

Community REPORTER

SERVING WEST END NEIGHBORHOODS, ST. PAUL TO FORT SNELLING, SINCE 1970



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VOL. 50 NO. 8

AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 2020

CIRCULATION 13,000

BUILDING A NON-RACIST COMMUNITY

Talking about Racism

BY TIM JOHNSON

Retired pastor of Cherokee Park United Church

Editor's note: This is the seventh article in Johnson's series on racism. Comments and insights are welcome: send to editor@communityreporter.org.

It happened twice in as many weeks. I went away from the conversation thinking about what I should have said. In the first conversation, my friend was insisting there is no such thing as white privilege. Numerous examples were provided of ways in which as white people we have benefits and opportunities frequently denied to Indigenous people and people of color. We pointed out that in our middle-class families of modest wealth our parents had benefited from the GI bill that enabled our parents to attend college and get a loan for a home. Both created family wealth denied to people who had the wrong skin color. We took note of the "Karen" in New York City who illegally had her dog off-leash in Central Park and when challenged by an African American birder, she called the police, falsely claiming she was being threatened, knowing her white privilege gave her power, even as it risked his life. None of this broke through the strong conviction of my friend that there is no such thing as white privilege and we each make it on our own.

The question I wish that I had asked is "do you believe racism exists?" He sees himself as a white liberal and I know he would have said, "yes". The follow up question then is, "If racism exists, thereby disadvantaging certain groups because of their skin color, who stands to benefit by this arrangement?" If someone is disadvantaged, then it follows someone else has to necessarily be advantaged. That advantage is "white privilege." This privilege is systemic and woven into every aspect of our common life.

In the second conversation, my friend, also a white person who sees herself as liberal, put forth a long litany of problems in the Black community. Her work exposes her to real-life situations where Black youth in particular are frequently getting into trouble and ending up in the criminal justice system. In response, concrete examples were given of racial inequities that contribute to the situations she was identifying, but no matter how things were framed or examples given she returned again and again to a litany of failings in the African American population. I did ask "Why do you think that is?", but that elicited a little more than a shrug.

What I wish that I had said is: "It sounds like you believe Black people are inferior to white people. Is that what you truly believe?" The comment would have been a shade beyond Minnesota Nice, but it also would have gotten closer to the truth in our conversation. This is what Eddie Glaude Jr., in his book Democracy in Black refers to as the value gap, the literal valuing of white people more than those who are Black, Indigenous and People of Color. This value gap, Glaude argues, is often masked by questions that imply something is wrong with Black people. Glaude lays out how this value gap is built into the very foundation of our country.

The thing both friends held in common is a firm belief in American meritocracy, the conviction that individual initiative and hard work are the keys to success. Through this obstructed lens, there is no value gap and there is no white privilege, because everyone from the very beginning has had an equal chance at success.

I don't know that anything I said or might say will break through this deeply held false narrative, but I believe white people need to continue having these conversations. We need to continue our own learning so that we are better prepared in our response and in our support for efforts at making a more perfect union.

Back to School?

In year of uncertainty, parents, students and teachers tackle new challenges



Adams Spanish Immersion Elementary School, like all of its peers in the St. Paul Public School system, will remain closed as students begin the year with distance learning on September 8.

BY DAVID LAMB

After the debate over how to handle the coming academic year raged through most of the summer, with no consensus emerging, administrators for the St. Paul Public Schools (SPPS) made a decision: the year would begin with full-time distance learning, with the possibility of reopening schools later on. "We are going to fight, and we are going to work... to get back safely,"

the district's superintendent, Joe Gothard, told school board members as he shared his plan on August 2.

The board that proceeded to approve the measures was missing one person who had been integral to its work over the past three years. Marny Xiong, 31, the board's chair, succumbed to COVID-19 in June, complicating the decision-making process and driving home the perils of the disease. Governor Walz described her passing as "a heartbreaking loss for Minnesota."

The SPPS plan allows for the district to move toward hybrid learning as the year progresses, assuming the number of COVID-19 cases in Ramsey County declines. The school board will assess the possibility of hybrid models in consultation with the

Minnesota Department of Health, first on September 25, then again on October 14 if they have not already been implemented.

While the seriousness of the health risks that motivated the decision to start the year remotely are undeniable, concerns about how the plan will impact families abound. After St. Paul's schools were forced to close last March, some students struggled to keep pace with their classmates, and parents pointed out issues of fairness in distance learning—around

"We can acknowledge that this is hard for everyone."

SPPS board member Jessica Kopp

high-speed internet access, private space for attending remote classes and special-education needs including one-on-one support that many cannot readily accommodate.

Board member Steve Marchese echoed these concerns at the August 2 meeting, criticizing how the district's plan "treat[s] all of our families equally in terms of mode of instruction—and that's not equity." School administrators insist, however, that they have learned from the challenges of the spring. The plan requires that special education teachers meet at the beginning of the year with each family to "discuss individualized students' needs and services," and the plan also involves rolling out support centers

throughout St. Paul, where students can get in-person help.

Robert Sahli, principal of Adams Spanish Immersion Elementary School in the West 7th neighborhood, acknowledged that "each person affected by distance learning will respond differently," creating a new mandate for teachers. "Our response as educators must be one of grace every opportunity we are given....Educators have the unique opportunity to support our community in each of [the year's] changes in the educational landscape."

A central concern for parents, perhaps especially those who are single or in households where both parents work, is child care. An online survey of 1,000 working parents with children, conducted recently by Care.com, revealed that nearly three quarters of parents are making changes to their professional lives to accommodate the lack of child care resulting from school closures, with 15 percent considering permanently leaving the workforce.

Conceding that they "agree with the choice the SPPS district is making" to begin the year with full distance learning, Parents for St. Paul Public Schools, a Facebook group of nearly 400 founded by the former PTO

SCHOOL, PG 3

Weak Link in the Transit Triangle: Riverview Corridor

BY GREG STRUVE

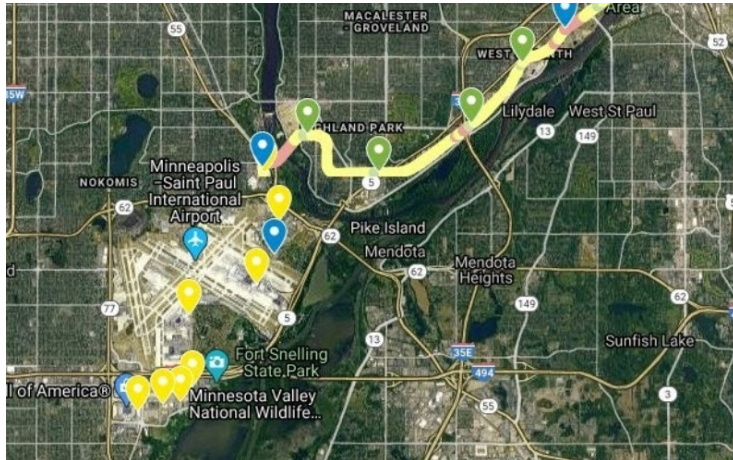
The fate of the final leg of the long-anticipated "Transit Triangle" will be decided in December. At that time, the Riverview Corridor governing board will determine project viability and changes needed.

The "Transit Triangle" is intended to be the core of the backbone regional LRT network. It connects the three transit anchors of the region: downtown Minneapolis, downtown St. Paul, and the Airport, forming a "Transit Triangle".

The Blue and the Green Lines now provide two strong legs of the Triangle. But the current Riverview Corridor Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA), with a streetcar running in traffic on West 7th, does not even come close to the capacity and reliability of the existing Blue and Green Lines.

The Riverview Corridor must also be LRT, but running in its own guideway near West 7th, with stations easily accessed by a normal West 7th bus and safely interconnecting with north/south transit routes.

The current \$2+ billion LPA needs to be



For an interactive version, go to bit.ly/Cartmap

revised and replaced with a strong regional link. The alternative that should replace the LPA was described by James Schoettler in the June issue of the *Community Reporter*. The attached map shows the route; and more detail can be found on the interactive map. Here are some of the key benefits:

normal street activity

• Real fulfillment of transit needs in Riverview Corridor

With LRT and bus transit working

CORRIDOR, PG 6

Community REPORTER

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Turn to page 8 for more details.

COUNTY PERSPECTIVES



COMMISSIONER
RAFAEL ORTEGA
columnist

Answering the Pandemic

Every day at Ramsey County, we are reminded that we are facing the largest health and economic crisis in 100 years and trying to answer multiple needs of our residents. This past week we introduced new ways to help folks who are looking for jobs right now.

On August 3, we at Ramsey County gathered with news media at Dayton's Bluff Library to announce the launch of six new Community Center Labs at locations throughout the county. These sites provide critical computer access to help those who have been impacted by COVID-19 connect with workforce services – from applications, to training, to virtual meetings with career counselors. Careful planning for these sites and a strong partnership with Saint Paul Public Library have allowed us to safely open these sites for reservation-only access following Public Health guidelines for those who have lost their jobs, had hours reduced, have been furloughed or otherwise had their employment affected by COVID-19.

Two of the sites are at our Ramsey County Library locations in Maplewood and Roseville, while the other four are partner sites at libraries serving some of the hardest hit neighborhoods in Saint Paul – Dayton's Bluff, Rice Street, Rondo Community Library and Sun Ray. When we launch our Downtown Service Center in the Ramsey County East Building later this month, we will open a Community Career Lab there as well. We're also remaining flexible so we can add pop-up and community sites based on demand to ensure we're serving all of our communities and meeting our residents where they are.

Community Career Labs are a great example of how Workforce Solutions and partners in other departments like Finance, Information Services, Property Management and Communications & Public Relations are aligning resources quickly to put the \$96 million of federal funding through the CARES act into operation for those who need help most in our communities as a result of COVID-19. We commend staff for bringing programs like this forward just weeks after our commissioners approved a framework for investing the CARES funding. These Ramsey County Reinvestment and Support Efforts (RISE) address three main areas: Employment support programs, including Community Career Labs, are helping to get people back to work, providing training and helping to provide technology resources for those who don't have access for job searching, digital literacy, career development and more.

Another focus area is small business. Just this morning we announced a second round of applications for grants of up to \$10,000 to help sole proprietors and those contributing to the local creative economy pay for critical expenses such as rent or mortgage payments, utilities and costs associated with reopening. Small businesses with 20 or fewer employees who missed the first round of millions in grants that have been awarded since June through the Small Business Relief Fund are encouraged to apply. In total, at least \$15 million of CARES funding will be provided to help small businesses through these efforts led by Community & Economic Development. I encourage businesses to apply at bit.ly/countyrelief

As always, I encourage people to contact me at rafael.e.ortega@co.ramsey.mn.us if they have questions or suggestions.

Editorials & Opinions

The letters, opinions, and editorials expressed on this page do not necessarily reflect the views of the Board of Directors of this newspaper or any of our advertisers or sponsors.

Your involvement is requested

As a nonprofit organization we are governed by a Board of Directors, and we have openings for community members to join. We encourage your involvement in the creative side of things. We have correspondents, reporters, reviewers and general writers involved. You can write a letter to the editor on a topic we have written about, or in response to one of our columnists, or a longer "Neighbors Speak Out" piece.

You can also contribute story ideas: We aim to cover a wide range of interesting areas in the neighborhood. Your ideas for stories and topics are always welcome. Discuss the many possibilities with the Editor. Leave a voice message at 651-665-0068, or e-mail editor@communityreporter.org.

-- David Lamb, Editor, *Community Reporter*



WEST END HEALTHLINE

COVID-19 - Recommendations as the pandemic drags on

BY JONATHAN DICKMAN, MD, PHD

As we approach a half of a year of working from home, distance learning and Zoom meetings, many people have become weary of hearing about COVID-19. Some people have questioned the importance of following public health recommendations as the pandemic continues.

Despite people's understandable fatigue with COVID-19 guidelines, the rate of infection remains higher than desired, making recommendations to wear masks in public, maintaining a social distance of at least 6 feet and practicing good hand hygiene as important now as they were when COVID-19 first came to the West End. Since people can feel perfectly normal when infected, we still recommend taking these precautions even if you do not feel sick. Some people have asked if having a recent negative COVID-19 test could provide reassurance about visiting grandparents. Unfortunately, because the

COVID-19 PREVENTION

20 SEC

Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.

Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.

test is not perfect, this is not recommended. The ongoing recommendation is to take precautions whenever you are with others, no matter how you feel.

If you are sick, but do not require medical help, the top priority is to self-quarantine at home for 10 days from the onset of symptoms. After 10 days, you can return to previous activity if you have not had a fever for 24 hours (without using fever reducing medications) and your symptoms are

improving. Symptoms of COVID-19 infection vary, but can include cough, fever, muscle aches, loss of smell, change in taste and loose stools. You can choose to get tested for COVID-19 infection, but if your symptoms are worrisome for this viral infection, you will still be recommended to quarantine even if the test is negative.

Until we have a COVID-19 vaccine (which could be available as early as Spring 2021), we must continue take extra precautions to

keep our community safe. You can also protect yourself from severe disease from COVID-19 by making sure your vaccinations are up to date and your medical conditions, such as diabetes and high blood pressure, are well controlled. In addition, regular exercise is also likely protective. If you have questions, contact your medical provider about how you can continue to stay safe this Fall.

WHOLE WIDE WORLD
WEST 7TH PUBLIC LIBRARY

BY CATE SERING, LIBRARY MANAGER

As we transition out of summer, we know that the needs of our community are more important than ever. Whether you are a student, a job seeker, or are looking for the next best read, Saint Paul Public Library is here to respond to community needs with innovation and a commitment to safety. We are doing what we do best: providing resources so you can virtually learn, work, and connect to others.

Distance learners: Whether you are going to school for the first time or continuing your journey of lifelong learning, Saint Paul Public Library has virtual resources to support learners of all ages.

Library Go – K through 12 students at all Saint Paul Public (and some charter) schools have automatic library access to online resources and physical materials using their school ID. Students can check out up to 5 items with Library Go. Online, they can get homework help from a tutor, find primary resources using our databases, find a book to read or download an audiobook. Always free, and now accessible and integrated into your child's curriculum. Visit <https://sppl.org/library-go/> to find out more.

Online Storytime – Join us weekly for Live Storytimes on the SPPL Facebook page with stories, songs, and movement to support development and learning for your little learners! Visit <https://sppl.org/little-learners/> for recordings of story-

times and lots of other great content.

Learning Tools – All you need is a library card to access a variety of learning resources from the comfort of your home. Learn a new language, how to create a website, how to access e-books and more! Visit <https://sppl.org/digital-library/> to access our learning resources.

Job Seekers:

Career Labs - Saint Paul Public Library has partnered with Ramsey County Workforce Solutions to provide workforce services and support to Saint Paul residents as they seek employment, build career skills, and navigate career transitions. Career Lab locations include Dayton's Bluff, Rice Street, Rondo, and Sun Ray Libraries. To make an reservation call 651-793-1699 and visit us at <https://sppl.org/career-labs/> to learn more.

JobNow! - Access one-to-one help from online job experts including resume assistance, live interview coaching and more every day from 1:00 to 11:00 p.m. Visit <https://sppl.org/resources/jobs-careers/> to learn more about JobNow! And other resources.

Lynda.com - Easy-to-use video tutorials to help you learn business, technical and creative skills right that can be accessed anywhere with your library card. Visit <https://sppl.org/learning-tools/courses-and-tutorials/> to learn more.

Letter to the Editor

To the Editor:

Since 2009, I have served as my father's in-home caregiver as he undergoes dialysis treatments. In that time, we've had the incredible fortune of working with supportive and attentive medical staff who helped us as we learned about life with dialysis.

Because of this great medical care, my father was, until a recent amputation, able to maintain an active lifestyle as a pastor and enjoy his favorite outdoor activities like fishing. However, there was a lot of work involved for me early on in the process as his caregiver, including asking the right questions during appointments, managing medications, and ensuring each doctor had access to the information they needed.

While I was able to be there for my father, I know that not every dialysis patient is able to have a caregiver to help them manage their appointments, medications, and other major medical information. That's why dialysis patients in Minnesota need Representative Betty McCollum and our other members of Congress to support a new bill called BETTER Kidney Care Act, which would allow all of a patient's doctors to work together to share information and help their patients receive the high level of care they need.

When Congress previously tried to address coordinated care through the Dialysis PATIENTS Demonstration Act, it had immense support on both sides of the aisle, with more than 200 cosponsors. This is an issue Congress has shown they want to address and now is the opportunity to do it.

Advocating for dialysis patients is something that I hold close to my heart, and I want to be sure all patients have access to a well-coordinated treatment plan. The BETTER Kidney Care Act would be the best path toward achieving that.

Ramona Banks, St. Paul, MN

Community REPORTER

265 Oneida St. St Paul, MN 55102

AD DEADLINE & MEETING

Copy Deadline/Meeting: Sept 21. Ad Deadline: Sept 23. Third Monday of each month. Articles should be typed, double spaced. The editor reserves the right to edit submitted copy. We can design your ads, camera ready, tiff or jpeg files on disk.

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FEDERATION UPDATE

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13TH ANNUAL WEST END NEIGHBORS' GARDEN, HISTORY TOUR

Tour and history guides at the open-air Keg and Case Market Saturday, Sept. 12, 10am-2pm. Masks and social distancing are mandatory for self-directed walking tour. Tour is free and donations are welcome.

Community Arts & Culture

West End Artist Profile: Kelly Ludeking

I grew up in the Midwest on a traditional farm—dairy, beef, pigs and all the crops to feed them and us—where I absorbed a great work ethic and a real sense of community. I learned how to fix just about anything on the farm, which helped create the man I am today. I also learned that my grandpa Kelly was an inventor and had US patents on farm machinery for making it easier to harvest the crops.

A summer course at the Iowa State University Journalism Department on photography had a great impact when I reached Augsburg. I applied to be a photographer for the school newspaper. I became photo editor and soon added the yearbook and other local photography jobs to my work. To focus more on photography, I transferred to MCAD (Minneapolis College of Art & Design), with its amazing facilities and access to top of the line cameras and studios. I also explored cast metals during this time and I was hooked. Seeing the liquid metal created the need to explore more deeply. When the head of the Sculpture Department, Michael Bigger, complimented me on my photography and said that I was a good photographer, but I could be a great sculptor, I agreed to study under him as my mentor. He was a large-scale monumental sculptor, and I wanted to learn all that I could from him.

He became my Father of Art. The connections he helped me make led me to cast iron art and building furnaces for casting. The first of many Iron Pours was held at MCAD.

After college I worked in the large-scale prop industry as a welder/fabricator, building larger than life objects for advertising agencies in malls, on billboards and theme parks around the world. Along the way, I also worked for blacksmiths, interior designers, furniture designers, industrial fabrication shops and finish carpentry. All of these jobs have helped create the craftsman that I am today.

I was hosting a Cast Iron pour with the White Bear Center for the Arts when Kle Thune invited her dad Dave Thune to come see what we were doing. After that event Dave approached me about collaborating on a festival at the abandoned Schmidt Brewery in St. Paul. In 2008 we had our first West 7th Schmidt Brewery Iron Pour. There was live music, food trucks and a fiery spectacle which was repeated for five years, until Dominion took over the brew-



Elephant sculpture: "In the Room" (below) "Accessible Metal Arts" is KRL Metal Arts Studio tagline.



ery and created the Schmidt Artist Lofts. In 2014 I was asked by my alma mater, MCAD, to build a large-scale sculpture for their new sculpture park on campus. "In the Room" was built and installed in the park in 2014 and had the honor of being placed next to a Michael Bigger sculpture. This was an amazing feeling of accomplishment. I moved back to the Twin Cities in 2015 and found how the Schmidt Artist Lofts had been developed. I knew I needed to live here. I love what this West Seventh area has become: a vibrant home for artists to live and work together; collaborating with each other and with the community at large. My dream of having my own studio is now coming true, with my new venture at the site of the original Orme Omaha Brass & Iron Foundry — KRL Metals Art Studio.

Schmidt Artists realizing many dreams

Having Schmidt Artist Lofts in the neighborhood is just beginning to have the kind of impact many predicted when it was opened. Years of moving in, getting settled, establishing their studios and learning and creating have brought many artists to special moments in their evolution.

Brad Menninga was selected for the 2020 McKnight Artist Fellowship through the Northern Clay Center, an honor that another Schmidt artist, Guillermo Guardia, earned last year. A profile of Brad is in the works. The artists of the Schmidt clay studio have now earned two McKnights, two Minnesota Artist Initiative Grants (Guillermo and Brad), two Jerome emerging artist awards (Mitch Iburg and Zoe Powell). The four artists also hosted seven shows at the Schmidt for the National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts (NCECA) conference in 2019.

Heather Friedli embarked on a journey to complete the entirety of the Huron River in Michigan. She says, "We are paddling all 104 navigable miles of the Huron River to raise awareness about this beautiful and important natural resource. Through our trip, we hope to tell the river's story, promote the newly-formed Huron River Water Trail, and support an incredible organization that helps protect our beloved river." We can expect inspiration for new art from Heather after this adventure. If you can offer a small donation to help, please contact heather@friedliarts.com.

Kelly Ludeking is opening his metal and welding studio — KRL Metals Studio. He will teach welding, and casting in bronze, aluminum and iron. See Kelly's full profile in this issue.



Lt. Gov. Peggy Flanagan wearing one of Maggie's ribbon masks.

Maggie Thompson (makwastudio.com), whose work in textile arts and design was profiled in 2015, has been working on the "ribbon mask project," which has been picked up and promoted by the Minnesota Historical Society, American Craft Council, Critical Craft Forum, the San Diego Art Institute, and others. The photo shows Lt. Gov. Peggy Flanagan wearing one of Maggie's ribbon masks. The Ribbon Mask Project is a response to the widespread need for protective masks, and a way to keep this effort sustainable. For every Ribbon Mask sold, Maggie will be donating two CDC compliant cotton masks approved by Allina to individuals and partnering organizations.

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West End Neighbors
Garden and History Tour

Pick up your free garden guide and history book at Keg and Case patio, Saturday, September 12, 10 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

An open-air sidewalk tour
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Four historic sites
The origin story of W7

<http://www.fortroadfederation.org/events.html>

In the Community

Wabasha Street Caves to Close as Pandemic Threatens Local Venues

BY DAVID LAMB

The manmade tunnels behind West St. Paul's castle-like structure, once the site of a speakeasy said to be frequented by notorious gangsters, are set to close in November. Owned by Donna and Stephen Bremer since 1994, the 12,000-foot three-cave complex has more recently served as a venue for dances, weddings, and other gatherings as well as for tours examining the area's history. After the COVID-19 pandemic suspended those activities indefinitely, the Bremers recognized that they wouldn't be able to weather the storm. "We're an attraction and we're not allowed to open," Donna Bremer told the *Star-Tribune*. "That would be bad enough. But then to have everybody cancel their events and want all their money back — and you can't blame them." As the couple worked to repay event deposits while unable to raise revenue, the Bremers, each in their



The future of the sandstone caves that have entertained St. Paulites for more than a century is in doubt.

70s, decided it was time to move on. Venues across the West End are staring down similar challenges, brought on by the pandemic and exacerbated by the economic recession that has resulted. The Grand Oak Opry, a site on Goodhue Street for intimate outdoor concerts, was forced to cancel its spring events. Its owners acknowledged in a recent post on Facebook that "[w]e won't be gathering in the yard this year most likely." The North Garden Theater on West 7th Street, a historic cinema that hosts weddings, live performances, and other parties has also cancelled the public shows on its calendar, though it continues to book private events so long as the space remains

below 25% of its former 210-person capacity, allowing social distancing to be possible. "We're trying to stay creative," said Ryan North, co-owner of the Theater, "thinking about smaller things we might be able to do to generate revenue." In place of physical gatherings, the Opry has promoted online events for musicians affiliated with its concert series. Writing in the wake of George Floyd's killing about the importance of music for bringing people together to stand up for political action, the owners of the Opry asked their social media followers to "turn to musicians...to listen to them, to support them financially, and to support their work in the community."

Park Square, SteppingStone Join to Create Theatre for Life

Park Square Theatre and SteppingStone Theatre for Youth will join forces this fall to create "your theatre for life" in downtown St. Paul. The two companies have agreed to a collaboration that will lead to more robust regional theatre programming for all ages. Through joint management and mission, though operating as separate legal entities with separate boards and finances, the two companies will provide a full range of theatre experiences out of the Historic Hamm Building. Those experiences will encompass all ages and the best that both theaters have to offer: classes and camps for young people, workshops for adults and intergenerational groups, family-oriented productions for young audiences, and Park Square's full mainstage season of new works, classics, mysteries and musicals. In tandem, the partner organizations will serve an audience of 125,000 with more than 70,000 young people attending performances and educational programs. "What excites me by joining forces is how together we truly become St. Paul's "theatre for life" for artists and audiences.



This is a natural outgrowth of the theater-in-residence concept Richard Cook started with the addition of Park Square's Andy Boss Stage," said Park Square executive director Michael-jon Pease. SteppingStone's artistic and executive director Mark Ferraro-Hauck agrees. "With the planned sale of our building on Victoria Street near Summit, SteppingStone will return to its downtown roots for performances while maintaining easy accessibility for our hundreds of camp and class families through neighborhood-based programs and facilities. Greater geographical flexibility and the strength of our combined resources are essential to meet the evolving needs of young artists, families, and schools." The agreement strengthens both compa-

nies by bringing assets and skills together; as well, it allows the Hamm Building — which also houses the former SPCO recital hall and the former Vieux Carré jazz club — to expand into a diverse performance center that can help rebuild downtown's economy once the pandemic is over. For details and plans see parksquaretheatre.org and steppingstonetheatre.org.

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Express Bike is a social enterprise of Keystone Community Services

West Seventh Business Association

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Community Nourishment



HALLE O'FALVEY
columnist

BIRDS IN PARTICULAR White Pelicans and Hollywood Chickens

Historically, I have spent a lot of time on the riverbanks of Minnesota swimming in the summer months. One of my favorite places is the St. Croix River, a designated Wild and Scenic River. There are many easy access beaches from Hwy 70, in Grantsburg, WI to the confluence of the Mississippi River in Prescott, WI. Each beach has its own unique qualities. I love the rusty colored waters of this lesser known avian flyway. Recently, I was laying down on one these St. Croix River beaches watching the cumulus clouds changing shapes after a great swim. I noticed this massive flock of big birds arise overhead. I sat up and could immediately identify them as American Pelicans with their black wing tips. Generally, these birds fly over this beach so high you can only see minute specks of white in an established flight formation. This day the pelicans flew close to the treetops in a clunky formation with stragglers flying up and out, in and down. I realized

it was flight school! The juveniles were out. It was one of the best sightings, magical. It brought smiles and sighs. By the time I got out my binoculars, they had flown west to another river.

Why did the Hollywood chicken cross the road? To see Gregory Peck. Peck, peck, peck. I'm needing some humor, folks. Send me some nature jokes please!!! Covid and this isolation has brought a low-grade depression that seems to be affecting so many of us. So, during Covid what can we do with ourselves and children for backyard birding? One project could be a **match game** with resident birds (birds who do not migrate) or any birds or ducks you like. The supplies you need are paper, card stock or cardboard, a ruler, pencil or marker and a cutting implement. Research your bird choices. Then start drawing or painting the images of your birds and decorating the back side of the card. It might be just as fun to download images of and print them off and cut them up. Take note some species of birds have



GARDEN VIEWS KENT PETTERSON columnist

What about those insects?

The loss of habitat and food sources and pesticides used to control insects, and in particular pollinating insects, has drawn increasing concern. The role of insects in the cycle of life for fruits and vegetables and our flowering plants is a key factor in our food chain. Homeowners recognize that their property can be a way station of friendly environment, a place for insects as they travel through the landscape, but not all know how to promote that. Many people appreciate green lawns for the attractive easy to maintain appearance. For insects, the lawn is mostly a food and habitat desert.

A recent program established through funding from the Environment And Natural Resources Trust Fund called Lawns to Legumes is supporting the idea that you can be part of the change that would help mitigate the loss of insects that live with us. The program encourages protection of endangered insects such as our state insect, the Rusty

Patch Bee, and shows how we can help pollinating insects move from habitat to habitat easily through relatively small plantings of native flowers in our yards. The program provides grants and resources of information to provide the most effective planting you can provide.

Wild flowering plants that have co-evolved with the insects, which find the wild plants particularly well suited as habitat and a food source. Did you know that ornamental grass plants that are popular in landscapes are wind pollinated and do not require an insect to pollinate their flower? The flower on grass plants is small and not visually attractive to us or insects, and that's why. They don't need to appeal to anyone but the wind to do their job.

Minnesota has about 450 native species of pollinating bees, plus uncounted flies, wasps, beetles, moths, etc. Some of the bees look like flies. If you were to stand beside an insect friendly area on a sunny day, it is a delight to watch and listen to the buzzing going on as insects forage for food.

If you are interested in helping our pollinating insect friends and would like to stand near to them as they work in your own yard, you can go to bluethumb.org/lawns-to-legumes for more information. In our neighborhood there are probably several places, but you could check out 503 St. Clair and 199 Duke St. for two examples of what you can do in your own yard. Good gardening to you!

CORRIDOR, PG 1

together as a system, the Riverview LRT will meet both local and regional transit needs in the Corridor; Allows completion of "Transit Triangle" which is essential foundation for build-out of backbone; public rail transit network in east metro; Connects east third of the metro with the airport; Connects to existing west metro rail transit system; Increases east metro access to west metro jobs and west metro employers to east metro workers; Can be extended east for one-seat ride to airport for major east metro businesses like 3M

- **Downtown transit improved** Additional station (underground) at Landmark Center; Greatly increased rail transit capacity for Xcel; West 7th entertainment district within half mile radius of Xcel station; Eliminates years of demolition and construction on two downtown roads; Eliminates endless interference with normal activity on narrow downtown streets had the streetcar been built

- **Improved stations** Stations can be designed for safe transfer to buses, autos and other modes without crossing dangerous streets; Stations designed for expansion to full three car trains; Stations designed for less exposure to elements
- **The current LPA provides no service to Ford Site ("Highland Bridges")**

8,000 new Ford Site residents create serious traffic congestion in Highland; proposed alternative provides direct LRT network service to Ford Site and Highland Park; Greatly improved access for all Highland residents to LRT network through pedestrian, bicycle & bus connections to Ford station; Greatly reduces traffic congestion impact from Ford Site and other redevelopment sites on surrounding Highland area

- **River crossing at Ford Site eliminates ALL impact on Fort Snelling Park and Historic Area** No visual intrusion in historic area; No demolition of bluffs; No disruption of historic buildings and sacred sites; This new location for the river crossing at the Ford Site and the connection to the Blue Line at the Veterans Hospital can save more than \$250 million compared to the streetcar through Fort Snelling!

- **River crossing at Ford Site includes trail crossing from South Minnehaha Drive to Mississippi River Blvd** Addition of a wye at 54th & Minnehaha could easily provide one-seat connections from the Ford Site and other points to downtown Minneapolis

- **CP-Spur right-of-way sufficiently wide for trail entire length of spur** Already confirmed by City of St Paul study; Trail can be continued to cross Shepard

UPDATE, PG 2

BOARD UPDATE

At Aug. 10 meeting, the Board heard about a proposed new foundry to rehab an old railroad foundry to include welding classes. They voted to support the project in concept; also discussed how to hold the West End Neighbors' Garden and History Tour safely on Saturday, September 12.

UPCOMING MEETINGS, ON ZOOM

Go to www.fortroadfederation.org/calendar

- **Transportation and Land Use Committee**, Wed, Sept. 2 & Oct. 7, 6:30pm

- **Board meeting**, Mon, Sept. 14, 7pm
- **Community Engagement and Outreach Committee**, Thu, Sept. 17, 6:30pm

STAY IN TOUCH

"Like" us on Facebook. Subscribe to its e-newsletter fortroadfederation.org.

CONTACT

Emily Northey, FRF executive director + community organizer 651-298-5599; emily@fortroadfederation.org; 882 West 7th St, Suite 6, Rathskeller Building.

different colorings for males and female like the cardinals, goldfinches, purple finches and all the varied sparrows. Many birds look the same, like the downy woodpecker, coopers hawks, robins, bluejays, chickadees, mourning doves, crows, and cedar waxwings. I say, the most intriguing birds are those rock doves (pigeons). They are short legged ground walkers showing multi-colored grey feathers, two black wing bars and a dark tipped tail with a distinct iridescence neck. Male or female no two look alike. A whole different game could be played with pigeons using a **face flip book**. Supplies you will need are a sheet of paper 8.5 x 11 works, paint or colored pencils, a hole punch, and some type of "O" rings or yarn that allows you to flip sections. Draw the birds then cut them into three narrow horizontal strips that will be flip about back and forth. Certainly, Pinterest has ideas for this.

You can also check out children's author, Mo Willems LUNCH DOODLES on YouTube. For some pigeon fun. The Kennedy Center for the Arts contracted Mo Willems during the beginning of Distance Learning and there is a whole series of very fun videos:

- https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL14hRqd0PELGbKihHuTqx_pbvCLqGb0kF
- <https://adayinourshoes.com/backyard-bird-feeders-and-bird-watching-activities-for-kids/>

Feel free to contact me at halleofalvey@gmail.com.



**BEATRICE
COSGROVE**
reviewer

BEA'S BOOKS Esperanza Rising

★★★★★
(5 out of 5 stars)

Esperanza Rising
by Pam Munoz Ryan

This book tells the story of a girl named Esperanza who lives on her family's ranch: El Rancho de las Rosas, in Aguascalientes, Mexico. She loved her life at the ranch but when one of her loved ones dies, she and her mother have to cross the border into California. They live at a camp with many other Mexicans and work all day. Esperanza isn't accustomed to not having servants or a huge house. She has to sweep a big platform every day and take care of her friend Isabel's younger baby siblings, Pepe and Lupe. It is a big change for Esperanza, but on the way she learns some helpful things such as sweeping, changing diapers and being strong even when times are tough. This is a great book and I highly recommend it to ages 8+.

Beatrice Cosgrove, 10, is a reader and writer in St. Paul.

Road and connect to Mississippi River trail

- **Normal bus on West 7th** West 7th will have a bus that makes frequent stops along 7th and also connects with the Sibley Plaza, Montreal/35E, Randolph and Xcel stations

It is important that all interested parties, including Leaders and Citizens, provide input to the Riverview Corridor Governing Board by December to ensure that this final link to the Transit Triangle is as strong or stronger than the existing Blue and Green LRT Regional Transit Lines.

It is anticipated that more details to this Alternative Plan will become available in subsequent issues to the *Community Reporter* through December.

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CHURCH BULLETIN

editor@
communityreporter.org

Remember to verify all scheduled events, including church services. Call 651-665-0068 or e-mail items to editor@communityreporter.org.

St. Peter's Church: Sunday services can be viewed online, saintpeterslutheranchurch.com St. Peter's, 530 Victoria S. Information at 651-228-1482.

St. Luke Church: 1807 Field Ave. and St. Mark Church: 550 West 7th.

Humble Walk Lutheran Church: Worship on Sundays at 4:30 p.m. at Art House North at 793 Armstrong Ave., St. Paul.

Immanuel Baptist Church: Sunday, 10am Bible Study; 10:45am Worship. Wednesday, 7pm, Bible Study/Prayer — 740 Watson Ave., 651-227-5075. Immanuel Baptist is an independent church.

The Way Church: Services every Sunday at 12:30 with Pastor Joseph Webb IV at St. Mark, 550 West Seventh. For information text 612-859-2572 or call 651-668-0065 and leave a voice message.

Keystone

COMMUNITY SERVICES

**WEST 7TH
COMMUNITY CENTER**

265 Oneida, St. Paul

651-298-5493

keystoneservices.org

Check the website for the latest information or call the Center.

VOLUNTEER

Call 651-797-7725 or email volunteer@keystoneservices.org to learn more or sign up

We rely heavily on volunteers to serve our community in this difficult time. Fill out an application and interview with the volunteer coordinator. A criminal background check is also conducted. You may choose to volunteer as an individual or in a group.

Meals on Wheels delivery: 1x/month, 11am-12pm

Friendly visitors needed: Visit seniors in our neighborhood who need companionship.

Our food shelf programs are busier than ever. Volunteer in our food shelves or help sort food donations.

Friendly Visiting Phone Call Program: Provide friendly weekly phone visits for our senior participants. To be involved call 651-645-0349.

55+ ACTIVITIES

Virtual Senior Programming via Zoom Free virtual programs for our adults 55+ community. We're keeping in touch via **weekly Zoom social hours!** Our Active Seniors program is also staying in tip-top shape through **twice weekly Fit and Fabulous workouts** via Zoom. Get involved today by signing up for our Keeping Connected Senior E-newsletter, email info@keystoneservices.org or call 651-645-0349.

FOOD PROGRAMS

Food Programs Keystone is committed to giving people in our community access to fresh and healthy foods. Go to www.keystoneservices.org or call 651-645-0349.

Keystone Food Shelves are open with modified service. Food shelf deliveries option available. For details call 651-917-3792.

Fare For All Friday Sept. 11, 10am-12pm, West 7th Community Center. It's back with a new drive-through, outdoor, streamlined, and low-contact sale model. Anyone in the community can buy quality, fresh groceries at discounted prices.

Keystone Free Farmers Market Friday, Sept. 11, 10am-12pm, West 7th Community Center. Keystone will also provide a Free Farmer's Market in a Bag event in a drive-through model! You can participate in Fare for All or Free Farmers Market event, or both. Available to anyone in need of food support and every household who participates will receive free, fresh produce.

Meals on Wheels Keystone's Meals on Wheels provides affordable, home-delivered meals to anyone in need. Our delivery model has been updated to be socially-distanced and safe for all participants and volunteers. Call Metro Meals on Wheels at 612-623-3363 to register. For basic information, call Keystone's senior services at 651-645-7424.

Take a safe and pleasant walk, learn history with West End Garden Tour

13th Annual West End Neighbors Garden Tour (WENGNT) beautifully feature West End as historic origin of the Township/City of Saint Paul and Territory/State of Minnesota

On Saturday, September 12, from 10am to 2pm, eight gardens in a three-block area at the High Bridge will provide bluff views and highlight its environmental setting. A very pleasant self-directed walking tour features eight residential gardens, plus four point of historic interest: the North High Bridge, Waldmann Brewery, Hope Breakfast Bar, and Little Sisters of the Poor.

From garden to garden, from view to view along its bluffs—three Uppertown blocks rise above the historic Upper Landing and Irvine Park that gave rise to state history. The gardens range from street-side to Asian-inspired, formal to casual.

Tour maps will be available at the Federation's offices in the Keg and Case complex terrace, 928 West 7th St. Masks, social distancing, and CDC/MDH guidelines in effect for this open-air sidewalk distraction.

Another highlight will be the free distribution of an ambitious history that features the origin story of not only the West End, but also the Township/City of Saint Paul and Territory/State of Minnesota, 1840-1940. As neighbors of the by-ways of Fort Road/West Seventh Street, we live in the area that was first settled by non-native



immigrants and settlers via the Upper Landing. Eventually Minnesota Supreme Court Justices, Governors, entrepreneurs, educators called West Seventh home. The history highlights our early major immigrant groups: Metis/French-Canadian, Bavarian/Baden/Wurtemberg-German, Czech-Slovak, and Italian. Over 100 pages of historic images, documented with 135 endnotes, illustrate the history and will be distributed free on the day of the tour. Local businesses' advertising in the guidebook have made this educational and civic effort possible, as they have the past twelve years. Our neighborhood has been empowered with their diverse creativity.

For information, visit www.fortroadfederation.org, call 651-699-6995 or email joe@josfland.com

BULLETIN BOARD



WOOD-FIRED PIZZAS AT DAY BY DAY

Day By Day Café's portable wood-fired pizza oven is now located at the top of the patio. Pizza chef Ben Bruns (left) has guided production in seven wood-fired ovens, and calls it part of the "slow food movement." Gena and John Ekbohm are doing everything they can to assure customer safety, with new Plexiglas barriers and a promising air ionization system. Open Mon-Sun 7am-3pm for dine-in, and onward from 3-8pm for pizza, 477 West Seventh, 651-227-0654.

FRESH PRODUCE DISTRIBUTION

9/1 & 15; 10/6, 1:30-3pm. JCC Parking Lot, 1375 St. Paul Ave. The Fabulous Friends Club (fabfriendsclub.org) is joining with the St. Paul Jewish Community Center and Second Harvest Heartland to distribute fresh produce on the first and third Tuesday through October 6.

JEWISH FAMILY SERVICE OF ST. PAUL (JFS)

"This Loss is Different: Facing the High Holy Days and the Loss of a Loved One in the Time of COVID" Sept. 2, 7:30-8:30pm via Zoom. For those who have lost a loved one during this pandemic, the usual rituals have not been available to lend comfort. Participants will have the opportunity to specifically recognize the memory of their loved one. Contact Sara Wellington at swellington@jfsp.org to request the Zoom link for this event.

WELCOME WRITERS!

Every Thursday, 10:30am-noon at Merriam Park Library, Marshall and Fairview Avenues. A group of experienced writers provide feedback and support to sharpen your skills and fine-tune your work. For info, call Jim, 651-442-3544.

BEGINNER SQUARE DANCE CLASSES

Every Monday 6:30-8pm, St. Mark Evangelical Lutheran Church, 550 W7th. Triple T Square Dance Club. \$5. First night, dance is free. Square Dance is for everyone: solos, couples, families and youth. No partner needed. Pre-registration not required. For information call 651-503-7040.

UPCYCLED JEWELRY WORKSHOP

Wednesdays 5:30-8:30pm, 957 W. 7th St. Learn

to create jewelry from a large selection of old pieces. Make earrings, necklaces, bracelets, sculptures or anything you can think of. Visit centerforlostobjects.com to reserve a spot: \$25 includes all supplies. Call Amy, 612-382-8100.

POWER-UP LEGAL CLINIC

Legal issues covered include landlord/tenant or property; divorce, parenting time, custody, or other family law issues; debt collection; impounded car; purchase or service contracts; probate; employment; simple wills and health care directives and any other civil legal issues. Walker West Music Academy, 760 Selby Ave. Free walk-in legal clinic dealing with any non-criminal law issue. 651-894-6912, interfaithaction.org/legalclinic. First & third Thursday, 1-4pm.

SAINT LUKE'S FARMERS' MARKET

Saturdays, 8am-1pm, 1807 Field Ave. Local West End Farmer's Market offers fresh produce and more. SNAP/EBT accepted, Market Bucks stretch dollars. 651-698-9443 or saintlukechurch.org. All Covid-19 precautions observed: wear a mask, and learn the rules when you arrive.

WOMEN'S DRUM CENTER

Online workshops available. 2242 University Ave W, St. Paul. Visit us at womensdrumcenter.net.

DRINKING PROBLEM?

Alcoholics Anonymous: aaminneapolis.org (952-922-0880) or aastpaul.org (651-227-5502). 24/7.

WOMEN FOR SOBRIETY

Mondays 10am, Pilgrim Lutheran Church library, 1935 St. Clair Ave. Info: Jill at 651- 235-1935.



Minnesota Historical Society

13th Annual West End Garden Tour

Sept. 12, 10am-2pm. Visit www.fortroadfederation.org/ Call 651-699-6995; email joe@josfland.com

Pictured: In the fall of 1850, Charles Elfelt erected the Mazurka/Mazourka Hall on the southeast corner of 3rd (Kellogg) and Exchange, on the bluff above the Upper Landing near Seven Corners. The first floor had his dry goods store, the second floor served as an entertainment venue, including weekly cotillions. The first professional theatrical performance in Minnesota Territory took place in St. Paul, August 12, 1851, when seven players from Placide's Varieties in New Orleans opened a two-week engagement at the hall. Whiting, Frank M. "Theater in Old St. Paul". Ramsey County History, Fall 1968.

EMAIL CALENDAR ITEMS TO: INFO@COMMUNITYREPORTER.ORG
FOR COMPLETE CALENDAR LISTING GO TO: communityreporter.org

CLASSIFIEDS

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