

# Community REPORTER

SERVING WEST END NEIGHBORHOODS, DOWNTOWN ST. PAUL TO FORT SNELLING SINCE 1972

## BUILDING A NON-RACIST COMMUNITY

### Racism: A Hidden History

by **Tim Johnson**, Retired pastor of Cherokee Park United Church

[Editor's note: This is the second in a series that Tim Johnson is writing for the *Community Reporter*. His reflections are drawn from the 2019 Overcoming Racism Conference held at Metropolitan State University.]

We never really learned the story of my father's uncle David. If his name was mentioned at all, it was in hushed tones. We did pick up bits and pieces. At some point he had been institutionalized in a state-run hospital for the mentally ill where he eventually died. One sensed a strong feeling of shame that this had happened to a member of our family. My siblings and I upheld the silence by choosing not to ask. David's story was kept hidden.

There are many reasons for resistance to speaking about the legacy of racism in our nation, state and communities. Certainly, it is economically beneficial for those of us who are white to ignore our racist past. We can imagine, for example, that whatever material success we have accomplished has nothing to do with the theft of native land, culture, and religion or the denial of home loans, educational opportunities or work opportunities because of one's name or color of one's skin.

But, I have no doubt that there is an even deeper reason that so few of us know that Hitler's model for concentration camps was drawn from the imprisonment of Dakota women, children and elders below Fort Snelling following the U.S.-Dakota war in 1862. It is an area the Dakota called Bdote, where the two rivers join, and in their origin story is the place of creation. Hundreds died of starvation and illness over a long cold winter as they were imprisoned in the very place they held most sacred. It is among the many stories we in Minnesota largely keep hidden from our children. It should come as no great surprise that the Minnesota Historical Society decision to include signage at Fort Snelling which reads "Fort Snelling at Bdote" was met with fierce criticism. In response, the senate sought to cut MNHS funding by four million dollars. To be reminded of the Dakota name Bdote is to be reminded of a history we have sought to keep hidden.

We prefer to remember our stories, be they family stories or stories of nation, state and community without blemish, free of all that is discomforting and troubling. As recently as 2013, Macalester College, a school that sees itself as embracing diversity and racial justice, nonetheless named a building after Neil Hall, the school's founder, whose history includes the theft of native lands and robbing native graves. It was a hidden history until students brought it to light, seeking a change in name for the building.

At the 2019 Overcoming Racism Conference held at Metropolitan State University, Dr. Joe Feagin reminded us that our nation's founding President, George Washington, was a slave holder who used whips to keep his slaves submissive and among other atrocities had their teeth yanked out so they might be fitted with his dentures. Washington D.C. was chosen as the capitol, not because this then swampy area had such natural beauty, but because slave owners like Washington, Jefferson and Madison could keep their black servants enslaved there. This is a part of our nation's hidden history.

We are slowly coming to realize that keeping mental health struggles hidden only makes it that much more difficult to address when they surface anew. Bringing my great

**SOLIDARITY, PG 2**

## Ways of Knowing *Minnesota Compass Provides Data that Matters*

By **Jerry Rothstein**

**W**hat do we know about our city, our neighborhood, our street, not to mention the wider world of the great state of Minnesota? What is important, really necessary, nice to know but not essential?

Usually we start with an overall awareness of the larger world — something about the state, the city, taxes, schools, arts and cultural resources, services we might need. We learn the practicalities of meeting our needs.

When we want to have a broader perspective to help make family decisions; plan for the development of our business or profession; determine what social services our community will need and what agencies are best to develop and operate them — we need to have access to credible and complete information that can illuminate where we have been and how things are trending across many key categories of societal life.

The Minnesota Compass Project was developed precisely to help us address such questions. When leaders from around the state voiced a desire to have credible, easy-to-access data about what was happening in their communities across Minnesota, Wilder Research worked with advisors representing business, government, nonprofit, and philanthropy to develop and implement Minnesota Compass as a statewide resource for reliable data.

Minnesota Compass is a social indicators project that measures progress in our state and its communities. Led by Wilder Research, Minnesota Compass provides



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nonpartisan information and tracks trends in topic areas such as education, economy, workforce, health, housing, and many others.

Data and analysis on [mncompass.org](http://mncompass.org) give everyone in our state — policymakers, business and community leaders, and concerned individuals who live and work here — a common foundation to identify, understand, and act on issues that affect our communities. Compass does this by:

- Providing unbiased, credible information.
- Tracking trends and measuring progress

on issues that impact our quality of life.

- Identifying disparities by race, age, gender, and income as data are available.
- Providing additional resources for addressing issues.

Not only does MN Compass provide this wealth of material, it also allows anyone to use the tools they have developed to create individual research results. See [mncompass.org](http://mncompass.org) and go to the Build Your

**MN COMPASS, PG 5**

## Who are the people in your neighborhood, in your neighborhood...?

By **Deb Padgett**

Overheard at a local café. "He bought me a 9mm for the living room, a shotgun for the bedroom, a Glock (something or other) for the basement and a pistol for the garage." Heads nod around their table as if this all makes sense. The talker goes on to describe economic hardships and family troubles, and other bitter truths of their existence. I turn to my husband and say, "Are you hearing this?" He nods, a look of incredulity on his face.

"What could possibly go wrong," we ask simultaneously. I ask him if he is staying current on the West 7th Where the Cool Kids Hang Out (Facebook) site and he says he's out of the loop. I describe a post from yesterday in which a neighbor warns the group (us, our neighbors) to beware because someone jiggled the handle on her side door in broad daylight. The first response was "Did you call the police?" followed by post after post of people describing the arsenals they keep close at hand for just such a possible occurrence. Geez Loo-eeze! This is the same neighborhood that houses regional leadership of Mom's Demand Gun Sense.

For more than 40 years we've had family in this neighborhood. We've seen growth, retrenchment, upheaval, gentrification, poverty, blight, homelessness, growth of healthcare, mental health providers, social service providers, faith-based outreach, community building, neighborhood associations and small business development.

I'm of the belief that guns in our homes and on our streets create the very problem people are trying to solve by owning them. They create a safety hazard. How is owning a gun or two or three or four (for cripes

sake!) a reasonable and acceptable practice? I often see signs or hear the phrase, "If you see something, say something!" Well... HELL... I'm saying something now! I am shocked and appalled at the prevalence and acceptance of weapons in the hands of so many of my neighbors. You scare me and you should be scared my fear of you will lead me to arm myself because I have no business (zero, none...) owning a gun knowing what I know about the statistics on the hazard they bring to our homes, businesses and streets.

The conversation I overheard spelled a disaster waiting to happen when things get harder, pressure builds up, and the people involved lose the feeling they have any good options.

You can bet I'm not going to jiggle any more door handles in broad daylight as I try to check up on a neighbor I haven't seen hide nor hair of since the first snow fell either.

Again, I'm seeing something! I'm saying something! Is gun ownership public data? I know I can find out if a sex offender has moved into my neighborhood. Can the Fort Road Federation conduct a survey on gun ownership and share the information? I'm, frankly, afraid to find out I'm surrounded by households owning multiple guns. I'm not only frightened by the number of guns but by the perspective that sees gun ownership as a reasonable and accepted practice. Who, I ask, will save us from ourselves? I would say more and with greater emphasis on my outrage and heavier use of expletives but, frankly, I'm afraid you'll shoot me.

*Deb Padgett is a West End artists and writer, and a regular contributor to the Community Reporter.*

## There's a lot of common ground around gun sense

By **Marit Brock**

The debate around the role of guns in our culture often happens right in our own homes. How many of us had a conversation with a relative about politics or guns over the recent holidays? I used to dread those discussions as too divisive and impossible to resolve. However, as a gun violence survivor and a founding member of the Minnesota chapter of Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America, I realized that I had to wade into some uncomfortable situations in order to change our culture around guns.

I have learned that there is a lot of common ground. Nearly all of us can agree that we want to keep guns out of the hands of people who shouldn't have them — specifically criminals, those with illness that makes them a danger to themselves and others, and children. When we start from this point of common ground, we can then identify evidence-based solutions to keep our communities safe.

This can be hard work, but there are two recent statistics that keep me motivated to do this work:

- The #1 cause of death for Minnesota children is guns. I am a mother, and this statistic is unacceptable to me. We must find solutions that will keep our kids safe. [Source: Children/teens source: CDC, Fatal Injury Reports, five-year average: 2013-2017. Leading cause of death: CDC, Fatal Injury Report, 2017.]
- Nearly 4 of 5 gun deaths in Minnesota are by suicide. We talk about mass shooting or city gun violence but ignore the pain of hundreds of Minnesotans who die by gun

**GUN SENSE, PG 7**



COUNCIL PERSPECTIVES



SAINT PAUL CITY COUNCIL MEMBER CHRIS TOLBERT WARD 3 columnist

Goals for 2020

After the new year people often have new resolutions and goals. As I hear friends and family talk about what they'd like to accomplish in 2020, I think about how fortunate we are to live in a community that has prioritized the wellbeing of all residents. Many of their resolutions, and perhaps yours, can be accomplished with support by our city facilities and staff.

Want to move your body and get more exercise this year? Stop by your rec center! For only \$30 a year as a St. Paul resident you can purchase a fitness center membership, which gets you access to all thirteen rec center fitness rooms throughout the city. If you don't want to purchase a pass, but want to get out of the house comfortable on a cold day, stop by and purchase a day pass for \$3 for the fitness room, and only \$1 a day for a walking track pass.

If you want to lace up your skates and get more ice time in 2020, stop by our neighborhood outdoor ice facilities. Groveland Rec Center is the only natural ice rink in the city with its very own Zamboni, and the refrigerated rink at the Palace Rec Center is great for those warmer winter days.

Want to set aside time to discover new worlds, learn about a new topic, or take a free class to improve skills? Stop by a library! Our St. Paul Public Libraries offer hundreds of programs with tens of thousands of participants. You can do much more than just check out a book at our libraries — take a ukulele class, bring your child to story time, get free GED prep, help with a job search, and even after school homework help for school aged kids.

I wish you all the best as we begin 2020, and hope you're successful in accomplishing any goal you've set for yourself this year. As always, please reach out to my office if you ever have questions, concerns, or ideas on ways to improve our communities (651-266-8630).

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.

-- Jerry Rothstein, Editor, Community Reporter



WEST END HEALTHLINE

Improving Community Health II

BY JERRY ROTHSTEIN

A recent initiative by United Family Medicine's (UFM) Family Practice Residency Program is leading to some efforts to improve communication, connection and collaboration among individuals and groups concerned about specific community health issues.

Each Resident physician has been involved over their three-year residency in a community oriented primary care project (COPC). Until this year it was the residents' responsibility to design a project and then see whether they could gather community interest and participation.

This year, with the class of 2022, the process has been reversed. Community nonprofits and agencies were invited to submit ideas to involve the Residents in projects that the community developed, on topics that concern them the most — ones that would benefit, of course, from a doctor's involvement.

Many good responses were received, and UFM is in the process of connecting Residents with projects so that things can proceed.

One of the proposals came in from the West 7th Community Center's Community Kids After School Program, a remarkable educational resource often generating creative learning opportunities.

Community Kids proposal

Community Kids overall program goals



include promoting the development of the whole youth/child including healthy physical development, as well as college and career readiness. The Community Kids target population consists of youth from low income households attending schools in St. Paul and attending the Community Kids after school program.

Project goals for K-4 students

- To learn the benefits of physical fitness/regular exercise and healthy nutrition.
- To learn about being a doctor.
- To lessen fear and anxiety regarding regular visits to the doctor.

Project goals for students (grades 5-10)

- To learn about career pathways into the medical profession.
- To participate in medical related STEM activities.
- Increased knowledge regarding benefits of exercise and nutrition.
- Increased knowledge of the medical

profession and possible careers.

Increased comfort level around doctors. In addition, Community Kids teachers and STEM Specialist will gain knowledge and activity ideas that they can continue to share with students in the future. These may include the benefits of physical fitness/regular exercise and healthy nutrition followed by active sports and games and healthy cooking projects; discussions about why we make regular visits to the doctor, how immunizations help us; question and answer sessions about being a doctor and learning about career pathways into the medical profession; medical related, hands-on STEM activities conducted jointly between the doctor and Community Kids teachers. Also, the Resident could do a parent education session for program parents regarding regular wellness visits, immunizations, and healthy lifestyle choices.

The kids came up with a few important ideas about who would be good for the program: (a) A doctor that enjoys spending time with children and teens; (b) A doctor that enjoys physical activity/sports and games/healthy nutrition; (c) A person of color to be a role model for our students (86% are students of color, 50% are from East African immigrant families).

Two Residents have responded to the invitation: Drs. Jené Carter and Natalie Hemmerich.

In future issues, *Community Reporter* will present information on the other projects being launched under this initiative. Any time you are interested in becoming involved you can contact Editor Jerry Rothstein, 651-587-8859 or editor@communityreporter.org.



WHOLE WIDE WORLD

WEST 7TH PUBLIC LIBRARY

BY CATE SERING, LIBRARY MANAGER

As we push on through winter, West 7th Library has everything you need to enjoy the dark nights and cold weather! Stop by to check out a book or movie and enjoy our new sun lamp kit including sketchbook, pens, and origami paper to find mindfulness and peace during the harsh winter months.

The **West 7th Book Club** will be discussing *Climate Justice* by Mary Robinson on Thursday, February 27 at 6:30 p.m. We are looking for more members, and everyone is welcome. For help finding copies of book club titles, give us a call at 651-298-5516.

West 7th is hosting **One-to-One Tech Help** on February 4 and 18 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Call to make a 30-minute

appointment with us for help with your personal device (including smartphones, tablets and laptops), or a library computer.

Join us at the West 7th Library on Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. for **Preschool Storytime**. Enjoy time with your child while building a foundation for reading success. Storytime teaches social skills, letter/number recognition and vocabulary all while moving, singing and having fun.

All Saint Paul Public Library locations will be closed President's Day, February 17.

WEST 7TH LIBRARY HOURS

Mon 12:30-8pm. Tue 11:30am-5:30pm. Wed 10am-5:30pm. Thu 12:30-8pm. Fri 10am-5:30pm. Closed weekends, holidays. Info: 651-298-5516

Community REPORTER

265 Oneida St. St Paul, MN 55102

AD DEADLINE & MEETING

Copy Deadline/Meeting: Feb 17. Ad Deadline: Feb 19. 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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FEDERATIONUPDATE

974 West 7th | fortroadfederation.org

The Federation Board meeting was held on Jan. 13. The next Board meeting is Monday, Feb. 10 at 7 pm, 882 West 7th Street, Suite 6 on the second floor.

BOARD UPDATE

At the Federation's January 13 meeting, the Board supported a request from Shamrock's for serving liquor at their outdoor patio, and approved a working budget for 2020.

SPECIAL EVENTS

What is a District Council? Learn about what a district council does, learn about leadership opportunities, how to get involved in your West 7th neighborhood, and about what a board of directors is, what they do, and how to join.

- Wed, Feb. 12, 6:30-8pm. Shamrock's.
- Mon, Feb. 17, 10-11:30am. Claddagh Coffee.
- Sat, Feb 22, 9 - 10:30am. Fresh Grounds.

RSVP to emily@fortroadfederation.org or 651-298-5599.

COMMITTEES

The Federation has three committees: Transportation and Land Use, Fundraising and Development, and the Community Engagement and Outreach Committee. If you would like to join a committee or learn more about it, please call or email the office at 651-298-5599 or emily@fortroadfederation.org.

SAVE THE DATE!

The Federation's Annual Meeting will be the evening of April 7 at Summit Brewing Co.

STAY IN TOUCH

"Like" the West 7th / Fort Road Federation on Facebook and subscribe to its e-newsletter on our website — fortroadfederation.org.

CONTACT

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


SOLIDARITY, PG 1

uncle David's story to light has nothing to do with bringing shame on the family, but it has everything to do with healing the mental health struggles people continue encountering today. If we are unable to honestly name and confront the brokenness of the past, we will be unable to name and heal the brokenness of the present.

There is much we need to learn about racism in our nation, state and community. But, one thing is certain: if healing is to occur and we are able to truly live into the ideal version of our common life that we hold dear, it will be because the history and reality of racism is no longer hidden.



# Community News & Events



## February is Black History Month

"2020 marks the 150th anniversary of the Fifteenth Amendment (1870), which gave the right of black men to vote following the Civil War. It also marks the centennial of the Nineteenth Amendment and the culmination of the women's suffrage movement.

"This year's theme for Black History month, "African Americans and the Vote," recognizes the struggle for voting rights among both black men AND women throughout American history.

"It is an ongoing struggle for people of color that continues into the 21st century" [Source: chiff.com].

Take advantage of these many excellent resources:

- **African American Civil Rights Movement by the Minnesota History Center:** [libguides.mnhs.org/civilrights/](http://libguides.mnhs.org/civilrights/)
- **Black History from the National Archives:** [archives.gov/research/alic/reference/black-history.html/](http://archives.gov/research/alic/reference/black-history.html/)
- **National Museum of African American History and Culture:** [nmaahc.si.edu/](http://nmaahc.si.edu/)
- **Library of Congress, African American Odyssey:** [memory.loc.gov/ammem/aaohml/aohome.html/](http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/aaohml/aohome.html/)
- **Smithsonian Institution Black History Teaching Resources:** [learninglab.si.edu/](http://learninglab.si.edu/)
- **Minneapolis Department of Civil Rights, Black History Month:** [civilrightsmnneapolis.wordpress.com/black-history-month/](http://civilrightsmnneapolis.wordpress.com/black-history-month/)
- **Minnesota Department of Human Rights:** [mn.gov/mdhr/news-community/events-calendar/feb-events.jsp/](http://mn.gov/mdhr/news-community/events-calendar/feb-events.jsp/)

### STAR Grant Process Begins

Both Neighborhood STAR and Cultural STAR granting processes are underway.

The Neighborhood STAR Program provides low-interest loans and grants for capital/bricks & mortar improvement projects within the City of St. Paul. It is a great opportunity to pursue "gap" financing, potentially a mixture of grant and loan funds, to move forward on projects.

Online applications will open Jan. 31, with a deadline of Wednesday, March 18, 2020 at 4 p.m. Learn more at [stpaul.gov/neighborhood-star](http://stpaul.gov/neighborhood-star).

The Cultural STAR Program supports the arts and cultural sector to promote economic vitality in St. Paul. Organizations and artists are encouraged to apply for 2020 Round One funding for projects taking place between July 1, 2020 and June 30, 2021. Applications are due Friday, February 28 at 4 p.m. Learn more at [stpaul.gov/CulturalSTAR](http://stpaul.gov/CulturalSTAR).

### Nourish Your Need For Nature Love in the Wild Date Night:

2/13, 6-8 p.m. at Farm Entrance 3, 1701 Charlton St. West St. Paul. Hosted by Farmer Don Oberdorfer and Naturalist Pam Welisevich. This experience has limited reservations so sign up soon. Adults must be 21+ to drink alcohol. Pre-registration is required. \$60 per couple. Preregister at 651-455-4531 or [DodgeNatureCenter.org](http://DodgeNatureCenter.org).

### St. Paul Business Awards Nominations

The St. Paul City Council values the diverse communities that bring warmth, accessibility, and innovation to the community through many businesses. These awards are the next step in City Council's Open for Business initiative that started in 2015 to make St. Paul an even better place to do business.

Award Categories include: Traditions Award; New Kid on the Block Award Good Neighbor Business; People's

**Choice Award.** To nominate, go to [stpaul.gov/2020BusinessAwards](http://stpaul.gov/2020BusinessAwards). Nominations are open until February 28.

**Talk: Prosecuting Myanmar for Genocide of the Rohingya**

World Without Genocide will host a program about the genocide of the Rohingya in Myanmar, people the UN calls "the most persecuted people on earth." For decades the country's military has carried out rape, torture, killing, and a scorched-earth policy against this Muslim minority.

There are three concurrent efforts to end impunity for the genocide: prosecution of the country of Myanmar at the UN International Court of Justice; prosecution of leading generals and Aung San Suu Kyi, state counsellor and now-fallen human rights icon, at the Federal Court of Argentina; and an investigation at the International Criminal Court into the military generals.

This event explores the reasons for the persecution of the Rohingya; the three efforts to seek justice; and the US role in this issue. Saturday, Feb. 8, 10 am-12pm at Mitchell Hamline School of Law, 875 Summit Ave., Conservatory – Room 147. The program is open to the public. Registration is required by Feb. 7 at [worldwithoutgenocide.org/courts](http://worldwithoutgenocide.org/courts).

**Minnesota's Alternative Care and Elderly Waiver Programs**

Older adults who need services to help them remain in their homes may be interested in Minnesota's Alternative Care and Elderly Waiver programs. Programs offer a wide variety of services, including home health aide services, home-delivered meals, transportation, personal care assistants, medical supplies and equipment, companion services and homemaker services. Services that help spouses, families and others who care for older adults are also offered.

On Feb 6, 12-3pm, Ramsey County and representatives from the Senior LinkAge line, HealthPartners, Medica and UCare will provide info about eligibility and resources. Info: 651-917-4621; [bit.ly/rondolInfoSession](http://bit.ly/rondolInfoSession)

## CUSTOM FRAMING

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## APPLICATIONS ARE DUE BY FEBRUARY 28

### APPLY TODAY FOR AN ONEIDA SCHOLARSHIP

Scholarships are available to adult learners in the West Seventh Neighborhood. You must be enrolled in a certificate or degree granting post-secondary training or educational program. Funds must be used for education or training expenses only. Scholarships will be awarded in May.

**Visit [keystoneservices.org](http://keystoneservices.org), stop by the West 7th Community Center or call 651-298-5493 for more information.**

## Ready-Steady Research



**You are Invited!**

**If you are at least 70 years old and do not practice balance or strength exercises on a regular basis, you may be eligible to participate in this research study.**

**Participants attend an 8 week course that meets once per week for 90 minutes. They also participate in research interviews before and after the course. Participants receive a Fitbit to keep, and compensation.**

**The next course begins in April, 2020 at the West 7th Community Center, 265 Oneida Street Saint Paul, MN**

**For more information and to learn if you are eligible;**  
**Call: 612.626.9599**  
**Email: [readysteady3@umn.edu](mailto:readysteady3@umn.edu)**  
**<https://sites.google.com/umn.edu/readysteady/home>**



## United Family Medicine

A COMMUNITY CLINIC



## Need to soothe a scratchy throat?

## Now offering Convenience Care!

Convenience Care provides comprehensive healthcare services, including onsite laboratory tests and x-rays, and interpreter services.

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1026 West 7th Street, St. Paul | [unitedfamilymedicine.org](http://unitedfamilymedicine.org)



# Community Arts & Culture

## 'Til Death: A Marriage Musical Returns for Sixth Year

*'Til Death: A Marriage Musical* at Art House North in St. Paul drew many plaudits last year, including topping the @visitsaintpaul list of "best spots in St. Paul to cozy up for Valentine's." Writers and performers Jeremiah and Vanessa Gamble, who recently celebrated their twenty-first wedding anniversary, wrote the show and have performed it every Valentine's season since 2012.

Says Jeremiah, "It's become our Valentine's tradition. It's a joy seeing couples laughing together and cozying up to each other. Laughter is good couples' therapy."

Some couples return year after year, often bringing friends and family to experience the show for the first time. One couple remarked, "It's a must see for all married or soon to be married couples. The perfect combination of humor and inspiration." Many couples have found it to be a great way to celebrate their anniversary. "We saw it to celebrate our 50th wedding anniversary! The right blend of touching and humorous, and bits every couple can relate to." Even reviewers return! "I saw *'Til Death* again this year and loved it just as much. It's just as funny and heartfelt as ever" (SayEntirely.com.)

Joining the Gambles onstage is another real-life married duo, Damian and Anna Leverett, who are returning for their third season as the quirky newlyweds, Leslie and Freddie.

Damian says, "Doing this show is a very special experience. We all look out at the audience and see couples holding each other, laughing together, clinging to one another."

Anna adds, "I can't wait to perform *'Til*



At least the newly-weds are happy.

*Death* again. It is a JOY to get to be in the same show AND play a married couple!"

Vanessa adds, "Working with your partner has its ups and downs. The highs are high and the lows are low, mostly because you know each other so well. But... it's worth it. And we do laugh a lot, which saves everything — including our marriage — particularly during tech week."

*'Til Death* follows the story of Ethan and Olivia (portrayed by the Gambles), a couple in marital midlife crisis, who find themselves

stuck in a remote cabin with newlywed eccentric strangers (portrayed by the Leveretts) who are "perfectly perfect for each other."

**'TIL DEATH: A MARRIAGE MUSICAL** runs Fri & Sat 7:30pm, 1/31-2/22 at Art House North, 793 Armstrong Ave, St. Paul. Also 2/15, 3pm, a Pay-As-You're-Able Mon, 2/10, 7:30pm. \$20-\$27 (treats included!). bucketbrigadetheater.com or 651-560-0892 And, for a second year, Michael Pearce Donley (of Triple Espresso fame) will perform love songs by request whilst you enjoy your dessert.

## A Choice of Weapons, Honor and Dignity: The Visions of Gordon Parks, Jamel Shabazz

Minnesota Museum of American Art (the M) is presenting A Choice of Weapons, Honor and Dignity: The Visions of Gordon Parks and Jamel Shabazz through April 19.

This exhibition includes photographs that document expressions of dignity, honor, hope, and love in the African-American community by two towering photographers. Featured works include Gordon Parks' astonishing images from the Jim Crow-era through the civil rights movement, and photographs by Brooklyn-based artist Jamel Shabazz, who has followed in Parks' footsteps from the 1980s to the present day. A Choice of Weapons, Honor and Dignity explores how Parks and Shabazz have both used photography to empower communities and lift up Black voices.

The exhibition is curated by Robin Hickman-Winfield, CEO and Executive Producer of SoulTouch Productions and a

great-niece of Gordon Parks, with the help of four Gordon Parks High School Scholars and curatorial advisors, Travell Williams, Andrew Shorty, Amelia Pharmed, and Tyrell Horton, Choice of Weapons Fellow and Gordon Parks Legacy Movement Program Assistant. Key components of the communications and marketing strategies were designed by the BrandLab interns Elijah Buchanan, Waylon Rembert Jr., and Charvaye Williams.

Hickman-Winfield (with the help of M Trustee Nathan Johnson) will also be assembling a Vision Council of distinguished black men in the Twin Cities. This transgenerational group will meet at the M to discuss how this exhibition can serve as a platform for healing and for lifting up Black voices.

Free Admission. The M at 350 Robert St North, St. Paul. Open Wed, Fri, Sat and Sun, 11am-5pm; Thu 11am-8pm.



Jamel Shabazz, Father and Sons

SPECIAL RELATED EVENTS

- **Family Day: Expressions of Dignity, Honor, and Love**, February 16, 1-4 pm, free and open to the public. Featuring: Empowerment Story Hour with Justice Alan Page.
- **Curator Tour: In Memory of Gordon Parks**, Led By Curator Robin Hickman-Winfield, March 7, 1 pm, free but RSVP.
- **Artist Talk: Den-Zell Gilliard**, April 4, 1 pm, free but RSVP. Documentarian Den-Zell Gilliard will discuss the influence of Gordon Parks on his practice. From Parks, he inherited a belief that photography can serve as a weapon against racism.

### Happy Birthday West Enders

West Enders making a difference: Pat Tupper at 80; Fran Gray at 90, at their January celebration!

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**PART ONE: "Being Mortal" Movie & Discussion**  
Feb. 13, 5:30-7:30 pm

**PART TWO: Dinner & Discussion**  
Feb. 20, 5:30-7:30 pm  
Free dinner and discussion about living and dying, and what matters.

**BOTH EVENTS** at Jewish Family Services of St. Paul, 1633 West 7th St, St. Paul

West 7th Community Center



# In the Community

## Phi Chay Thai Cuisine comes to West Seventh

BY JERRY ROTHSTEIN

Chong Ku is definitely an “older brother” (Phi Chay) in the restaurant business. After being displaced by war from Laos, his home country, his family spent a year in Thailand before coming to the US in 1976, first to Philadelphia. In 1979 his father died, and the family relocated to Michigan.

Since 1988 Chong has owned and operated five different restaurants, with Phi Chay Thai Cuisine, which opened late January, as his sixth food enterprise.

For the first, he partnered with his brother-in-law, offering Chinese food. The second, in 1990, was also Chinese, and he had learned to be a good chef of Chinese cuisine by then. That restaurant was sold, and his third effort — changing to Thai food just as it was becoming known and popular — was successful and led to the fourth effort, also Thai and also successful, which operated for ten years with Chong as sole owner.

During that decade, Chong finished his BA and an MBA while operating the business and developing his Thai cooking skill. He recalls, “In business school I could see the mistakes I had made with my first restaurants and was able to correct them.”

After moving to Minnesota in 2005, Chong operated King Thai on University Avenue, which became one of St. Paul’s most popular. That, too, was sold profitably, and he started to look for a new location.

As with many of the new businesses we have welcomed to the West End in the past several years, Chong recognized our



Chong Ku at the wok.

growing neighborhood, with lots of activity, safety and supportive people.

He will bring us real Thai comfort food. Not “fancy,” but fresh and perfectly prepared, as you would find in Thailand. Chong is committed to creating a comfortable atmosphere, consistent food quality and the best customer service.

His curries, noodle dishes, soups and appetizers set the stage for his stir fry. He says, “Each chef has their unique approach to stir fry; spices they have

come to appreciate, combinations they are happy with.”

Chong knows that he is carrying on a great tradition at 967, and wishes Supatra well as she begins a new phase of her life. He is determined to maintain the love of Thai food in our community.

**PHI CHAY THAI CUISINE**, 967 West Seventh, 651-222-5859. Hours: Monday-Thursday 11 am-8:30 pm, Friday-Saturday 11 am-9:30 pm, Closed Sunday

### MN COMPASS, PG 1

Own section on the home page. You’ll be able to create a custom profile for your area of interest anywhere in the state. Instructions and tutorials guide you through the process.

When you use the MN Compass resources you can find measurable information that shows trends over time on select areas related to quality of life across the state and in our local communities. The information is provided in a wide variety of topic areas, many of which have important links to other topics when using the data for planning and development purposes, or to assess how a given community is doing in essential areas.

The topic areas, each of which has a link to results on the MN Compass site, include: Aging, Arts and Culture, Children and Youth, Civic Engagement, Demographics, Disparities, Early Childhood, Economy, Education, Environment, Health, Housing, Immigration, Public Safety, Transportation and Workforce. Special topics are added periodically; currently data around STEM and Risk, Reach and Resilience, and the recently launched Cultural Community Profiles are offered. Community advisory committees guided the selection of data indicators included in each topic area.

By using the Build Your Own tools, you can create in-depth data profiles or build your own data profile for Minnesota

communities by geographic area. For a sample analysis of poverty levels in the West End and Highland districts see [www.communityreporter.org](http://www.communityreporter.org).

The West End of St. Paul is historically and culturally consistent from downtown to the Highway 5 bridge. But political divisions paint a different picture. Part of City Council District 2 (C.M. Noecker and the West 7th/Fort Road Federation) takes more than half of the West End, with a boundary around Montreal and West Seventh. Part of City Council District 3 (C.M. Tolbert and the Highland District

Council) covers the western part of the West End and the Highland district. By selecting the boundaries carefully with the MN Compass Build Your Own tool, we’re able to confirm that using the variable of poverty levels, both parts of the West End are consistent, while the rest of Highland is quite different. This could be a starting point for many investigations — whether housing costs are affordable; whether public transit options are equitable for lower-income people.

### MN COMPASS, PG 7



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# Community Nourishment



**HALLE O'FALVEY**  
columnist

## BIRDS IN PARTICULAR It is a Leap Year

February 29 is activated for the quadrennial celebration of Leap Year. The earth's rotation around the sun is 365 years, 5 hours, 48 minutes, and 46 seconds. The overlap was noticeable early on; Julius Caesar introduced Leap Day in 46 B.C.E. But Pope Gregory XIII of Rome tweaked it in 1582, omitting a few random years; like those divisible by 100.

If you were born on this day, you could be called a "29er" or a "Leapster" or a "Leapling." You could belong to a unique club group. Plus, you have the possibility of three different birthdays, February 28, February 29 or March 1. The decider, usually the state, calls February 28 quite often. My friend Barbara is March 1, her brothers

aren't teasing her so much anymore now that she is about to be 17 years old.

Those who have February 29 on their documentation can have significant problems with identity. Applying for a new driver's license in a different state, February 29 may not be recognized. At 21 years of age, your first alcohol purchase may be hindered by the barkeep thinking you have a fake ID. Or you could lose your lover. Frederick from "The Pirates of Penzance" (Gilbert and Sullivan) nearly had to wait until his 21st birthday, not his 21st year, to be released from his indentured pirate service. He wanted to marry the beautiful, beloved Mabel, daughter of a Major-General, but his sense of duty would not allow him to break away. He was rescued by the Police Sergeant during a pirate raid on the Major-General's home. In Queen Victoria's name

he was to marry his true love, Mabel.

February is predicted to be mostly overcast. We might have 8 days of sunshine and 7 partly sunny days of our 29 days. On February 1, sunrise will be 7:32 a.m. and sunset will be 5:20 p.m., yielding 9.47.07 hours of daylight. On Leap Day, sunrise will be 6:51 a.m. and sunset will be 5:59 p.m., 11.05.13 hours of daylight. Last month on New Year's Day, sunrise was at 7:50 a.m. and sunset was 4:41 p.m., 8.50.31 hours of daylight. I will enjoy every minute that comes each day.

If you are not feeding the birds and would like to see some bird activity in your yard, February would be a good month to put out some feeders. Then by the lean months of March and April you will have established your yard as place to get food. Make sure you place out water too. They come for the water and stay for the food. The chickadee will be sounding off its spring song very soon too.



**KENT PETTERSON**  
columnist

## VIEWS FROM THE GARDEN Vegetable Gardener Decision Time

For vegetable gardeners that want to grow their own food, it is decision time for the early seeding of some of the plants you may want to grow in this year's garden. I am not going to get into the how-to details because that is too much for this column. There are lots of sources for the information you need on line and in books at the library.

The basic decision is, do you want to do it indoors or outdoors? If indoors, February is the month to start some seeds. I will say, you need a sunny south facing window or grow lights to succeed with indoor seeding. Display racks of seed packets at local outlets or mail order catalogs are good sources of fresh seed.

What is the information you need to time when to plant seed indoors? To determine the timing, you must start at the date you will plant out in the garden and work backward.

Until you gain experience, use the infor-

mation on the back of the seed packet for the plant you want to grow for recommendations. Most packets provide information for days to germination from planting and days to transplant size.

Plants that are not hardy and must not be exposed to freeze can be planted out no earlier than May 15 unless you have special freeze protection. Plants growing indoors need to "harden off" for their life outdoors and this should be planned for one week. Time frame for germination and growing to transplant size must also be subtracted to get the date you seed indoors.

Another way to approximate the time to seed is to say cold weather plants from the cole family such as broccoli and cabbage should be started indoors the last half of February and warm weather plants such as tomatoes and peppers should be started approximately March.

There is so much fun and satisfaction in the garden when you grow your own food. If you miss a time for seeding plants indoors, you can always fall back on seeding outdoors for many of the plants. That can be started, as the seed packet will say, as soon as the soil can be worked. Good luck!

## West End Business Update

Local Health Practitioner Dr. Kayla Zirpel-Proctor has received her Nutrition Response Testing® Professional Certification. Nutrition Response Testing is a method of evaluation that can help determine the cause of underlying health concerns and which organic whole food nutrition each individual needs to rebuild deficient organ systems. This proprietary system of analysis is non-invasive and customized for each patient. It uses a muscle testing procedure to access the needs and wants for each individual.

Back to Wellness Chiropractic has incorporated Nutrition Response Testing® and Designed Clinical Nutrition Programs into patient care, finding that spinal and health conditions stabilized and improved at a much quicker pace. Patients have reported improvements in allergies/asthma, eczema, weight loss, mental clarity, fatigue, diarrhea/constipation, frequent colds, chronic joint aches, and more.

Until March 15, Dr. Zirpel-Proctor is offering the first two visits of Nutrition Response Testing® which includes a consultation, health assessment and report of findings for \$40 (\$300 value). It also includes a non-invasive fitness test and body fat analysis. Schedule online at back2wellnesschiro.com or call/text 952-693-3736.



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# ROMANCE PACKAGE

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## CHURCH BULLETIN



editor@communityreporter.org

**St. Peter's Church:** Feb. 1, Women's Fellowship first Saturday monthly: 8:30am. Bible study 9-10am. Sunday services 8:30am. Bible Class & Sunday School 9:45am. Ash Wednesday Service, 2/26, 6:30 pm. St. Peter's, 530 Victoria S. 651-228-1482.

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

**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 Sunday 12:30 with Pastor Joseph Webb IV at St. Mark, 550 W 7th. Info/text 612-859-2572 or 651-668-0065 and leave a voice message.



## WEST 7TH COMMUNITY CENTER

265 Oneida, St. Paul  
**651-298-5493 west7th.org**

Register at least one week in advance.

*Note: providing free events is no longer feasible. With a \$30 yearly membership, these activities are free. If costs are a concern speak with a Seniors staff member.*

Closed Feb 17. When St. Public Public Schools are closed due to weather, senior programs will also be closed.

## ADULT 55+

### WELLNESS

**Fit and Fabulous Exercise Class:** Mon, Wed & Fri, 9-9:45am, \$10 per month. [May be covered under Silver & Fit program; check your insurance.]

**Heavy-Weight Yoga:** Wednesdays 10:45-11:45 am. \$10 per class.

**T'ai Chi Ch'uan:** Thursdays 9-10am. \$12 per class.

**Gym Walking:** Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, 9:45-10:30am. Free.

**Foot Care Clinic:** 2/6, 9:30am-2:30pm — call for appointment; cost is \$30.

**Caregiving Services:** Contact Holly Brackett, ext. 206.

Block Nurse Program: 65+ in-home nursing & health aide through Recover Health. Medicare certified.

### ACTIVITIES

**Fiberazzi:** Knitting & Crocheting Group Tuesdays: 1-3pm, \$1. Free for members.

**Health Insurance Counseling:** 2/13, 10am-noon. Call Senior Link Age for appt at 1-800-333-2433.

**Family Law:** 2/12, 4-5pm. Dave Burns Law Office, LLC provides FREE one-time consultations to assist with family law issues such as divorce and child custody. Must preregister and will be served in order of arrival. Call 651-298-5493.

**Ask the Lawyer:** 2/20, 3-4pm provided by Melanie Liska of Tarrant & Liska.

**Lunch 'n Bingo:** 2/20, 11:30am-1pm. Register by 1/9. Ki's Kitchen chicken chow mein, fried rice, dessert: \$7 lunch, \$1 bingo cards. Vegetarian options available.

**Cribbage:** Mon, 12:30-3pm; \$1. Free/members. 500/65 Cards: Fridays, 12:30-3pm.

**Movie & Popcorn:** 2/26, 12:15-2:15pm, *The Peanut Butter Falcon* (PG-13, 2019, drama/fantasy). \$1.

### SPECIAL PROGRAMS

**CBD for Seniors:** 2/12, 12:30-1:30pm. FREE. Join us as we dig into the details of CBD. We will help guide you through answering all the pertinent questions, including Why CBD? Why the craze? What exactly is CBD and what can I use it for? Samples and snacks provided.

**FREE Tax Assistance through AARP:** Mon & Wed 9-11:30am; Feb 5-April 15; closed President's Day. Call for appointment: 651-298-5493.

**TED Talks:** 2/6, 11:30am-1pm; Small Things/Big Ideas. Watch pre-selected TED videos, then have discussion. Bring your lunch. \$1; free/members.

**NEW: Bridge:** Mondays, 12:30-3:30pm. Weekly bridge in the Seniors' Lounge. \$1 for non-members.

**Coloring Jam:** 2/11, 10-11:30am, \$1. Free/members. Come to open coloring sessions. Materials available, or bring your own.

**Family Movie Night:** 2/7, 6-8pm. *The Addams Family* (PG). Gym. Free, low-cost concessions. Children must have someone age 13+. Doors and concessions 6pm. Movie 6:15-8:15pm.

**Mobile Menders:** 2/24, 5:30-7:30pm. Provides free sewing and mending services on site.

**Fare for All Discount Groceries:** 2/7, 10am-noon. Affordable & nutritious foods. Cash, check, EBT or credit card accepted. Info: Cathalina 651-298-5493.

## VOLUNTEER

**Meals on Wheels** - Delivery: 1x/month, 11am-12pm.

**Friendly Visitor** - Visit seniors who need companionship.

**Drivers needed** - Bring seniors to appts, shopping, errands. Jamie, 651-645-0349.

## YOUTH

**Community Kids After School Program.** Serves students K-10, M-F, 2:15-6pm. Free. Homework help, tutoring in reading, math, social skills, enrichment activities, STEM, sports, fitness, field trips, healthy snacks. Transportation may be available. Julie, 651-504-2246 or [jmurphy@keystoneservices.org](mailto:jmurphy@keystoneservices.org).







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**FEB ENTERTAINMENT**

**RIVERSIDE HITMEN** FEB 1, 8:30PM

**MIDAS TOUCH** 7:30PM: FEB 6,13, 20  
8:30PM: FEB 7-8, 14-15, 21-22

**JOYANN PARKER** FEB 19, 7PM

**LINDSAY PEDALTY QUARTET** FEB 27, 7:30PM

**RIVERSIDE ALL STARS** FEB 28-29, 8:30PM

**KARAOKE EVERY TUE**  
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