

Community REPORTER

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



CITY OF SAINT PAUL

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VOL. 51 NO. 1

JANUARY 2021

CIRCULATION 12,000

COUNCIL PERSPECTIVES



REBECCA NOECKER
CITY COUNCIL
MEMBER, WARD 2
columnist

Hope for the Year Ahead

"Man plans, and God laughs."

As I looked back at the column I wrote this time last year, this old Yiddish saying came to mind. At times, it has felt like the mantra of 2020.

My final column for 2019 teemed with concrete plans for the new year, bulleted lists of things to work on in the brave new decade, problems to solve and policies to put in place. Reading it now, at the end of this collective nightmare of a year, I'm struck by how senseless its certainty looks.

As anyone who has ever made a New Year's resolution knows, making plans is always a fraught enterprise. But the notion of planning for a certain future has never seemed more fantastic than it does now. No matter what personal, professional or civic goals we'd set for ourselves in 2020, all our plans were completely upended as the COVID-19 pandemic came to dominate all else.

By spring, we'd embarked on a new reality—and my March column had a very different tone. Instead of talking about plans, I wrote about my hope that the pandemic would restore us to our values of community and generosity, that it would remind us of our common humanity and our obligations to one another, that it would challenge us to be our better selves.

That hope has been borne out again and again in countless acts of individual sacrifice and collective action. Though this has been one of the toughest years many of us have ever experienced, we haven't given into despair. Our values of empathy, working hard and caring for each other have prevailed as we've reached out and supported one another.

I experienced our values in action again a few weeks ago during an online meeting with West 7th neighbors. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the City's proposal to locate a day shelter for people experiencing homelessness in the fire station near West 7th St and Grand Ave. I was nervous going into the conversation. The urgency of the situation meant that we hadn't had time for the robust community engagement that would normally be part of any such development, and services for people experiencing homelessness are often opposed and unwanted by neighbors.

From the very first question, however, I knew I'd had no reason to worry. While there were natural concerns expressed about the logistics of the shelter and how it would be managed so as to serve both guests and the surrounding community, the vast majority of neighbors welcomed the shelter, supported the City's work to help people experiencing homelessness, and were only concerned that we weren't doing more. Our neighborhood values of caring and compassion grounded the entire discussion.

At the end of the meeting, I took off my headphones, closed my laptop, and took a deep breath. I realized that I felt more centered than I had in weeks. While the daily onslaught of death, disease and doom-scrolling made it feel like everything was out of control, my home—my city—was the same as it had always been.

Because a city isn't defined by its plans. It is defined by its values. And while our plans may have fallen to pieces this year, our values have never been stronger. If there is one thing that gives me hope for the year ahead, it is that.



Allina Health's physicians (21 residents and 11 faculty members) outside their new clinic location.

Allina Health to open United Family Physicians Clinic

BY DAVID LAMB

After months of swirling rumors about the future of Allina Health's residency program erstwhile housed at the United Family Medicine (UFM) clinic, Allina announced its plans: a new community-based primary care practice called the United Family Physicians Clinic, set to open later this month at 233 Grand Avenue, the same block as United Hospital—the residency program's primary teaching site—and Children's.

The clinic will train 21 residents per year in family medicine, a specialty that research in the *Annals of Family Medicine* suggests will see a projected shortfall of doctors that will grow to 33,000 in the U.S. by 2035. "With the opening of this new clinic, we are deepening our commitment to serve the health care needs of the community," senior vice president of Allina Health Operations and president of United Hospital Sara Criger described in a press release. She said the new site would provide a home for "Allina Health's well-respected family medicine residency program that is training the next generation of committed and compassionate caregivers."

Dr. Stephanie Rosener, director of Allina Health's United Family Medicine Residency Program at the new clinic, noted that, given

"We may have a new address, but we are the same people, with the same mission, same vision and same heart."

- Dr. Stephanie Rosener,
Director of the United Family
Residency Program

its employees' tenure at UFM for years, the program's "physicians and residents are deeply connected to the West 7th neighborhood." (Allina Health's family medicine residency program has been operating at the UFM clinic since 1995.) While the opening of the new clinic marks the end of a long and meaningful partnership between UFM and the residency program, Allina's press release said, "Allina Health looks forward to collectively working to serve the West 7th community that both organizations cherish."

"We may have a new address," Rosener

said, "but we are the same people, with the same mission, same vision and same heart."

While the exact day of the clinic's opening remains uncertain, information will become available at allinahealth.org/ufpclinic, and appointments may also be scheduled at 651-241-5200 once its phone lines are active.

Dr. Tim Rumsey, who has served as a faculty physician in Allina Health's residency program for decades while it has been located at UFM, described the experience of leaving the site of the program's founding as "surreal." But he added, "We're very excited about the new location and glad to move ahead and continue to serve and teach." One of the upsides of the new location, he said, is the proximity to United Hospital, where the residency program will continue its inpatient service. "Caring for the underprovided requires 24-hour care," Rumsey said. "We're delivering babies at six in the morning, for instance. Hospital service helps facilitate that kind of continuity."

Rumsey also noted other advantages of the new location, such as being near marginalized people who the program can serve, from the residents of Catholic Charities' Higher Ground homeless shelter to those who had until December sought treatment at nearby St. Joe's, a Fairview

ALLINA, PG 2

West Seventh Street is not a corridor; it's a neighborhood

The following letter, signed by the board of directors of the West 7th Business Association, was sent on December 8 to St. Paul Mayor Melvin Carter, the City's seven councilmembers and Ramsey County's seven commissioners:

Honorable Public Servants,

It should be no secret to you that the West 7th Business Association represents a constituency that has been strongly opposed to the Riverview Corridor Advisory Committee's determination of the so-called Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) in a massively expensive proposal for transit between downtown St. Paul and the airport and Mall of America.

During the process, we presented a petition signed by more than 3,100 individuals and business owners opposed to light-rail transit on West 7th Street. Our local representatives on the PAC consistently argued against the direction being taken. We provided steady and public constructive criticism via the *Community Reporter* during the years of process.

In the end, the LPA decision effectively denied all those efforts, without proving the validity of the ideas being adopted.



Streetcars run along West Seventh Street in 1918.

But at least, we believed, the adoption process included a commitment to review the decision — to confirm the validity of those ideas after several years in which they might be tested and confirmed.

That commitment called for a review of the decision as follows:

In December, 2020, the PAC will reconvene to evaluate the technical and financial outlook for the Riverview Corridor

Project, to determine whether the chosen LPA is likely to become a reality by 2025, and make alternate plans if necessary.

We learned long ago that the earliest projected "reality" for this project is 2031-2032, six or more years after the original target.

Yet the RCRRA recently began the process of convening a new PAC, and announced that the December meeting would not be pursued by the new PAC.

This decision, in addition to its abandonment of a commitment made as part of the original approval of the proposed LPA, is also remarkable for its ability to ignore several vital points:

- The original project cannot be achieved by 2025.
- The transit needs of the West End and Highland areas have remained poorly addressed in the years since the LPA was adopted, in spite of a second resolution elaborately called for research and study in the "Ford Corridor."
- The pandemic has changed all economic conditions in the public sector.

WEST SEVENTH, PG 2





FEDERATION
UPDATE
882 West 7th, Suite 6
fortroadfederation.org

Board Update
At the Dec. 14 meeting, it approved some updates to the strategic plan, a 2021 budget and updates to the personnel policy. Planning for board recruitment began as well as discussion about the Annual Meeting in 2021. In lieu of the traditional holiday party in January, the board will volunteer serving a meal at the Catholic Charities Opportunity Center.

Upcoming Meetings, via Zoom. Details , log-in info at fortroadfederation.org/calendar

- Office closed - 1/1/21
- Transportation and Land Use Committee - 1/6, 6:30pm
- Joint Riverview Task Force - 1/7, 6-7pm
- Board - 1/11, 7pm
- Community Engagement and Outreach Committee - 1/21, 6:30pm

Yard Signs
Yard sign text includes, "West 7th Believes: Black Lives Matter, Fort Road Together, LGBTQ Lives Matter, Women's Rights are Human Rights, Immigrants & Refugees are Welcome, All Abilities are Celebrated." See the yard sign design and order at fortroadfederation.org/yardsign. Yard signs are ready for curbside pickup at our office after purchase.

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

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

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 at editor@communityreporter.org.

-- David Lamb, Editor, *Community Reporter*



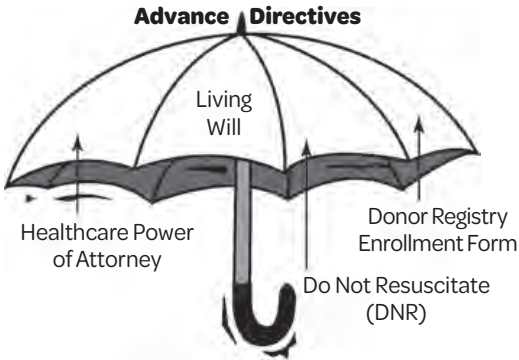
WEST END HEALTHLINE

If You Were Sick, Who Would Speak for You?

BY COURTNEY KLINKHAMMER, MD

Among all the surprises 2020 brought us have been new challenges for getting the care we want. Every morning, as I walk into the hospital and report to work, I pass a sign on the entrance — "No Visitors Allowed." Like other healthcare providers, we have been forced to ask our patients to battle illness without the nearby help of those that love them, support them, and can speak for them.

Given that, it is more important than ever to determine what a patient would want if the worst-case scenario were to happen. Asking whether a patient would want a breathing tube or CPR are difficult and uncomfortable conversations. My job is to help people to start to think about whether they would want to be placed on a breathing machine or ventilator. Although every person is unique, we know that those who are more frail oftentimes struggle to get off breathing machines when they have COVID-19. Those who have the coronavirus rarely survive CPR if their heart stops. As we brace for the next surge—hopefully the last with vaccinations having already begun for certain populations—it is important to have these really tough conversations while we are healthy. With COVID-19, problems with breathing sometimes progress so quickly that providers don't have a chance to talk about these wishes with our patients. I like to refer my patients to the conversation guide created by Ariadne



Labs called *Being Prepared in the Time of COVID-19: Three Things You Can Do Now*. The first step is identifying which person in your life could stand in for you to make important medical decisions if you became too sick to do so. This person needs to know you and your preferences well enough to choose on your behalf—and to not make choices based on what they would want for you. When patients come the hospital, we will ask you to identify a person to serve this role. You can also make this an official decision by filling out an advance care directive.

So let's say you have identified who you feel would best make medical decisions for you—now what? For starters it's important that, they know you have identified them to make decisions on your behalf should that be needed. Then make sure they know what is important to you regarding your medical care. Maybe your greatest fear is

being on a breathing machine for a long time. For some patients and their proxies whom I speak with, the most important thing to you at the end of their life is to be at their home. For some being pain free is more important to than anything else at the end of life. Most of us have stories about family or friends that we have seen at the end of life, and what we liked or didn't like about their experiences; these can be a place to start thinking about your own wishes.

Lastly, it is important to think about and discuss your medical preferences specific to COVID-19. Would you want to be brought to the hospital if you had COVID-19 or stay at home if possible? Would you want to be placed on a breathing machine or would you want a greater focus on comfort and non-invasive treatments?

As vaccines begin to be administered to health-care workers and qualifying elderly people in Minnesota, many are hopeful that we will begin to make progress beating the pandemic. But we are not out of the woods yet, and even then care directives will remain important for people affected by all sort of unforeseen illnesses. Take the time today to start these critical conversations with your loved ones and make sure they get the care they desire.

Courtney Klinkhammer, MD is a resident physician at the Allina Health United Family Medicine Residency Program.

Letter to the Editor
Transit for the Neighborhood—and the Region

BY JAMES SCHOETTLER, CITIZEN ADVOCATES FOR REGIONAL TRANSIT (C-A-R-T.ORG)

Kent Petterson made a number of good points in the December issue of the *Community Reporter*. In particular, he cited the need for both local and regional transit service in the Riverview Corridor. He recognized that these two service needs require different forms of transit; and the first order of business is for the implementation of local bus service with ten-minute frequency and stops appropriately located up and down West 7th Street. With suitable refinements of bus stops and streetscape, this bus service would go a long way toward connecting Corridor residents with all the businesses and services up and down Seventh, improving business and enhancing neighborhood life.

The importance of two modes of public transit cannot be overstated. As noted in our first *Community Reporter* article last July, for nearly two hundred years, the Corridor has also been a vital regional artery, today connecting our international airport, the Mall of America and the eastern third of the metro area. We outlined a regional transit alternative for Light Rail Transit (LRT) (rb.gy/egclc6) that avoids West Seventh completely, while providing the same level of regional service as the Blue Line or

Green Line LRT. The West 7th bus would safely connect with the LRT at each of the LRT stations that are near but not on West 7th. The West 7th community would have the best of both.

The fundamental error of Ramsey County's Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) is to try to combine both local and regional transit service into one, with its so-called "modern streetcar." In so doing, it compounds the drawbacks inherent in either approach. It would mean no improvement in service for 10-15 years and, if it is in fact built, a permanent bottleneck for east metro riders for generations.

Ramsey County has recently restarted the Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) that supervises the LPA. They are intent on pounding through their \$2 billion folly unless and until it is deemed infeasible. But the notion of combining local and regional transit in one vehicle, running in traffic, is as infeasible as ideas come. With the new PAC having the goal of pushing through this folly, it is vitally important that community members make their voices heard and demand that our leaders abandon their quixotic fantasies in favor of practical solutions: frequent bus service on West 7th now and a new approach to a regional transit connection between Downtown St. Paul and the Airport.

ALLINA, PG 1

Health hospital that closed last month and was converted to a community wellness center.

But Rumsey did not paper over the challenges of moving a program that had grown over its 25 years in its size and ambitions. "We're working with Allina to redevelop a sliding scale," he said, referring to the flexible payment model in place at UFM. He noted that the new clinic would accept all insurance that Allina takes as well as Medical Assistance and Medicare.

The new program will also have several roles for nurse practitioners and physician assistants to fill. Of his former colleagues, who were advanced practitioners, Rumsey said, "I miss all of them—the nurse

practitioners, physician assistants, social workers and psychologists whom we were able to work beside as partners at UFM."

After being furloughed in March, Rumsey decided over the summer to retire from seeing patients, though he plans to remain involved in teaching at the program. He said he would miss his patients as well.

Patients of the UFM clinic received calls in recent weeks following up on its October letter announcing the departure of Allina Health's doctors and asking them to select a new primary care provider at UFM. A copy of the callers' script obtained by the *Community Reporter* instructed them to inform patients of "a number of new providers starting in the coming months."

WEST SEVENTH, PG 1

Every responsible transit system in the world is reviewing, reconsidering and revising future planning.

- While Metro Transit has incorporated the LPA into its master plan, this development threatened the possibility of eventually having a truly regional transit system, as the Citizen Advocates for Regional Transit have demonstrated.

We call on you to invest some of the time and funds of the RCRRA in restoring the public review meeting; creating a process that will allow the

public to take a meaningful part in that meeting; and preparing clear responses to the many serious objections to the current LPA that the public, given the opportunity, will provide in abundance.

Sincerely,
West 7th Business Association Board of Directors: Jerold M. Rothstein, Vice-President; Paula Faughender, Secretary; Cheryl Schak, Treasurer; Landen Hedrick, Rebecca Austin, Richard Berger, Brennan Malanaphy, Julene Maruska



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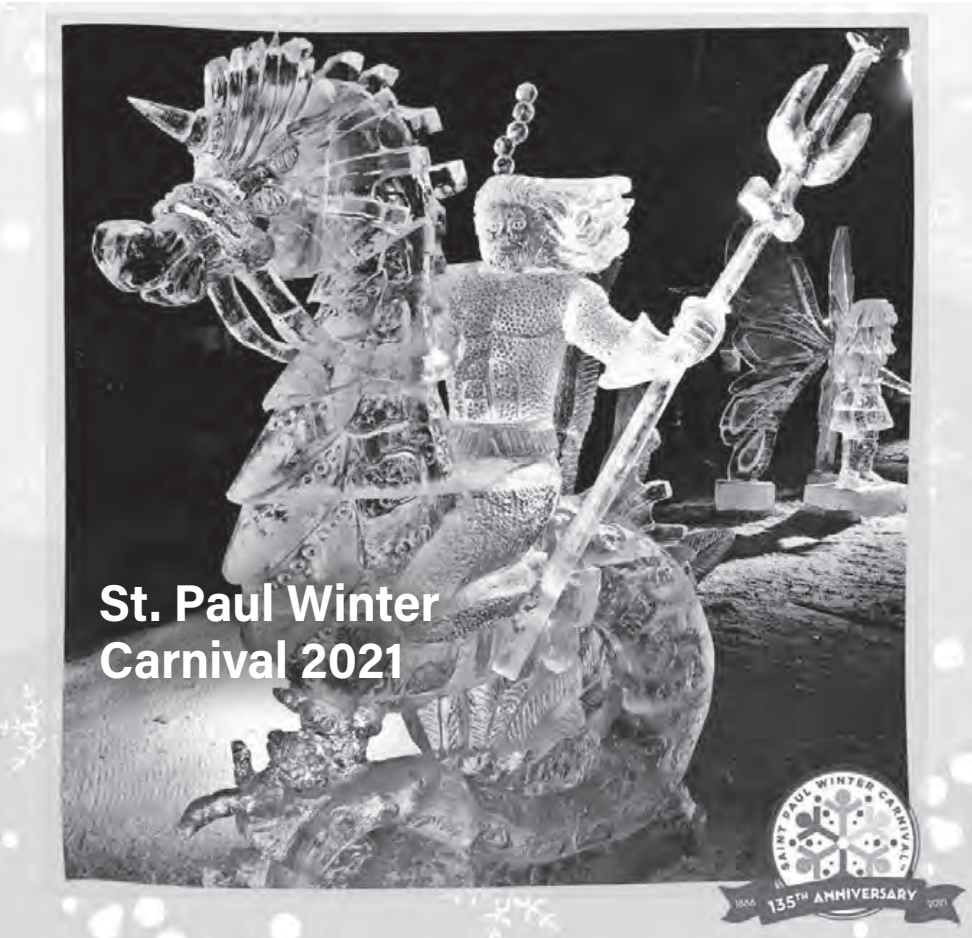
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Community News & Events



St. Paul Winter Carnival

The 135th edition of the winter tradition will move forward in a new form this year in light of the pandemic. The socially distanced events begin January 1 and run through February. Visit wintercarnival.com for a full calendar. Highlights include:

- **Ice sculptures** (pictured above) can be viewed (\$20/vehicle) in a drive-through ice and snow sculpture feature at the Minnesota State Fairgrounds (1265 Snelling Ave. N.), Jan 28–Feb 7 on weekday evenings or weekends from 9am-10pm.
- **Ice-Fishing Competition** (Jan 1–Feb 7): A digital contest in which you submit photos of your catch, the competition will award Minnesotans from across the state with prizes spanning categories such as largest walleye, largest northern pike bass, and others.
- **Craft Drink Experience** (Jan 15–Feb 14): Participating restaurants, local breweries and coffee shops around St. Paul will offer a “passport” program with which you can enjoy discounts and collect “stamps” from the retailers that make you eligible for prizes.
- **Art Show** (Jan 9–Feb 21): Taking place at AZ Gallery (308 Prince St.), the show celebrates Minnesota artists.

- **Scavenger Hunts** (Daily Jan 28-Feb 7): The festival is organizing socially distanced scavenger hunts for all ages—one exploring the city’s parks, another its historic landmarks and another its shops and attractions. Find out more on wintercarnival.com.
 - **Puzzle Competitions** (morning of Jan 30): Known as the nation’s largest puzzle contest, this year’s will take place in-person and socially distanced at Landmark Center. A virtual puzzle contest will be conducted via Zoom on January 31.
 - **Winter Run** (Jan 30): The fundraiser will take place with a 5K fun run around Lake Phalen. Runners can also participate virtually.
 - **Hot Cocoa Drive-up** (Jan 30, 12-3pm): The historic St. Paul Hotel is bringing their traditional hot cocoa and rice crispy bars event outdoors.
 - **Orchid Show** (Jan 31): Hundreds of orchids will transform the Como Conservatory into a tropical wonderland. Visit comozoconservatory.org for more information.
- Minnesota Birch Beer Collaboration Launches**
Northern Soda Company and the St. Paul Winter Carnival have once again come together to support each other with the creation of a

limited-edition soda: Minnesota Birch Beer. The non-alcoholic soda is now available at grocers and other retailers in St. Paul. “This collaboration shows what can happen when small businesses and local organizations come together and support each other,” said Deb Schaber, president and CEO of the Saint Paul Festival & Heritage Foundation.

Eight St. Paul Residents Receive Assistance Following Apartment Fire
Following an apartment fire in the Riverview neighborhood of St. Paul, American Red Cross volunteers connected with the eight residents, providing comfort, essential items such as food, clothing, shelter and medications, and help beginning the long-term recovery process. “As we continue to help our neighbors in need, we urge everyone to take steps to minimize the risk of a fire occurring in their home,” said Phil Hansen, Regional Executive Director for the Minnesota Region of the American Red Cross. An average of seven people per day die in the U.S. due to a home fire. Visit redcross.org/homefires for additional free resources and safety tips.

Knight Foundation Announces \$2.2 million in Grants to St. Paul Arts
The grants go to a number of arts organizations: the Playwrights’ Center, Penumra Theatre Company, FilmNorth, Victoria Theater Arts Center, Ordway Center for the Performing Arts, Public Art St. Paul and Mixed Blood Theatre Company.

MN Pharmacists Successfully Close Care Gaps for Patients with Diabetes
MN Community Measurement announced the results of a yearlong study on the impact of pharmacy-based engagement to close gaps in care for patients with diabetes. The study is part of the organization’s broader efforts to empower health care decision makers with meaningful data to drive improvement and details the pharmacy program’s success eliminating 80 percent of open clinical opportunities. Find the full study at rb.gy/3cmjwx.

World Without Genocide’s Born on the Battlefield
Born on the Battlefield is an introduction to International Humanitarian Law (IHL) presented by the American Red Cross and World Without Genocide at Mitchell Hamline School of Law, via Zoom. IHL seeks to limit the effects of armed conflict and to protect civilians, people providing humanitarian aid, and the wounded or those who are taken prisoner. This two-part program will cover the background of International Humanitarian Law, the treaties on which it is based, and its evolution in international law. January 23, 10-11:30am. \$10 for the general public, \$5 for students and seniors. Register online: bit.ly/2JqgQJg

New rep joins Advisory Committee Policy Advisory Committee

BY DIANE GERTH
As we know, the idea of a transit corridor along West 7th Street has been kicked around since the mid-1990s, and the latest iteration, the Riverview Corridor “modern streetcar” has moved into its newest phase, one where engineering and environmental questions will attempt to be answered. In the first meeting of the project’s Policy Advisory Committee (PAC), City Councilmember Rebecca Noecker expressed the desire that the public engagement process “be better this time around.” The frustration of residents and business owners with the lack of information about the project was a common theme in the initial phase.
In that phase, the community representative on the PAC was Laurel Severson, who has chosen to not continue in this role. As she made her decision public, she stated that she “didn’t think that the businesses and those living on our skinny street are the number one consideration” of those planning the project. After spending four years working on having her voice heard, she opted to step aside.
Taking her place is Tyler Blackmon. Blackmon cut his teeth on West 7th transit planning as a member of the joint task force set up by the West 7th Federation and the West 7th Business Association to work through principles that it was hoped could guide the neighborhood voice moving forward. I had the opportunity to speak with Blackmon about his new role on the PAC.
Asked why he wanted to jump into the mess that is a transit infrastructure project in St. Paul’s West End,

Blackmon explained that he has lived along West 7th, and knows of the need for improvement along the corridor. He is pushing not only for long-term improved transit, but recognizes that there are immediate needs that can’t wait for the building of a big project.
I asked Blackmon how he will be connecting and hearing from businesses and residents at a time when meetings aren’t always possible. He acknowledged the difficulty, but thought that one-on-one conversations and small group meetings can often lead to more in-depth conversations about the details of the project. He is seeking feedback at a dedicated email address: RiverviewFeedback@gmail.com.
And details about the project are the name of the game this time around. I told him of the frustrations of neighbors about the project during the last phase when design details were scarce, and concerns about impacts were pushed aside by decision makers. Concerns about construction disruptions, street closures, parking lot cutoffs, sidewalk narrowing and a host of other worries were swept aside as being “too soon to consider” and “part of the next stage of the process.”
That next stage is now, and it is our job to inform Blackmon of the concerns of the neighborhood residents and businesses and make certain that these are not lost on the PAC. With a lead policy committee that appears to be little more than a booster club for dedicated light rail down our skinny little street, we must make sure our questions are answered and our voices heard.



The Jewish Family Service’s annual B’Yachad Gift Bag Program has for 10 years offered several ways to volunteer, either by donating, shopping, wrapping or delivering gifts to people throughout the community who are in need emotionally, financially or spiritually. The program is funded exclusively by donations of time and money.
As the COVID-19 pandemic emerged this spring, it became clear that B’Yachad would need to proceed differently this year. In Hebrew, b’yachad means “together,” something that presented too much risk for the time being. Trying to identify safe ways for people to volunteer, program leaders acknowledged that there could be no groups of people wrapping gifts; no in-store shopping; and no greeting people at their front door to deliver gifts. Instead, they asked people to donate online this year. All bags contained standard items that could be ordered in large quantities online. Volunteers safely delivered gift bags to nearly 185 people, who were struggling with isolation or loneliness, experiencing financial hardship, or who need help believing someone cares. Recipients included chaplaincy and Holocaust survivor clients.
During this time of being apart from one another, so many people and agencies came ‘together’ to make this happen. What a beautiful example of community connection. Find out more about the Jewish Family Service and its programming at jfssp.org.



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In the Community

St. Paul Teacher Joins Hall of Fame, Recognized for Outstanding Work in Youth Service

Keystone Community Services is proud to announce that one of our staff, Ed Steinhauer, was inducted into the Youth Intervention Hall of Fame on December 4. The annual award is presented by the Youth Intervention Programs Associations (YIPA) and honors individuals for their work with vulnerable youth.

"We know how hard our Keystone team works, to deliver services in neighborhoods across Saint Paul, and to have a teacher be recognized for that dedication is really special," said Mary McKeown, President of Keystone. Steinhauer was nominated for the Friends of Youth Leadership Award and was selected to join others who have demonstrated an "above and beyond" commitment to helping their students and their families.

Keystone's Community Kids Program is a 21st Century Community Learning Center and an accredited program that serves youth, grades K-10, and their families living, working or attending school in the West 7th neighborhood.

"I feel honored to be recognized by YIPA," said Steinhauer. "As a teacher, I've learned that learning happens when we're able to build trusting relationships with children. Trust comes when we model empathy, curiosity, and playfulness. We also have to tacitly acknowledge that our kids get to make choices, like showing up with an open mind and an open heart. You just can't coerce choices like those. So as leaders of children, we have to model open-heartedness, too."

McKeown said another Keystone staff member was inspired to nominate Steinhauer and shared this anecdote about his impact on a young person in the Commu-



Ed mentors students in person before the COVID-19 pandemic forced him to find ways to engage in remote learning.

nity Kids program:

"One of Ed's students was sad when her family moved out of our neighborhood. Ed kept her enrolled online so she can continue to receive academic assistance and connection with friends. Ed checks in with the parents frequently to make them aware of support services. He delivered needed school supplies and books to their new home. Ed has provided a trusted source of support during a difficult transition."

Since 1999, the Youth Intervention Hall of Fame has recognized only 89 individuals in the Youth Intervention Field. You

can learn more about the award and meet the other youth leaders recognized this year online here - <https://yipa.org/membership/youth-intervention-hall-fame/>.

Keystone Community Services was founded in 1939 as a small neighborhood resource center in St. Paul. Today, Keystone supports more than 37,000 people in Ramsey County through a variety of community-based programs serving low-income adults and families, youth and seniors. For more information on Keystone, visit keystoneservices.org.

Community REPORTER

Community Reporter 50th Anniversary

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thank you!

EDITORIAL CARTOON



Dave Thune, former longtime St. Paul City councilmember representing the West Seventh neighborhood (1995-2015), responds to the recent changes at the United Family Medicine clinic. Per "Allina Health" on page 1, all but one of the doctors that were practicing at the clinic before the pandemic began will begin practicing at the new United Family Physicians Clinic this month answering Kevin's second question.



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Wishes the community a safe and healthy recovery from the challenges of 2020.

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In the Community

Ducks, Swans and Snow Sculptures



HALLE O'FALVEY
columnist
halleofalvey@gmail.com

The waters of the lakes and rivers are open in many places yet. Lake Phalen, in St. Paul, is one, as is Bass Ponds in Bloomington. Trumpeter swans and goldeneyes are plentiful. There were many mallards, as well as a few pairs of hooded mergansers hanging around each other.

The trumpeter swans have their full grown grey colored signets with them as they navigate to their winter residence. You can tell the families apart from one another. They stay close together. Many parents can bring five signets to adulthood. In the late summer the 'flight school' is hilarious with five learning to fly at the same time. Lots of short take offs and landings.

The goldeneyes are brilliant with their striking golden eyes. The male has a green head with a white patch below each eye. Its body is mostly white with black tail feathers that seem to stick up. The female has a beautiful warm brown head, a grey body, and a white patch on her neck. The ducklings share that white patch. Both goldeneyes have black bills and golden eyes. They are divers, so their legs are further back on their bodies, it is more difficult for them leave the water. Not like their waterfowl relatives, the mallards, who we often see walking on land with great ease. Hooded mergansers are divers too, and the smallest of all the mergansers. With a big white patch on their heads, amber eyes and transparent eyelids, the male mergansers almost look like an abstract painting in browns, blacks and whites. Both males and females have crests on their heads. It was a great view in the bleak, cloudy landscape this December.

So, here's my nature joke: If Kevin, our resident white squirrel, lost his tail, where would you to get him another? A



The Usumacinta River Visits the Mississippi by Javier Del Cuerto at 100 Mounts Blvd. in St. Paul.

"Retail" Store.

This month will be our snowiest but coldest month according to the Farmers Almanac. So, if you are up to it. Here is your winter activity for January: Make Snow Sculptures, but not just any old snow sculptures. Make your own snow-based renderings of "Minnesota Rocks," stone sculptures located around our city. They were carved over several weeks during a stone carving symposium that came to St Paul in 2006 thanks to St. Paul Public Arts. (I visited the carvers many times.) Twelve sculptures were installed in our city. Visit one, two or all twelve sculptures. I have listed the website that has an image of each stone sculpture and its location below this article. Also, North Bridge Park has several sculptures worth an echo in snow.

If you take this challenge to make your own renderings in snow, you can use your hands as tools, of course or bring some hand tools. I got some great advice from local artist, teacher

and Snow Sculpturer, Dusty Thune, founding member of the Internationally Ranked Snow Sculpting Team "House of Thune." Dusty recommends using shovels, sandpaper, ice scrappers, curry-combs (metal horse brushes), bringing a five-gallon bucket, a sled, wood chisels, and of course, a sharpening stone to keep your tools sharp. Are you up for this challenge? I, for one, will be preparing a large blue, Ikea bag full of gardening shovels, sandpaper, ice scrappers, and maybe a few screw drivers and spoons. Send me photos of you and your sculpture for us to share with our readers at halleofalvey@gmail.com.

View the snow sculptures at houseofthune.com/home/ and the North High Bridge Park sculptures at stpaul.gov/facilities/north-high-bridge-park. A guide to the Minnesota Rocks sculptures is available at bit.ly/2KWEZY4 and more information on them can be found here: bit.ly/3hfZVFM.

New light on case sets Myon Burrell free

BY DAVID LAMB

After the killing of George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis police officers on May 25, 2020 spurred renewed interest in issues of institutional racism in the criminal justice system, the questions began. Perhaps because of her high profile as a contender at the time to be the Democratic vice-presidential nominee, some zeroed in on the work of Senator Amy Klobuchar, who had previously served as the Hennepin County attorney and declined to prosecute the officer accused of murdering Floyd. Within weeks, the Center for Responsive Politics reported that Senator Klobuchar had received more money from police union PACs than all but one of her peers in the senate, and legal activists launched inquiries into the cases she prosecuted.

The one that drew the most attention involved Myon Burrell, convicted at the

age of sixteen of murdering eleven-year-old Minneapolis resident Tyesha Edwards. For eighteen years, Burrell waited in prison, insisting he was innocent. Suddenly, with new interest in police misconduct, activists took up his cause. After an *Associated Press* report questioned the validity of evidence used to convict Burrell, the Center for Wrongful Convictions and the Innocence Project convened a panel of legal experts to conduct a "conviction integrity" review, supported by the Minneapolis NAACP and the ACLU of Minnesota, among other organizations. The office of the Hennepin County attorney responded by defending Burrell's conviction, saying, "This case is being politicized..." and insisting that "[t]he evidence is quite strong." But Senator Klobuchar backed the effort for a review.

Professor Mark Osler, a former assistant U.S. attorney who runs the clemency clinic

at the University of St. Thomas' law school, played a leading role in it. Selected as one of six legal experts from across the country to comprise the panel, Osler worked with his students to evaluate the case, new evidence recently brought to light and reforms in the criminal justice system since Burrell's conviction. Osler described it as exactly the kind of work his clemency clinic focuses on. "These are people [in prison] for whom

RELEASE, PG 7



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Community Nourishment



DEBORAH PADGETT
columnist

DEAR DEB Be the Change...Love What is...

Peace begins within. ... The glory of the human spirit lies in our ability to choose, to let go of despair, to turn our energies to creative uses. Peace begins with resolution of our inner wars. — Promise of a New Day, Karen Casey & Martha Vanceburg, passage from Dec. 13.

How I have struggled between speaking out and remaining still! My world today seems a veritable Tower of Babel with everyone talking and no one listening, caring, contemplating or taking heart. I want to scream “words matter, reason matters, facts and data matter”! I cannot make sense of the images of cruelty or the excuses for perpetuating suffering that could be alleviated. I feel battered by the voices that defy reason; the blatant lies accepted as truth merely because they’ve been repeated over and over again. Many times I have experienced gaslighting and crazy-mak-

ing, illogical diatribes through which it seems my voice can never be heard. My first attempt at writing a column this month, was titled “I’m Speaking!” I was inspired by Vice President Elect Kamala Harris and her calm, dynamic, knowledgeable, persevering and compassionate words when she was interrupted during a debate. These words have been applauded by and taken up as a mantra by women everywhere, and for good reason. I spoke of the history and tirelessness of women showing up and speaking up, a tradition I enjoyed following in, and the forces that serve to silence them. The more I contemplated speaking my convictions and/or my complicity in remaining silent, the more the cacophony of careless and thoughtless speech crowded my mind. In recent times my troubled mind, my fears for my loved ones and the future, my grief at the massive loss of life, my fear of becoming sick myself or of losing my true life’s love have left me awake in the night. Last night I found rest in a Yoga Nidra practice led by Jennifer

Piercy. Her close and soothing voice urged: “Set your deep resolve for this practice. Ask yourself: in your life right now, what is your deepest, most heartfelt desire? ... Now, see and feel your life with the fulfillment of this desire. What would your life look, sound, smell and taste like if this deepest desire were a reality? State your desire like a mantra. Then give thanks and let it go...” Over the years I’ve engaged in this and other meditative practices I have settled on a mantra of “love what is” along with, what sometimes seems the conflicting notion to “be the change.” I slept soundly and awakened to my morning ritual of listing those things I feel good about today. I reached for my daily passage in *The Promise of a New Day*. I found resolution for my conflict between speaking out and silent acceptance. I returned to the heartfelt desire I embraced in my sleeplessness. My desire, my choice, my pursuit, is to be the change I wish to see in the world. To speak out but listen, too. And as I act and speak for change, with all my heart, I will also love what is, for that is where freedom is found. *Deborah Padgett is a writer and visual artist living in the West 7th Community. Please visit <http://padgettstudios.com/>*



ERIN BRANDEL
DYKHUIZEN
columnist

BEING WELL A New Year's Resolution: Self-Compassion

Last night I was sitting on my couch, watching TV, and I found my arms resting on my ever-growing belly and noticed it was a bit bigger than last time I checked. Mind you, I am not pregnant. No, this “fluffiness” is due in part to letting my gym membership lapse because of the pandemic and in part due to the stress-eating and take-out habit (support local restaurants!) that I have acquired. I catch myself staring at my body, thinking, “I’m disgusting. I can’t stand myself. I have no self-control. It’s not like I have lacked the time to exercise.” We can be our harshest, most dishonest and unreasonable critics. Maybe you can relate, though perhaps it’s not about your belly but your messy house, your shaky finances, your chronic disorganization, etc. So many things can lure us into this trap of self-criticism. Often our immediate response is to make a plan to fix the problem that we can’t help but fixate on -- a big plan. So, we embark on the latest diet, decide to Marie Kondo the entire house, make a budget that we are definitely going to stick to this time, cutting back a little extra for January

Give yourself a mental hug. Let yourself know it's okay to make mistakes. You don't need to be perfect.

because we overspent during the holidays. We decide to fix our problems once and for all. This is an especially prevalent reaction at the beginning of the year when we are encouraged to set resolutions to transform our lives for the better. That works sometimes, but most often, big changes fail, and when we fail, we fall back into the cycle of self-criticism and the behavior that was distressing to begin with. Except with the idea that we have failed at making a change now haunting us, we often feel worse than before. It is hopeless, you might think to yourself, rationalizing that you might as well finish that box of chocolates.

What to do instead? This January, I challenge you to a new resolution: use self-compassion. That is, treat yourself with kindness and understanding, much the way you would treat any fellow human being. This may sound simple, but many of us find it much easier to be compassionate with others than with ourselves. Think of some of the words you use to describe yourself inside your head when you mess up. Do you call yourself stupid, lazy, or a screw-up? Now imagine how you’d feel if someone said those things about someone you care about, such as a child you love. You’d probably get pretty angry. You might even tell them off, that they have no right to talk to your loved one that way. So why do we tolerate this kind of abuse from ourselves? It’s certainly not effective to berate ourselves over past mistakes. We wouldn’t talk to anyone else this way. The next time you find yourself criticizing or shaming yourself, stop. Take a moment and picture yourself as a small child. Talk to yourself with kindness. Give yourself a mental hug. Let yourself know it’s okay to make mistakes. You don’t need to be perfect. You can accept your imperfections, and you can keep trying. Go ahead and start that exercise routine, but do it because it will make you feel better and live a longer, healthier life -- not because you hate your beautiful, fluffy belly. *Erin Brandel Dykhuizen, MA, MSW, LICSW is a psychotherapist living and working in the West Seventh neighborhood. You can learn more about her work at www.erinbdlicsw.com.*



TIM JOHNSON
columnist

BUILDING COMMUNITY What's the problem with truth?

Our children were asleep, or so I thought, when I asked my wife if she had finished hiding the Easter eggs. Unfortunately, my five-year-old son was awake and overheard the question. He quickly determined that if mom was hiding the Easter eggs, then what we’d taught him about the Easter bunny doing that job wasn’t true. He proceeded, in short order, to debunk the tooth fairy and then Santa Claus. Like dominoes toppling one after the other, they all fell to the true or false clarity of a child’s perspective. As a Christian minister, I was glad that Jesus, about whom we tell some rather amazing stories, seemed to be still standing unscathed. We live in a time when what is true has been very much in question—and it likely will remain this way for the foreseeable future. We have lived under a president who for the past four years has branded any truth that does not fit with the world as he wishes it to be as “fake news,” including the results of the November election. But the issue of what is true and what is false goes well beyond any assertion of a one-term president who treats truth like potter’s clay. Many of us are relieved that we will soon have a president who values science as a place in which truth can be grounded. We understand that, despite the complexity of the world, scientists willing to reserve judgment and accept unwelcome truths have helped us understand the importance of masks and social distancing in the fight against COVID-19. These scientists have created a vaccine that

"...if truth is to be found, it will only happen in the context of relationships that are strengthened and nurtured."

will hopefully make it possible for us to be once again in close proximity with family, friends and neighbors without fear of catching or spreading a deadly disease. Other scientists alert us to the extreme danger of climate change and, we hope, will help us mitigate some of its worst effects. Yet science also can come up short if seen as the sole arbiter of truth. Author Wendell Berry, in his book of essays, *Our Only World*, is quick to point out that analytical science commonly locates its truth in evermore focused specializations. When our son applied to schools of engineering, I was astounded to learn how many types of engineering existed from which he would ultimately need to choose. The truth of science is distilled in ever more detailed refinement of smaller and smaller parts. Where the truth in science comes up short is in its capacity to see the whole, which is more than the material existence of, say, a plant or a human being, but also the relationships that exist among them. As Berry notes, “we may know the anatomy of the body to the extent of the anatomy of the atoms, and yet we love and instruct our children as whole persons.”

Truth is built on more than specialized observation. Truth also requires relationship. The very notion of “fake news” is built and reinforced on the fracturing of relationship, a state in which truth is filtered only through the lens of conflicting ideologies. It was this brokenness of relationship that made it possible for German doctors to experiment on Jewish prisoners, scientists in the U.S. to conduct the Tuskegee syphilis study on African American men, or Line 3 advocates in Minnesota to ignore the treaty rights of Native Tribes. Truth requires seeing the whole as well as the parts. Truth is found in anecdote as well as in data. It may be some time before we are able to discover a shared sense of truth on which we might all rely. But, if truth is to be found, it will only happen in the context of relationships that are strengthened and nurtured. This, of course, puts a special responsibility on those of us who are accustomed to having our stories heard. There was and is truth in the Easter bunny, the tooth fairy and Santa Claus, but for our children that truth was firmly planted in our love and relationship. It is a connection which is much stronger than the biological truth found in our DNA. When the Easter bunny was no longer needed, the truth of our bond remained. *Tim Johnson is a retired pastor of the United Church of Christ.*

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- **Virtual Storytimes:** Our children’s librarians bring you a weekly storytimes full of books, songs, and more. Get silly and learn together.
- **Ruby’s Report:** Enjoy our monthly newsletter especially for babies and toddlers from Ruby the Raccoon. Each newsletter includes activities, rhymes and songs to help build your little ones speaking and literacy skills.
- **Storytime @ Home Guides:** Check out our themed storytime guides that you can enjoy in your own home anytime. Each guide has links to videos of read-aloud stories, songs and fingerplays, and simple preschool craft and extension activities.

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- **Bananas in Quarantine:** Saint Paul Public Library’s beloved Performing Banana puppets and their families have been hard at work documenting their lives in 2020. Keep your eyes peeled for a new Performing Bananas minisode every week!
- **Catch-a-Chapter:** Join Miss Carla as she reads aloud the first chapter of favorite kids’ books that can be enjoyed by the whole family. If you like what you hear, borrow the book from the library to continue listening or reading.
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**Food support via the
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Keystone’s mobile food shelf will be back at the West 7th Community Center Jan 4, 2021, 10am–12pm. Get free groceries and help stretch your budget. Anyone is welcome! To learn more, visit keystoneservices.org or call us at 651-645-0349.

**Stay connected with
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It’s a new year, and Keystone is back with free virtual programming for adults 55+ in our community! Our virtual programming is a great way for seniors to stay connected to their neighbors and “gather” with their peers without risking health and safety. Visit keystoneservices.org/seniors for details!

RELEASE, PG 5

the world knows about one day of their life,” Osler told the *Community Reporter*. “Our job is to tell the rest of the story—what happened before that, and what happened after. . .Burrell’s case was a great opportunity for students to make a difference.”

The panel determined that Burrell’s sentence had, in Osler’s words, “fulfilled any legitimate purpose it may have had.” While it did not aim to draw clear conclusions about guilt or innocence, it uncovered what Osler called convincing evidence of jail calls indicating that people involved in the crime knew that Burrell wasn’t there. On December 8, it concluded, recommending Burrell’s release. Eight days later, the Minnesota Board of Pardons commuted Burrell’s sentence to 20 years, his remaining two years to be served on supervised release.

Osler characterized the panel’s

recommendation as something of a warning shot to weak prosecutions. Asked whether he believed its findings suggested a need to review other cases prosecuted by the Hennepin County attorney’s office, he said, “There are weak cases from every prosecutor’s office. Some have been more problematic than others, but the problems that we talk about—the tunnel vision, the use of jailhouse informants—are across the board.”



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The Watermark Art Center in Bemidji, Minnesota has launched its *Mashkawiziwag*, or “they are strong,” exhibit features the work of a Ne-Dah-Ness Rose Greene, an emerging BIPOC photography artist from the Leech Lake Reservation. Her powerful images reveal the unscripted poetry of our human world. Going to places where people gather, she is a seeker of truth found in the emotions of those she photographs. Her portraits reveal the complexities of the human spirit and celebrate the strength of our survival. In her work we see the pride of ancestors and a future we hope for. Her view of the world is a gift in these complicated times. For more info: watermarkartcenter.org/virtual-exhibits/.

Beat Cabin Fever Online at Women’s Drum Center
Designed for youngsters aged 9–14. Three live sessions: 1/23, 2/20 & 3/20. Include demos of drums and a kit for each participant to make a percussion instrument to keep. Register at womensdrumcenter.net.

Report Finds Minnesota Has 13th Largest Population of Homeless People
Researchers analyzing the populations across the U.S. determined there are 14.1 homeless people for every 10,000 residents in Minnesota. Nearly 21 percent of these people are living unsheltered. Find the full study here: rb.gy/2xv9jh.

U of MN Press Author Conversations
Free audio conversations with the authors of recently published books online: rb.gy/apatyx.

Home Additions for People with Hearing Loss
A new report from coverage.com highlights useful devices including alarm clocks that use vibrating mechanisms or extremely loud sounds; innovative baby monitors that use light flashes, vibration and video; specialized smoke alarms and landline phones that can create captions or do video calls. View the full report here: rb.gy/3cmvwx

Dehumidifiers, Air Purifiers May Carry Fire Risk
A West 7th resident reported a house fire in November caused by a dehumidifier that had been recalled. She recommends checking the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission website (cpsc.gov) to confirm that none of your home appliances that run throughout the day or without supervision have been recalled.

Free Online College Counseling Program
A free service from Collegewise, Runway, provides resources to high schoolers planning for college, evaluate their options and keep on top of important deadlines. go.collegewise.com/runway

JFS Continues Community Support Program
Recognizing the continued need for additional mental health services as a result of this time of prolonged uncertainty—as well as the challenges of season affective disorder—the organization has continued its program offering three free 20-minute phone conversations with a Jewish Family Services mental health professional. Call Avi, 651- 410-7822 or email azadaka@jfssp.org

Solar United Neighbors Launches Solar Co-op
The new co-op deadline for joining, which is free, is January 31, 2021. Open to homeowners and business owners in the Twin Cities and surrounding areas. Together, members will learn about solar energy and leverage bulk purchasing to ensure competitive pricing and quality solar installations. Find out more at rb.gy/lbfgrn

Board Members Join Great River Passage Conservancy
This nonprofit leads advocacy and private fundraising efforts for capital projects along St. Paul’s Mississippi shores is excited to expand its leadership and create paths to new partnerships with the addition of two new board members, Tanya Bell, founder of Grand Real Estate Advisors and Cameron Boyd, who serves as general counsel for the Metropolitan Airports Commission.

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