



We build Pride on the Southside

FIRST MONDAY OF THE MONTH

**April
2023**

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Whitewashing the riot

BY ED FELIEN

On March 7, the city of Minneapolis released an 86-page study of the riots that followed the murder of George Floyd. The study says what most government studies say: we need more studies and we need more bureaucracy.

It's called, "Protecting What Matters," and it seems that what matters most to the city is protecting its reputation as a progressive city that cares about serious social problems and is trying to solve them. The study doesn't talk about the racism in the Minneapolis Police Department (MPD). It doesn't reference the 2006 FBI study that warned about white nationalist groups taking over police departments. It doesn't talk about Bob Kroll's influence over the MPD as president of the union. It doesn't talk about Kroll's leadership in City Heat, a motorcycle club of area police officers that flies Confederate flags and wears white power patches on their jackets. It doesn't talk about Kroll being cited in a lawsuit that proved discrimination in the MPD against Black officers. It doesn't talk about the killing of young Black men by the MPD: Terrance Franklin; Jamar Clark; Thurman Blevins; Travis Jordan; etc. It seems that "What Matters" most, what the study thinks needs "Protecting," is white male privilege.

The key findings of the report seem trivial and filled with bureaucratic gobbledygook: "The OEM established a virtual EOC, but generally did not seem integrated with the MPD and MFD command"; "The MPD did not adhere to a proper centralized command to ensure uni-



ty in decisions and operations in compliance with Policy 7-905 Incident Command System (ICS), Policy 7-810.02 Critical Incident - On-Scene Procedures and Policy 7-910 Emergency Operations Center"; "The MFD did not follow a structured ICS. The Chief and Assistant Chief commanded from the field and were involved in operational decisions at fires, not from the EOTF where they could provide strategic direction."

To summarize the key findings in understandable language - there was a breakdown in communications.

In the section on Timeline of Events, the report misses the significance of the key event in the riot. The demonstrations in front of the Third Precinct station were angry but generally peaceful. After Frey announced that the

See Riot, page 5



How we got here

BY ED FELIEN

The name Ukraine probably comes from the Slavic language, meaning borderland.

Greek and Roman historians write about Slavic peoples growing wheat and riding horses across the wide steppe or prairie. The Eurasian Steppe reached from Ukraine to northern China. It was a wide highway and open invitation for the Golden Horde and Mongol

invasion that reached the southern steppes of present-day Ukraine in 1237. The Crimean Khanate survived for 546 years, until 1783.

Alexander Nevsky, the Prince of Novgorod (just south of what is now St. Petersburg), is considered the founder of modern Russia. He defeated the Swedish Teutonic invaders in the battle of Neva in 1240. He was such a loyal subject of the Mongol Khan (he put

down a rebellion of his own people in Novgorod who refused to pay tribute to the Khan) that he was made Grand Prince of Kiev and then of that section of Russia that included the small village of Moscow.

During the 14th century, Ukraine was part of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania that included Belarus and parts of Poland and Russia--the largest nation in Europe at the time. Eventually, Russia gained control of

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Cam's Corner



A setback for racial equity in City Hall

BY CAM GORDON

The struggle for racial equity within our city government has suffered another setback.

As of March 13, Tyeastia Green, the director of the recently elevated Department of Racial Equity, Inclusion and Belonging, no longer works for the city of Minneapolis.

In a memo-style report that she sent on March 6 to Mayor Jacob Frey, City Operations Officer Heather Johnston, Deputy City Operations Officer Fatima Moore and Chief Human Resources Officer Nikki Odom, Green describes problems she has had with the city "enterprise" in general and some staff and elected officials in particular.

"Coming into the enterprise, I had high hopes," wrote Green. "However, being in the belly of the beast for nearly a year, I know that not only is Minneapolis far behind the curve of other cities and towns in fighting against racism, Minneapolis, as an enterprise, doesn't even make it on the list to be considered doing the work of

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Earth Day
Pages 2 & 3



Celebrate Spring
Lake Street
Pages 7, 8 & 9



Celebrate Spring
48th & Chicago
Pages 10, 11 & 12



Celebrate Spring
Hennepin Ave.
Pages 18 & 19



Celebrate our Planet

Thoughts on environmental racism for Earth Day 2023




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BY DEBRA KEEFER RAMAGE

The ongoing fight against fracking, pipelines and all extractive industries

We lost the battle if not the war on Line 3. It's done, it's dusted and it's leaking into groundwater even as you read this. (See tinyurl.com/55mjebse for reporting on the 153 cases of pollution control violations in the

Enbridge Line 3 pipeline took place, despite all the legal means that seemed sure to stop it. Arrests accompanied the construction from start to finish, first dozens, then hundreds. In September 2021, as the pipeline neared completion, MPR reported that "nearly 900 people have been arrested during protests against the Line 3 oil pipeline, which is being built in northern Minnesota. Most were cited with misdemeanors.

and got the case transferred. Since their defense was that they could not be trespassing on treaty lands of their own tribe, charges against all three were dismissed. In another case a single defendant, Shanai Matteson, had her charges dismissed when her attorney successfully argued that the state had not made a case. In November of 2022, five of the Shell River Seven had their cases dismissed in Wadena County, leaving only Winona LaDuke and photo-journalist K. Flo Razowsky. Razowsky's case was later also dismissed. LaDuke's case was heard in February of 2023 but apparently is still pending a decision. (Incredibly, LaDuke was appointed by the state as guardian ad litem of the Shell River before the arrest of the seven for trying to defend the river from the pipeline.)



The fight against Cop City and defending the forest in Atlanta

A blogger named Daniel Peisner, in an online publication called Bitter Southerner, wrote a long, detailed account of the Forest Defenders fighting against a massive police training facility being built on publicly owned forest land outside of Atlanta, Georgia. In his article, "The Forest for the Trees," Peisner summed up the fight against the so-called Cop City (officially, the PSTC) thus: "For progressive activists, Atlanta's PSTC represents something of a perfect storm: a single project that catalyzes fears of ecological degradation, state-sponsored violence, police militarization, environmental racism, opaque governance, and the long legacy of white supremacy."

You can read that piece and Peisner's follow-up, "Little Turtle's War,"

Water Protectors Shell River 7 arrest in 2021

latter half of 2022.) But there were tiny victories along the way. The Line 3 battle brought the global reality of environmental racism home to Minnesota, although some Minnesotans were already only too aware, as the paragraphs below indicate.

In 2021 the construction of the

But many ... have been charged with gross misdemeanors, and some face felony charges."

Unlike in the Standing Rock protests against the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) in North Dakota, most of these charges did not hold up. But they managed to ruin a lot of lives even if just for a year or so. In July of 2022, two cases were heard and dismissed. In one, for defendants Nancy Beaulieu, Justin Keezer and Todd Thompson, the case was heard by the White Earth Tribal Court after their attorney successfully argued that only that court had jurisdiction



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Except to know that summer is due!

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Earth Day!

which covered the killing and the legacy of Manuel Teran, forest name Tortuguita, who was murdered by Atlanta police inside the forest in January of 2023, at bittersouthern.com. I wrote a shorter summary of the two pieces with some other background here: twincitiesdsa.org/2023/01/the-battle-against-cop-city-in-atlanta.

You would think (or hope) that the death of Manuel Teran would cause the police and developer forces in Atlanta to scale back their attack, but instead they have escalated. Although no one else has died yet, at least 23 Forest Defenders or urban protesters have been charged with domestic terrorism, a felony (www.democracynow.org, March 9, 2023).

There is a clear line between forest defenders and water protectors, a clear link between these two struggles. Both are glaring cases of environmental racism, aimed at Native Americans in some of the poorest reservations and rural areas in the nation, or at African Americans in the working-class parts of the “City Too Busy To Hate,” Atlanta.

Close to home, fighting to decommission HERC

Here in River City, an organization called the Minnesota Environmental Justice Table (MEJT) is working in coalition with other groups



Manuel Teran, a forest defender, was murdered in January.



Jackie Echols of South River Watershed Alliance opposing Cop City

to shut down garbage incinerators, including Minneapolis's own HERC. Hennepin County, which owns the incinerator, has launched a zero-waste plan, which MEJT is using to leverage pressure against HERC. HERC is another clear example of environmental racism and classism, as it burns everyone's garbage, but mostly only the low-income, mostly BIPOC residents of near north Minneapolis suffer the health effects of its toxic gaseous output. Nazir Khan, an organizer with MEJT, said “This is a big opportunity for the county to put in place a careful, detailed plan.” Go to their Facebook page, [mnejtable](https://mnejtable.com), to see how you can get involved.

Right in our backyard, No Demo! for the Roof Depot building

And then there is the Roof Depot struggle, which is also as close as can be to home, in the East Phillips and Seward neighborhoods of Minneapolis. As the battle heated up, there have been several articles by others covering this in 2023 in Southside Pride, so I won't go into the details. Currently at an impasse thanks to a ruling imposing a stay on the planned demolition of the Roof Depot building, this struggle

has been going on for nearly a decade.

Our friendly neighborhood competitor paper, Longfellow Messenger, had a forthright attack on the majority pro-Hiawatha Expansion city council members. Daniel Schmidt's piece in the March issue is headlined, “Lacking rationale for Hiawatha Expansion Project, council members foment fear to rouse

base.” This is similar to the counties of northern Minnesota charging offenses they ought to know are bogus, and the charges are essentially the same as those Atlanta police are bringing against forest defenders there – inflating peaceful protest and dubious trespass into a felony called “domestic terrorism.”

Here we had a young white wom-

an claiming to be in fear for her life because a Native American grandmother, who is literally fighting for her life and the lives of her loved ones, raised her voice at City Hall. If you made this up in a dystopian fantasy, readers would find it implausible. This is why my daily meditation on Earth Day will focus on this horror – environmental racism.

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Restorative justice report

BY KAY SCHROVEN

In 2022 the Public Safety Committee of the Minneapolis DFL Senior Caucus prepared a report on improving policing in Minneapolis (adopted 7/12/22). Below are some of the highlights.

The first observation was that reviewing one system isn't enough. Review was needed for all of the interconnecting systems related to justice and public safety. The committee started with an inquiry of the court system including the bail system, charging decisions, trial versus plea bargain and detention versus release. They attended community meetings, studied 25 scholarly reports, journalism accounts and public data, and interviewed individuals with extensive knowledge of Hennepin County's court system.

When Willie Sutton, the notorious American bank robber,

was asked why he robbed banks he replied, "That's where the money is." Likewise the committee found that the focus should be on juvenile and young adult offenders because of their proportion in the criminal justice system. Because Minneapolis has had a sharp rise in crime rates (auto, bicycle and catalytic converter theft, etc.) since the murder of George Floyd, there is a tendency to want to get tough on crime. It is a tempting approach for those who simply want to feel safe in their community. However, there is evidence based on research that "locking them up," especially pre-trial, is not always the best public policy. Simply put, it doesn't reduce crime and increases rather than reduces recidivism (with some exceptions).

Here are a few important observations of the committee:

- One-fourth of incarcerated

people have not been convicted of a crime.

- Detention increases post-disposition crime.
- There are sharp racial disparities in who is detained pre-trial.

Diversion and restorative justice programs have merit. Diversion allows offenders to participate in specific programs where they get the necessary support to improve their chances of staying on the right side of the law. Restorative justice programs expose offenders to the impact they have had on their victims and through negotiation agree to do what they can to make the victim more whole. Early intervention, especially for those who lack home, school and social support, has been shown to be effective in turning a meaningful percentage of young offenders away from a life of crime.

Based on its findings the committee made the following observations/recommendations:

- Elected officials should consider diversion and restorative justice programs over incarceration, especially for young offenders.
- Stronger targeting of felons is needed.
- Consider reducing the case-loads of juvenile probation officers.

- Those administering diversion programs should consider well-validated algorithms in order to separate those whose release would endanger the public and those who would not.
- Consider no-cash bail for low-level offenders with respect to race and inequities of income.
- Because the Glen Lake detention center was closed in 2021, there needs to be added capacity in housing and treatment centers, especially for young offenders.

- Revisit the recommendations made in 1994 by the Minnesota Supreme Court task force with respect to today's crime climate and consider implementing those that are still worthwhile.
- Emphasize special prosecution for domestic assault.
- Audit Hennepin County practices.

- Restorative Justice Community Action (RJCA) serves Hennepin and Ramsey counties. A four-year University of Minnesota study shows that offenders referred to the traditional system were 2.5 times more likely to be arrested in the next year compared to those referred to RJCA's program.
- For over four decades, Hennepin County has had diversion programs. The current program,

Diversion Solutions, plus 14 additional options exist today, coordinated by Richfield-based Headway. A study of outcomes reveals significant success. Often re-arrests and reconvictions decline after a "second chance" experience. In addition, employment increases, especially among young Black men. Diversion reduces the probability of reoffending within two years by 53%. For first-time offenders, the reduction of offenses is 70%. • While long-term studies are still needed, there is enough evidence that diversion and restorative justice programs should be taken seriously. Through them, public safety can be improved, lives of offenders can be turned around and public costs can be avoided.

Seward Longfellow Restorative Justice is excited to announce a fundraising concert by Maria Isa at the Hook and Ladder on May 4! Tickets are on sale now at <https://thehookmpls.com/event/utc23-mariaisa-sl-rj/>. Proceeds from ticket sales will benefit SLRJ. There will be a food truck on site for the duration of the show and free ice cream provided by Big Bell/Minnehaha Scoop.



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Remembering Ray St. Louis, 1949 - 2023

BY DAVID TILSEN

Ray St. Louis died in hospice on March 12, 2023. He had not been living in Minneapolis for decades, and had only visited when the Minnesota Renaissance Festival was in town. In spite of that, his work and creativity has made an impact on our South Minneapolis culture.

In the late 1960s, Ray St. Louis was part of the Twin Cities Draft and Information Center, TCDIC. This organization and organizations like it played a role in ending the brutal, obscene war in Vietnam. They began by educating themselves in draft-related laws, and counseling young men about their legal (and sometimes illegal) options.

As the women's movement emerged at the time, Ray learned about toxic masculinity and the "Superman myth" and helped form a men's living collective called Kryptonite. He, together with men and women around TCDIC and the women's movement, founded the Alive and Trucking Theater company. This important



(Photo/bradshawfuneral.com/obituary/Ray-StLouis)

theater company wrote and performed plays about sexism, education, history, urban renewal, and workers' rights as well as street theater (think live YouTube) on what was going on in the world. A part of the anti-war movement, of course, they were seen at many demonstrations

and parades. Ray learned puppet-making and stilt walking, and helped write some remarkable theatrical pieces, like "Rosie the Riveter," the "Red Scare," "Nude Superman" and others.

Ray believed in community celebrations and organized, along with Sandy Spieler and Alive and Trucking members, the first May-Day March and Festival in Powderhorn Park in 1973.

He later left Alive and Trucking to create the Powderhorn Puppet theater with Sandy Spieler, later renamed the In the Heart of the Beast Puppet and Mask Theater. He honed his puppet-making and stilt walking skills as they kept the MayDay annual festival alive.

Ray later left the theater to join the traveling Renaissance festival circuit. He continued to do this until he was too sick and went into hospice care in early 2023.

He was a dear friend, spoke with insight and honesty, and played an important part in my life.

Love you, Ray.

Ward conventions and candidate questionnaire

BY ED FELIEN

DFL ward conventions are coming up at the end of April and the last half of May.

The Ward 2 convention will be on April 30. It will be a virtual convention. According to the Minneapolis DFL, “no known candidate is seeking the DFL endorsement.” Robin Wonsley is seeking re-election. She is seeking Democratic Socialist of America (DSA) endorsement.

Wards 6, 7 and 8 are holding virtual conventions in May.

The Ward 9 convention will be held virtually on April 30. Jason Chavez is seeking endorsement. He is unopposed.

Wards 10 and 11 are holding virtual conventions in May.

Ward 12 will hold an in-person convention on April 29 at Roosevelt High School. The four candidates for DFL endorsement answered the Southside Pride questionnaire last month. There was an excellent Ward 12 candidate forum hosted by present City Council Member Andrew Johnson on March 8. Thanks to Brandon Long, you can view it on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/blongstpaul/videos/195825519725193>.

We asked candidates to answer two questions in 50 words or less:

1. Do you support the Urban Farms Project at the Roof Depot site?
2. Do you believe the city has the responsibility to remove sand it has dumped on streets that has flowed into storm sew-

ers and into Lake Hiawatha and Minnehaha Creek?

Here are the answers from the candidates who responded:

Ward 2

Robin Wonsley:

1. Yes. I stand with East Phillips and the community-led vision for the site. The city’s plan will perpetrate continued environmental racism and violence against East Phillips residents. I have used every tool at my disposal to fight the city’s terrible plan for the site, and will continue to do so.
2. Yes. Sand is harmful to water quality and aquatic ecosystems and could potentially clog storm sewers. I’m committed to reducing sand usage and exploring better ways to clear streets in winter, while also working to minimize our need for environmentally damaging automobile infrastructure by supporting public transportation, robust pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and municipal sidewalk plowing.

Ward 6

Kayseh Magan:

1. I support the Urban Farms Project at the Roof Depot site.
2. I believe the city has the responsibility to remove sand that it has dumped on streets that flowed into storm sewers and into Lake Hiawatha and Minnehaha Creek.

Tiger Worku:

1. I support the East Phillips Urban farm because it is the most sustainable option of the two proposals for the people of East Phillips. The urban farm provides an opportunity for the city to live up to its values in ensuring that members of our most marginalized communities are protected from a whole range of health hazards. The people of East Phillips have spoken and now our elected officials must listen.
2. The city has an obligation to repair any past environmental harm it has caused. When vital resources such as water become poisoned, then we are exiting the realm of political disagreement and entering the realm of criminality. The city cannot turn a blind eye to the environmental destruction it has caused.

Ward 7

Katie Cashman:

1. I support the Urban Farms Project. For too long, industries have used BIPOC communities as dumping grounds for pollution. Public Works staff need a new facility, but not in a designated Green Zone, where marginalized residents will be exposed to unearthed arsenic and diesel fumes from hundreds of city vehicles.
2. Lake Hiawatha and Minnehaha Creek are considered impaired, at least in some sections, and the city should work on clean-up efforts. The city’s MS4 permit requires them to do routine street and parking lot sweeping. Minneapolis has the responsibility to actively pre-

vent dumped sand from flowing into storm sewers.

Ward 8

Soren Stevenson:

1. Yes, I strongly support the East Phillips Urban Farm project. The city’s plan to demolish the Roof Depot and bring hundreds of diesel trucks to one of the most diverse and already over-polluted neighborhoods in Minneapolis is textbook environmental racism. The city

should listen to community leaders in East Phillips and support the Urban Farm initiative.

2. Yes. I believe the city should be responsible for any harm it causes, including sand pollution. We must improve the natural barriers between our roads and waterways and work to filter our stormwater systems. I am committed to working with the Park Board to make sure our lakes are clean and safe for all to use.

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Riot, from page 1

“four responding MPD officers involved in the death of George Floyd have been terminated. This is the right call,” the mood changed at the station house.

Essence Magazine quoted MPD Arson Investigator Sgt. Erika Christensen, who said that “before Umbrella Man became involved in the protests, specifically, before he started smashing windows of an Autozone and spray painting the words ‘free sh-t for everyone zone’ on the doors, the protests around Floyd’s death had been peaceful. The actions of this person created an atmosphere of hostility and tension. Your affiant believes that this individual’s sole aim was to incite violence.” As we noted in February of 2022, a search warrant issued by Sgt. Christensen identifies the Umbrella Man as Mitchell Wesley Carlson from Ramsey, Minnesota. Carlson was a member of the Aryan Cowboy Brotherhood and also a member of a white nationalist motorcycle club. It’s not too hard to imagine Bob Kroll and Mitch Carlson riding together and imagining themselves as heroic warriors and defenders of white male privilege.

There is no doubt that the Umbrella Man set off the conflagration. Autozone was next

door to the Third Precinct. Minnehaha Liquor was across the street. Target and Cub were less than a block away.

The report does note that “some participants blamed the police union for the mixed messaging from the MPD. Specifically, some stated that the police union president at the time had too much influence within the MPD, thus empowering officers to disregard MPD leadership’s direction. Several stated that this dichotomy within the MPD contributed to the lack of trust that has developed and continues between many in the community and the MPD.

“There is a disconnect between what leadership says and what the rank and file do.”

But isn’t it possible to go even further and conclude that Bob Kroll and other racists inside the MPD wanted to get even with Frey for not supporting the officers who killed George Floyd? That they deliberately sabotaged communications between the Third Precinct and other command centers? That they deliberately held back their response to allow the Umbrella Man and others to loot and burn?

Doesn’t the public deserve a serious study that tries to find the answers to these questions?

And why hasn’t Mitchell Carlson been arrested? Who is protecting him?



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Siege at Wounded Knee 50 years later: the fight for self-determination continues

BY SAND BRIM

This article first appeared in CounterPunch on March 10, 2023. It is reprinted here by permission of the author.

The 1973 Siege at Wounded Knee is the longest “civil unrest” in the history of the U.S. Marshal Service. For 71 days, the American Indian Movement (AIM) and members of the Oglala Lakota (Sioux) nation were under siege in a violent standoff with the FBI and U.S. Marshals equipped with high powered rifles and armored personnel carriers. Two people were killed, over two dozen wounded. At stake, sovereignty and self-determination guaranteed through treaty rights.

Fifty years have passed but for American Indians the struggle for recognition of the nation-to-nation treaties continues to be seen as survival. At the end of February, young Indian leaders joined older activists to gather at Wounded Knee to commemorate the violent events that began on Feb. 27, 1973, and renew their call for self-determination and recognition of their treaties.

For older Wounded Knee veterans, this 50th anniversary year is a time for a ritual passing on of the struggle. “You are the seventh generation. It’s your time to stand up and protect your water, defend your land,” proclaimed Vic Camp, son of Wounded Knee AIM leader Carter Camp. “Remember your treaty rights, protect those treaties ... we have to remind the United States government that this is our land.”

Bill Means, a veteran of the 1973 siege, urged people to be clear on the purpose. “Remember, we came here for the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty. We didn’t come here just to raise hell. We had to make a statement, to tell the world that Indians are still alive, that this is still our land, and the Black Hills are not for sale!”

For the Lakota, this fight for self-determination, the preservation of their nation and its

land, were the central demands of the siege at Wounded Knee. It was a fight for survival. During the negotiations in 1973 the local Oglala leaders were frustrated with the Justice Department’s refusal to grasp the central issue of the Treaty. Gladys Bissonette, a revered Oglala elder, admonished the government negotiators: “In the past there were a lot of violations of the sacred treaties. ... This is real. We’re not playing here. So all you people that go back to Washington, think real good, because our lives are at stake. It concerns our children’s children, the unborn.”

Much has been written about the aftermath of the 1973 siege, including the murders of 60 AIM sympathizers and activists in the following year, known as the Reign of Terror, carried out by a local vigilante group self-titled “Goons” (Guardians of the Oglala

land, were the central demands of the siege at Wounded Knee. It was a fight for survival. During the negotiations in 1973 the local Oglala leaders were frustrated with the Justice Department’s refusal to grasp the central issue of the Treaty. Gladys Bissonette, a revered Oglala elder, admonished the government negotiators: “In the past there were a lot of violations of the sacred treaties. ... This is real. We’re not playing here. So all you people that go back to Washington, think real good, because our lives are at stake. It concerns our children’s children, the unborn.”

In the 50 years since the siege at Wounded Knee, corporate extraction of critical metals and minerals and the increasing impact of climate change on Indigenous lands has brought a new urgency to the fight for self-determination.

In 2015 polluted waters took on a different meaning. The epic struggle by the Standing Rock Lakota/Dakota people, bolstered by thousands of supporters against the Dakota Access Pipeline, evinces that Indian sovereignty is environmental justice. Standing on their rights under the Treaty of 1868, they fought fiercely to protect their land and waters and in doing so became the nation’s “Water Protectors.”

American Indians see their responsibilities under the treaties linked to the health of the land and water. Lakota leader and Wounded Knee veteran Madonna Thunder Hawk joined the fight at Standing Rock. “When we step up as a people to protect land and water,” says Thunder Hawk, “what we stand on are our treaty rights.”

To understand their struggle, you have to understand the history.

The 1973 Siege at Wounded Knee is rooted in the abrogation of the Fort Laramie 1868 Treaty between the U.S. government and the Great Sioux Nation. This Treaty sets aside a large swath of land west of the Missouri River and designates the Black Hills, sacred land of the Indians, as “unceded territory” for the “absolute and undisturbed use and occupation of the Indians.” The American Indians justly understood the Treaty as the right to self-determination.

But the discovery of gold in the Black Hills by George Armstrong Custer in 1874, followed by the Battle of the Little Big Horn in 1876, galvanized the illegal confiscation of Indian lands and the enforcement of the reservation system. After failed attempts to convince the Tribes to cede the Black Hills, the government simply took the land as an Act of Congress via the 1877 Dawes Act. The Act intended to take more than just



Gathering at mass grave for victims of the 1890 massacre at Wounded Knee (Photo/Gail Sullivan)

land, it intended to eviscerate tribal sovereignty by withdrawing recognition of nationhood and recognizing Indian people only as “individuals.” It was an egregious violation of the 1868 Treaty and set the stage for the massacre at Wounded Knee in 1890, where as many as 300 unarmed Native Americans were slaughtered. Nearly half were women and children.

Not until 1980 did the U.S. Supreme Court acknowledge that the taking of the Black Hills was illegal, and compelled compensation, today estimated to be at over one billion dollars.

But the Lakota People have rejected the court’s decision. They are clear. The Black Hills are sacred and not for sale.

Oglala Lakota County is one of the poorest counties in the United States. The Lakota people live in extreme poverty. Their life expectancy is nearly six years less than white Americans. The infant mortality rate is stunning at nearly double that of white Americans. Their children were subjected to cultural genocide through forced assimilation in Bureau of Indian Affairs schools. But they were not poor before their land and resources were taken. The Lakota understand Indian poverty as a direct result of colonialism.

“We know we’re about survival. [We’re] not fighting for civil rights, in our own traditional system we have that. But we are a colonized people. Our fight is against a colonizing nation,” explains Madonna Thunder Hawk.

The new Indian leadership is educated both in traditional ways and at American colleges and universities. They easily traverse both worlds, but they do not accept the label of “American.” They are members of their respective Indian Tribal Nations. And return of their lands under the treaties remains their priority. They call for solidarity with other colonized peoples of the world. And they identify the continued denial of self-determination and pressure to assim-

ilate as an ongoing strategy of cultural genocide.

Oglala Lakota leader and NDN Collective President Nick Tilsen speaks to the fight for the Black Hills: “The Waters of Justice have absolutely been polluted. The issue of the Black Hills is one of the longest unresolved legal, political, treaty and human rights matters in the history of the United States. This president says he’s about a reckoning with the past and healing forward yet no effort has been made by the White House to have open dialogue about the return of public lands in the Black Hills. It’s time to talk about Land Back. If this country wants to authentically engage a restorative and just healing process with this country’s Indigenous peoples it must start with the return of stolen Indigenous lands back into Indigenous hands. That’s our ask, it’s very clear, return all public lands in the Black Hills to the Lakota. It will halt the mining claims and projects that are polluting the water and destroying the environment and move us all closer to justice.”

These are warriors of a new era committed to the protection of their land, their waters, and their people, and they are fueled by the urgency of climate change.

“The waters of justice have been polluted.”

The fight continues.

Sand Brim was at Wounded Knee in 1973 and remained as an investigator for the legal defense of the 350 federal criminal cases brought against Indian activists. She just returned from the 50-year commemoration of Wounded Knee. She is a lawyer and has a long history of activism, from anti-war, civil rights, El Salvador, and as a labor activist for the past decade. She is the former Director of Strategic Campaigns for National Nurses United and was a policy advisor in the 2020 Bernie Sanders presidential campaign.



Frank Star Comes Out, Oglala Sioux Tribal President (Photo/Gail Sullivan)

la Nation). U.S. District Court Judge Fred Nichols viewed this as the FBI colluding with vigilantes to target AIM sympathizers. The continued imprisonment of Leonard Peltier despite universal calls for clemency – even by the prosecutor – demonstrates the truth of the FBI’s intent to eliminate Indian activists even at the cost of truth.

At the end of the nine-month trial of AIM leaders Dennis

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Celebrate Spring on Lake Street

Spring on Lake Street



Sandy Spieler with Las Posadas puppets for 'Border CrosSings' event in December 2022

BY DEBRA KEEFER RAMAGE

Lake Street rebuilding and revival

Spring is a good time to talk about Lake Street. Lake Street started rebuilding in the midst of the pandemic from the destruction wrought by the anger unleashed in the George Floyd uprising. But it was slow at first. It's stronger now, and Lake Street is getting back its vibe as a multicultural corridor.

First let's look at two long-time institutions that are each making a comeback or a transformation. The first one is In the Heart of the Beast Puppet and Mask Theatre (HOBT).

You probably know that after 40-plus years of singlehandedly putting on the immense event known as MayDay, HOBT stepped back from that in the summer of 2019, announcing that the 2019 MayDay was its last. A new body was formed called the MayDay Council (MDC). The MDC is working toward a vision of many MayDays at scattered sites – more sustainable, but still totally rooted

in community and build-it-yourself. It is now its own separate enterprise, though partnered with HOBT.

So where does that leave HOBT and the Avalon Theater? Still there, and about to become more visible. The first of a series of new events for the rest of 2023 and beyond has been announced. First up, a Puppet Fashion Show, from Thursday, April 13 through Sunday, April 16. Check out the artists, extra information, promo videos and ticket sales at hobt.org. Also check out the Puppet Library Project kicking off this month. The "HOBT in the Community" heading on the website menu also has a wealth of information about projects in the traveling puppets or teaching areas of HOBT's mission.

The other institution is Walker Community United Methodist Church, or Walker UMC for short. Walker's population, like that of so many other churches, is aging. Young families with children, still plentiful just six or seven years ago, have largely stopped attending. When COVID

See *Lake Street*, page 8

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Celebrate Spring

hit and Sunday services went online, revenue all but vanished overnight, with few of the longtime traditional members being online givers. In the wake of the uprisings, the Walker building was home to many mutual aid projects helping the neighborhood survive. A few are still there and are rent-paying tenants. Gradually, in-person celebrations returned, but the Zoom option remained.

Ten years ago, the rich panoply of Walker's history was enlarged when a young "church planter" named Tyler Sit came to Walker to start a new kind of church. As Walker gently declined, Sit's New City Church rapidly grew. It turns out this will probably be the key to Walker's survival. In recent months, with new pastor Rev. David Wheeler and a new governing structure, Walker



UMC voted to gift the building to New City Church and become their tenants. With the easing of pandemic restrictions, parties,

concerts and shows, usually to raise money for various causes, have returned. One such event, to be held on Saturday, April 29,

Retail along Lake Street

Retail businesses of many kinds are found along Lake Street, many as small local places to buy specialized items. A prime example is Ingebretsen's, which has been present for so long in the community you might forget about it. An inspiring place to find unique gifts for all occasions, including food, crafts, books and more, almost all of their in-store items are also available online. Check out their fantastic book selection for Nordic noir, travel books, cookbooks and more. I found a book there by an old friend of mine, Ellen Jensen, now living in Norway. Jensen's book, "We Stopped Forgetting," is a scholarly yet intimate dive into the tales of her Sami ancestry.

Speaking of books, you know the Uncles are back, right? In case this is a fantasy or mystery to you, “the Uncles” is the affectionate nickname of twinned

bookstores Uncle Edgar's and Uncle Hugo's, specializing in the respective genres of crime/mystery and SF/fantasy. Burned out of a longtime Chicago Avenue location just north of Lake Street, they are now inhabiting the former Glass Endeavors space on 31st Street, just east of Minnehaha Avenue. Visit them today.



Habanero Tacos Grill

Midtown Global Market

One great option for food – as ingredients or ready to eat – can be found at the large booth of Grassroots Gourmet at the

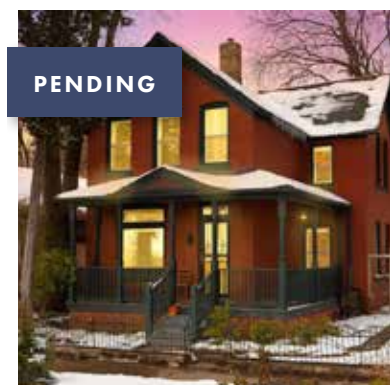


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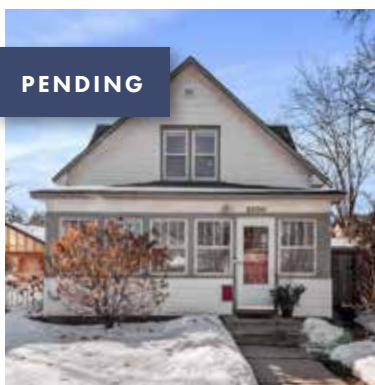
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Happy Spring!

Celebrate Spring on 48th & Chicago

Spring on Chicago Avenue and 48th Street

BY DEBRA KEEFER RAMAGE

Spring 2023 dawns on a reinvigorated Chicago Avenue at 48th Street and the southward stretch. There are a couple of new incoming businesses, there are some longtime stalwarts thriving



Original Urban Wok in St. Paul's Lowertown

once again, there is a lively sidewalk culture, and there's even a new transit option from Metro Transit. And, the return of something we missed last summer.

The thing we missed, that went away for a season, was the Nokomis Farmers Market at 5167 Chicago Ave. During their 2022 hiatus, the parent organization, Neighborhood Roots, held pop-up markets and used other ways of raising money to bring back the smallest (but very popular) of its three south Minneapolis markets (the other two, which remained open, are Kingfield and Fulton). The market will be back in its same location and time slot, Wednesdays from 4 to 8 p.m., beginning on June 14, according to the Neighborhood Roots website.

Arguably, the anchor of the actual block that runs between 48th and 49th Streets on the west side of Chicago Avenue is the Parkway Theater. It's been back in busi-

ness, in person, for over a year now and is really hopping. Imaginative film series alternate with exciting live entertainment, both local and imported. The food options on either side of the Parkway are both stellar and worth a visit on their own - Creekside Supper Club to the south, and Town Hall Tap and Sidecar at the Tap to the north.

The Saturday film series for April is Puppet Month, featuring "Muppets from Space," "The Dark Crystal," "Labyrinth" and "The Great Muppet Caper," while the Thursday series is Murderers, Stalkers and Psychos. On April 10 there will be an author talk and new book signing with local superstar author Curtis Sittenfeld, moderated by Julie Schumacher, and Tuesday, April 11, there will be a concert by Lucy Wainwright Roche, that exquisite talent resulting from the marriage of two folk rock dynasties. You get



Scene from the Nokomis Farmers Market

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Lucy Wainwright Roche

the picture. Check out the Parkway’s event portal on their website for even more riches.

There are two businesses coming soon to the Chicago and 48th commercial hub, one food-related and one not. The non-food one will open any day now at the spot between Bauhaus Framing Studio and Town Hall Tap. It’s called Stirling Castle Vintage and Resale. This is the first physical storefront for a vintage clothing (and other items) business that has been only online and in pop-ups and markets until now. I saw the window display, all ready for the opening, and if it’s an indication, we’re looking at some really good quality stuff. I forgot to take a picture, so I’ll post a picture of the actual Stirling Castle, which I have been to, by the way.

The food-related one is Urban Wok. There has been a sign in the window for more than a year claiming the space vacated by Primp, a dress shop, as the future space for the next Urban Wok. Urban Wok was found-

franchises) can also be found in Medina, St. Louis Park, Brookhaven, Georgia, and Columbia, South Carolina, as well as the original one in St. Paul. I think both of these new businesses will round out the retail mix very nicely.

Not that it is lacking now! How many other commercial hubs surrounded by attractive, stable, middle-class housing can boast a large urban park, a fencing school, too many beauty and wellness salons to count, a great coffee shop, pizza, sushi, a bakery, vegan fried chicken, a good liquor store, a brewpub, a theater, a veterinary clinic and a pet washeteria? And that’s not even all there is at 48th and Chicago.

Part of that lively sidewalk culture I mentioned is Pumphouse Creamery. The Twin Cities abound with good ice cream places, but Pump-house, one of the smallest, punches above its weight. They make my favorite ice cream on the planet – Lemon-infused Olive Oil Sea Salt. I won’t even try to describe this; just go and taste it. Honorable mentions are due to their use of Askinosie Chocolate in their chocolate flavors, their Ruby Roasters Coffee flavor, and the Brother Justus Single Malt Whis-

See 48th & Chicago, page 12



Pumphouse Creamery’s flavor board

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Celebrate Spring on 48th & Chicago

48th & Chicago, from page 11

key flavor. Way to boost local brands.

McRae Park is the neighborhood's prairie and parkland (it actually has a small prairie within the park).

There is a lot of interesting programming for kids during spring break and all summer long, and for all ages throughout the year. On Thursday, April 20, if you are 55 or older and live in the vicinity, come to McRae park at 1 p.m. for coffee and a chat about what kinds of programming you would like to see and participate in.

You'll be talking with Helene Gauthier of Community Education at Roosevelt High and Rachel Hoben of McRae Park. For more information call 612-668-4828.

And the new transit option? That would be the D Line, which is still pretty new, but in operation now. The D Line is the latest route in the bus rapid transit (BRT)

system, where prepaying before boarding and specially designed limited stops cut travel times greatly. Chicago and 48th is one of those limited stops on the D Line, which runs from Brooklyn Center to Bloomington, via downtown Minneapolis, Chicago Avenue and the Mall of America. Unlike the "limited" bus routes of old, which



Curtis Sittenfeld and her latest bestseller



The actual Stirling Castle in Scotland



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Restaurant and food news, plus a mini-review of Café Racer's 'Breaking Bread'

BY DEBRA KEEFER RAMAGE

Openings and closings

All things old shall be made new again! Leading the Openings and Closings is a Return. The Seward Cafe held an event to announce their relaunch on Tuesday, March 14. I had to go to a caucus that night, but I managed to drop by the first half hour of the event and gain some information. The two main pieces of information are that the Cafe Grand Reopening will be on May 1 (how appropriate), and they will reopen the kitch-

Joint, The Stray Dog, Advellum Vegetable Eatery.) I have no quibbles. They got almost all my own favorites - May Day Cafe, Hard Times, the Himalayan, Namaste and Reverie, as well as the two mentioned above.

America's Test Kitchen (ATK) was acquired by Marquee Brands, a consortium which includes the Martha Stewart Brand and others. ATK itself includes more than just TV: a magazine, a cookbook, etc. Employees were assured that nothing would change, but less than two months later, 23 staff were terminated, and the ATK

erage world, it's food TV's turn, it seems. In March, workers for BSTV, a production company behind two popular shows on the Food Network, "The Kitchen" and "Trisha's Southern Kitchen" with country star Trisha Yearwood, signed cards with the Writers' Guild. Their union drive was sparked by being converted involuntarily from employees to freelancers, losing health care and job security. As noted in Eater magazine, "Though scripted television is a highly unionized industry, nonfiction shows like [these] have not had those same protections. A 2020 poll of workers in the industry found that more than 80 percent of those who worked in nonfiction television lacked health insurance, and a vast majority reported working overtime without pay."

Mini-review: Café Racer's 'Breaking Bread'

Café Racer Kitchen (2929 E. 25th St.) has a free brunch offering the last Monday of every month from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. called "Breaking Bread." They serve one special item with options, a bread side, and drinks. I took my food-insecure friend CJ there, and we had a delicious dish called sancocho. It came accompanied by a small, round, slightly sweet corn cake. I loved it!

Afterward, I did a deep dive into sancocho, because this was the first I had heard of it. Sancocho seems to be a thing in most of Central America and the Caribbean, and a few South American countries. It's not a thing in Mexico, as far as I can deter-

mine (correct me if I'm wrong!) but it shares some DNA with posole. The dish is usually made with pork and one or two other meats, but Breaking Bread's options were a vegan version with black beans added, or a meaty version with some boneless chicken added (we both got the chicken). Also, all the photos I saw in my research had small chunks of corn on the cob which looked very frustrating (how do you eat it?) but Breaking Bread's just had lots of fresh sweet corn kernels and chunks of both potato and yucca, in a thick, flavorful vegetarian soup.



Sancocho con pollo at Café Racer's 'Breaking Bread'



America's Test Kitchen

en but also are going to focus a lot more on being a community space and resource, coming off of three years of being only that. By the way, 2024 will be Seward Cafe's 50th birthday, and it is by far the longest running cooperative dining establishment in the country.

Another favorite is changing hands. The founding owner of J. Selby's put the business up for sale, hoping, along with his fans, that it would be preserved as a vegan eatery, and it was bought by Aubry and Kale Walsh, the siblings who founded and own Herbivorous Butcher. They don't plan to make major changes, but I'm sure any they do make will be popular, as will the best sellers they're keeping.

And then, this is not a restaurant but it is a return of sorts. The Women's Prison Book Project is back at Walker Community UMC this year for their famous pancake breakfast fundraiser, now branded as Book Sale and Brunch (Saturday, Aug. 29, 8 a.m. to noon). Excuse me, but I am a bit of an expert at this, and you can't call a meal between 8 a.m. and noon a brunch.

Food industry news

The Twin Cities Eater had a piece about vegan dining in our metropolis. We now have at least 13 noteworthy establishments, either all-vegan or outstanding vegan options! I read the piece eagerly, and I got a few must-try ideas from it. (Francis Burger

kids' show was axed. Last year, workers for ATK had successfully formed a union with Communications Workers of America (CWA) but they hadn't got a contract yet. I am detecting a pattern here. It's almost like there's a union-to-acquisition-to-downsizing pipeline spreading from one industry to another.

And now, in the food and bev-

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workshops give participants the skills to create their own rain gardens, native plantings, pollinator habitat and more. Use our free online learning series, register for a live virtual workshop, or do both! Your yard can BEE the change. Live virtual workshops cost \$15. Scholarships are available upon request, no questions asked. All workshop registrants can choose to be automatically registered for a

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The Metal Shoppe Open Studio Saturday, April 29, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.
2919 Como Ave. SE, Mpls.
Join us for an open studio at the Metal Shoppe. In conjunction with International Sculpture Day, artists Max Cora, Gita Ghei, Wayne E. Potratz, Lindsey Raven and Brian Sobaski will open their studios. There will be art, antiques, curios, food and fellowship. Parking is available behind the building. Contact: Wayne E. Potratz at 612-707-4350 or potra001@umn.edu.

Seward Longfellow Restorative Justice Fundraiser Concert by Maria Isa Thursday, May 4, 6 to 10 p.m.

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Join Seward Longfellow Restorative Justice for a fundraising concert by Maria Isa at the Hook and Ladder on May 4. The concert will launch the Hook and Ladder's annual, award-winning Under the Canopy series. This outdoor concert is 21+ and tickets are \$25 in advance or \$35 at the door. Proceeds from ticket sales will benefit SLRJ. There will be a food truck on site for the duration of the show and free ice cream provided by

Big Bell/Minnehaha Scoop. Tickets are on sale now at <https://thehookmpls.com/event/utc23-mariaisa-slrj/>. Maria Isa Perez-Hedges is a Boricua singer, songwriter, actress, rapper, activist, youth worker and international recording artist. She is also a Minnesota state representative for District 65B, Rep. María Isa Pérez-Vega. For more information or to donate directly to SLRJ on their website, visit slrj.org. <https://slrj.networkforgood.com/projects/122953-growing-restorative-justice>.

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There are also virtual tune-in options such as a livestream on Community Power's Facebook Event Page.

Confirmed candidates: **Aurin Chowdhury, Jerome Evans, Luther Ranheim and Nancy Ford**. Each will share their visions on how to meet Minneapolis' Climate & Equity Plan goals and share some additional energy democracy perspectives.

Audience members can submit questions!
Informal mingling time and possible refreshments in the front lobby after the Q&A ends at 7:30. The facility requests no food or drink besides water in the auditorium.

All from around the city are welcome and encouraged to attend! RSVPs admired and appreciated at: <https://bit.ly/ward12forum>.

Also check the above webpage for updates, links to virtual tune-in options and full description.

Community Power is a Minneapolis-based energy democracy 501c3 organization which originated as the 2013 Minneapolis Energy Options campaign that led directly to the city forming its first-in-the-Nation Clean Energy Partnership with Xcel and CenterPoint.

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PUBLISHER/EDITOR	Ed Felien
ACCOUNTANT	Bridgit Jordan
ART DIRECTOR/GRAPHIC DESIGNER	Rebecca James
MANAGING EDITOR	Katherine Schaefer
STAFF WRITER	Debra Keefer Ramage
SALES DIRECTOR	David Goldstein
AD EXECUTIVE	Katherine Schaefer
WEBSITE MAINTENANCE	Rebecca James
COMPUTER CONSULTANT	Celia Wirth
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Hiawatha Golf Course – what is the Met Council’s stamp of approval worth?

BY KATHRYN KELLY

On March 22, 2023, the Metropolitan Council voted to amend the Hiawatha Golf Course Master Plan to the Nokomis-Hiawatha Master Plan. This opens a potential spigot of Met Council money to fund the Hiawatha Golf Course project.

What was wrong with this vote?

A Met Council member rightly asked why they were considering a golf course project because they are not allowed to fund golf courses. The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) responded that the project would also create items like boat storage and rentals, a fishing dock, sledding, ice skating and cross-country skiing. The problem is these items already

exist, so no funding is needed. Some proposed items, like an observation tower, can be built just outside of the golf course property. The new restaurant that they have been talking about for six years is, all of a sudden, described as a “main park building.” A park building can be funded with Met Council money; a restaurant cannot. So which is it? And a park building already exists at Lake Hiawatha. Why build a second one? That leaves trails. They talk about a loop trail around the lake using the existing berm. Initially, the MPRB stated that this berm was unstable and could collapse and drown golfers. Now, it is part of their plan with water on both sides that may really make it unstable and likely to collapse. They also say that the proposed

trails through the golf course may need nets to protect people from golf balls, which illustrates the danger. So, will any of these “new” amenities really be built? It seems very unlikely. Which begs the question of why taxpayers should be soaked for the planning of these items when the items will ultimately be discarded from the plan. This appears to be typical smoke-and-mirrors from the MPRB to get money from the Met Council.

Another problem is that the Metropolitan Council adopted an equity policy in December of 2020 for regional parks. The MPRB states that “the park planning process does still meet the equity analysis guidelines adopted in December 2020 by the Met Council.” If so, why did the MPRB ask the Met Council to

exempt the MPRB from the Met Council’s equity guidelines? The MPRB claims that development of this plan amendment began nearly eight years ago before the Equity Analysis requirements were in place, thus this plan should be exempt. So it seems as if the MPRB is admitting that its plan does not meet the equity guidelines. A review of the Met Council guidelines does show that the Hiawatha plan does not meet guidelines for recreation and climate change. Yet, the Met Council allowed this exemption. So are the Met Council’s guidelines essentially meaningless, to be thrown aside at will? See this article about how this project does not abide by the Metropolitan Council equity guidelines: [https://southsidepride.com/2021/05/09/equity-](https://southsidepride.com/2021/05/09/equity-and-the-hiawatha-golf-course-master-plan-2/)

and-the-hiawatha-golf-course-master-plan-2/.

Finally, there were seven new members on the Met Council who had been there only two weeks. One new member asked if consideration of this proposal could be delayed so that new members could have some time to understand the proposal and absorb the large amount of public feedback that was received. The question was never really answered, and the vote proceeded. Thus, it appears that this decision was pushed through without proper knowledge and consideration. Will this project be a follow-on to the light rail project that is currently in big trouble?

Here, from page 1

most of Ukraine but almost lost it to the Ottoman Empire allied with the British and French in the Crimean War. The Treaty of Paris, signed on March 30, 1856, forbade Russia to base warships in the Black Sea.

After the Russian Revolution in 1917, Ukraine became one of the constituted republics of the United Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). With the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, Ukraine became nominally independent.

In 1991, Putin resigned as a senior intelligence officer in the KGB and became active in Russian politics. From 1999 to the present, he has been either president or prime minister.

The Iranian Revolution of 1979 effectively closed off the historic smuggling route for heroin from Afghanistan to Istanbul, so smugglers had to go through Turkmenistan and Russia to reach Western markets. Just as the OSS (the predecessor of the CIA) worked in partnership with the Sicilian Mafia to ensure a safe reception for the Allied invasion of Sicily, so the KGB has had a close working relationship with the Russian mob, running heroin out of Afghanistan through Russia and generally exiting to Western customers through the port of Odessa in Ukraine. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime estimates the heroin traffic from Afghanistan was worth \$1.4 billion in 2022.

Mark Galeotti wrote in Foreign Policy in 2014: “For example, Russian law enforcement officers have confirmed to me that on the Ukrainian mainland, the Moscow-based Solntsevo network, Russia’s largest and most powerful mob, has a long-standing relationship with the ‘Donetsk clan,’ an infamous political-criminal circle in the eastern Ukrainian industrial city of the same name. This was the

heart of ousted President Viktor Yanukovich’s power base, and his Party of Regions became a ‘haven for Donetsk-based mobsters,’ according to a 2006 cable from the U.S. Embassy in Kiev to the National Security Council.”

In November of 2013, large protests began in Maidan Square in response to President Yanukovich’s sudden decision to not sign a political association and free trade agreement with the European Union and instead opt for closer relations with Russia. By January and February the demonstrations had turned violent, with 108 protesters and 13 police officers being killed.

Feb. 18-20: Thousands of demonstrators march on the parliament building.

Feb. 21: Demonstrators occupy government buildings. The police abandon central Kyiv. Yanukovich flees the capital after signing an agreement for an interim unity government and new elections. He seeks asylum in Russia.

Feb. 27: Russia condemns the agreement, calling it a coup, invades and occupies Crimea and stages fake independence demonstrations in Donetsk and Luhansk.

East and West are once again at war in the borderland between Europe and Asia.

China says it is neutral. It is not supplying Russia with war materiel or troops. If it did, it would be game over. China has proposed a 12-point peace plan. Here is their first point:

“China’s Position on the Political Settlement of the Ukraine Crisis

“2023-02-24 09:00

“1. Respecting the sovereignty of all countries. Universally recognized international law, including the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, must be strictly observed. The sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of all

countries must be effectively upheld. All countries, big or small, strong or weak, rich or poor, are equal members of the international community. All parties should jointly uphold the basic norms governing international relations and defend international fairness and justice. Equal and uniform application of international law should be promoted, while double standards must be rejected.”

It is hard to believe that China could be neutral or an objective observer. After all, the Mongol Empire, the Golden Horde, created the rough perimeters of modern Russia, and their deputy, Alexander Nevsky, was Prince of Kiev. But China plays a very long game. They genuinely believe that Taiwan and most of Russia will eventually fall into their lap. All they have to do is sit and wait and keep doing what they’re doing. In 2021 Taiwan had \$198,280,000,000 invested in mainland China. Trade between the two was \$273.06 billion in 2021. China doesn’t recognize sanctions against Russia. It buys their oil and sells them goods. It may take a hundred years or more, but every day and in every way Taiwan and Russia are becoming more dependent on China. Nixon and Kissinger effectively ended the Two China Policy when the U.S. recognized China in 1972, more than 50 years ago. China could have legitimately invaded and occupied Taiwan 50 years ago, but they are content to wait and see.

China recently negotiated a peace treaty between Iran and Saudi Arabia. Bringing together Shia and Sunni seems almost a higher hill to climb than ending the war in Ukraine.

Notwithstanding China’s history and its sense of itself as the Middle Kingdom, the first proposal to end the war in Ukraine by getting Russia to agree to respect “the sovereignty of all

countries” would mean that Russia must withdraw from all occupied territories in Donetsk and Luhansk, and it must withdraw from Crimea.

If Russia would agree to this, it would end the war and stop the slaughter of innocents. Surely, Ukraine and the U.S. could agree to this, couldn’t they?

The remaining 11 articles could be negotiated, but Russia must agree to this first proposition and end the war.

Postscript:

Xi Jinping brought his major ministers to Moscow in March for a sit-down conference with Putin to try to talk some sense into him. He probably told him: withdraw from Ukraine; you can’t win; the whole world is against you; we’re not going to give you war materiel or combat



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Cam, from page 1

antiracism. Minneapolis holds, matures, coddles, perpetuates, and massages a racist anti-black work culture. This culture inevitably affects our employees – mainly those of color and our residents.” (Green’s memo can be read in its entirety here: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/13onT9VnfKTT1QLqm-J628wzY4pDZWmzxi/view>.)

The struggle to address racism in our city government is not new. The establishment of a division dedicated to repairing the institutional racism in City Hall was years in the making and had a rough time just getting started.

In 2014, when former Mayor Betsy Hodges proposed creating the new division with two staff people, the idea was met with opposition from then-Council Member Jacob Frey and some of his allies on the council, including Linea Palmisano and Lisa Goodman.

An amendment at the time, made by Palmisano, to cut the funding in half for the creation of the Hodges’ proposed Office of Equitable Outcomes, was defeated on a 7-6 vote. The six council members who voted against fully funding the office were Jacob Frey, Barb Johnson, Blong Yang, Abdi Warsame, Lisa Goodman and Linea Palmisano.

Over the years, the office grew and more staff were hired, but since 2020 the first director, Joy Marsh, and all of the original nine staffers have left. Other Black women in leadership positions have also left the city, including Sasha Cotton, the former manager of the Office of Violence Prevention, and Velma Korbel, the director of the Civil

Rights Department.

It took eight months after Marsh’s departure for the city to hire Green into the role even though the office was down to only one staff member at the time.

Earlier this term, there were objections raised to the appointment of Johnston as city coordinator. A group calling themselves “CCO Staff” (made up of former and current city staff) released a statement and testified about a toxic and racist work environment that was operating under Johnston’s leadership. The statement they wrote was endorsed by more than 80 current or former city staff people from at least 13 departments.

Despite the opposition, Johnston’s appointment was eventually approved, and she has since taken over as City Operations Officer under the new government structure.

For Green, problems were evident from the start. “On my first day, March 28, 2022,” she wrote in the March 6 report, “I was placed in a windowless, mouse-infested space that shared a wall with inmates. I could hear crying, talking, praying, etc., at various times throughout the day. The mere placement of the then Race & Equity office was very telling as an incoming director, where race relations ranked in the enterprise and its importance.”

Green’s report goes on to detail a “toxic work environment” with dates and descriptions of many “instances of racism and antiblackness.” She cites “experts and scholars to show how what I have experienced here is, in fact, antiblack racism and that some of that racism was done at the hands of other Black people in the enterprise.”

She also informed the mayor and others that she intended to file a lawsuit against Council Member Latrisha Vetaw for defamation of character.

The report elaborates on that defamation as well as concerns about communication, procurement, resources, “fake ethics



Tyeastia Green

complaints,” “extra scrutiny and moving goal posts.” It also highlights work accomplished and underway including antiracism training, work on a Minneapolis (in)Equity Report and 12 other projects and priorities.

Green’s memo appears to have led to her departure and was written after an event held on Feb. 25 at the Minneapolis Convention Center called “I Am My Ancestors Wildest Dreams Expo,” and a special City Council meeting called by the mayor for the purpose of approving funding for the event on Feb. 17.

At that Feb. 17 meeting, Green shared problems she encountered with funding and how a city attorney, Susan Trammell, told her it was unethical to solicit funds.

After continued resistance and lack of support for the event following that council meeting, “on February 21, 2023,

I resigned,” she wrote. “My decision to resign was from pure exhaustion, and my body, mind, and spirit could no longer take the racist, toxic nature of the enterprise.” She was also prepared to cancel the event.

After talking with Deputy City Operations Officer Moore, however, Green decided to stay and the expo event was not canceled. “After speaking with Fatima Moore, I rescinded my resignation,” Green explained in the March 6 report, with obvious energy to address problems and work to improve things at City Hall. “Profound changes need to be made to the culture of the enterprise. As a Minneapolis citizen, I demand it. As a leader in the enterprise, I won’t stop demanding it and holding folks accountable until we all see it come to pass.”

Then, three days after that memo, the Star Tribune ran a story alleging that Green had misled the council at the Feb. 17 meeting by saying that the Bush Foundation had made a commitment, and claiming that “her statements to the City Council at an emergency meeting last month have proved to be untrue.”

After that article, in an email to the city’s director of communications, Green identified the person she spoke with at the foundation and wrote, “I never said that I received a commitment from Bush for \$3 million. I said Bush offered \$3 million but their stipulations I couldn’t agree to. What was on the table was \$1 million per year for three years, with some dollars attached to do program evaluation each year. However, in order to move forward I had to agree that the mayor and city council could not be involved in the event.” She was told that if the mayor and City Council

were involved Bush would not fund it because “there are people on the board that don’t like the mayor and specifically the council president.”

The video from the meeting confirms that Green did not use the word “commitment” but did tell the council that the “Bush Foundation had offered us \$3 million, but they had some stipulations that we could not satisfy.”

Then, on March 13, Green was told by Johnston that if she did not resign, she would be “unappointed.” The reasons for not being appointed included her defensiveness, failure to act on Johnston’s recommendations, as well as things she said at the Feb. 17 meeting, and the newspaper article. She decided “to keep my original February 21, 2023, resignation.”

Since Green’s departure, among those who have spoken up in support of her is Angela Rose Myers Moroles, former president of the Minneapolis chapter of the NAACP, who wrote on Twitter, “Director Green was set up. Unfortunately, we have seen this all too often.”

Erica Mauter, former candidate for City Council, wrote, “We should be thanking her, Joy Marsh before her, and all the current & former staff in that office who brought themselves, their expertise, and their lived experience to try to make this city a better place for all of us to live. Only to be met with hostility & abuse.”

“The enterprise isn’t structured in a way that automatically supports racial equity,” Green concludes at the end of her report. “The city needs a supportive leadership team and public officials who want an antiracist work environment. I don’t believe the city as an enterprise is concerned about having an antiracist organization. The city, as an enterprise, is concerned about optics.”

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Spring on Hennepin Avenue

BY DEBRA KEEFER RAMAGE

Is Uptown ... political?

There are several different takes

on what's going on with Uptown and Hennepin Avenue south of downtown. Psychically, Hennepin seems to lie upon a political fault line in Minneapolis. Or that's what

you might think if you read Minneapolis "Left" Twitter (which, for my sins, I do).

The Star Tribune wrote a perfectly factual account of the "decline" of Uptown and its possible, hopeful, current resurrection. The article (see the March 24 piece by Nicole Norfleet) related the history of Uptown from approximately the late 1970s until now and noted how its upward trend into gentrification never really panned out. Without discussing it much, it vaguely alluded to that old conundrum: do plywood-covered windows and empty storefronts lead to crime, or vice versa? And it predicted a comeback by the route of returning to roots – bohemian values, artists, small local businesses, denser housing. And I think that's all fine.



Boludo in Uptown

Still this anodyne piece was virulently attacked on Twitter. The main charge was that it didn't mention the police murder of Winston Smith in 2021. I can understand the frustration about that shameful event. As one tweet proclaimed: "Hey everyone, remember when the Star Tribune falsely called Winston Smith a murder suspect

so that they could paper-over his assassination and keep serving Uptown business interests? They won the Pulitzer Prize that year."

Now don't get me wrong. I also call Winston Smith's death a murder or assassination. I also blame the police, and think the mainstream media in general (not just our paper of record) distorted the



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news to shore up their coverup/damage control, and that was bad. (And what others may forget is that a protester was deliberately run down by a car and died.) The whole episode was a nightmare within a nightmare. But does that mean every cub reporter who writes anything about Uptown forever more has to reverently name-check Smith? Actually, no. Let's get a grip and focus on the subject at hand.

Hennepin South reconstruction, Seven Points, and transit

What I was surprised to see left out of the aforementioned article was the thing that was exercising Minneapolis Twitter over a year ago – the Hennepin Avenue South reconstruction plan, a city-planned improvement project that ended up pitting millennials, bikers and disability advocates against small business owners and automobile lovers. Not that I think the plan,



which will enter the construction phase in mid-2024 if all goes well, is responsible for the Uptown decline from roughly 2018 to now, but that one should not speculate on what will “bring Uptown back” without taking it into consideration.

After two years of community engagement, the plan for reconstruction unveiled in 2022 will eliminate some on-street parking on Hennepin Avenue, which comprises about 10% of the total area parking. In return, the street redesign will eliminate major danger zones for cars, bikes and pedestri-

area is the fourth location of Boludo, a trending eatery specializing in Argentinian food and wine, including pizza and empanadas.

A big one is the return of entertainment. There are three former film theaters within a block of each other around Hennepin and Lagoon Avenues – the Lagoon Cinema (still a film theater), the Granada (a live entertainment dinner theater now), and the Uptown Theater (shortly to reopen as a venue for live music, comedy shows, meetings, speakers, plays, corporate events and more). Another live music venue, also lo-

offers a mix of first-run and independent films. Upcoming showings of interest include “The Lost King” (a dramatic true story about Phillipa Langley, amateur historian who discovered the burial site of late medieval King Richard III) and “How To Blow Up A Pipeline” (not a documentary, but a drama about blowing up pipelines).

The Granada’s very popular Candlelit events are candlelight dinner concerts featuring diverse musical acts such as jazz, light classical or romantic pop favorites, as well as offerings such as sci-fi and fantasy film scores. They host a wide range of other events, too, from Latin dance nights with salsa dancing to a live orchestra, to hip-hop artists, to flamenco ballet, plus galas such as the Queer Space 2nd Annual Birthday Bash on April 26. The Granada can also be booked for private parties and events. See their full calendar at granadampls.com.

The revived Uptown Theater has had a preview concert or two but will have its official opening at a Kickoff Party with Yam Haus on June 10. Four more acts are booked for June so far, two hip-hop and two rock. The venue is currently owned by Swervo entertainment, which also owns the Armory in downtown Minneapolis. Tickets are available now for the June performances.



Film still from ‘The Lost King’ coming to the Lagoon Cinema



Scene from ‘How to Blow Up a Pipeline’

ans, and add dedicated bus lanes and stations for a new bus rapid transit (BRT) route. See minnpost.com/community-voices/2022/01/new-hennepin-avenue-redesign-is-a-major-step-forward/ for a good summary of the plan’s pluses and minuses.

Another piece of the Uptown puzzle this article doesn’t get quite right is the Seven Points piece. It mentions “the former Calhoun Square” near the top, then concludes with some current information on “the Seven Points retail complex,” but never clarifies that these are the same property.

A tweet from the MSP BizJournal in November 2019 records the transaction at the time: “Chicago-based Northpond Partners has purchased Calhoun Square for \$34.5 million, half of what the former owners paid for the Uptown Minneapolis shopping center in 2014.” So clearly the decline in retail fortunes began well before the pandemic.

Things to celebrate or be hopeful about

There are some really good things happening on and around Hennepin that signal a hopeful future. One of them is the transformation and renaming of the former Jefferson Community School. In 2021-22, the Pre-K through grade 8 school at 1200 W. 26th St. was both transformed into a “Global Studies and Humanities Magnet” open to all students in the city, but also in a year-long study followed by a vote and approval by the school board, changed its name from Jefferson to Ella Baker.

Another good thing is that well-regarded new restaurants keep opening, and well-regarded older restaurants are staying (e.g., Ann Kim, as quoted in the Strib article). One new restaurant to the

cated at Hennepin and Lagoon, is called Green Room. It opened earlier this year as a space that welcomes all music genres, bands and artists.

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