA KEEFER RAMAGE

## An opening

The long-vacant Viking Bar location on Riverside Avenue has finally attracted a new resident: TAMU Grill and Catering, with a Kenyan fusion menu. Owner George Ndege, aka Chef JoJo, was formerly known as both the host of KFAI's African Rhythms and a caterer of African food, both of which he and his family will continue along with running the restaurant. With their grand opening in early July, TAMU ("delicious" in Swahili) will be open Wednesday through Sunday, serving food described as a fusion between (deep breath)

deed many owners, he was not insured). The fund is about half-way to its goal, so do contribute if you can. [gofund.me/57674b61](https://gofund.me/57674b61)

Kim Bartmann, owner of a mini-empire of restaurants including Barquette and Tiny Diner, was tapped by Wisconsin-based Wilson Hotel Group to run the food and drink space in their boutique hotel under development in downtown Minneapolis. The hotel is part of a chain of small hotels called Indigo Hotel and is going to occupy the former Crowne Plaza spot on 2nd Avenue. The hotel-based eatery will be co-managed and developed by the Bartmann group and Wilson Hotel Group and will be called Star Bar & Bistro. It will

in-house, chef-prepared. For my two side dishes, I got: (1) grilled asparagus with romesco, and (2) mac and cheese with potato chip panko crust. For my salad-soup-bread choices I got: (1) a loaf of Laune sourdough bread, and (2) a watermelon and smashed cucumber salad. For my single (but very large) dessert, I got mixed berry crisp with real whipped cream. For a free gift, I got a bottle of homemade hibiscus syrup.

The only thing gone quickly was the syrup, which I mixed with seltzer water and drank within two days. The meatballs and marinara spent over a week in the freezer before being cooked and divided into three humongous portions. I am close to finishing that and the bread. So all in all, the kit has majorly supplemented my meals for almost three weeks now.

I will rate the things in descending order of yumminess:

- Smoked tofu with rhubarb BBQ – adored it. Two large meals plus a riff on a banh mi to finish it off.

- Mac and cheese –excellent, but way too much. I would say a minimum of 12 servings as a side dish. I lost count of how many lunches and sides I got out of it. I combined it with roasted broccolini a couple of times, then with peas and a spicy sauce. It almost seemed to get better the more times I reheated it. Up to a point, anyway.

- Mixed berry crisp – lovely, not too sweet. Not enough whipped cream, though fortunately I also had some of my own.

- Laune bread – excellent when lightly toasted and thickly buttered, but hard to slice.

- Hibiscus syrup – great. No complaints.

- Marinara sauce and meatballs – good, would probably get again, but also way too much for me. (I know, that's my fault, not theirs, but it affects the ratings so I provide it as a reason why I might have had a higher rating in a normal restaurant setting.)

- Asparagus and romesco – asparagus was a bit underdone and woody at the bottom. I have always wanted to try romesco, but guess what? I'm not a fan. I gave it away.

- Watermelon and smashed cucumber salad – I would probably like this a lot in a proper restaurant setting. The instructions said the crispy shallots would be separate, but they weren't. The whole salad, dressing and all, came to me in a tall quart-size container. The shallots had liquified into goo. I don't think this works in a meal kit unless it's prepared fresh by the consumer.

## Mini-review – She Royal Bar & Bistro

I discovered this new place at 2223 E. Franklin Ave. (where a coffee shop was before the pandemic) when I attended Open Streets. I was fainting from



Chef Justin Sutherland

hunger and also quite hot and thirsty. When I saw that it was more than just a coffee shop, I decided to get a meal. I got the small Ethiopian Plate and was offered an unlisted drink item – a house-made sweetened hibiscus iced tea – which I happily accepted, and it was just what I needed. I finished every bite of the lovely, all-vegan, beautifully-but-not-aggressively-spiced items with injera and white rice.

Later I read about it on the E-Democracy forum for Seward neighborhood. Neighbors were all very happy to have this new dining place on the avenue, where places to get a drink or a

bite to eat are getting quite thin on the ground. Everyone agreed that the Ethiopian food offered there (not the only kind of food, though) was better than at a number of larger, more well-known places. But the owner put "Bar" in the name because he was trying to get a liquor license, and apparently the city is being weird about it. So neighbors in Seward are trying to flex their muscle and clear the path for a bar to open along with the bistro. For now, although you can't get an alcoholic drink, you can get some really tasty food at She Royal.



## Tamu Grill grand opening

Kenyan, West African, Indian, Southeast Asian and Middle Eastern cuisines. (Sounds great, actually. Watch this space, I may review it.)

## The highs and lows of local celebrity restaurateurs

Justin Sutherland, our local mega-celebrity chef who seems

be Bartmann's first foray into downtown.

## Mini-review – the Eat for Equity meal kit

As promised last month, I am reviewing the Eat for Equity meal kit. I accidentally got a full-size kit instead of a half-size kit. Half-size kits are made for cou-




## Small Ethiopian plate at She Royal

to be everywhere (he's mostly known as the genius chef behind Handsome Hog but that's far from his only gig) was grievously injured in a boating accident on July 3. He sustained propeller injuries on one arm and the side of his face. He needed surgery that involved wiring his jaw shut for six weeks. There is an ongoing Medical Recovery Fundraiser for his medical expenses (like most restaurant workers and in-

ples, full-size for large households, and I am a singleton who almost always eats alone, so it took a bit of creativity, juggling and freezer capacity to do this but I did it.

For my two "mains" I got: (1) pasta with vegan meatballs and marinara sauce, and (2) smoked tofu with rhubarb BBQ sauce. The pasta consisted of a box of dried macaroni in an upscale brand, and everything else was



## 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 150 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:

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# • COMMUNITY CALENDAR •

Southside Pride / RIVERSIDE EDITION

## EVENTS

### Community Listening Session on Police Union Contract Negotiations Monday, Aug. 15, 6 to 7:30 p.m.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Park Recreation Center  
4055 Nicollet Ave., Mpls.  
The city is holding three community listening sessions to receive input on topics related to a new three-year contract with the Police Federation of Minneapolis. Members of the public are welcome to attend. This past spring Mayor Jacob Frey convened an internal workgroup focused on collaboration and developing a shared set of priorities in advance of the 2023-2025 police union contract negotiations. The group, comprised of Council President Andrea Jenkins, Council Member Lisa Goodman, Council Member Aisha Chughtai, Council Member LaTrisha Vetaw and city staff, meets monthly and is hosting these listening sessions as an extension of its work. This process will help inform the city in its negotiations with the Police Federation. Information on the negotiations is available on the city's website: <https://www2.minneapolismn.gov/government/departments/hr/labor-agreements/contract-negotiations/>. Earlier this year, the city approved a three-year collective bargaining agreement with the Police Federation that retroactively covered years union members worked without a contract. That agreement expires Dec. 31, 2022.

### Talk of the Stacks:

#### A Pulitzer Poetry Celebration Diane Seuss and Mai Der Vang in conversation with Jeff Shotts Tuesday, Aug. 16, 7 p.m.

#### Free virtual event

The 2022 Pulitzer Prize announcements were a red-letter day for Graywolf Press, whose tradition of championing the most talented emerging voices in literature yielded two significant honors in poetry for the Minneapolis-based publisher. Talk of the Stacks is proud to present both honorees, Diane Seuss and Mai Der Vang, in conversation with Jeff Shotts, Graywolf Executive Editor. Diane Seuss is the winner of the 2022 Pulitzer Prize in Poetry for "frank: sonnets," which deftly transforms the sonnet form into lyrical autobiography. These poems tell the story of Seuss's working-class childhood in rural Michigan to the dangerous allures of New York City and back again. Mai Der Vang is a 2022 Pulitzer finalist for her poetry collection "Yellow Rain," a groundbreaking work that reopens a wrongdoing that deserves a new reckoning. As the United States abandoned them at the end of its war on Vietnam, Hmong refugees recounted stories of a mysterious substance that fell from American planes during their escape from Laos. This substance, known as "yellow rain," caused thousands of deaths and was widely misportrayed by American scientists as the feces of honeybees.

To register for this free webinar, go to [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_FlvBd29TSTSMfP8x-FAcKNw](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_FlvBd29TSTSMfP8x-FAcKNw).

**HomeHelpMN program open for applications**  
**Deadline extended through Aug. 17**

HomeHelpMN began accepting applications for assistance on Tuesday, May 17. HomeHelpMN will provide relief to homeowners who have been impacted by the pandemic and who owe past due mortgage payments and other eligible housing expenses. Funds for the program are limited, and need is expected to be high. If applications received during the application period exceed available funding, applicants may be put on a wait list. Applications will be accepted until Aug. 17. Homeowners can get ready today by visiting the website at [HomeHelpMN.org](http://HomeHelpMN.org) or calling the Call Center at 1-800-388-3226. That website and phone number are also where they can apply for funds. A submitted application is not a guarantee of funding. The Call Center is available Monday through Saturday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. It is accessible by TTY and also utilizes the Language Line to provide access for callers who wish to communicate in a language other than English.

### Kramarczuk's Kielbasa Fest

**Friday, Aug. 19,**

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**Saturday, Aug. 20,**

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Utepils Brewing Co.  
225 Thomas Ave. N., Mpls.  
Utepils Brewing Co. has teamed up with the legendary Northeast Minneapolis staple, Kramarczuk's Eastern European Deli, to bring back the amazing Kielbasa Fest! This event will be a weekend filled with music, fun, beer and of course, sausage! Friday we will get things kicked off in the Beer Garden with a FREE Meat Raffle (4 p.m.) and The Ukrainian Village Band (6 p.m.). Kramarczuk's street food will be available all night. On Saturday your \$5 wristband gets you into the festival and you are allowed to come and go as you please. Kramarczuk's will be serving up sausage and Utepils will be pouring our delicious European-style beers. Music and a pierogi-eating contest throughout the afternoon. For details, go to <https://utepilsbrewing.com/events/kramarczuku-kielbasa-festival/>. Cost: Friday FREE; Saturday \$5 – (ages 5 & under FREE)

### Puppet Lab: A 2-Week Festival of New Work

**Through Aug. 21**

Open Eye Theatre

506 E. 24<sup>th</sup> St., Mpls.

Featuring new work by Dominique Herskind, Mary Plaster, Liping Vong and Amoke Kubat.

Puppet Lab is celebrating its 10th year of radical, genre-expanding, boundary-pushing puppet work! Since early spring, four emerging puppet and mask theater artists have been testing and creating new works within a supportive and challenging workshop environment. Join us for the culmination of their hard work during the Puppet Lab Festival. For performance schedule and tickets, visit <https://www.openeyetheatre.org/puppet-lab-festival>.

### Do The Work: An Antiracist Activity Book by W. Kamau Bell + Kate Schatz Monday, Aug. 22, 7 p.m.

Parkway Theater

4814 Chicago Ave., Mpls.

Overwhelmed by racial injustice? Outraged by the news? Find yourself asking, "What can I doooo?" DO THE WORK! Join Emmy-Award winning

sociopolitical comedian W. Kamau Bell and New York Times bestselling author Kate Schatz as they discuss their revolutionary antiracism workbook that addresses institutional racism in the U.S. Poet, author and cultural commentator Sun Yung Shin will moderate this important conversation as the authors share insights and their hands-on approach to dismantling systemic racism. All ages. Presented by Magers & Quinn Booksellers. Tickets available at <https://www.magersandquinn.com/event/W-Kamau-Bell-and-Kate-Schatz-present-Do-the-Work!-An-Antiracist-Activity-Book/107>.

### MPS Young Learners Celebration

**Wednesday, Aug. 24, 4 to 7 p.m.**

Mona Moede Early Learning Center  
2410 Girard Ave. N., Mpls.

(Corner of Girard and 23rd)  
Join Minneapolis Public Schools for a Young Learners Celebration! Families with children ages 0-7 are invited to this fun back-to-school event featuring activities, entertainment, music, food, school resources and much more.

- Free food for everyone
- Free books
- Free school kits (backpacks)
- Free COVID-19 vaccine clinic for all ages
- Ride a school bus!

### Scott Lloyd Anderson, Oil Paintings Through Aug. 27

Doug Flanders & Associates

5025 France Ave. S., Mpls.

DF&A will present the second solo exhibition featuring the work of plein air painter Scott Lloyd Anderson. Scott Lloyd Anderson is a quintessential landscape painter of the 21st century. In addition to interpreting

the beauty of nature or the vitality of the cityscape, Scott has explored that area where so much of our experience lies – the suburbs. He proves it is possible to paint a good picture of anything by combining detailed realism with abstract playfulness. [flandersart.com](http://flandersart.com)

### MPRB's Group Bike Rides for Teens Through August

Make friends and explore the city on FREE rides, led by MPRB naturalists. Bikes and helmets provided! Take to the trails and explore Minneapolis green spaces on two wheels. Youth ages 12 to 17 can develop safe bicycling skills, navigate the city's outstanding trail system and have fun while making new friends. All rides are FREE and led by MPRB naturalists. Bicycles and required helmets are provided (riders can bring their own equipment). For youth ages 12-17 who can ride a pedal bike without training wheels. Rides run 1 to 2 hours and cover about 2 to 8 miles. Wear summer clothes and bring a water bottle – it's hot out! At least two adult supervisors ride with each group.

Locations and times:

Upper South Minneapolis

East Phillips Park, 2399 S. 17th Ave.,

Tuesdays 5 to 7 p.m.

Stewart Park, 2700 S. 12th Ave.,

Thursdays 5 to 7 p.m.

Lower South Minneapolis

Powderhorn Park, 3400 15th Ave. S.,

Wednesdays 5 to 7 p.m.

Southwest Minneapolis

Whittier Park, 425 W. 26th St., Mon-

days 5 to 7 p.m.

Ready to ride? Sign-up is encouraged but not required:

Online: [bit.ly/BikeWithANaturalist](http://bit.ly/BikeWithANaturalist)

Phone: 612-230-6400 (Mon. – Fri., 8

a.m. to 4:30 p.m.)

In person: Visit any recreation center and talk to MPRB staff

### Saint Paul Classic Bike Tour

**Sunday, Sept. 11**

**7:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.**

Como Lakeside Pavilion

1360 Lexington Pkwy. N., St. Paul

This year, the 28th Annual Saint Paul Classic will again explore the beautiful off-road trails and protected bike-ways that circle the city. Registration is OPEN to ride the Saint Paul Classic on Sunday, Sept. 11! This year there are two different check-in times: 7:30-8:30 a.m. and 8:30-9:30 a.m. Please make sure you are purchasing the correct tickets for your desired check-in time. This will greatly help reduce congestion on the route and lines at rest stops. We also hope it will allow a few more people to enjoy some of the best St. Paul has to offer including some newly rebuilt trails along the river (yay, no detours)! This year, we're once again going over the river and through the woods to visit a hidden gem — Lilydale Regional Park. We're excited to ride together for a splendid day of bicycling, tasty treats and live music. Find out more and sign up to ride or volunteer at <https://www.eventbrite.com/o/bicycle-alliance-of-minnesota-13331907631>.

### Vine Arts Center

#### Member Show/Reopening

**Sept. 17 – 18, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.**

Vine Arts Center

2637 27th Ave S., #228, Mpls.

Vine Arts Center will have its Member Show/Reopening as part of the LoLa Arts Festival.

[info@VineArtsCenter.org](mailto:info@VineArtsCenter.org)





## EVENTS

### A Listening Ear: Mental Health for Everyone

Wednesday, Aug. 17  
6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Living Spirit United Methodist Church  
4501 Bloomington Ave., Mpls.  
This summer, Living Spirit is providing a listening ear to the community. At the event, trained listeners (mental health professionals, marriage and family therapy students, and certified coaches) will be available from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. You can talk about a specific problem you'd like an outside perspective on or check in about your mental health in general. This event is open to people of all (or no) faith traditions. More information at <https://www.livingspiritumc.org/news/listeningear>.

### Genocide Warning: India

Tuesday, Aug. 23, 7 to 9 p.m.  
Online

The speakers discuss the persecution of Muslims in India by the Indian government and its supporters. Key human rights organizations warn that genocide is imminent, yet incitement and violence continue. We will hear from Safa Ahmed, journalist and media associate of the Indian American Muslim Council (IAMC), Nikhil Mandalaparthi, Deputy Executive Director of Hindus for Human Rights, and Ellen J. Kennedy, Ph.D., Executive Director of World Without Genocide. Register at <http://worldwithout-genocide.org/programs/upcoming-events/genocide-warning-india>.

### Minneapolis Friends Meeting Summer Schedule

Through Sept. 11, 10 to 11 a.m.  
4401 York Ave. S., Mpls.

The summer schedule for Minneapolis Friends Meeting is in effect from now until Sept. 11. Worship hours are from 10 to 11 a.m. Services will continue to be hybrid – join us on Zoom or at the Meetinghouse. Please go to our website at [minneapolis-friends.org](http://minneapolis-friends.org) for more information. All are welcome!

### Volunteer with Refugee Services: Orientation

Wednesday, Sept. 14, 2 to 4 p.m.  
Minnesota Church Center  
122 W. Franklin Ave., Mpls.  
Interested in volunteering with MCC Refugee Services? Join us for our upcoming volunteer orientation for positions like Befriender, Apartment Setup Volunteer and Resettlement Assistant. To register, please contact a Volunteer Coordinator at [rsvolun-](mailto:rsvolun-)

[teers@mnchurches.org](mailto:teers@mnchurches.org) or call (612) 230-3291. Apply online at [www.mnchurches.org/volunteer](http://www.mnchurches.org/volunteer).

### 'Many Voices United' United Theological Seminary's 60th Anniversary

Wednesday, Sept. 28  
8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Register by Friday, Sept. 16  
United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities  
767 Eustis St., St. Paul  
Founded in 1962, United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities will kick off its 60th anniversary at a special event for students and alums, current and former faculty, and other members of the community on Wednesday, Sept. 28. The theme for the celebration is "Many Voices United."

"Many Voices United" pays homage to the ecumenical origins of the seminary and its ongoing dedication to educating leaders for the church and society, and weaving into its curriculum tenets of social transformation, theology and the arts, interreligious engagement and public theology. During the day-long celebration participants can tour our St. Paul campus, worship with Rev. Elizabeth Macaulay ('99), and enjoy special intergenerational theological conversations between current and retired faculty members. There is also an option to view the program online. Please register for the event by Friday, Sept. 16. Visit <https://content.unitedseminary.edu/60th-anniversary-reg-form> to learn more and register.

### Healing Minnesota Stories Open Sacred Site Tours

Sunday, Oct. 2, 1 to 5 p.m.  
Sunday, Oct. 30, 1 to 5 p.m.

Church of St. Peter  
1405 Sibley Memorial Hwy.  
St. Paul  
While dozens of private Sacred Sites Tours have taken place for groups this year, the Minnesota Council of Churches is happy to announce two open-to-the-public tours, led by Rev. Jim Bear Jacobs (Mohican) and Kelly Sherman Conroy (Oglala Lakota). The tours offer an opportunity to learn about Minnesota history from a Native perspective through storytelling and experiencing the sites in silence/meditation/reflection. Learn more about how you can participate in Healing Minnesota Stories by absorbing the sacred narratives of Minnesota places. Get more info and register at <http://mnchurches.org/what-we-do/healing-minnesota-stories>.

### Plymouth Congregational Church Worship Schedule

1900 Nicollet Ave., Mpls.

"Under the Big Top" – outdoor worship on Sundays at 9 a.m. Masking is not required outdoors.

Sundays at 10 a.m. – coffee and social time in Jones Commons, and Community Joy Circle Dance in the parking lot next to the tent or, if rain, in the Conn Gallery.

Indoor worship on Sundays at 11 a.m. in the sanctuary and online. Masking in the church building is strongly recommended. There is a "Mask Only" section available in the Sanctuary and marked for those wishing extra security. [www.plymouth.org](http://www.plymouth.org)

### Donations Needed for Newly Arrived Refugees

From the Minnesota Council of Churches: During the hectic past few months, MCC Refugee Services has been able to serve 225 Ukrainian individuals – nearly as many people as we served from Afghanistan – through Matching Grant and RCA programs. As folks settle into their homes, we have an urgent need for donations for newly arrived Ukrainians and others from around the world.

On the top of our list: trash bags; laundry detergent; kitchen/bathroom cleaners; shower curtain and rings; toilet brushes; brooms & dustpan or mops; bed sheets twin & queen, blankets twin & queen; pots & pans; kitchen knives; and kitchen utensils. Do you have items you would like to donate? Please email [Rsvolunteers@mnchurches.org](mailto:Rsvolunteers@mnchurches.org) or call (612) 230-3219, or order online from our up-to-date Amazon Wishlist at [https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/2144RAQ240DR9/ref=nav\\_wishlist\\_lists\\_1?fbclid=IwAR1MPIVOD3g-P6giEmpmQ55m4HgCvYIDAUZ-G6p-zaZvp4l4nnFWWhK9Ev\\_dxo](https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/2144RAQ240DR9/ref=nav_wishlist_lists_1?fbclid=IwAR1MPIVOD3g-P6giEmpmQ55m4HgCvYIDAUZ-G6p-zaZvp4l4nnFWWhK9Ev_dxo).

## SHARING FOOD

### Soup for You! Café at Bethany

2511 E. Franklin Ave., Mpls.

612-332-2397

Soup for You! operates out of the basement of century-old and deeply rooted Bethany Lutheran Church that we honor in our name. After two years of COVID lockdown and serving our community through a set of three glass doors, Soup for You! Café is back to an open dining room. Monday through Friday, noon to 1 p.m. Wednesdays, groceries, noon to 1 p.m. Large space, high ceilings, only

four chairs per table, all volunteers vaccinated/boosted. <https://soupfor-you.info/>

### Minnehaha United Methodist Church

3701 E. 50th St., Mpls.

612-721-6231

The Minnehaha Food Shelf serves food for the hungry on Tuesdays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. We help distribute up to 30,000 pounds of food each month. In response to the COVID-19 virus, we have changed many things to protect both our guests and our volunteers – rigorous cleaning routines, streamlined procedures, moving outside, wearing face masks and following the 6-foot social distancing guideline. Please be patient as we continue to improve what we do.

<https://www.facebook.com/MinnehahaFoodShelf/>

### 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.

Thursday 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.

612-871-0277

Monday – Friday

9:30 a.m. to noon

On Groveland Avenue between Nicollet and Lasalle (Temporary entrance on Nicollet Avenue)  
Hosted in the basement of Plymouth Congregational Church

Delivery is available for individuals who are housebound due to disability.

<https://www.grovelandfoodshelf.org/>

### 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. We have re-opened the food shelf to choice shopping. We do require mask, sanitizer and temp check. Be safe and God bless! <https://www.facebook.com/NCBCfoodshelf>. Saturdays (except 5th Saturdays) 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

(Brown door on the corner of 48th St.

and 15th Ave.)

### Nokomis Heights Lutheran Church

5300 10th Ave. S., Mpls.

612-825-6846

Serving Loaves and Fishes free community meals on Wednesdays from 5 to 6 p.m. The meals are all "to-go" meals, served from the northwest door on 53rd Street. These meals are free to anyone, no questions asked. You might have had a hard day and simply cannot cook dinner. Or maybe you've paid your last bill for the month and cannot buy groceries. Whatever your circumstance, you are welcome. You can simply drive or walk up to the church and receive a meal any Wednesday evening between 5 and 6 p.m.

### Calvary Lutheran Church

3901 Chicago Ave., Mpls.

612-827-2504, ext. 205

The Food Shelf is open for food distributions on Saturdays, from 9 to 11:30 a.m. Due to COVID-19, we are currently operating on a limited-choice outside ordering process, or indoor client-selected shopping. Masks are required. No appointments are needed – just come to the parking lot. Eligibility is based on self-reported income and need. We ask that households come only ONE TIME PER MONTH to allow everyone access. The Calvary Food Shelf has no geographic boundaries – all are welcome! If you have any questions, please email [foodshelf@clchurch.org](mailto:foodshelf@clchurch.org) or call 612-827-2504, ext. 205. For more information and to see eligibility guidelines, go to <https://www.clchurch.org/food-shelf>.

### 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.

### Community Meals at Walker Church

3104 16th Ave. S., Mpls.

612-722-6612

Free to-go meals and groceries are available for pick-up every Tuesday from 4:30 to 6 p.m. All are welcome. Sisters' Camelot holds a separate food distribution out of Walker Church every third and fifth Tuesday of the month starting at 2:30 p.m. This is in addition to our weekly programmed food distributions starting at 4:30 p.m. Follow Sisters' Camelot on Facebook or at <http://sisterscamelot.org/> for more.

## 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](http://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

### MINNEHAHA COMMUNION LUTHERAN CHURCH

4101 37th Ave. S.  
612-722-9527  
*Pastor Shauna Day*  
9:45 am Sunday Worship in person & livestream  
Go to church website for info  
12-step groups Tuesday through Friday evenings



All Directory Churches are Wheelchair Accessible

### TRINITY LUTHERAN CONGREGATION

Augsburg College  
Hoversten Chapel  
Riverside & 22nd Aves.  
612-333-2561  
[www.trinitylutherancongregation.org](http://www.trinitylutherancongregation.org)  
Sunday Worship 10 am  
Pastors: Jane Buckley-Farlee & Alem Asmelash  
Office: 2001 Riverside Ave.  
Reconciling in Christ

Please send news of your faith-based community to  
[katherine.southsidepride@gmail.com](mailto:katherine.southsidepride@gmail.com)





# Born with a mission

BY ELAINE KLAASSEN

Steve Floyd is a man with a heart for others.

He has raised four children—the fifth is still under his supervision; he nurtures dozens of other youth through the Agape Movement and through his work as a mental health counselor at Change, Inc.; he makes award-winning photographs; he practices healthy living to support his transplanted kidney; he travels the globe; and he has connected to thousands over his love for basketball. There are so many areas that he tends to. His life is complex but not complicated. He exudes a rare serenity.

Co-founder of the Agape Movement, formed in the 1980s, Floyd has spent the past 40-plus years helping to bring love, safety, inspiration and opportunity into the community, particularly to former gang members as they find new paths for their lives.

Currently, Floyd goes out almost nightly with Agape members as they create a peaceful presence in the streets. There are always situations to de-escalate. Agape also offers its nonviolent presence in the schools, replacing the armed police that used to patrol the halls until June of 2020 when the MPS board voted to cut its contract with the Minneapolis Police Department.

Floyd, who has been to Africa many times, organizes trips for young Black men to visit Senegal in West Africa through the Agape's Rite of Passage program. Their latest trip was last October and November. Floyd takes them to see the shores from which captured Africans were shipped to North America. He knows how Black culture has been destroyed. His compassion for himself and those who share his history leads him to work toward healing.

Steve Floyd was born and raised on the south side of Chicago. His 17-year-old mother struggled, had no one to lean on, was abusive. His father drank a lot, went to Vietnam, was decorated for bravery, responded violently when he was called the N-word (he used a firearm to destroy property) and spent nine years in prison for it.

Steve grew up with three sisters and five younger brothers. Since their dad "wasn't in the home enough to provide the guidance, love and care needed by six young men," Steve, as the oldest, took on the task. He became the man in his brothers' lives. His brothers were all "in groups the equivalent of gangs, but they didn't call themselves that." They were basically neighborhoods that fought other neighborhoods. Now, many years later, all of them have ended up OK.

Growing up, Steve always envied his friends who went home at suppertime because their dads would be there. He didn't have a dad to go home to. One of

the themes I've heard Floyd express a number of times is that he wants to provide his kids and other kids with everything he didn't have.

As a kid, Steve lived for basketball. Just loved it. He loved the game so much that he got the idea to create a basketball court by burning down the family garage, which was in ruins and not in use anyway. Nobody was hurt and when the rubble was cleared his mother wondered what to do with all that space. Steve innocently suggested, "Maybe we could build a basketball court." Years later it came out who was responsible for the fire, but by then it was water under the bridge.

In his junior year of high school Steve got cut from the basketball team, a political decision. He was so distressed he dropped out of school—on a Monday. That Friday he got into an altercation and "a bullet grazed my temple." It scared him enough to start praying, and the next Sunday he went to church, which was all new to him because his family didn't go to church.

The next day Steve went back to school. One day he was reinstated on the team.

He was invited to attend a church camp where he thought there would be basketball, but it was all religious. He didn't behave very well at the camp, but then he started thinking about sin. He had stolen food stamps from his mom (even though he had used them to buy food for people at the park), he had set the garage on fire, and he was fighting all the time. At the camp he had stolen T-shirts and tried to let the horses out. His soul-searching led him to the conclusion that he didn't like the church because it used fear to control people, but he liked Jesus. He decided he would change and follow Jesus' teachings.

Floyd went to college at the Assemblies of God North Central Bible Institute in Minneapolis (now North Central University), where he studied theology and played basketball. He was all-American in basketball, and after graduation he stayed on for two more years to coach the sport.

Steve didn't like the business aspect of the church, the corporate ladder. He was more interested in basketball—and helping people.

During college he had been inspired by country preacher David Wilkerson, whose book and later film adaptation, "The Cross and the Switchblade," told of Wilkerson's calling to go to New York City and bring love and hope to gang members there. Floyd was on his way to Detroit to do a similar kind of work when Pastor Art Erickson from Park Avenue United Methodist invited him to work with youth in the neighborhood.

Just as he was getting started

as a leader of youth, Floyd's father, who had never recovered from Vietnam, was beaten to death in Chicago, a murder that was never solved.

From then on, Floyd has used his considerable energy to nurture young people who might not otherwise have a chance. All the difficulties and tragedy of his youth were converted to a mentality of compassion.

At Park Avenue he saw many of the kids "drifting toward gang membership" and he wanted to get them out of their four- to eight-block area so he took them camping to Mexico, to Washington, D.C., and eventually to Africa. He wanted to show them other options. He knew from trips to Europe in college how much travel can change your worldview.

Floyd saw many needs that he responded to. He started doing presentations in schools about unconditional love (agape), in which he told funny stories about each ethnic group, making fun of the stereotypes, and then talked about all coming together to value each other. He presented a vision. "Kids would run out crying. It was hitting and challenging them where they were. Hundreds were marching in Agape marches," he said. Now, in 2022, because of COVID, the assemblies have slowed down. In 1987 he started a basketball league called Youth in the City, followed in 1990 by another league that included other sports besides basketball: S.T.R.E.E.T.S. (Striving to reach educational excellence through sports).

In 1985, when the Disciples gang executed 16-year-old Christine Kreitz, who they thought had "snitched," Steve found himself speaking on TV and radio. He was explaining that gangs formed because kids needed support and protection they didn't get from adults in their lives.

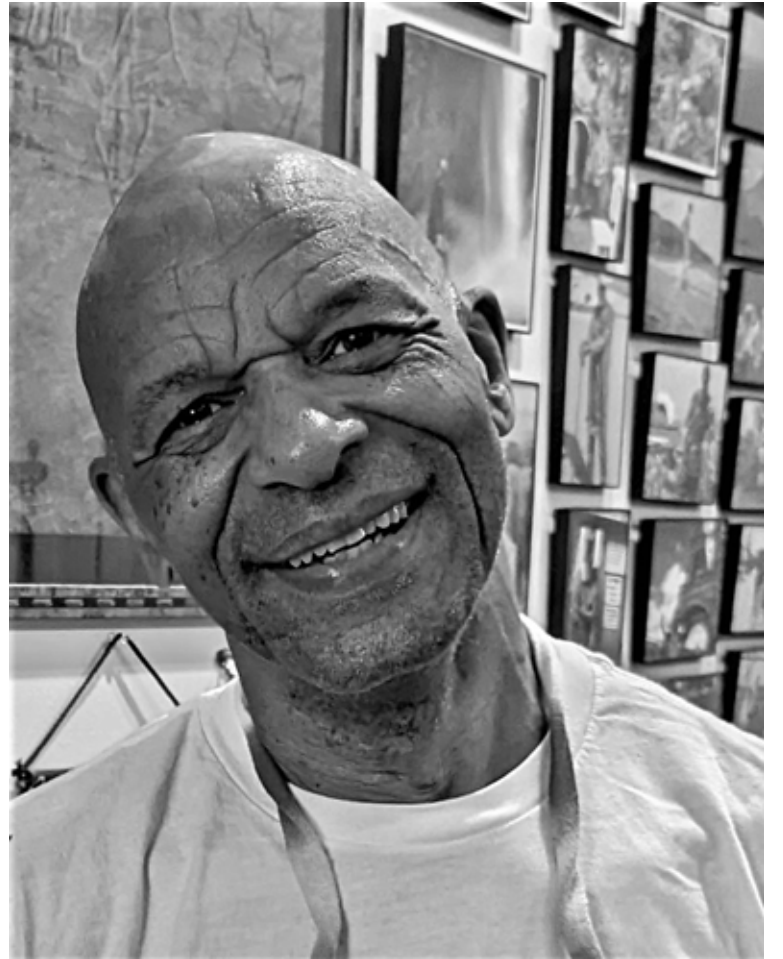
Because of Floyd's close association with gangs, he was under investigation by the FBI.

He joined The City Inc. where he started Champions of Agape, in which gang members from all different gangs worked together on life skills, went camping, took trips, built relationships. This valuable work was interrupted in 1992 when Police Officer Jerry Haaf was murdered by the Vice Lords gang.

From 1995 to 1998, the murder rate went up; there were three to four homicides per week. City Attorney Amy Klobuchar hired Steve to be an advocate for victims of gang violence and homicide because he had credibility with all gangs.

He would get calls to show up as police were putting up the yellow tape. His role was to calm people down and wait until the family arrived.

"It allowed me to understand the pain of mothers, the experience of delivering a child. It



Steve Floyd

would get quiet, and you knew the mother was coming. The scream would be the same as the scream of giving birth. The hardest thing to do was hear the mother. I understood her pain. She had to get to her baby."

He went through funerals and trials until one day he couldn't stop crying. He went into a deep depression and his colleagues encouraged him to take time off. After that breakdown, he traveled a lot more and began his passion for photography. He had to get away from "dealing with so much homicide."

Over the years he developed a deep connection to Africa and in 2017 considered moving there. When he first saw the slave houses in Senegal, it brought about a change in his choices as far as Christianity went. "Christians promoted slavery; they used the Bible and scriptures for control." He moved away from organized Christianity and focused on "the rhythm of the universe, animals and plants as well as Jesus, his belief in humanity and serving humanity." Floyd states, "Agape in action, that's my religion."

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# Graffiti – art and crime

BY KAY SCHROVEN

## Crime

Graffiti is a polarizing issue. Some regard it as art that should be preserved, perhaps even in a museum, like Banksy, whose work was recently on display in North Minneapolis and who remains unidentified. It is said that he remains unidentified to protect himself from authorities who may charge him with the crime of graffiti. It is estimated that he is now worth 50 million British pounds. Others regard graffiti as vandalism, a crime punishable by law. Several business owners on East Lake Street have shared with me that they have a weekly budget for removing graffiti from their walls, windows, etc. I am not thrilled when I find my garage tagged and have to paint over it (city ordinance). The city of Minneapolis regards graffiti as a crime (Statute 617.90) and defines it as “Unauthorized markings of paint, dye or similar substances, or the unauthorized etchings or scratching of surfaces of such real or personal property any of which markings, scratching or etching is visible from premises that are open to the public.” Public properties and owners of private properties can bring legal action and

damages may be recovered up to three times the cost of restoring the damage. Or a defendant may be ordered to restore the property. The parents of underage offenders can be held responsible (Statute 540.18). In 2016 the Minneapolis Graffiti Abatement and Enforcement program spent \$539,420 on prevention, removal and enforcement. The city has four levels of conviction, considering factors such as damage, risk and value. Sentences can involve both fines (up to \$10,000) and jail time (up to five years) and are most often charged as misdemeanors.

## Art

Since 2020, Minneapolis has become more familiar with graffiti, murals and tagging. The murder of George Floyd, followed by civil unrest, seems to have created a need for residents to express themselves. The portrait of George Floyd at Chicago and 38th Street has been seen all across the country and beyond. The image symbolizes a variety of themes including justice – especially racial justice – police brutality, legal and human matters, such as compassion and humanitarianism.

Symbolism and abstraction have been around for a very long time, as has the human-

need for self-expression. Primitive peoples drew on cave walls and rocks. Anthropologists have identified images created by Ne-

The oldest known cave painting is of a life-size wild pig depicted in Indonesia 45,500 years ago. Anthropologists summarize that

abandoned buildings,” he said. They then discovered an alley in their neighborhood between two buildings that seemed to be



We can change the world

anderthals and Denisovans as far back as 64,000 years ago in the caves of La Pasiega, Maltravieso and Ardales of Spain. These cave dwellers depicted images of humans and animals (horses, deer, bulls), the beauty around them, and the hunting activities which dominated their lives. These images demonstrated fantastic imagination, such as unicorns.

these early cave dwellers wanted to express feelings and depict their lives and daily activities. Perhaps it was to remind them of something, to remember something or someone. It is believed via the study of hieroglyphics and petroglyphs that such images were precursors to what we now know as language. The oldest prehistoric art was not found in a cave, however, but rather on a rock in Africa, estimated to be 73,000 years old. Alistair W.G. Pike, the head of archaeological sciences at the University of Southampton in the U.K., points out the common use of symbolism and the spiritual significance of these ancient images. Even in North America into the 19th century, cave paintings have been identified in Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, and Georgia. Fortunately, caves are perfect homes for these paintings, preserving them and allowing us to study them so many years later.

“Art should comfort the disturbed and disturb the comfortable.” – Banksy

Miguel Quiñones grew up in Southwest Chicago, the son of Mexican immigrants. He is now a graduate student at the University of Minnesota. Miguel remembers how graffiti spoke to him at an early age: “It was colorful and I could relate to it. It was the visual art of my neighborhood.” He started drawing in the styles he saw around him. He had a close friend who was experimenting with photography. Together they explored sights heavy with graffiti and took photos. Miguel says, “You don’t have to be rich or go to art school, all you need is some spray paint.” They were careful about where they put their projects, intending to avoid criminal charges, “so we only worked sites already full of graffiti and off the beaten path such as industrial sites and

a “laboratory” for graffiti. It became Miguel’s go-to place. There he could observe others’ work and add his own.

Miguel grew accustomed to his work being painted over by others and came to regard his alley as a place of “stories and expression – a living, breathing evolution – a voice.” Graffiti is often the voice of rebellion, social commentary and politics. It has been described as the voice of the unheard and disenfranchised. Miguel points out that originally hip-hop was regarded as noise and overlooked, but it evolved into a billion-dollar industry, its worth estimated at \$15.7 billion in 2016 with a projected growth rate of \$4.08 billion year by year. He further points out that sometimes hip-hop and graffiti become entrances to the arts, maybe the only entrance for some low-income urban youth.

There are many types and styles of graffiti such as bombing, burning, tagging, letters, character and gang. Styles include wild, stencil, sticker, slap, blockbuster and so on. Cities known for their graffiti include New York, Mexico City, Los Angeles, Berlin, Prague, Melbourne, San Francisco, Barcelona, Buenos Aires and Delhi. At @149st you can find documented history of New York City’s subway graffiti. Hardcore graffiti artists pride themselves on the risk they take, looking down on those who ask for permission. Well-known graffiti artists include Lady Pink, Vhils, Toxic, Keith Haring and Seen (Richard Mirando), who is considered the godfather of graffiti. If you Google Minneapolis graffiti you will find 34 images, with 28 of the artists identified and 6 not identified. Graffiti supply sites offer 11 categories of products and 17 different brands.

See Graffiti, page 15

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Graffiti, from page 14

### A conversation piece

If you are a fan of Greek food you probably know about Christos award-winning restaurant and catering, in the Whittier neighborhood since 1988. Owned by Gus Parpas, he and his staff bring delicious, authentic Greek dishes with specialties from the island of Cyprus, ambience of an island taverna, reasonable prices and quality service to their customers.

During the riots of 2020, as anger and frustrations grew in the aftermath of the mur-

der of George Floyd, Christos, like many businesses, boarded up their property against the violence and destruction that was taking place. As protesters marched down Nicollet Avenue, a young man entered the restaurant and asked to see the manager. When Carol Parpas met with him he asked if he could paint on the plywood boards covering the windows. He seemed polite and determined. Carol gave permission and off he went. When he finished his creation he returned and asked if Carol would like to see it. She was impressed. They chatted; he was offered a meal and then went on his way.

The protests on Nicollet Ave-

nue were peaceful and damage was minimal. The boards were taken down and a contractor moved them to a storage room intending to repurpose them at a later date. One of the boards was eventually used for another project, then returned, but in two pieces. Fortunately the art work was not damaged. For the next year and a half the boards collected dust until Gus came across them while rummaging for something else. He removed the boards, set them up against a wall and admired the work for some time. He felt that the artist had conveyed the anguish caused by George Floyd's murder at the hands of former MPD



Miguel's graffiti

officers. Gus also saw hope in the artist's work, a colorful, turbulent, compelling piece. Rather than letting it languish in a storage room it was decided that the art should be shared. It now hangs on the back wall of the restaurant's dining room, raw and unvarnished, a reminder

of the issues unleashed during that stormy time and our duty to continue to address them. The graffiti brightens the room and is a conversation piece, a history lesson. In spite of a photo taken of the artist at work at Christos, he has not been identified and remains a mystery.

We are social beings. Whether an image appears in a gallery, a cave, a building, an office, a living room or on the street, it's clear that we humans have a need to express ourselves and share our experiences.

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