

# Southside Pride

**We build Pride on the Southside**

FIRST TUESDAY OF THE MONTH

**DECEMBER  
2024**

**VOL. XXXIV, ISSUE 12**

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

## Cam's Corner



### Property Tax Dependence: Are there Alternatives?

BY CAM GORDON

This fall, many Southside homeowners received their truth-in-taxation estimated property tax notices for 2025 and discovered they are going up again.

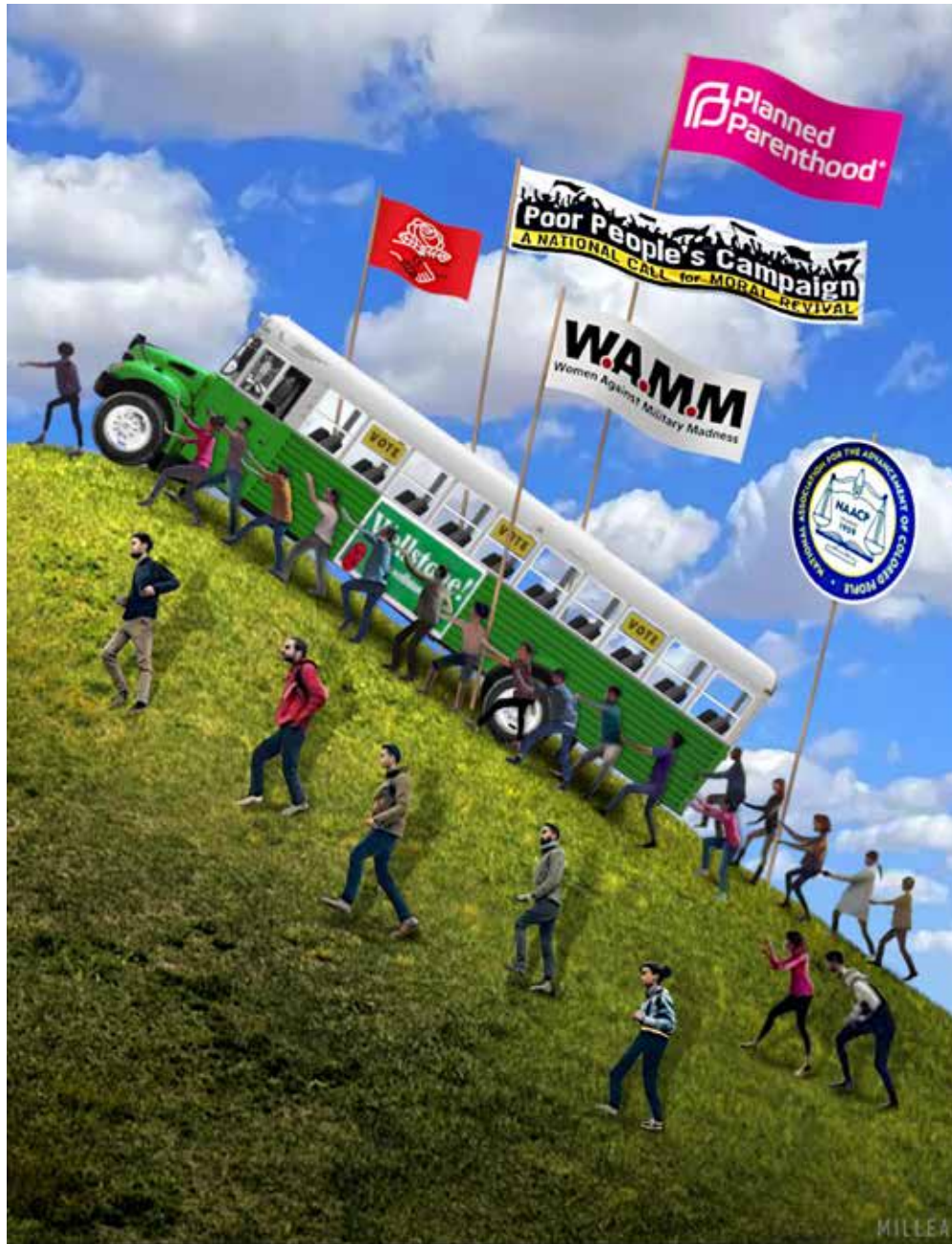
The 2025 city budget is set to be approved on Dec. 10, and council members are looking at ways to cut costs and find new funding options to address what some consider the unfair and burdensome way we pay for city services.

In the past, the downtown business district has provided a larger share of the property taxes needed to operate city government and fund services, but this year more of that burden has shifted onto residential property owners, and through them, renters as well.

Property taxes are also going up because of the 8.27 percent levy increase approved by the city, the 5.5 percent increase by the county, and 4.52 percent increase by the school board.

Property taxes represent about 30 percent of the revenue the city brings in, and pays for

See Cam, page 7



## Get on the Bus! But, First, Let's All Get Out and Push it Over this Hill

BY ED FELIEN

What happened? Why did the Democrats do so badly?

Was it that white male privilege was threatened by a Black, South Asian woman becoming President?

Or was it the Democrat's refusal to condemn the Is-

raeli genocide of Palestinians?

Or was it a general mood of "Throw the rascals out!" that cost conservative governments in Britain and France to be replaced by leftists?

Probably all of the above. What does the road ahead look like?

Trump thinks he can settle the Russia-Ukraine war in twenty-four hours.

He would do this by ceding most of the Russian-occupied areas to Russia. Those areas, east of the Dnipro River, were always thought of as Russian. The people speak Russian. In previous Ukrainian govern-

See Bus, page 4

## Xcel Protest

BY CLINT COMBS

On Nov. 21, 2024, Whitney Wildman and George W. Crocker were among the speakers at a protest outside Xcel Energy's offices at 401 Nicollet Mall in Minneapolis. The protest was organized by a coalition of groups including Women Against Military Madness, Indigenous Earth Protectors, Nukewatch, and the Coalition for a Nuclear-Free Mississippi River. The demonstration called attention to Xcel Energy's environmental violations — particularly the ongoing tritium contamination from the Monticello Nuclear Plant — and demanded stronger accountability and action to protect local communities and waterways.

The Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant, located in Minnesota, is in hot water for violating environmental regulations due to its discharge of excessive levels of tritium into nearby water sources, and delayed informing the public for four months after first notifying state regulators months earlier. Tritium, a radioactive isotope of hydrogen, is routinely created in nuclear power generation and can pose significant risks to the environment and public health if not properly managed. The plant's ongoing issues with tritium emissions have raised concerns about the potential long-term effects on the local ecosystem and drinking water safety.

The Minnesota Department of Health has made clear the risks posed by tritium contamination, citing the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Safe Drinking Water Act limits. According to the MN Department of Health website, the EPA sets a limit of 4 millirems per year for tritium exposure through drinking water, which corresponds to a concentration of 20,000 picocuries per liter (pCi/L). Levels exceeding this threshold can lead to harmful radiation exposure for people consuming contaminated water over extended periods.

While tritium exposure in small amounts might not pose an immediate danger, long-term exposure to elevated levels of the radioactive substance can result in increased risks of cancer, genetic mutations, and other health issues. When tritium enters water supplies, it can be consumed directly by humans or enter the food chain through aquatic life. Over time, its radioactive properties can accumulate in the body, increasing the chances of cellular damage and illness.

The Safe Drinking Water Act is in place to protect the public from these risks, ensuring that tritium levels remain within safe limits. The Monticello plant's violation of these standards underscores the challenges faced in regulating nuclear power plants and holding them accountable for their environmental impact.

### The Call for Action and Accountability

Whitney Wildman of the Climate Justice Com-

See Xcel, page 8



**HAPPY  
HOLIDAYS**  
Pages 11 - 16



**Winter  
Wellness**  
Pages 20 - 21

# Injured in a Car Accident? We Can Help Prevent Chronic Pain from Untreated Injuries!



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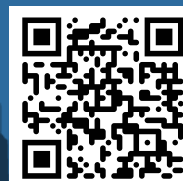
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— Sheryl

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# ● RESISTANCE ROUNDTABLE ●

Southside Pride / NEIGHBORHOOD EDITION

If your organization is part of the resistance to the Trump presidency and it is not included here, then please tell us about your group and its upcoming activities in an email to editor@southsidepride.com by the 20th of the month to be included in next month's edition.

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## The City of Minneapolis

The Sanctuary City Task Force is a multi-departmental team formed in 2017, tasked with making recommendations to strengthen city-level policies, programs, and resources in the city of Minneapolis to better protect and defend undocumented immigrant families from unfair deportation, Muslim residents and other targeted groups from acts of bigotry and hate, and the rights of refugees from unjust persecution.

"Minneapolis is a welcoming city. We believe that all people, including immigrants, are valuable contributors to society. Every resident is vital to the success of our communities and shared future."

If you have problems related to immigration status, call the mayor's office: 612-673-2100

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## Jewish Voice for Peace



JVP is a national, grassroots organization working towards Palestinian freedom and Judaism beyond Zionism. It's the largest such organization in the world.

After a year of genocide against Palestinians, Israel is waging a campaign of terror and destruction that has brought the entire region ever closer to a state of all-out war.

A year of impunity for Israeli genocide has landed us here. The U.S. government's refusal to impose any consequences for Israel's crimes against humanity has meant that the Israeli government feels it has free rein to keep escalating and expanding its destruction. In a single day in late September, Israel bombed Gaza. And Lebanon. And Syria. And Yemen.

This latest escalated assault has already displaced approximately one million people in Lebanon, and risks killing even more men, women, and children. Meanwhile, the U.S. continues to back this catastrophe.

If you have any questions, please call us at 510-465-1777, or send an email to info@jvp.org. Jewish Voice for Peace respects and guards your privacy.



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## Insight News

Insight News is the brainchild and continuing publishing prodigy of Al McFarlane: insightnews.com/

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## NAACP

The Minneapolis Branch of the NAACP has legal, food and community resources, and some local job openings listed on their website: naacpmpls.com/.

## Keith Ellison



We received the following fundraising letter from Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison:

"When I was elected, I promised I would do everything in my power to protect Minnesotans' fundamental rights - and that promise has never been more important. That's why I want to be 100% clear: I'm prepared to stand up to the second Trump administration if they attempt to interfere with any of the freedoms that people of our state enjoy, including access to abortion and immigrants' ability to live without fear.

My office spent months preparing for the possibility of a Trump presidency, identifying potential threats and determining what we can do to make sure the people of Minnesota are protected.

Now, I didn't run for Attorney General so I could sue Donald Trump. But I've done it before, and I'll do it again if he violates the rights of Minnesotans.

I will always fight to protect your fundamental rights from those who seek to restrict them. But I can't do it alone.

None of my work is possible without support from this grassroots movement. That's why I'm asking you to step up and help prove that we're ready to defend our freedoms.

I wanted to remind you that you're still eligible for Minnesota's Political Contribution Refund (PCR) program. You have until Dec. 31 to donate \$75 (or \$150 for couples) to our campaign and receive a full refund from the state of Minnesota."

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## MN Poor People's Campaign

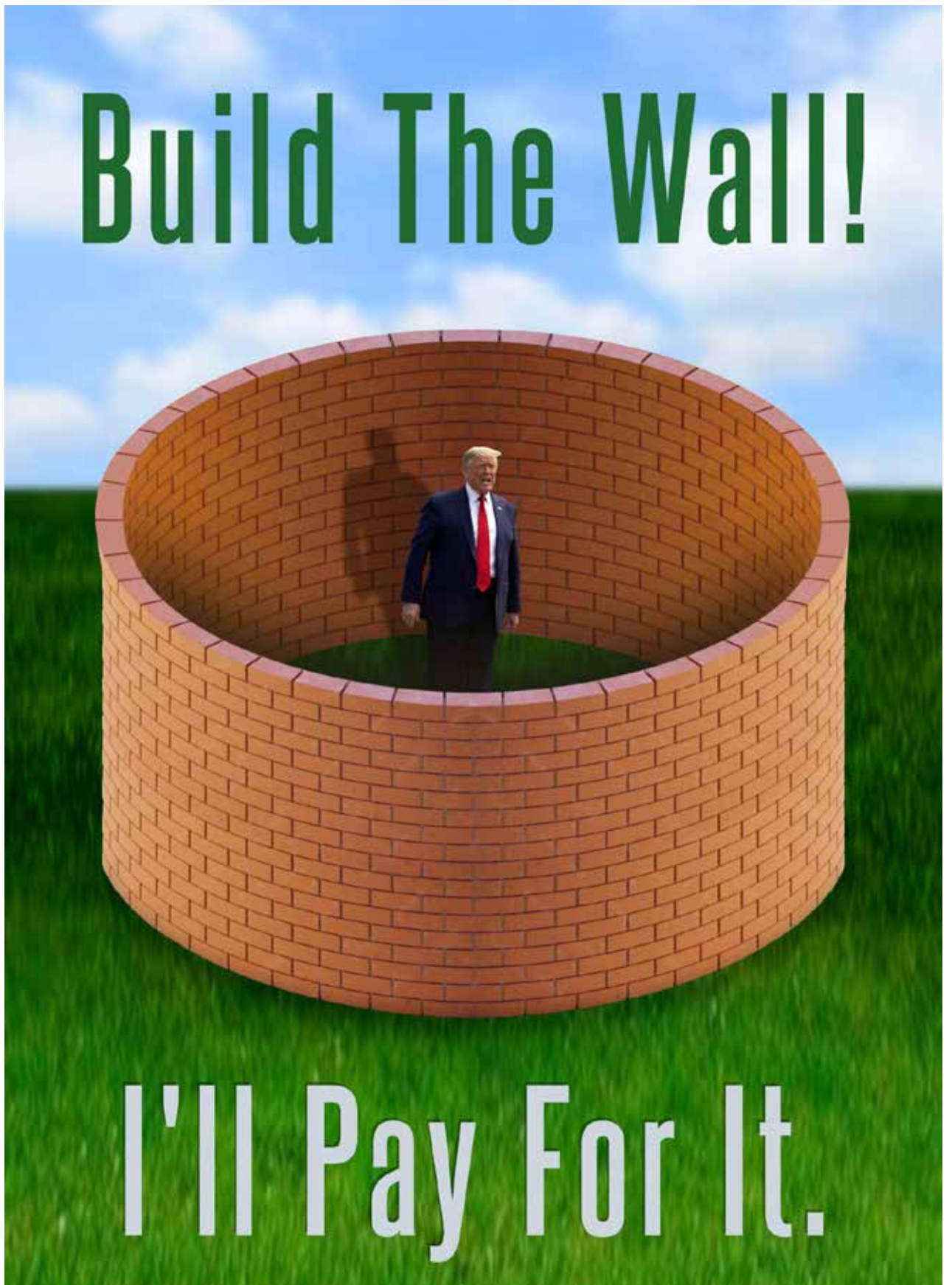
MN Poor People's Campaign has virtual gatherings planned Dec. 5 and 19, at 6 p.m., to share national updates, plan local activities, think through building relationships with other organizations and more. Email us at: minnesota@poorpeoplescampaign.org

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## Spokesman-Recorder

The Spokesman-Recorder has persevered for more than 90 years: spokesman-recorder.com/

See Roundtable, page 5



# My First Christmas Dinner

BY ED FELIEN

The first Christmas dinner I can remember is when I was 7 years old. It was in 1945. We drove over to Aunt Beda's house in North Minneapolis in a 1935 Dodge sedan. She was the matriarch of the family. She raised my dad, his two sisters, Edith and Alice, and his brother Lester. It was a grand event and one of the few times in the year when all my dad's family could get together. There were candles on the table, fine linen and the best china. The candlelight made the crystal glasses sparkle.

Uncle Lester was my hero. He was on leave from the Navy. He was an airplane mechanic stationed at Guantanamo Na-

val Base in Cuba. He had just a little rocking swagger to his walk. He talked about fixing planes and seeing them fly. I can remember a picture of me taken about this time saluting the camera in a sailor uniform. And I remember being thrilled reading "Don Winslow and the Navy."

Dinner was very traditionally American: turkey, potatoes, green beans, sweet potatoes, sweet caramel rolls, pies—but there were also Swedish cookies: spritz, pepparkakor (ginger cookies), rosettes, Swedish almond cookies, sandkaker, sand cookies, sugar cookies, kringler (cookie rings), drommar (dreams) and mazariner (mazarins). My favorite were the struvor, rosettes with pow-

dered sugar made with a branding iron pressed down on flour boiling in lard and then covered in powdered sugar. These puffy, thin pastries seemed like clouds when you ate them. But the biggest treat, the dish that defined most Swedish immigrant dinners, was warm rice pudding with raisins and cream. There was lutefisk, but hardly anyone ate it, but everyone ate as much as they could of the rice pudding.

After dinner the women would clear the table and clean the dishes, and the men would go down in the basement with Uncle Anton to the coal bin where he had set up chairs. Aunt Beda was an Evangelical Lutheran and leader of



the Broadway Tabernacle Christian Youth Group. She didn't allow drinking or smoking in the

house, but on this special occasion she did allow the men to smoke downstairs in the coal bin. It certainly added to the exotic and forbidden allure of tobacco for me. I don't remember what the men talked about, but I knew that this was where they agreed on common values. This was the time when the men spoke passionately and with strong language about what they believed and how they would go forward. It was a kind of religious moment for me, my first taste of the seriousness of adulthood, being admitted to the fellowship of men, baptized by tobacco smoke in a coal bin.

**Bus, from page 1**

ments there was always an informal accommodation of the Russian and European territories. One side got to be President, and the other side got to be Premier. This fell apart when the Russian-friendly President refused to sign the European Union trade agreement. Demonstrations in Maidan Square (led at first by neo-Nazis, but then supported by the left) forced the President to flee to Russia. Neo-Nazis in the Azov Bri-

gade had been conducting a terrorist campaign in the Russian-speaking area around Mariupol. Russia annexed Crimea. Nothing happened. Then they began occupying Ukraine.

The best solution, in my opinion, would be for there to be an immediate cease fire, withdrawal of all troops, a referendum in the disputed territories, supervised by the United Nations, on whether to align with Russia or Ukraine. Russia should be forced to pay indemnities to Ukraine for initiating

the hostilities and as compensation for damages done.

What Trump will probably do is threaten NATO and Zelensky that he will cut off supplies, tell Putin he can have all he wants of the Russian-speaking provinces, and then, he will nominate himself for the Nobel Peace Prize.

To introduce his claim for the Nobel, he told Netanyahu to stop the war in Gaza by the time he gets inaugurated. Netanyahu will stop the war, but he will have to keep an occupying

army in Gaza to maintain order. This will end the Two State Solution because of "facts on the ground." Of course, it will not end the war between Israelis and Palestinians. The war will change to a guerrilla war of resistance to the Israeli occupation.

Trump's plan to cut the federal workforce, DOGE - Department of Government Efficiency - strikes a sympathetic chord with his supporters. They're tired of an unresponsive bureaucracy, and they're thrilled

that Trump will cut the red tape that's holding them back from government programs. Of course, the reality is that benefit programs for the poor will be cut, and the only red tape that will be cut will be to benefit Vivek Ramaswamy's pharmaceutical companies and Elon Musk's Space X rockets.

Of course, we face serious dangers in the next four years. Fortunately, we have people on our side.

# • RESISTANCE ROUNDTABLE •

Southside Pride / NEIGHBORHOOD EDITION

Roundtable, from page 3

## Planned Parenthood North Central States

Their website says: We're here for you.

It remains our top priority to continue providing care. Regardless of what you hear, keep your appointment. If you have questions about what care you can receive, call us at 1-800-230-PLAN (7526).

The local office: Minneapolis Health Center, 1200 Lagoon Ave., is open 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. weekdays, and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekends.

For questions related to donations or any other inquiry, call 1-855-789-7723



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## Veterans For Peace Hour

Featuring special guests and an eclectic mix of music and talk. We are anti-war veterans who have been raising the awareness of the costs of war from a moral, environmental, and economic perspective since 1986. Dec. 8 on KFAI (Wave Project) 90.3 at 10 a.m.



## Twin Cities DSA

Twin Cities DSA issued the following statement on Nov. 7, 2024: "The election results may feel like a loss, and it is OK to grieve. No matter who holds the presidency, Twin Cities Democratic Socialists of America remains steadfast, organizing and fighting every day as members of the working class.

We fight against fascism, against capitalist exploitation, against oppression. We struggle for collective liberation, for a thriving planet, for dignity. Join the movement. A better world is possible, but only if we build it together."

The following day, they tweeted: "The corporate-controlled Democratic Party has failed the working class and allowed lying billionaire Trump to return to power. Join TCDSA to fight for collective liberation & a thriving planet — we have a world to win."

In the less than a month since then and now, over 100 new members have joined Twin Cities DSA, the third "wave" of growth in the past eight-plus years. This is part of a nationwide phenomenon that also occurred with the first Trump election.

Twin Cities DSA is far stronger now than they were eight years ago. They now have a large, visible office space in St. Paul, a robust online presence, an outstanding leadership team, and apparently, according to a centrist DFL PAC, control the entire city government of Minneapolis <sarcasm.> The chapter has endorsed elected members of the Minneapolis, St. Paul, and Robbinsdale city councils, as well as two state senators and a few house representatives.

When they say they are going to just grow bigger, grow stronger, and keep organizing the same way, you should believe as many obviously do. The chapter's political education centerpiece, an orientation called TCDSA 101, usually has fewer than 20 attendees. In mid-November, over 100 people signed up for it, and they had to have multiple sessions that month to accommodate.

As an example of the kind of organizing that continued apace in November, the chapter mobilized scores of phone calls to MN Senators Smith and Klobuchar to whip votes for Bernie Sanders six Joint Resolutions of Disapproval that had the potential to stop \$20 billions of weapon sales to Israel.

Also, another difference between 2016 and now? Then, Twin Cities DSA was the only DSA chapter in the state. Now there are three others, experiencing similar waves of growth, and DSA endorsed elected officials across the state.

Would you like to join? Follow this link: [twincitiesdsa.org/join](https://twincitiesdsa.org/join).

## Women Against Military Madness Continues to Work for Peace, Justice and the End of War Through Trump's Second Term

BY KIM DEFRANCO, MEMBER OF WOMEN AGAINST MILITARY MADNESS

Women Against Military Madness (WAMM) is a member-based organization whose mission is to oppose U.S. militarism and involvement in wars. WAMM challenges systems of harm, oppression and exploitation, and helps build movements of solidarity with others for peace and justice.

Members of WAMM always say no matter who is the tenant in the White House, WAMM is always working for justice and will do the same in opposing U.S. wars, interventions, and sanctions. Our name says it all! Militarism is the most potent source of injustice where the obscene military spending comes at the expense of housing, medical care, education and adequate nutrition, etc.

In our 42+ years, our work for peace and justice has continued through the Reagan, Bush, Clinton, Bush Jr., Obama, Trump, Biden eras, and will not change during Trump's second term.



On Wednesdays from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. (time change in spring), the Vigil to End War gathers at the Lake Street/Marshall Avenue Bridge over the Mississippi River. The End War committee is dedicated to ending U.S. involvement in war, the threats of war, and the production, sale and use of the weapons of war.

On Fridays from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m., WAMM's Middle East Committee, along with the Palestine Solidarity Committee, gather in St. Paul at the corners of Snelling/Summit Avenues. Waving Palestinian flags and signs, we take a stand against the ongoing occupation and genocide of the Palestinian people and call out the leaders and countries that continue these injustices.

Please join us! WAMM has several committees to get involved in. Email us: [general@wamm.me](mailto:general@wamm.me). Call us: 612-827-5364. Visit our website: [womenagainstmilitarymadness.org](https://womenagainstmilitarymadness.org).

## We Need Your Help!

Now More Than Ever!

If you find us useful in these perilous times, please send us a contribution:

Southside Pride  
2721 East 42nd Street, Suite B  
Minneapolis, MN 55406



Contributions to Southside Pride are not tax deductible because we mean business!

# The Consent Decree and the MPD Where are We Now?

BY KAY SCHROVEN

## History

In the spring of 2023, the Minneapolis Department of Human Rights (MDHR) and the city of Minneapolis – including the Minneapolis Police Department (MPD) – entered into a court enforceable agreement to correct alleged violations of the MDHR Act, Minn.Stat.Ch.363A. The Agreement requires specific measures that must be taken and on-going evaluation of these measures. Minneapolis is the first city in the country to be under both State and Federal consent decrees regarding discriminatory policing practices, with over a decade of civil rights abuses. The decree addresses many issues including use of force, body cameras, marijuana policy, protocols in training, pretextual traffic stops, de-escalation, accountability and much more (for a more complete summary of the Agreement, see Southside Pride, May 2023.)

One of the requirements of the decree is independent, outside monitoring and evaluation. That is, a third-party organization of evaluators with appropriate, professional expertise to provide relevant data and counsel as well as evaluation of the progress. This includes “coaching” for the MPD, with a

goal of achieving compliance. In addition to the local Community Commission on Police Oversight, (CCPO) an Independent Evaluator (I.E.) needed to be identified and hired.

There were 20 applications for this role; 3 finalists were invited to come to Minneapolis to present their organization and what they have to offer. The group selected is Effective Law Enforcement for All. ELEFA was founded in 2020 by David Douglass, Deputy Monitor for the City of New Orleans. ELEFA is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit “Dedicated to educating and empowering the public to engage with their law enforcement practices that are safe and effective for police and the communities they serve.” ELEFA has worked with New Orleans (under consent decree since 2013) as well as Montgomery County, MD., and have offices in Louisiana and Maryland. (Learn more at elefa.org) The decision to hire ELEFA was made by MDHR, the city and approved by the court. This brought criticism from some community members who sought to have more direct input into the decision.

The Minneapolis ELEFA team is co-lead by Mr. Douglass and Michael S. Harrison, former Officer and Commissioner of the Baltimore Police Dept. (BPD) and former Superintendent of the New Orleans Police Dept.

(NOPD.) Harrison is available to, and meets with, Minneapolis Chief Brian O’Hara on a regular basis. The rest of the professional team of nine assigned to Minneapolis have expertise in monitoring, independent evaluation, project management, accountability, policy, intervention systems, training (such as Use of Force) and mental health. They bring diverse backgrounds and a focus on community involvement and reforming policing. ELEFA is compensated at 1.5 million annually.

In the Agreement (set forth in July 2023) there is an “Implementation Progress Evaluation Plan” which defines how the I.E. will evaluate the Parties progress toward compliance. Page 87 outlines the requirements as written in the Settlement Agreement. That is, actions the city and MPD must take, a schedule for accomplishing the actions and how compliance will be measured. In Sept. 2024 the I.E. published its plan. The format of the plan contains three parts: Requirement, Action and Evaluation. Because the I.E. was not appointed until March of 2024 (not July of 2023) there is a delay and request to the Court to change the effective date to March 2024. The request is pending before the Court.

## Meeting with the Communities

On Nov. 13 and Nov. 14, the Minneapolis ELEFA team met with community members in both South and North Minneapolis for a presentation and opportunity for the community to give input, voice concerns, etc. The South Minneapolis event could have been better attended (I estimated 50 to 60 people), but those that were present were attentive, spirited and vocal. Mad Dads were there, as were Violence Interrupters, representatives of George Floyd Square, CCPO, several active neighborhood organizations as well as residents of South Minneapolis and other interested parties.

The panel was introduced, each giving a brief overview of their role and touching on key matters currently being addressed. There were overhead charts and graphs, a very long, detailed spreadsheet tracking various actions, dates, deadlines and handouts about ELEFA’s mission. It was a bit like corporate meetings I’ve attended – lots of data and documents, insider acronyms, key phrases (empowerment, engagement) and an upbeat vibe. Implementation goals were broken down into Year 1, 2, 3 and 4. We learned that there is a serious backlog of officer conduct complaints (about 300.) Why the back up? Answer – staffing issues (turnover), dated software, etc. The backup has slowed the process of officer discipline and feedback to those in the community who filed the complaints.

Eleven bullet points were listed with respect to Year 1 goals. The list started with cleaning up the backlog (of course.) It was followed by matters involving body worn cameras, increased ability to observe officer performance, equipment and facilities updates, launching of a MN website (elefamn.org), reports, meetings, data systems updates, policies, training plans, officer wellness, etc.; a lot to unpack.

We were also introduced to the measures that will determine compliance status. That is, the type of questions that must be answered such as “Has the MPD adopted approved policies that meet the requirements of the Agreement? Have they provided approved training? Do they have sufficient personnel? Adequate financial support? Proper Facilities and equipment (such as data systems)?” We heard that the data base regarding officer misconduct needs a complete revamp. What are the results of the required community evaluation surveys (you can take the survey on ELEFA’s

website)? And so on. Regarding compliance there are 7 status options: Compliant, Partially Compliant, Partially Off-Track, At Risk, Non-compliant, Not Yet Measured and Not applicable.

The ELEFA team emphasized the importance of community input and detailed how and where to give input (website, public engagement sessions, and connection via community organizations.) They further shared that they are impressed with the active organizations in Minneapolis that have reached out to them since day one.

Questions from the community in attendance and the discussions that followed were lively. When asked point blank how things are going, we learned that “The MPD is not resistant to the Agreement and its requirements although there is a lack of trust that must be overcome. There is unlearning to do. We need to repair relationships.” We learned that the physical facilities for officers are terrible and there is a real need to improve them. And that the MPD is currently re-drafting their policies. ELEFA will review these policies before they will go up the food-chain for final approval. There is a great need for resources regarding health and wellness – especially for officers and the 911 Department. It was pointed out that fortunately mental health issues are more openly discussed and treated than in the past. A community member asked what is being done to reward officers who are cooperating with the changes. Not sure that we got a clear response. There was mention that a 600-page document is more than we can expect officers to read. Conciseness counts! There were questions about how cultural barriers are being addressed with respect to the community input processes (tech and language.) Kudos was given to the CCPO for their involvement and progress. Criticism from community members involved pointing out that the decree is short term (4 years) and that we have “Another outsider coming in who will be here a short while, is not invested in the long term and will leave and not much will change.” There were echoes of the Cedric Alexander experience; he was hired into a newly created position as the Commissioner of Public Safety, tasked with integrating 5 Minneapolis city departments, stayed a year and left (2022-23.) One outspoken community member bluntly stated, “It’s not working – and we are tired, we need visible change, boots on the ground, not more of the same.”

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How silently, how silently,  
The wondrous gift is given;  
So God imparts to human hearts  
The blessings of His heaven.

Phillips Brooks, *Christian Science Hymnal*, No. 222

**SECOND CHURCH of CHRIST,  
SCIENTIST, MINNEAPOLIS**

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7:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Child care provided.

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In December all products are 20% off.

Our hours this December are:  
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Tuesday, Friday, Saturday 10 am – 1 pm  
Wednesday 3:30 – 8:45 pm



CHURCH / READING ROOM - 1822 Hennepin Ave South • Minneapolis • [secondchurchminneapolis.com](http://secondchurchminneapolis.com)

# The Children's Press Conference

BY LUCIA W. SMITH

On a chilly Saturday morning in November, children gathered with families and colleagues in Stewart Park, across from Abbott Northwestern and Minnesota Children's Hospitals, including the Mother Baby Center, to commemorate that other "Children's Press Conference" held a year earlier, Nov. 7, 2023, outside Gaza's largest 700-bed hospital complex, Al Shifa. Within months, Al Shifa hospital was destroyed by Israel's military attacks.

The Children's Press Conference in Minneapolis was organized by local people active within HW4P (Health Workers for Palestine, Twin Cities) and FAMM (Families Against Military Madness, newest committee of WAMM - Women Against Military Madness).

A stunning display of 450 red paper poppies seemed to sprout from the ground surrounding the event speakers and their supporters. The poppy flower symbolizes the bloody war in Gaza and reflects the colors of the Palestinian flag. Closer looks at these poppies, however, revealed that each held the name, biographical information, and, often, a photograph of a healthcare worker killed in Gaza during the year-long genocide reported at [cal\\_teams. The Children's Press Conference in Minneapolis was held in the midst of a paper poppy garden of death.](http://gazahcsector.palestine-studies.org/ar/medi-</a></p>
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People were welcomed by Liz McLister, a mother of three children, a registered nurse, and FAMM co-founder. She compared and contrasted the hospital settings in the two locations - Gaza City and Minneapolis - and introduced each of the speakers.

Wolf, age 12, read the statement initially delivered a year earlier by children in Gaza:

"Since October 7th we've faced extermination, killing, bombing over our heads. All of this in front of the world. . . We came to Al Shifa to seek shelter from the bombing, but suddenly faced death again when [Israel] targeted the hospital. The Occupation is starving us. . . We come now to shout and invite you to protect us. We want to live. We want peace. We want to judge the killers of children. We want medicine, food and education. We want to live as the other children live."

Oliver, a Central High School student, presented his original statement:

". . . I wonder how many kids in the Press Conference [in Gaza] are still alive today. And the ones who are alive, how much longer will that be true? . . . A year after that press conference, those kids still don't have



what they asked for. In fact, it's gotten incredibly worse. . . We can only imagine what schools look like in Gaza after a year of bombing funded by our country. We all have a responsibility right now to figure out what to do. . . To parents: Please talk about this issue as much as you can with your families."

Salah, age 15, also delivered his original speech:

". . . for us to be standing here today means that we have failed the children of Gaza. . . We, the youth, cannot stay silent while the children are begging for help. . . We, the youth, hear Gaza. . . These children. . . are not just numbers or statistics, they are sons, daughters, brothers and sisters and friends. . . forced to live in the shadows of destruction and surround-

ed by ruins of what was once their home. . . So, to the leaders of the world, I ask you, if these were your children. . . would you still remain silent? . . . The children of Gaza need more than our pity. They need action. . . Stop the genocide, stop the bombing of kids in Gaza. We demand an arms embargo. We demand a cease-fire, and we demand peace."

Following the students' statements, Dr. Asfia Qadir, Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, spoke as a member of HW4P. She reported that, as of November 2024, there has been no acknowledgement by any major health system or medical society of this largest, most rapid extermination of children in recorded history. Now there are no fully functional hospitals in

Gaza. More than 1,000 healthcare workers have been killed and hundreds more have been detained by Israeli forces under circumstances of documented torture. Dr. Qadir outlined the demands of "Not Another Child, Not Another Hospital." Based on the ethical imperative of medical professionals and supported by thousands of healthcare workers across the U.S., it calls for a weapons embargo on Israel and reversal of the current ban on humanitarian medical aid into Gaza.

The poignant commemoration was closed by Anna Madison of FAMM, calling for action and saying there is nothing more important than the life of a child.

## Cam, from page 1

many basic city services, like most of the police and fire departments, as well as debt service, pension funds and costs for our parks, public housing and public buildings.

Increases in property taxes are a challenge for many people. Unlike income taxes, property taxes are not connected to how much money a person is making or how much wealth they have beyond the property they own. They apply to all property owners, even those who are unemployed, on a fixed pension or social security income, or have otherwise limited financial resources. There are state programs that can help, but they don't solve the problem for everyone.

So, what can we do about it? Improving property values downtown is at the top of many lists but has been costly and challenging in the past. Many of the causes, and likely solutions, to declining values may be beyond the city to control or influence.

The state's complicated and unpredictable system of local government aid is often seen as a source of relief and offers possible help.

Holding back on new funding ideas and budget cutting may also help.

"I will not be asking for any new funding and will not vote for any new funding given the proposed 8.3 percent property tax levy increase," said Rainville. "With the lack of growth in new construction and the continued drop in value of downtown build-

ings, every renter and homeowner is facing increases in property tax for years to come."

Rainville is offering 3 proposals that would, respectively, reduce the property tax levy increase by 2 percent, 1.4 percent, and 1 percent. They would cut spending equally across all departments, delay internal technology upgrades, or do both.

Across-the-board spending cuts offers some advantages. Although department heads may call out - or threaten to cut - popular programs, if approved, department heads would then be empowered to make the cuts in a way least harmful to their goals. Then the council and mayor could avoid having to find and agree on a large number of budget decisions.

"I have heard loud and clear that continually rising taxes are causing financial hardship for renters and homeowners alike," Rainville wrote in a recent newsletter on Nov. 22. "As a city, we have to tighten our belt, just as residents have had to. I will continue to speak with my colleagues on the City Council and I hope we can agree on this common sense proposal to keep money in your pocket."

A longer-term solution could be to find fairer ways to raise revenue.

"Expanding and diversifying revenue sources," wrote Ward 2 Council Member Robin Wonsley in November, "has the potential to shift the burden off of residents and increase revenue through more progressive strategies."

In November, the council approved her proposal to study

city revenue sources other than property taxes, comparing them to other cities, and explore "innovative strategies for independent revenue generation," and "policy changes that would be required at the state and local level to implement a tax on the wealthiest individuals in Minneapolis."

While currently prohibited by Minnesota state law, many states allow cities and counties to collect wage, payroll or income taxes.

As property taxes continue to put disproportionate pressure on low-income renters and homeowners, this might be a good time for cities, and the state, to reevaluate its prohibition on local level wage, income or payroll taxes.

In a 2019 study, Jared Walczak of the Tax Foundation, found that local income taxes are imposed by 4,964 local jurisdictions across 17 states, with most levied by municipalities (3,816) and school districts (954). These taxes are a long-standing and significant source of revenue for cities in many states including Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Iowa, Kentucky, and Michigan.

According to Walczak, local wage taxes can complement or replace other local revenue sources, like property, sales, business, meals, or lodging taxes.

Six states rely on income taxes for more than 10 percent of local tax collections, while the local income taxes in five states capture more than 1 percent of adjusted gross income.

In different states, local income taxes are levied on all income, earned income, or interest and dividend income. Nonresidents

are sometimes subject to a lower rate than residents, or not taxed at all. The Philadelphia City Wage Tax, for example, is a tax on earnings applied to all Philadelphia residents and all non-residents who work in the city.

Maryland's local income taxes range from 1.75 to 3.2 percent, while nonresidents pay a uniform rate of 1.75 percent. They are generally paid by the employer but withheld by the employer, although in San Francisco and Newark, they are paid directly by the employer. Kansas's 485 jurisdictions only impose their local income tax on interest and dividend income. Four West Virginia cities impose a flat charge of \$2 to \$5 per week on all those employed in the city.

Minnesota's system of "Local Government Aid (LGA)" could be another place to look. According to the city's website, in 2021, Minneapolis generated 3.5 times more in tax revenue to the state than they receive in state aid.

This revenue comes from sales, income, and property taxes and was \$74,542,064 in 2023.

One way to relieve property tax pressure might be to modify our LGA program by increasing the progressive income taxes slightly and distribute a preset and more predictable portion back to the locality where the taxes were collected.

A state-level income tax plan that returns some of its collections back to the cities in which they were collected could not only help fund needed services in a predictable and uniform way to all cities, but it could make them less dependent on regressive sales and property taxes.

As we continue to see the pressure, and even hardship, property taxes place on many city residents, being open minded about innovative alternatives could pay off.

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# Please help Save Heart of the Beast Puppet and Mask Theater

BY ED FELIEN

We just received an announcement that Heart of the Beast is planning to sell the Avalon theater property and move to an as yet undetermined new home where “the new location will be centered on learning and development by providing after school programs, camps, storytime, artist and puppeteer training, and offer a more accessible space to all participants. It will also house the puppet library, be a place for artist collaboration and idea sharing, and continue to be a space for puppet performances that have been a part of HOBT for 50 years.”

It sounds like what they want is a place in a Minneapolis Public School, and the best place (in my opinion) for them would be in the Laura Ingles Wilder complex next to Powderhorn Park, the site of their annual impromptu Mayday Festival.

Please contact School Board Members and discuss this possibility. This after-school and weekend programming for young people in our community would be a remarkable and wondrous

affirmation of cultural life in South Minneapolis.

The HOBT press release:

## Heart of the Beast is Moving!

Going Forward in a New Location and Expanding Programming:

After 36 years at The Avalon Theatre in Minneapolis, In the Heart of the Beast Puppet and Mask Theatre (HOBT) intends to move to a new location and sell the building. HOBT has always been a place that welcomes all no matter where it’s been located. From its humble beginnings inside a church basement, to existing inside a storefront building before settling into the Avalon Theatre, the organization helps nurture creative empowerment through the joy and magic of puppetry and education. Now, that legacy will continue in its new home.

“We look forward to creating and sharing collaborative spaces for artists, and comfortable, sensory-friendly spaces for anyone in the neurodivergent and disabled community,” says Elina Kotlyar, Interim Executive Director of HOBT. “As we look

for a new space, we are mindful of creating performance and engagement spaces accessible to all. That includes being near a bus line, having parking and bike racks, and a stage that can be accessed without stairs. We also plan to have a workshop space that better fits the needs of our artists and participants.”

The move from The Avalon is a strategic one as Heart of the Beast continues to expand its reach further in the Twin Cities community. Once chosen, the new location will be centered on learning and development by providing after school programs, camps, storytime, artist and puppeteer training, and offer a more accessible space to all participants. It will also house the puppet library, be a place for artist collaboration and idea sharing, and continue to be a space for puppet performances that have been a part of HOBT for 50 years. It will allow Heart of the Beast to continue its connections with artists and the community with even more programming that is currently unable to be produced with the limitations of The Avalon Theatre.

“I believe that moving not only allows us to tailor the space to our community’s needs, but it’s also a great way of letting folks know that we are here to stay and have big plans for moving forward with our fantastic programming led by our amazing community of artists and puppeteers,” says Rachel Beaver-Scott, Puppet Librarian and Storyteller. “There is so much fun to be had, and I can’t wait to welcome everyone to our bright, new, accessible space!”

Prior to a future move to its new home, Heart of the Beast will continue its slate of programming not only at the Avalon but around the community. These events are open to the public.

December:

- Puppet Library (1st and 3rd Saturday) 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- Puppet making workshops.

Join artist Jake Quatt and make dancing fish puppets at Midtown Global Market (Dec. 14) from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Join artist Spencer Arevalo and build marionettes out of recycled kitchen materials at the

Avalon Theatre (Dec. 21) from 10:30 a.m. to noon.

- Lantern building workshop series at The Avalon (Dec. 4, 6, 11, 13, 18). All are invited to come to one or more of these workshops to create their very own lantern, plus help one of our puppeteer artists make a large animal puppet lantern.
- Winter Solstice Event (Dec. 21). Bring your lantern for a procession to the Powderhorn Park lake. There will be local musicians and food during this event.
- MIA Family Day storytime (Dec. 8).
- Storytime at St. Paul Library (Dec. 14, 21, 28).

Heart of the Beast is also working with schools, centers, churches, and more in the community for private events as well:

- Mask Making residency at Arcadia Charter School.
- Storytime at St. David’s Center.
- Afterschool puppet making at Little Earth housing complex.
- Storytime at Mt. Olivet Lutheran Church.

## Xcel, from page 1

mittee has drawn comparisons between the Monticello Nuclear Plant’s environmental violations and other industrial pollution issues in Minnesota.

“These companies plan to exploit the land and its people to their breaking point, all in the name of profits,” Wildman said. “The Climate Justice Committee sees this in east side St. Paul, where we’re holding Northern Iron and Machine accountable for their heinous poisoning of the east side neighborhood.”

She further emphasized the severity of environmental abuses, noting the ongoing violations by other companies. Smith Foundry, an iron manufacturer in the East Phillips neighborhood, announced it was shutting down operations citing difficulties in applying for new permits with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. This came amid pressure from environmental activists outraged over a federal report that the factory emitted lead well above standards. A foul odor hangs over the Circulo de Amigos Child Care Center, just blocks from the foundry.

“Northern Iron has been operating in serious violation of the Clean Air Act on multiple counts, creating unsafe living conditions for the east side community.”

Wildman also criticized the practices of industries that prioritize profits over environmental and public health.

“Earlier this year, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency ordered Northern Iron to cut its hours and product output to reduce pollution,” Wildman said. “When arguing in court to be able

to continue business as usual, Northern Iron argued that adding environmental protections would be too costly for them to continue operating.”

In her remarks, Wildman made it clear that such attitudes are not unique to local factories, but extend to larger corporations like Xcel Energy, which owns the Monticello Nuclear Plant.

“They came right out and said that they believe it is correct to pollute our communities if it generates profits for the company. And what we see with Northern Iron is not some isolated issue,” Wildman said. “Monticello Nuclear Plant is no different. A major company like Xcel cannot be trusted to pay for the infrastructure changes needed to keep the plant from poisoning our beloved Mississippi River.”

The protesters rallied to demand that Xcel Energy cease operations to stop the pollution from its nuclear operations and ensure that the Mississippi River, a vital water source, is protected from further contamination.

Environmental experts have also weighed in on the situation, expressing deep concern over both the environmental and economic implications of nuclear operations. George W. Crocker, Executive Director of the North American Water Office in Lake Elmo, MN, has been particularly outspoken about the Monticello plant and Xcel Energy’s practices.

Crocker is known for his colorful and provocative commentary on corporate behavior. He used a highly charged moral analogy, drawing a comparison between Xcel Energy’s business practices and alleged sexual misconduct by former U.S. House Rep. Matt

Gaetz, who later pulled his nomination for U.S. Attorney General after CNN asked the embattled congressman about an additional allegation involving a 17-year-old. Crocker’s quote underscored his view of Xcel’s unethical behavior in stark terms: “It’s hard to know where to start with these guys. They run Xcel Energy like an addicted child molester would run the attorney general’s office.”

Crocker’s use of this analogy was intended to emphasize what he perceives as a morally bankrupt, exploitative approach by Xcel Energy, similar to the alleged misconduct in Gaetz’s actions. He views both as examples of powerful figures and organizations abusing their authority for personal gain, without regard for the harm they cause to vulnerable communities. By making this comparison, Crocker underscores the predatory nature of Xcel’s corporate practices, which he argues prioritize profits at the expense of public health and environmental protection.

Crocker continued by pointing out the company’s incentives to pollute in ways that accelerate climate change, arguing that Xcel Energy’s business model thrives on pollution: “For example, Xcel Energy makes more money when it makes more pollution that is accelerating climate chaos.”

He also accused the company of neglecting the necessary infrastructure to support local communities, instead prioritizing costly and inefficient power lines that benefit corporate interests: “They neglect lower transmission infrastructure and build the biggest, most expensive power lines first and get the public to pay for it,” Crocker said. “Because that

way Xcel and its valves and industry partners get to preserve their precious market share. They get to continue extracting wealth produced by the community for their own private corporate office.”

Crocker argued that a focus on local renewable energy solutions would be far more beneficial for both the economy and the environment, stressing the need for a shift in priorities: “But it would be so much, so much cheaper, far more beneficial for local economies to acquire transmission infrastructure that serves local communities with locally produced renewable energy,” Crocker said.

Crocker also expressed concern over the continued operation of the Monticello Nuclear Plant, particularly as Xcel Energy plans to extend its nuclear operations until 2050: “We’re here today because Xcel Energy wants to continue nuclear operations until 2050. And that is a really bad idea for a long list of reasons,” Crocker said.

He highlighted the dangers posed by the plant’s aging infrastructure and the ongoing environmental failures, referencing the serious issues with the plant’s operations: “There is failure like what’s been going on now, after the place corroded into pieces and almost a million gallons of radioactive tritium leaked into the environment,” Crocker said.

The Monticello Nuclear Plant doesn’t seem concerned with public trust or environmental standards amid lax regulatory efforts by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC).

The area surrounding the plant is home to several threatened and

endangered species, including some that are federally listed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. According to the latest environmental report from the NRC, three species in the region are classified as endangered, threatened, or candidates for federal listing. Two of these species are aquatic, and all are vulnerable to the plant’s potential environmental risks, particularly tritium contamination.

The following species are of particular concern:

**Eastern Spotted Skunk:** A state-listed threatened mammal, the eastern spotted skunk (also known as the civet cat) has experienced a rapid population decline, with only a few sightings recorded in Minnesota in recent decades. Although no occurrences of the eastern spotted skunk have been reported on or near the Monticello site, riparian woodlands and brush habitats on the site could provide suitable habitats for the species.

**Blanding’s Turtle:** A state-listed threatened species, the Blanding’s turtle is found in the Mississippi River and surrounding wetlands, which are located on or near the Monticello site. The NRC’s report indicates that there have been 20 observed instances of Blanding’s turtles within a 6-mile radius of the plant.

**Rock Sandwort:** This state-listed threatened plant species has been observed in the vicinity of the Monticello site. The rock sandwort typically grows in dry, sparsely vegetated sites such as the shallow cracks and crevices of sedimentary rock outcrops, which could be present on the Monticello site.



# What's next?

BY ED FELIEN

Next year, the city of Minneapolis will elect a mayor and a city council to four-year terms.

We understand Omar Fateh, Emily Koski and DeWayne Davis are challenging incumbent Mayor Jacob Frey. We sent Koski this questionnaire, but she did not respond by press time. We did not know Fateh was running until past our deadline. We will offer all candidates an opportunity to respond to our six questions in our January edition.

Here are the responses to our questionnaire from DeWayne Davis:

*Why are you running for Mayor?*

A: We need leadership that treats everyone with dignity; a city where everyone has the opportunity to earn a living wage; and a community where we can

all walk all the streets of Minneapolis safely and securely.

*What has Frey done wrong?*

A: We need leadership that responds to the needs of all of our community members. Leaving anyone behind is unacceptable. Each of us must step up if we want all of our neighbors to share in the prosperity our city has to offer.

*What will you do differently?*

A: Our values are shaped by our life experiences. As a pastor, I have been organizing and advocating for a range of social justice issues long before my decision to run for office. I will work to center anti-poverty policies and advocacy in my approach to governance.

*What is your solution to the homeless problem?*

A: Homelessness is a symptom of poverty and a lack of affordable housing. Encampments reflect a specific failure of our social safety net to be accessible, culturally responsive, and adequately funded. Real solutions require meaningful partnerships across jurisdictions and collaboration between many partners.

*Should the city re-examine the Terrance Franklin killing by the MPD? (southsidepride.com/2020/03/02/justice-for-terrance-franklin/)*

A: There is a long list of failures that led to Terrance Franklin's death. However, the city is not the appropriate party to investigate the conduct of MPD officers in that case. I would support an independent review of the case by the Minnesota BCA.

*Does the city have responsibility*



DeWayne Davis

*for removing sand from Lake Hiawatha that was dumped on city streets in the winter and has flowed through storm sewers into the lake and reduced the depth from 33 feet to a sandbar in spots?*

A: Lake Hiawatha has been a popular recreation destination

for decades and we need to make sure it stays that way for future generations. I will work closely with neighborhood leaders, Park Board Commissioners, and the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District to ensure the long-term health and safety of Lake Hiawatha.

# Southside Summit: "One South"

BY KAY SCHROVEN

The 2024 Southside Summit kicked off on Friday evening, Nov. 8, at the historic, renovated Coliseum building (E. Lake St.) A crowd of about 100 gathered over a delectable buffet provided by Baba's Hummus House and Mana'eesh Bakery. Many of the attendees are, have been or want to be involved in improving and revitalizing Southside neighborhoods. The opening social hour was an opportunity to meet and mingle; revisit friends, partners, neighbors, and colleagues.

Tabitha Montgomery, Executive Director of the Powderhorn Neighborhood Assoc. (PHNA) opened the Summit with an inspiring introduction and led us through the evening's event. While she did not directly address the recent reelection of Donald John Trump, attendees were perfectly capable of reading between the lines. She spoke about "Getting Up," starting with the description of a child falling off their bike and surely someone dishing the sage advice "Get UP!" She followed this with descriptions of various scenarios where one might fall or lose ground and the only solution is to get up and keep going, to keep the faith. (Translation: do not accept defeat.) Clearly Montgomery's message and the message of the Summit were about unification, not divisiveness.

Joe Davis (writer, speaker, poet,) followed Montgomery with additional encouraging words. He travels near & far speaking with folks about health & wellness. He is the founder and Director of Finding

Your Freedom Practice. (JoeDavispoetry.com)

This year's focus was on "One South," (Is this a take on Bob Marley's "One Love"?) all about the unification of the Southside neighborhoods and an emerging initiative by seven neighborhood organizations. The goal of One South is to unlock collaboration amongst these organizations and associations to create a stronger, community centered unit with more resources and bargaining power.

Montgomery introduced a panel of four representatives - all with impressive experience and histories in our neighborhoods:

Alicia D. Crudup, Executive Director (E.D.), Kids in Kinship Rachel Boeke, E.D. for LEAD MN (Former E.D. for Longfellow Community Council)

Brandon Long, E.D., Nokomis East Neighborhood Assoc. (NENA)

Eric Gustafson, Corcoran Neighborhood Assoc. (12 years)

Montgomery posed questions to the panel: the day-to-day issues they face, why they engage in this type of work, and what their challenges are. We heard about the challenges representing diverse populations with varied interests and the variety of issues our communities face. There were discussions about change, how inevitable it is and how many resist it. Yet, because

it is inevitable we would be wise to participate in what the changes will be. That is, influence decision makers.

The issues are far reaching as any urbanite knows; affordable housing, lack of resources, low wages, land stewardship, etc. Much of the work is and will be relational (vs. transactional.) There seemed to be an understanding amongst attendees that communities need to care for themselves, with low expectations that the city will aid and assist with neighborhood issues, such as air quality. The example given was the Roof Depot site, where an extension of one year for raising needed funds has finally been granted after a long, arduous battle between the East Phillips Community and the city. If the funds can successfully be raised an urban farm is planned for the site.

One South is a grass roots effort where the movers and shakers are wearing many hats, giving of their time and skills and now reaching out to expand their circle of influence. A story was shared about one of the organizations getting a call in which they were asked "Who is your I.T. person?" There was laughter in the room. Why? Because most seemed to understand that an I.T. person is a luxury. In the grass roots, neighborhood assoc. and not-for-profit world "You just figure

it out." You might be the janitor, human resource rep, administrator and tech expert all rolled into one. You develop a wide range of skills. This is one of the pluses of doing this type of work. But too often these multi-talented individuals are lost due to low wages, creating high-turnover and instability.

In closing there was a call to action for residents of the South neighborhoods to get involved, to contribute their (sometimes hidden) talents. Community

leaders spoke: "We need market and legal support. Home is bigger than your living room, it is your neighborhood, your children and grandchildren's place - so what do we want it to be? If we do not shape it, someone else will."

This event was organized by PPNA and sponsored by SENA, Corcoran Neighborhood Assoc. and the Longfellow Community Council.

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# The Fear of Deportation

BY JONAH SEDELMEIER

The Trump administration's deportation plan has sparked significant concern for Latinos across the United States. In South Minneapolis, a community known for our vibrant and diverse population, the potential implications of this policy are profound.

The Trump "Enhancing Public Safety in the Interior of the United States" executive order, aims to increase the number of deportations of undocumented immigrants.

For the undocumented Latinos living in South Minneapolis,

the deportation plan represents a significant threat. South Minneapolis has a large and diverse Latino population, including many of whom are undocumented. They contribute to the city's economy and culture in numerous ways, from running small businesses to participating in community organizations. The fear of deportation has already begun to affect daily life for many Latinos in the city.

When Trump's victory was announced on Wednesday, Nov. 6th, Ma Elena Gutierrez, executive director of Fe y Justicia, had already been receiving numerous calls from immigrants who were concerned about being deported and wanted guidance on what to do next. On Nov. 6th, in the Cedar-Riverside neighborhood, hundreds of people participated in a protest to promote their disapproval of anti-immigrant rhetoric and policies.

In response to the deportation plan, many community organizations and advocacy groups in Minneapolis have mobilized to provide support and resources for undocumented Latinos. These organizations offer legal assistance, know-your-rights workshops and emergen-

cy planning for families at risk of separation. They also work to raise awareness about the contributions of undocumented immigrants and advocate for more humane immigration policies.

One of the most immediate impacts of the deportation plan is the heightened sense of fear and uncertainty among undocumented Latinos. Many may end up being afraid to go about their daily routines, such as going to work, taking their children to school, or even seeking medical care, for fear of being detained by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents. This fear could lead to social isolation and a reluctance to engage with community resources, ultimately harming the overall well-being of individuals, families and the community as a whole.

The deportation plan also has significant economic implications for South Minneapolis. Undocumented immigrants are an integral part of the local economy, working in various industries such as construction, hospitality, and agriculture. The

removal of these workers could lead to labor shortages and increased costs for businesses, potentially slowing economic growth.

Road construction may end up taking longer to be completed, causing an increase in traffic. Infrastructure may not be as maintained. There could be a shortage of available agricultural products. Additionally, the loss of income for deported individuals and their families can lead to increased poverty and reliance on social services.

Beyond the economic impact, the deportation plan threatens to tear apart families and disrupt the social fabric of the Latino community. Many undocumented immigrants have lived in South Minneapolis for years, building lives and raising children who are U.S. citizens. The deportation of a parent can have devastating effects on children, leading to emotional trauma, financial instability, and difficulties in education. The separation of families undermines the stability and cohesion of the community, creating

long-term social challenges.

Local government officials in Minneapolis have also taken steps to resist the deportation plan. The city has declared itself a "sanctuary city," meaning that local law enforcement will not cooperate with ICE in detaining individuals solely based on their immigration status. This policy aims to protect undocumented residents and maintain trust between the community and law enforcement. However, the federal government has threatened to withhold funding from sanctuary cities, creating additional challenges for local officials.

While community organizations and local officials are working to provide support and resist the policy, the potential for widespread deportations and family separations remains a critical issue. The long-term impact of the deportation plan on Minneapolis's Latino community will depend on the ongoing efforts of advocates, policymakers, and the community itself to navigate these challenging times.



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# There is one Narcan Vending Machine, at a Fire Station in South Minneapolis

BY JILLIAN KRINSKY

In a state where opioid-involved drug overdose deaths have more than quintupled in the last decade, a hero comes to the forefront: Narcan. Naloxone, which is commonly known by Narcan, is an anti-overdose medication that reverses the effects of an overdose. While primarily given through a nasal spray, you can also inject it via muscle or vein.

There is one Narcan vending machine in South Minneapolis: 3209 E. 38th St. This Narcan vending machine, which was unveiled this past summer by Mayor Jacob Frey, can be a way for those who do not want to call 911 or other services to stop an opioid overdose from happening. But Minneapolis needs to step up... and install more vending machines to ensure all Minnesotans, especially Minneapolis residents, get a second chance after an overdose.

If you cannot afford Narcan and don't live near support services or the singular vending machine - how will you get help? Luckily, policy in Minnesota helps contribute to protection from persecution. Minnesota is home to a Good Samaritan Law, which protects someone who administers naloxone and "Calls 911 in good

faith from prosecution, even if they are using drugs when the overdose occurs".

Calling 911 can even let somebody struggling from an overdose get timely medical attention, thus saving their life. However, one vending machine is insufficient in a city/state where the opioid crisis affects communities differently.

Incidence of effects on the opioid crisis (nonfatal overdose, death) is asymmetrical among demographic groups. Native Americans residing in Minnesota are ten times as likely to die from a drug overdose than white Minnesotans. Mille Lacs County, home to the Native Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe, had the highest drug overdose rate from 2016-2019 at 27.9 people per 100,000 people. This asymmetry is also preserved through racial lines - African American folk are three times more likely to die from a drug overdose than white Minnesotans.

Being an opioid user also carries immense stigma that can be a barrier to mental and physical health care, understanding, and even relationships with friends and family. Ignoring the problem will only make it worse. I strongly believe the more we talk about the extremely high rates of overdose, the more we will be able to prevent a new

generation of Americans from suffering at the hands of opioid overdoses. Even if it does not affect you, it could be someone you know.

So why is it that these vending machines haven't taken off?

People are scared that once you get Narcan, all hope is lost. You won't recover, and keep utilizing welfare, tax dollars, or police and firefighter resources. Yet putting Narcan in schools in Minnesota has taken off in 2023, and more and more organizations have supported the fight for Narcan. Grassroots organizations and movements such as Students for Sensible Drug Policy (SSDP) and The Steve Rummeler HOPE Network know that Narcan is critical for everybody to know about.

When Minnesota benefitted from the \$26 billion multi-state lawsuit against opioid companies, there was more money to combat this opioid crisis; harm reduction methods, prevention, and especially Narcan vending machines. More machines combined with these methods are a clear way to support those struggling. With the money Minnesota has gotten, and will continue to get with state initiatives, more free resources should be available to residents.



# HAPPY HOLIDAYS

## The Lighter Side of Darkness

BY DEBERRA KEEFER RAMAGE

**Why I just could not write another dark and serious holiday article this year**

I reviewed the ten holiday pieces I have written for Southside Pride's December issues since 2014. This

year will be number eleven. Around about 2020, the tone of my writings got darker, and I was writing about things like how many people die on various holidays, and the literary treatments of the collision between holidays and times of war. Prior to that, many of the pieces reflected

my ongoing obsession with history trivia, and cultural exploration, especially weird or unexpected facts, and lesser-known cultures.

But this year, things over-all are too dark. I just need to lean into something less depressing than death and war. I get enough of that in my work life. (Yes, I am retired, but I'm also trying to save the gosh darned world here, OK?) The focus on darkness was partly because that's what midwinter is - dark. As are Christmas, Hanukkah, Solstice, Yule, and all the other light-beseeking festivals. But this year, I just have to focus on the lighter side of darkness, and I'll bet you will also appreciate that, constant reader.

What is the lighter side of darkness? I'm glad you asked that. It's humor. I am remind-



Sir Ian McKellen as panto dame in Mother Goose

ed of the famous quote from the American stage actor Edmund Gwenn: "Dying is easy. Comedy is hard."

Comedy snickers in the face of death. Humor is the clown sidekick that comes with the scary ghost or monster. It's the master being made to wait on his servants in the old Ro-

man Saturnalia. It's the comic relief in the most profound tragedies of Shakespeare. It's fat old British men dressed up as "dames" in the moral fairy tales of the pantomime tradition. To relieve your mind in this stressful time, I offer you

See *Holidays*, page 12

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# HAPPY HOLIDAYS

## Holidays, from page 11

a selection of funny books, funny films, funny songs, funny music, and weird feasts, suitable for Christmas or any midwinter holiday.

## Weird and funny foods

I'm kicking this section off

with a Keefer family holiday tradition – Strawberry Skillet Cookies. The only thing weird about these confections, apart from their rather kitschy appearance, is that they contain no strawberry anything and are not in fact cookies. They are made in a skillet though. They are basically deliciously moreish date balls thinly dis-



KFC Christmas dinner in Japan

guised as strawberries. They make a great Christmas sweet snack due to their festive appearance, being rolled in red crystal sugar and topped with a green icing leaf. Recipes can

be found on the internet.

Most of the weird and funny Christmas foods are only weird and funny if you're not of the culture that produced them. Not wanting to make

a big fuss about what other people eat, lest they do the same to me, I'll just list some interesting holiday foods I have dug up:

Lutefisk (Scandinavian) – needs no explanation in this state, not JUST for Christmas.

Carp for Christmas Eve (Poland and other Eastern European countries) – the interesting thing is that they are bought live and kept in the bathtub until Christmas Eve so they're fresh (see picture.)

Kentucky Fried Chicken for Christmas dinner (Japan) – this tradition developed from when KFC decided to take advantage of a severe shortage of turkey in Japan and it just sorta caught on.



Strawberry Skillet Cookies

Lampreia de Ovos (Portugal) – a sort of half-cake, half-candy thing made with 50 egg yolks and a half ton of sugar, in the shape of the favorite fish of Portugal, the lamprey. You'll have to Google it to believe it.

The Brits think our eggnog is weird. We say the same for their flaming Christmas pudding, which doesn't look like pudding at all to us, does it? More like a brandy-soaked cake. Speaking of which ...

Fruitcake – controversial on both sides of the pond, yet it persists.

Brussels sprouts – same deal.

## Funny holiday movies and television

Christmas movies fall into three categories, for the most part. Listing them in descending order of numbers:

Rom-coms, dysfunctional family dramedy, redemptive tragicomedy.

Flat out comedy, often of the farce variety, usually aimed at and featuring kids (includes animated features.)

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# HAPPY HOLIDAYS

cent development in the Christmas tradition.

There isn't a lot of comedy in the last category. But this is a low-key way to get some holiday cheer, faster than reading, easier than cooking, cheaper than a concert.

Here is a list of the best, according to Real Critics on the Internet:

It's A Wonderful Life (this had some haters too, but I'm ignoring them because I like it)

Scrooged  
Nightmare Before Christmas

Home Alone  
Muppet Christmas Carol

In the UK, there is a tradition of having a Christmas fundraising extravaganza on the Beeb called Red Nose Day. Prominent comedians usually host it (Lenny Henry has been the MC for over a decade) and blockbuster acts are parodied by the best and brightest comedians. You can usually find segments of this on YouTube, if not full programs. Here is the promo for 2023, where Lenny Henry "regenerated" into David Tennant. [youtu.be/N6lfnMV4i2U](https://youtu.be/N6lfnMV4i2U)

### Funny books and stories

Although ancient traditional solstice stories and Yule legends may have contained "funny bits," we often have trouble telling what is funny and what is serious in the world of these lost civilizations. (Like apparently giant cats that eat children were considered hilarious?) But in the modern world, dominated by capitalism and barreling toward its own extinction, there is a rich vein of humor based on deriding the very commercialism that we largely embrace in our celebrations. A good example of this can be found in the now-classic tale by David Sedaris, "The Santaland Diaries."

The story has had several forms and iterations. First it was a short essay that Sedaris read on NPR's Morning Edition on Dec. 23, 1992. It was a big hit and provided Sedaris with his first major break. Four years later he read a now greatly expanded version on the long-running radio show (now a podcast, I believe) "This American Life" (TAL). In 1997, it was published in an anthology of Sedaris's work



Marking the start of the Roman festival with "Io, Saturnalia!"

called "Holidays on Ice." From Wikipedia: In 1996, Joe Mantello adapted Sedaris' essay for the stage as a one-man, one-act play, which debuted (as The Santaland Diaries) at

the Atlantic Theater Company in New York City on Nov. 7, 1996. Timothy Olyphant originated the role. Mantello's adaptation has since become a seasonal staple of regional,

college, and high-school theatre.

The TAL show that featured the longer version also contained a similar tale from another David, the late David Rakoff's "Christmas Freud." An upscale department store I have never heard of, for some reason dedicated all their Christmas display win-

dows to a weird selection of famous people with a tenuous (or non-existent) relationship with Christmas. One of them was Sigmund Freud, who was featured live action (if you call reading and writing action) by Rakoff. Here is a sample quote from his

See *Holidays*, page 14

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# HAPPY HOLIDAYS

**Holidays, from page 13**

bizarre tale: In department stores across America, people leave display window couches sniffingly and meaningfully whispering, “Thank you, Christmas Freud,” shaking his hand fervently, their holiday angst, if not dispelled, at least brought into starker relief. Christmas Freud on the cover

of Cigar Aficionado magazine. Christmas Freud on Friends. People grumbling that – here it is, not even Thanksgiving, and already stores are running ads with Christmas Freud’s face asking the question, “What do women want for Christmas?”

Both of these stories reminded me of a much older story. It may not be exactly a



“Muppet Christmas Carol” with Michael Caine

Christmas story but it’s still the same idea. That would be Shirley Jackson’s 1941 (and very daring for its time, I imagine) “My Life with R. H. Macy.” Similarly to Sedaris’s experience, the narrator of

this tale is hired as a clerk at Macy’s and is totally bemused and overwhelmed by its Byzantine bureaucracy and brisk but ineffective training methods.

As for books, there are al-

most too many to even get into it. Every November, a large list of new books – cozy mysteries, too-sweet romances, young-adult novels, and general funny sagas, all with holiday themes – are published. Most are forgotten by the next year, but now and then one sticks. I’ll just mention two. The first is the 20th Discworld novel and 1997 British Fantasy Award nominee, Hogfather, by the late Terry Pratchett. This rollicking tale has a group of evil “celestial bureaucrats,” an Assassin’s Guild, a Tooth Fairy who can control the minds of children through their hoarded missing teeth, and Bilious, the “Oh God” of hangovers.

The other one I just discov-

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Right: Victor Borge at his villa



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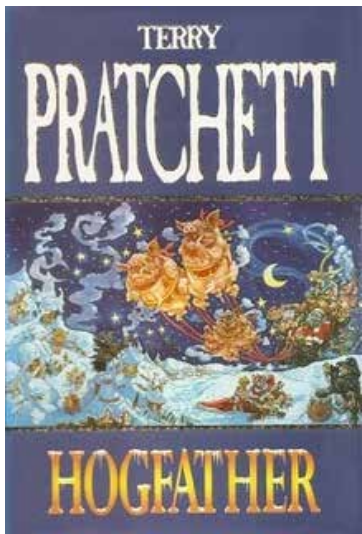
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# HAPPY HOLIDAYS

ered and have not read yet, but I must, because I love the author. "You Better Not Cry" is the holiday book from mem-



The cover for "Hogfather" by Terry Pratchett

oirist, humorist, and recovery writer Augusten Burroughs, best known for "Running with Scissors." The stories in this collection move from messed up childhood (his main wheel-house) to mining the comedy in the redemptive tragedies of adult life. In case you're not familiar with Burroughs, this might give you a taste: You've eaten too much candy at Christmas ... but have you ever eaten the face off a six-foot stuffed Santa? You've seen gingerbread houses ... but have you ever made your own gingerbread tenement? You've woken up with a hang-over ... but have you ever woken up next to Kris Kringle himself? Augusten Burroughs has.

### Funny songs and music

My friend Howard Kranz, a very local guy, is one of the most underappreciated, brilliant songwriters in the world, in my opinion. Several of his perennial favorites are Christmas-related, and the one that is especially a great hit with the kids, yet sly enough to get a laugh from the grown-ups too, is called simply "Santa Claus." It's in my top three favorite Christmas songs, along with Shane McGowan's "Fairytale of New York" and Bruce Cockburn's "Cry of a Tiny Babe." You can hear the whole thing on Howard's YouTube channel at [youtu.be/kc7fj2qaxx8](http://youtu.be/kc7fj2qaxx8).

"Get in on that giveaway, hey, come pa rum pum pum

pum,

Gets you anything you say, just don't ask where it comes from.

Makes a list, checks it twice, guess you'd better pay his price.

He's the one that cuts your slice, Santa Santa Claus."

In case you haven't caught

on yet, my personal tastes, especially in humor, tend toward the sharp, the bitter, and the dark. There are also funny Hanukkah songs out there, but one of the funniest holiday songs, a religion crossover I guess you could say, is Sarah Silverman's music video, "Give the Jew Girl

Toys" from her 2006 album Jesus is Magic, with Zach Galifianakis as Santa. Catch it on YouTube.

A great year-round tradition started in the 1940s, soon after a Danish Jewish pianist

and comedian named Børge Rosenbaum arrived in the US. He changed his name to Victor Borge, learned English and started performing his unique

See *Holidays*, page 16



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# HAPPY HOLIDAYS

Holidays, from page 15

YouTube for many selections of the genius of Victor Borge, who passed away in 2000 at the age of 91 but performed well into his last year of life.

A contemporary musician/comedian that many have compared to Victor Borge is

blend of classical music performance and physical (and musical) comedy. Borge had a very popular show on NBC radio starting in 1946 and going on for five years. Check out



"Scrooged" featuring Bill Murray (left) and Carol Kane

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the British performer Rainer Hersch. He was born in 1962, and like Borge, combined classical music training with a natural propensity for weird and witty comedy. From Wikipedia: In 1996, Rainer wrote

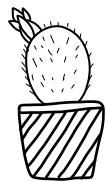


Carp for Christmas Eve

and presented his stand-up show All Classical Music Explained (ACME) at Edinburgh Festival Fringe, one of thirteen such Edinburgh appearances. Billed as "a simple and stupid guide to questions like 'why is organ music so boring?'; 'what does a conductor actually do?' and 'how to clap in the wrong place and mean it'" ACME has since been performed over 300 times in four continents.

My last funny song is from a performer who is a personal favorite of mine, Childish Gambino, aka Donald Glover. It comes from the hit comedy TV show Community. It's called "Christmas Infiltration," subtitled Troy and Abed's Christmas Rap. This can also be found on YouTube: [youtu.be/p\\_kdNBUoZE](https://youtu.be/p_kdNBUoZE)

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## Southside Pride / NEIGHBORHOOD EDITION

### EVENTS

#### The Seward Frolic & Holiday Art Market

**Dec. 7, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.**  
**Seward Neighborhood, Mpls**  
 Step into holiday enchantment as the Seward Frolic & Holiday Art Market invites you to the heart of Minneapolis' cherished and historic Seward Neighborhood nestled near the University of Minnesota campus. Organized by Seward Civic and Commerce Association, Seward Neighborhood Group, Vine Arts Center, and Redesign, the event will feature special sales and events at local businesses, along with a Holiday Art Market showcasing local artists and artisans at Matthews Park Recreation Center (2318 29th Ave. S) Vine Arts Center (2637 27th Ave S) and Northern Clay Center (2424 E Franklin Ave). To conclude the event, attendees are invited to frolic at the Wrap Party, 5 to 9 p.m. at the Eagles Airie No. 34 (2507 E. 25th St) with free tacos and cajun dance music by the New Riverside Ramblers. Families Are Welcome and Admission is FREE! [sewardbusiness.org](http://sewardbusiness.org)

#### From Heart to Hand: Celebrating Indigenous Arts & Crafts Market

**Dec. 7 and 8, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.**  
**American Indian Center**  
**1530 East Franklin Ave. S.**  
 Join us for an evening of Indigenous art, music, and community! The newly renovated MPLS American Indian Center is hosting an event to celebrate Native American Heritage Month. Enjoy traditional Native American art, music, and dance performances, and browse the work of local Indigenous

#### Sharing Food from page 18

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**Dec. 7 and 8, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.**  
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#### Queer Holiday Market

**Dec. 11, 5 to 9 p.m.**  
**Roxy's Cabaret**  
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 John Denver, the late Grammy® Award-winning singer-songwriter, is featured in a multimedia tribute concert that combines archival video footage with a live performance of the Minnesota Orchestra and former bandmates. Denver's first wife was Annie Martell (subject of Annie's Song) was from St. Peter, Minnesota, and the two lived together in Edina from 1968-71 before moving to Aspen, Colorado.

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# The Last Dish of the Year - Openings, Closings, News and Views and two Mini-reviews

BY DEBRA KEEFER RAMAGE

## Openings and closings

Some openings of note: I don't know if this is something we didn't know how much we needed or not, but a new place called L2 Tii Cup has opened in Uptown (27th and Hennepin) and they sell Boba cocktails and Taiwanese street food. I don't know what either of those are, but I am game to find out. Also, Aster Cafe has now got a sister restaurant two blocks away called Aster House.

Two new places, not related otherwise, have opened in that Edina-meets-Linden Hills area around 50th and France. One is a new Daniel del Prado spot, an



Lynette at Happy Hour

upscale sports bar called Dexter's. The other is a pizza place from the team behind Mr. Paul's Supper Club - Mothership Pizza Paradise. Definitely in Linden Hills is yet another new burger place. Opened by Bachelor Farmer vets and locally sourced burger experts Jonathan Gans and Josh Hoyt, Le Burger 4304 answers the question "what if you had a place with great burgers, only kind of French?" Also, top of the menu: SUB VEGETARIAN PATTY FOR ANY BURGER +o. (You love to see it.) It's in the former Zumbro Cafe spot.

Stephanie March in Mpls. St.Paul magazine is following the progress toward opening of a Saturday Dumpling Co. brick-and-mortar (they are currently catering) in NE Minneapolis. The latest was in the December issue and mentioned that they will miss their planned opening but only by a couple of weeks. Look for it

MPD, from page 6

## Culture Change

"Culture often trumps policy" said attorney Ben Crump as this consent decree was launched. And it seems this is at the crux of the matter. It is said that culture lives in the unconscious; changing it is not a fast or simple task. The ELEFA team acknowledged that the real task here is culture change and while they can help launch it, it is up to local powers-that-be and the community to sustain it. We know that the wheels of justice turn slowly - and culture change? Maybe even slower - like watching grass grow or paint dry.

Experts agree that - with respect to culture change - basic steps must be taken, such as creating a new and clear mission, developing practices in support

where Glam Doll used to be.

For closings, I have only one. Hi! Flora, the space that sold vegan food, functional teas and NA cocktails, including THC extracts, is closing (or has closed) in early December. A major reason was the whopping fine they got from the Office of Cannabis Management, which also halted their onsite sales of THC tincture with meals and drinks. Owner Heather Klein is exploring a new direction, but not at the pricey corner of Lyndale and 26th.

## New foodie magazine, big story

A new magazine about food with the cryptic name synonym (all lower case) has dropped. Its inaugural issue absorbed me, especially this article about a Seattle based Somali American chef and author, Ifrah Ahmed, who is doing big news pop-ups under the title Milk & Myrrh. Her food stylings feature Somali tastes and ingredients, with American twists and local ingredient substitutes.

I cannot afford a subscription right now, but look forward to future issues of synonym, and to the "coming soon" Marketplace section of Ahmed's website. Read the interview with Ahmed here: synonym-mag.com/eat-drink-and-be-myrrhy.

## Other food news

The May Day Cafe crowdfunding to help the workers buy it and turn it into a cooperative proceeds apace. Last time I looked they were at about 75 percent of goal with close to \$100K. You can be part of this by donating here: givebutter.com/maydaycafe.

Bichota Coffee workers have joined Unite Here local 17 after the owner proactively signed a labor peace agreement prior to opening the coffee shop at George Floyd Square. Give this coffee shop some love for showing the way.

Ben & Jerry's relationship with

of the mission, developing strong leaders and employees, and implementing a method for continuous improvement. ELEFA appears to be taking this approach with focus on policy development in year 1. This is to be the foundation upon which all else is constructed. It would be ideal if the ELEFA team was focused solely on Minneapolis, but this is not the case. On the plus side they bring experience that may benefit Minneapolis and the MPD, having worked with other cities and counties who surely have similar challenges.

In closing, the team stressed the need for community involvement, inviting those so inclined to connect with them. ELEFA is required to report updates every 4 months and produce 2 reports annually. Next community sessions will be in March 2025. Watch for dates (TBD) and details.



Gatherings squash soup and quiche

its adopted parent company Unilever has been rocky and is reaching a breaking point over support for Palestine solidarity. (Unilever acquired the ice cream brand in 2000, with a deal that gave Ben & Jerry's a supposedly independent board and free rein to continue its social mission.) From Reuters: A rift first erupted between Ben & Jerry's and Unilever in 2021 after the ice cream maker said it would stop selling its products in the Israeli-occupied West Bank because

2022, ... but Ben & Jerry's says Unilever has breached the terms of the 2022 settlement... According to the lawsuit, "Ben & Jerry's has on four occasions attempted to publicly speak out in support of peace and human rights. Unilever has silenced each of these efforts."

## Mini-review #1 - Lynette at Happy Hour

I visited Lynette, the new place

it was inconsistent with its values... The ice cream maker then sued Unilever for selling its business in Israel to its licensee there, which allowed marketing in the West Bank and Israel to continue. That lawsuit was settled in

in the old Riverview Wine Bar spot, in late October at Happy Hour. I had a rare (for me) glass of rose wine, which was delicious. I had the duck fat fries with Bearnaise sauce and a roasted broccoli plate. It made a perfect late lunch with ample leftovers to take home, for just over \$30, including the generous wine serving.

## Mini-review #2 - Gatherings Café for Native American Heritage month

I visited Gatherings Cafe in late November for lunch. I loved the ambience, the selection, the prices, and the friendliness of the service. I had a Headwaters sparkling water with real blueberry juice and chaga mushroom extract to drink, along with a slice of quiche and a fabulous, thick and custardy, spicy and warm squash bisque. I will be back.

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# How To Be Well – Following Native Pathways

BY DEBRA KEEFER RAMAGE

## Look to indigenous ways

Although you will be reading this in December, or later, I wrote it in November, which is American Indian Heritage Month. I thought for that reason, plus the fact that the past few years has seen a great increase in availability of both knowledge and products sourced by Native people and organizations, that I

would focus on local and indigenous ideas and products in the health and beauty sphere.

Minnesota is a great place to find resources for winter wellness. Native nations located here – the Lakota and the Ojibwe primarily – are working diligently to preserve their traditions for food, shelter, health care, stories, and language, among other things. This is mainly for their own physical and cultural survival, but they are happy to share

wellness resources and knowledge about growing food, foraging, herbalism, and other wisdom around

corn and corn products, coffee, chocolate, maple syrup, honey, jams and sauces made from native ber-

white ones, which are so creamy and subtly flavored.

## More local Native American sources

Lakota Made is a small business in Mankato founded and operated by Megan Schnitker. They sell a huge and ever-growing array of products, all produced by Schnitker and her small workforce, all based on traditional herbal knowledge she got directly from her extended family. The herbal products range from teas to brew and drink, tinctures, tonics, salves, balms, bath teas, and more. There are personal care and beauty products, dish soaps, various accessories such as for brewing tea or for your skin care routine, and then just a few items not made by Schnitker but by other relatives – star quilts and traditional jewelry. Sahan Journal wrote a piece about her and her business in 2022: [tinyurl.com/DKRatSSP-LakotaMade](https://tinyurl.com/DKRatSSP-LakotaMade).

Another Minnesota-based enterprise is Anahata Herbals in Duluth ([anahataherbals.com](https://anahataherbals.com).) Although Anahata does not claim to be Native owned, it is a supplier for Owamni and IFL, as they source many of their local products from indigenous suppliers. Anahata describes itself as “Minnesota Northland’s



Lakota Made’s Megan Schnitker

keeping body and mind healthy all year round.

## Our resident experts - NATIFS

One of the most notable and far-reaching resources in the country is right here in Minneapolis. The Indigenous Food Lab (IFL) at the Midtown Global Market, and NATIFS, the nonprofit behind it, were co-founded by Sean Sherman, “the Sioux Chef,” most famous for his award-winning restaurant, also in Minneapolis, Owamni.

The IFL’s Marketplace sells indigenous pantry items such as dried tepary beans, frozen game and wild-caught fish, wild rice, nixtamalized

ries and fruits, and more. They also sell herbal tea blends, tinctures and extracts, and things enriched with herbs and mushrooms. And non-food items, such as herbal soaps, balms, and oils. Everything in the Marketplace is produced by indigenous people, with most of it sourced from the heartland of North America.

The IFL Marketplace also sells prepared food and drink to take home or consume onsite. What I have done is to try out a new food or combination, then go back to the marketplace and buy the ingredients to take home and cook for myself. That was how I became a major fan of tepary beans, especially the



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They also have online sales and shipping, so you don’t have to make a trip to Duluth to sample their wares. In addition to a large selection of herbal products, they sell wild rice (wild harvested in northern Minnesota and wood-parched), chaga (a medicinal fungus), and a proprietary hot sauce called Hot Love Pepper Sauce, containing garlic scapes and habanero peppers. (Many people consider a good natural hot sauce to be essential winter wellness supplies for your kitchen.)

## Farther afield...

Another supplier of herbal health products that claims to be Native American owned – but is online



# Winter Wellness

only with no physical address, so kind of hard to verify – is Native Botanicals. I am including them because they have one unique product that I might want to get myself this winter. You may know about the practice of smudging, a practice good for both physical health and mental health. But some people, like me, are so sensitive to smoke of any kind that they may lose some of the benefits of smudging due to allergic reactions. Other people may have serious conditions that make breathing smoke completely off limits.

Native Botanicals has a small range of products called Liquid Smudge that was developed just to fill this gap. They consist of a spray mist containing only essential oils of the herbs used in smudging: white sage, cedar, and sweetgrass



**Dream of Wild Health youth gardening**

in the original formula, juniper and sagebrush in the Badlands version, and simply pine and cedar in the Black Hills version. If you're interested, you can find them at [realnativebotanicals.com](http://realnativebotanicals.com).

## Foraging for herbs and foods

Besides buying these kinds of products, many of them can be found in the wild, even the urban wild, once you're trained in safe foraging techniques. Fortunately, Minneapolis is a hotbed of nationally famous foragers as well. Community education, garden centers, nonprofits, food co-ops, and private foraging experts all offer short one-day classes or more in-depth teaching.

One such foraging superstar is Hope Flanagan. She works through Dream of Wild Health and its partner the Indigenous Food Network to teach foraging, among other traditional skills. Dream of Wild Health is a Native run nonprofit, their mission being "to restore health and well-being in the Native community by recovering knowledge of and access to healthy Indigenous foods, medicines and lifeways." Read more at [dreamofwild-health.org/hope-flanagan](http://dreamofwild-health.org/hope-flanagan).

Seward Co-op is also part of the Indigenous Food Network, and Native herbalism, cooking and foraging are often found among their class offerings.

Four Seasons Foraging is the organizational name of Maria Wes-

serle, a nationally renowned foraging expert. She teaches classes through her own business and with many partners, including the American Swedish Institute ([asimn.org](http://asimn.org)).



**Hope Flanagan teaching foraging at Crosby**

Check her out at [fourseasonforaging.com](http://fourseasonforaging.com) or check the ASI website events listings for her upcoming classes.

## Growing your own

The University of MN Four Directions Medicine Garden is a program of the University of MN's Agricultural College Extension program. It is run by Elder June Blue and provides education in both Native American practices for gardening and traditional herbal medicine cultivation. Read more about the garden and Elder June Blue here: [tinyurl.com/DKRatSSP-4DirGarden](http://tinyurl.com/DKRatSSP-4DirGarden).

## More resources

Explore Native American foods, medicine, and herbal traditions through books this winter. Check out Birchbark Books & Native Arts, a local Minneapolis bookstore owned by best-selling Native American author Louise Erdrich for books on

medicinal herbs, gardening, and health. Products from Dream of Wild Health and other producers mentioned here can be bought at the Four Sisters Farmers Market on Franklin Avenue from late April to October.

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# “It’s About Time (Millions of Copies Sold for Dad)”

BY ELAINE KLAASSEN

You don’t usually think of a boxer as a lovable guy, but in the case of Mark Connor, you do. I can say without hesitation that he is, indeed, a lovable pugilist. I worked with this dreamer, idealist, melancholy soul at Southside Pride and Pulse of the Twin Cities many years ago. In his short time there, he left the indelible mark of a person passionate about justice and community.

Now, after years of writing and writing, training boxers and immersing himself in the Catholic culture of Northern Ireland and the Native culture of this country, not to mention the culture of our twin city, St. Paul, Connor has published “It’s About Time (Millions of Copies Sold for Dad)”, an intriguing book about his life and thoughts.

A distinctive feature of the book’s format is the mix of Connor’s poetry with the narrative autobiography. To me, his book is about the poetry and where it

comes from. If you read the prose, you’ll understand the poetry. He tells about striving to be successful as a writer, he tells the story of Leonard Peltier, he tells about the hunger strike in Northern Ireland, he tells about sparring and injuries in the ring, he tells of caring for abandoned children in an overnight shelter OOK REVIEWS for five years. And all of this finds its way, distilled, into the poems. It’s almost as though the book’s nineteen poems add another 200 pages to the book’s literal 86. There’s a lot to think about in each one, besides the great sound and rhythm to absorb. While it’s satisfying to read them on the page, they are conceived for performance, and Connor has performed many of them. Four of his poems have been anthologized in Gabriel’s Horn Press.

The main thread of the narrative is Connor’s profound Catholic faith and his devotion to his parents, whose 51-year loving marriage inspires him to seek the same kind of union, based



Mark Connor and Elaine Klaassen

on a common faith. Many of his poems contemplate that quest.

Underlying the entire story is Mark’s bonded relationship with his father and the gut punch he suffered at his father’s sudden death, in 2019.

This book is for someone who is grieving a beloved parent, who loves poetry, who follows

boxing, who wants to reflect on the meaning of marriage, who loves the Catholic religion with all of its saints, relics, rituals, symbols and internal rigor, who respects the struggle for justice in many cultures, or who enjoys reading the adventures of an aspiring

writer (from fishing in Alaska to meeting Ferlinghetti, to protecting Franklin Avenue and Little Earth during the nights after George Floyd’s murder).

“It’s About Time” received the Bloomsday Literary Award this year on June 16, the day the Irish network in Minnesota celebrates James Joyce.

To get the book in person, go to Irish on Grand in St. Paul. Online, it’s available on Amazon, Lulu and Barnes & Noble. Connor’s website is: [boxersandwritersmagazine.com](http://boxersandwritersmagazine.com).

*Elaine Klaassen started selling ads at Southside Pride in June of 1996. She then enrolled in a class at United Theological Seminary in fall, which led to selling ads primarily to churches, religion-based schools and other institutions, and which was the springboard for what became her column called Spirit and Conscience. Eventually she became the managing editor of Southside Pride. Health concerns initiated her exit from the newspaper in June of 2021.*

# “La Penultima (With a Rose in its Eye)”

BY MARK CONNOR

Elaine Klaassen has written a book that captures readers in the freedom of her vision, grips us in the rhythm of her voice, and holds us in the arms of her love, releasing us in forgiveness and redemption. “La Penultima” is a memoir that had to be written, for Elaine herself and the people she’s touched, recording in words the picturesque life of a woman whose influence—from Minneapolis to New York, from Kansas to Spain and beyond—has touched many through her gentle simplicity, rooted in Mennonite heritage that, even in defeat, reaches victorious consolation.

Much input from friends brought her book to the finish line. Thanks to the suggestion of her friend Terry, the nine chapters are called galleries, in which the relationship between the separate fragments is like that of the relationship between paintings in a gallery; they are grouped according to themes.

A quote from her friend Gary, “Exposing your soul is the most valuable gift one can give to another,” is a thread that runs throughout. In “La Penultima”, Klaassen does expose her soul to us, at the risk of our judgment, winning our approval. She bravely bares her humanity, recounting hopes and dreams and triumphs and failures, turning even her transgressions into a grand wish and simple prayer for everyone.

The title of Klaassen’s “memoir-like document” came from Miguel (raised Michael Joseph Hagerty in suburban Chicago), who, Klaassen explains, “was going to write a book called The Penultimate (La Penultima). It was going to be the last thing before the last thing. And I think it was going to be everything he knew up until the point where he knew everything he

was ultimately going to know.” Elaine lived in Spain from 1969 to 1981, mostly with Miguel, and learning he died in 2010, she knew she’d eventually write this book.

After studying piano with concert pianist Ricardo Requejo in Madrid, Spain, working as a professional piano teacher and composer and playing piano in various churches, Klaassen has spent most of her time helping and learning from the community around her. She has worked with community groups, Indigenous people and communities of color, collaborating on peace, justice and environmental issues, writing about much of it in her Southside Pride column. This is fueled by her Mennonite identity, even though in her early 20s she left a Mennonite marriage to a pastor as she entered the first coed graduate school class at the University of Notre Dame, radically witnessing to peace on a path she carved out on her own terms.

There have been “five important Michaels in my life,” she explains. The other four include Mikey from grade school, “Mike, the father of my children; Michael who calls me a spirit: and Mischa, who now fills a bucket of happiness in my psyche.” Although divorced at 65 from Mike, father of their daughters, she enjoys companionship with him, living in the same house divided evenly with separate entrances, and his generous provision of mechanical skills that keep her equipped with a smoothly running car. Unorthodox as that seems, it’s indicative both of Klaassen’s singular style and the adventurous story she relates.

As each gallery chronicles early childhood to the present, in reverse order, a memory in Gallery VII (Justice = Peace) entitled “World Hunger: 1971,” recounts riding a motorcy-

cle with Miguel into southern Spain, arriving late-night in Talavera when restaurants and stores are closed, and lamenting intense hunger. She admits, “Years later it blew my mind that our thoughts didn’t automatically go to the plight of those who suffer hunger on a daily basis,” and the personal quality of Elaine Klaassen, a quality evident throughout the telling of her tale, is definitively clear—she has the conscience of a saint.

Hopefully, the book will be in the public library soon, as well as in independent bookstores, but for now it’s available on Amazon and directly from the author at [elaineruthklaassen@gmail.com](mailto:elaineruthklaassen@gmail.com). “La Penultima (With a Rose in its Eye)” is well worth reading and a great Christmas gift for someone you love.

*Mark Connor began writing for Southside Pride and Pulse of the Twin Cities in 1997 when, exhausted from organizing an anti-Margaret Thatcher demonstration with Minnesotans for a United Ireland, he thought, “I’ll bet I can work for those guys and make my rent, which is better than being an activist for free.” After publishing a story about the Irish Political Prisoners Children’s Holiday program in Southside Pride, and a feature on legislative efforts to compete with American Indian casinos in Pulse, he wrote many articles about local, national, and international politics and culture, and a couple of articles about boxing. From January through May 2001, he was assistant managing editor of Pulse and managing editor of Southside Pride. He continued providing freelance articles for both publications through 2003, grateful for the experience and the friends he made at the publications.*

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# Israel: America Reductio ad Absurdum

BY VICTORIA SHROYER

They didn't do it. No, the mothers and fathers, sons and daughters, grandparents and grandkids, aunts and uncles, cousins and even more distant relatives of those whose lives and lands are being forever destroyed by the U.S. Military Industrial Complex and its auxiliary - the Israeli Occupation Forces - did not cause Kamala to lose the election. Even those who are not relatives, except through shared humanity, but who recognized, protested and refused to vote for the soul-less massacre by U.S./Israel in Palestine are not responsible for Kamala's loss.

Not even Jill Stein! But could it be the Democratic faithful, who have spent decades delivering on their oft repeated promise to vote for ANY Republican, as long as (s)he has the Democratic Party endorsement? Could it be that same faithful and silent Democratic majority who give to their elected Democratic officials complete silence and fealty who are responsible for Kamala's loss?

It has hardly been their finest hour as they cowered in silence, lest any word they said against Biden's genocide in Israel should upset the Biden/Harris election plan!

How'd that work out? Could they have talked up and talked back in large enough numbers, loud enough voice and mean enough spirit that

we could have stopped a death or two? Could they have thus forced the Democratic Party to save itself and us from its own murderous greed?

They say no. We'll never know. That's what happens when you give up the fight.

No! No, no, no! After all, nothing, but nothing else, that Americans might do or say could affect the actions of their power elite. Nothing!

Too, too true! So no, the electoral loss cannot be blamed on those who did nothing, said nothing, thought and felt nothing.

In fact, we will never know if they could have saved a life or two or even saved us from four more years (at least) of Donald Trump. We just know that now, the Democratic Party has yet more bogeymen to blame for that quintessential American monster Trump to whom the Democratic Party has given two election victories. After all, it is as American as apple pie and the duopoly to blame someone else, always someone else, but preferably the victim. And it is even more American, perhaps, to add insult to the injury of that victim.

Take this quote from Israel, aka America redux: "When peace comes we will perhaps in time be able to forgive the Arabs for killing our sons, but it will be harder for us to forgive them for having forced us to kill their sons." - Golda Meir. Ah, yes, someone made Zionists

slaughter children so they could steal their land, their lives, their everything. Of course they did. Just hear today how Hamas, many years later, has forced Israel to institute their long planned Final Solution.

So yes, indeed, I stand cor-

rected: the dead and dying guilty terrorist children of Palestine and Israel cost the Democrats the election.

I can't really thank them for giving us back our very own quintessential demon Donald Trump, who also started, via

the Abraham accords - and will finish - this particular phase of Israel's long ethnic cleansing of other people's land. But can you blame them?!

Of course you can blame them.

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**Southside Pride**

**NEIGHBORHOOD EDITION**

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

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MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA 55406  
CALL US AT 612-822-4662  
email: [editor@southsidepride.com](mailto:editor@southsidepride.com)

PUBLISHER/EDITOR ..... Ed Felien  
ACCOUNTANT ..... Bridgit Jordan  
ART DIRECTOR/GRAPHIC DESIGNER ..... Rebecca James  
COPY EDITOR ..... Charissa Behringer  
STAFF WRITER ..... Debra Keefer Ramage  
SALES DIRECTOR ..... David Goldstein  
WEBSITE MAINTENANCE ..... Rebecca James  
COMPUTER CONSULTANT ..... Celia Wirth  
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