BUILDING A NON-RACIST COMMUNITY

The Spirit of Racism

BY TIM JOHNSON
Retired pastor of Cherokee Park United Church

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

Harriet Bishop was a force with which to be reckoned. In spite of petitions from family and friends, she set out on her own in 1847 from her home in New York to the Western territory known as Minnesota. Settling in the hard-scrabble town of St. Paul, Bishop is credited with starting the first public school, the first Sunday school, and being a leader in the temperance and suffrage movements. Harriet Island bears her name.

What is less well known about Harriet Bishop is the racist and white supremacist attitudes she brought with her. According to historian Mary Wingerd, at the time of Bishop’s arrival Minnesota had for nearly 200 years been developing a culture in which there was space for native people and people of European descent to co-exist. In Wingerd’s book, North Country: The Making of Minnesota, the erosion of this inclusive culture had already begun with the arrival of more and more Easterners who saw Indians as “either savages to be scorned and feared or exotic primitives.”

The request for a teacher in St. Paul specified, “someone entirely free from prejudice” in order to best serve the students of English, French, Dakota, Ojibwe and African descent. Wingerd notes Bishop was the “antithesis of that description, scarily describing non-Native Anglos as ‘morally insignificant,’ racist, ignorant and deluded.” Her harshest judgment was reserved for Indians who she referred to as “disgustingly filthy” and, as a race, treacherous, lazy and embedded in “moral pollution.”

Unfortunately, Bishop’s white supremacist attitudes were the norm among the growing population of immigrants to Minnesota, rather than the exception. Convinced viewing Indians as “less than” would provide a rationale for unscrupulous treaties, making it possible to acquire valuable farming land, and white supremacy embedded in “moral pollution.”

Clergy played their part as well, often wedging a belief in Manifest Destiny with Christian evangelism. Following the U.S.-Dakota war of 1862, it was a simple step for Ramsey to seek the extermination of Dakota people in Minnesota, offering a bounty for the scalps of any Dakota who were killed.

Because we live in a highly individualistic culture, even when we acknowledge the racism of people like Bishop, Ramsey, Rice and Sibley we tend to isolate their behavior as the result of prejudice found in those particular individuals. But, while supremacy as an ideology of superiority is bigger than any one individual, it has a life of its own, which is why Ojibwe leader and activist, Winona LaDuke refers to white supremacy as a Windigo, a spirit identified in Ojibwe tradition that is greedy, cannibalistic and a race, treacherous, lazy and embedded in “moral pollution.”

A Windigo is with us still.

Although the onset of COVID-19 has not changed everything in our lives, with its continuing spread it has become much more difficult to ignore the basic realities about how our ordinary lives are organized and sustained.

We are no longer naïve about devastating human costs of the disease, its devastating economic and social toll. Although we now know many more facts — the science and numbers speak for themselves — the future is still uncertain. One of the candidates for the Federation Board calls this a time of “unprecedented uncertainty.”

We are in a kind of liminal space, a time when we can’t imagine what comes next. We sort of remember how things were a few months ago, but that seems more like a fantasy — could it really ever have been that way? We don’t know enough yet to say much about where we are heading. We don’t really understand the complexity of COVID-19. So many have died, so many are grieving, and so many fear for themselves and their families.

How do people get by?

Each year, the Bureau of Labor Statistics conducts a Consumer Expenditure Survey, gathering income and expense information from people in all parts of the country; with all levels of education; from all ethnic groups; of all ages.

The results show what you have to earn to come out ahead of your expenses. That figure is more than $50,000 per year. Until that point, your expenses exceed your income — how you bridge the gap is not considered in the Survey, but it’s a question that may affect more than two thirds of our population.

You have no emergency funds; you can’t save for a vacation, or kids’ education, or retirement. Yet you work hard often with more than one job and probably don’t understand why you never seem to get ahead or why “society” doesn’t really seem to value you.

To make $50,000 per year you need to be making $25 per hour. We have all seen the struggles involved in getting to a $25 minimum wage.

In the Pandemic

Before COVID-19 we took it for granted that there must be some fairness in our system. If your work was more important, you would be paid more. During COVID-19 we are all thinking, praying for, amazed by our essential workers — and this may be opening our eyes to understanding that the many invisible and hardly rewarded workers among us are necessary to maintaining the world we consider normal.

No, we seem to need a completely abnormal, unbearable and hardly rewarded workers among us are necessary to maintaining the world we consider normal.

Our West 7th Neighbors

Being Careful, Caring and Creative

Our Neighborhood at High Risk

The Wilder Foundation’s Minnesota Compass research arm has released a report that identifies neighborhoods in Minneapolis and St. Paul at high risk for the virus. Seven different risk factors landed different parts of the cities in red. They are risks the CDC says will make COVID-19 more severe: Asthma, COPD, heart disease, stroke, obesity, diabetes and kidney disease. Besides these underlying health conditions, two other variables have a strong impact: percentage of the population over 60 years of age, and poverty status. The latter encompasses such conditions as chronic unemployment or under-employment, housing affordability, availability of credit. In our neighborhood, median household income falls short of the citywide average, with at least one in four residents living below the poverty level.

This analysis presents us with information that echoes what many in our community have known for a long time: The West Seventh and West End neighborhoods fall into the red zone or highest risk areas for COVID-19 infection.

And a broader perspective also emerges quite starkly when St. Paul is compared to Minneapolis. The St. Paul population with the highest risk factors comprises 27% of the city’s population, while the highest risk numbers in Minneapolis represent 16% of its population.

When we see our city calling itself ‘The Most
West End Neighbors Garden Tour Hopefully Rescheduled

by Joe Landsberger

In these uncertain times, the volunteer task force of the West Seventh Fort Road Federation — District 9 Community Council — has rescheduled the Thirteenth Annual West End Neighbors Garden Tour annual event to take place on Saturday, September 12, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Our garden, history and commercial tour has become a regional attraction, and this year features ten gardeners of the three-block historic bluff neighborhood of Uptown. The sites include eight residential gardens, the North High Bridge Park Sculpture Garden, and the Waldmann’s Brewery & Warshauer patio.

The plant sale includes houseplants, perennials, and a few tree seedlings. The first time will be held at the Keg & Case patio. Tour Guidebooks will also be available on site, this year focusing on the eastern part of the West End’s history, and including more than 80 pages and 160 images. The site tour map also includes a listing directory of every business and organization in the West End, from Seven Corners to Fort Snelling.

With the current economic stress, we will introduce a lower cost advertising option, probably a business card size. We are grateful for the support of West End local businesses and organizations that have made the Garden Tour possible these past twelve years!

Rehab Completed at 412 Goodrich

The John Lewis House project at 412 Goodrich has been completed, coordinated by Historic Saint Paul, which offers big thanks to John Yust (architect), Fred Livesay (carpenter) and their friend Alex Yerks for creating this. The house is being sold right now.

A small and socially-distanced open house for nearby neighbors will be held on May 30. Please register for the event by responding to info@historicsaintpaul.org.

To make this experience available to all, a virtual tour is being created by Neinow Cultural Consultants, Neinow also produced a 360 Tour as renovations began in 2017, and this is available at historicsaintpaul.org. Also check with the website for availability of the new virtual tour.

This project illustrates the enormous value of historic preservation. Historic Saint Paul leverages investment into under-resourced neighborhoods, and builds community pride by retaining and enhancing a sense of place and cultural heritage.

TO THE EDITOR

Stephanie Moss, Leech Street; Ken Peterson, Ryan Avenue.

WEST

TO THE EDITOR

Your neighbors: Elyse Jensen, Walnut Street; Ken Peterson, Ryan Avenue.

Since its beginning over two centuries ago, Fort Road has been the main route between the St. Paul area and the Fort Snelling area. Today, this corridor is the key artery between the eastern third of the metro area and MSP Airport, the Mall of America, and thousands of jobs there and further west. Arterial and local public transit must be part of the conversation because quick, dependable access to an international airport is vitally important to virtually all businesses and citizens. This is not up for grabs.

But Ramsey County has been deaf to the concerns of the Fort Road Community and the Fort Road/West Seventh neighborhoods, and builds community pride by retaining and enhancing a sense of place and cultural heritage.

What does make sense is changing the LPA. And when the LPA was adopted in December, 2017, the resolution specified that in December, 2020 the Advisory Committee would reconvene to evaluate the project and determine whether the LPA is likely to become a reality by 2025 and make alternate plans if necessary.

Alternate plans are necessary, available and superior. Let’s work together to save Fort Road and its community, while building a regional transit link that is good and necessary.

Jim Schoettler is a resident of the Highland area. He is a graduate of the University of Minnesota school of Architecture with a Bachelor degree in Environmental Design and an MBA from the Carlson School of Management. He started his career as a planner at the Met Council, is active in civic affairs, and is a founding member of Citizen Advocates for Regional Transit (C.A.R.T.)

The instincts of the Fort Road Community have been correct from the start: rail transit of any type does not belong on Fort Road. West Seventh, because the street is too narrow and operation of any rail line would be harmful for businesses, pedestrians and necessary traffic flow.

The growing entertainment district near downtown needs wider sidewalks, not narrower walkways with trains running inches away.

The system put in place has been to the delight of the Fort Road Community and has been blind to better alternatives that would achieve valid objectives for regional transit while protecting Fort Road.

The problem goes deeper than Ramsey County. There is no entity planning for regional rail transit. The counties are on their own. Nor is it surprising that Ramsey proposes a local solution to a regional need.

In response to Citizen Advocates for Regional Transit was formed to bring common sense to this dilemma and to show the way for practical solutions that serve our regional transit needs, while protecting the communities that host them.

We can all work together — hers and our thinking. As for its beginning over two centuries ago, Fort Road has been the main route between the St. Paul area and the Fort Snelling area. Today, this corridor is the key artery between the eastern third of the metro area and MSP Airport, the Mall of America, and thousands of jobs there and further west. Arterial and local public transit must be part of the conversation because quick, dependable access to an international airport is vitally important to virtually all businesses and citizens. This is not up for grabs.

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Do you agree with our appeal? Contact Ward Two Council Member Rebecca Frazier at ward2@ci.stpaul.mn.us and Mayor Melvin Carter’s office at 651-266-8510.

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Every Loss Matters

As Coronavirus Advances, Losses Reverberate Through Generations

BY DAVID LAMB

With the number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 soaring nationally, few communities have been spared the disease’s devastation. What first arrived in the form of disappointments like cancelled vacations, proms deferred and college experiences cut short, has more recently brought the surviving family members to tears and despair.

Although older people have suffered disproportionately — patients 65 years and older comprise 80 percent of the U.S. losses thus far, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention — the effects of the viral pandemic are being felt across generations. For one West End family that recently lost its beloved patriarch, Pastor Craig Breimhorst, who founded the Christ Lutheran Church in the southern Minnesota town of Faribault, it has meant untimely lessons in grief.

Breimhorst’s granddaughter, Tilly, who lives in the West Seventh neighborhood, shared her experience of mourning in an op-ed on the New York Times’ ‘The Daily podcast.’ Tilly, who is 12, described losing a grandfather who would take her on the roof to look for stars and surprise her in the school lunchroom, where he’d try to steal her chips and share stories about “going to Tanzania and all sorts of things.” She movingly expressed what it feels like to lose a person you love, comparing the sadness to “an ocean filled with nothing.”

In the meantime, the bereaved have found creative ways to remember those they loved. In Woodbury, neighbors found creative ways to remember those they loved. And while some bemoan the awkward, sometimes choppy nature of video conferencing apps such as Zoom — often by the same pastors, rabbis, and imams who lead traditional services provide a space for survivors to remember those they loved. And while some bemoan the awkward, sometimes choppy nature of video conferences, they are also grateful to be able to celebrate the lives of their loved ones in some form. Raquel Counihan, who mourned her mother with hundreds from around the country on a Zoom funeral, told the Star Tribune that the experience was comforting. “I got pretty emotional. It was surprisingly wonderful.”

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David Lamb is Assistant Editor of the Community Reporter.

in vain to shield her from their pain, they have at other times shared their emotions. Speaking about her grandfather with her father one day, Tilly saw that he had begun to weep. “Then I started crying,” she said, adding that she felt comforted by not being alone in her sense of loss.

Finding more public venues for survivors to mourn together has been a particular challenge of this crisis, as the virus’ highly contagious nature has put gatherings on hold. Funeral homes have been closed statewide since Governor Walz suspended all non-essential businesses on March 25, and it remains unclear when funerals and wakes will again be safe. In the meantime, the bereaved have found creative ways to remember those they loved. In Woodbury, neighbors found creative ways to remember those they loved. And while some bemoan the awkward, sometimes choppy nature of video conferences, they are also grateful to be able to celebrate the lives of their loved ones in some form. Raquel Counihan, who mourned her mother with hundreds from around the country on a Zoom funeral, told the Star Tribune that the experience was comforting. “I got pretty emotional. It was surprisingly wonderful.”

David Lamb is Assistant Editor of the Community Reporter.

Pastor Craig Breimhorst with his granddaughter Tilly.
Community News & Events

Keystone Community Services Adapts, Keeps Serving

Keystone volunteers are involved in so many aspects of the association’s programs that the impact of Covid-19 required a quick pivot to allow their work to continue. One volunteer, who spends one-on-one time with students in the Keystone Community Kids program is now meeting them on-line once a week, doing mini-art projects and playing games together. Volunteer Marilyn said, “It’s so important to keep our connections with each other at this confusing and confounding time. The students enjoy it, and so do I.”

Many Keystone volunteers continue their front-line work of preparing and delivering food to people in the community through Meals-on-Wheels. Others are connecting with seniors and youth participants by phone or virtually. Keystone staff have adjusted programs to encourage and allow this new way of working.

Keystone volunteers are an essential part in program support—last year more than 2,500 people gave time and effort, serving more than 33,000 hours. This represents almost 17 full-time jobs!

WULF G. GODBOURNE FAMILY FUNERAL HOME

Cremation Services | Advance Planning
651-224-4866
560 West 7th Street • St. Paul
MEANINGFUL APPROPRIATE AFFORDABLE

Mail-in ballot for the West 7th / Fort Road Federation Board of Directors

Directions: Vote online at www.fortroadfederation.org | line 1-3 OR cut out and mail in your Ballot with your Voter Eligibility by June 12. Read Board member candidate responses in this issue of the Community Reporter or on our website: www.fortroadfederation.org

Mail this ballot Voter Eligibility to: West 7th / Fort Road Federation, 882 West 7th Street, Suite 6, St. Paul, MN 55102

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Walkable attractive, quality housing for frontline hospital workers, local business

Located just steps from the United Hospital and Children’s’ Hospital St. Paul Campus, The Ackerberg Group and Northland Real Estate Group are planning to build a project that provides housing to the thousands of hospital staff, nurses, and technicians working across the streets of addition to the other local businesses, government and downtown employees.

Providing walkable attractive, quality housing at an approachable, entry-level price point to the frontline hospital workers and local business employees has always been — and remains — the vision of the project. We have spent a tremendous amount of resources in exploring innovative building practices and incorporating them into this building to ultimately provide an affordable rental product for future generations.

Existing traditional building practices in our market make it difficult to deliver entry-level price point housing. For instance, our contemplated semi-automated parking technology and modular construction currently do not exist in our market.

Our current project has reached out to dozens of businesses located along and near the West 7th Street project — the immediate support for the project has been overwhelming as adding 200 residences in a walkable and directly helps to strengthen the individual businesses.

The current project plan has increased the building height by approximately six feet which was primarily due to the new discovery of very shallow bedrock and the need for an adequate rainwater treatment program per the City’s requirements. So, the building footprint was pulled in, and we lost the ability to have an efficient ramp to access our second story of parking. In efforts to maximize our parking count we incorporated a semi-automated parking system which will stack cars three high. Slightly more floor to ceiling heights was needed to fit this system. We were able to keep the parking ratio very similar to what it was in our prior application with the incorporation of the automated parking system.

The gross building square footage actual has decreased from our previous application as we now have a much more efficient building. This site is located on a major public transportation corridor and node along West 7th St. Our target renter will be able to walk to their place of work.

We feel the building height and parking program fits well in the neighborhood, is consistent with the comprehensive plan, and with existing neighboring buildings. City staff and Planning Commission discussed these items at length. City Staff recommended approval of the project; and the Planning Commission approved the project earlier this month with an 11-1 vote. St. Paul City Staff, the West 7th neighborhood group, Fort Road Federation, and Planning Commission have all recommended approval for our project in its current form and feel it fits well in the neighborhood.

We feel fortunate to be a part of a project that helps stimulate and strengthen the local business community and provide an affordable and achievable housing option for the frontline hospital workers and the local businesses employees that is in walking distance from their places of work.

Respectfully,

The Ackerberg Group and Northland Real Estate Group
WEST END HEALTHLINE

Family Medicine Residency Training Program Responds to COVID-19

BY JONATHAN DICKMAN, MD, PHD

The current coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has put medical care in a new territory. Previously, family medicine providers embraced seeing patients with “cold symptoms” as it was usually a straightforward visit and was a break from providing complex medical care. Today, however, things are different. When COVID-19 came to Minnesota, there was panic whenever a patient described care. Today, however, things are different. The first step was to separate sick and well patients. Drs. Mercer, Balasubrahmanyan, Swenson and Carlson worked together and generated a solution. UFM’s second location at Sibley Plaza would be designated as a “sick clinic” while the main UFM location would be a “well clinic.” Sounds simple enough, but this is not easy, and the beauty of the effort is in the details.

How can UFM ensure the safety of everyone visiting and working at UFM? At the main clinic, all patients are screened for symptoms and temperature is taken before being allowed to enter the building. Any patients with positive screens are asked to go back to their car and are called for further instructions. At the Sibley “sick” clinic, the goal is to minimize the number of places and people the ill patients can contaminate in the building. There is no waiting room. Patients arrive in their car and are called to gather information. They are masked and brought immediately to a clinic room upon entry. One resident physician donning recommended personal protective equipment sees the patient, collects all vitals and labs, and generates the plan with the supervising faculty member, who is watching the visit via a baby monitor. After the patient leaves, the resident physician cleans a thorough cleaning of the room and anything the patient contacted in the building. The entire process is incredible to witness and truly a work of art that continues to be steadily running.

This residency team not only tries to perfect the in-person visits but has also developed a process for completing virtual sick visits via Telehealth. Many ill patients can stay at home and the residency team at Sibley can provide guidance in this virtual format. Protocols have been developed and are continually updated to ensure that up-to-date recommendations are provided, even if the patient does not physically step inside the Sibley clinic. Thus, this residency team is prepared to handle illness concerns in any way that best protects the safety of the patient.

The residency program at UFM has proven that, in a time of crisis, it continues the mission “To Serve and To Teach.” The West End community continues to benefit from the innovation, passion and hard work brought forward by the residency program. Thanks to this team, you can rest assured that it is safe to seek medical care at UFM if you have medical needs or concerns.
West 7th/Fort Road Federation Election Special

Federation Candidates Offer Values, Insights

Dana DeMaster
Candidate for President

What makes the Federation mission meaningful to you? Why are you interested in being a Board member?

“I have been on the Board for two years and am very excited with the work underway to stabilize our budget in a changing economy; expand our board membership and outreach; and grow our community engagement efforts. There are a few things I would like to see over the finish line and so am seeking a one-year term to continue my service. I would be honored and humbled to be able to serve the Federation with this awesome group!”

What is your connection to the West 7th neighborhood?

“My husband and I are the proud owners of a Lauer Brothers home in the Little Bohemia Neighborhood. Over this time, we have become a voice of the West 7th Community Center and Community Reporter board. We have helped small businesses enter into the neighborhood, and I’ve been champion of the West 7th Pride Ball. I was a member of the Minneapolis Saint Paul Home Tours as a way to promote our vibrant neighborhood.”

Tracy Farr
Candidate for 2nd Vice President

What makes the Federation mission meaningful to you? Why are you interested in being a Board member?

“People. People living in our community with one another. I see the Federation working together to provide opportunities for the people around us to thrive as we seek the common good.

What do you see as the greatest opportunities for our community?

“I don’t have a one-size-fits-all answer to this. In my role as a Board member, I work with a team of Board members to develop a plan and organize what will have the most impact and do not to do too much at once but being able to strategically plan and organize what will have the most impact and do for the West 7th area.”

What skills or strengths would you bring to the Federation’s Board of Directors?

“I have a growing knowledge of the organization and its needs, strengths, and challenges as current president. I am a skilled facilitator and have a leading role in the organization’s strategic plan and positioning for the future. I am focused on mission and strategy while building on the diverse skills, time, and talent of community members to achieve that mission. Professionally, I work in program evaluation and bring more than 15 years’ experience in strategic planning, performance measurement, and program development, as well as staff supervision and management.”

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Casey Carmody
Candidate for Area 1 Coordinator

What makes the Federation mission meaningful to you? Why are you interested in being a Board member?

“I’ve been an active member for many years, and I believe Federation’s mission is to ensure equitable opportunity throughout our community. I live by these values, both professionally — as an employee at Catholic Charities and personally as a West 7th resident and volunteer. I have truly enjoyed furthering this goal as a Federation board member.”

What do you see as the greatest opportunities for our community?

“Promoting growth and renovation without gentrification. Finding the balance between progress and everyday life.”

What skills or strengths would you bring to the Federation’s Board of Directors?

“I have many years of experience advocating policies and positions with them. My career and long service on the executive board of the Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota put me equally at ease in the political, business and non-profit spheres.”

What is your connection to the West 7th neighborhood?

“I have been a member of the Federation working on various people to enjoy and contribute to the life of our community. I want to live in a community with schools, local businesses that earn the vast majority of our spend- ing — and the common vision for this part of our city.”

Nicole Loran
Candidate for Treasurer

What makes the Federation mission meaningful to you?

“Promoting the well-being of our neighborhood. I have been privileged to engage with many neighbors. Through my work on the Federation board, I have been reminded of our Pittsburgh roots. The access to downtown and the common vision for this part of our city.”

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“Promoting the well-being of our neighborhood. I have been privileged to engage with many neighbors. Through my work on the Federation board, I have been reminded of our Pittsburgh roots. The access to downtown and the common vision for this part of our city.”

What do you see as the greatest opportunities for our community?

“Promoting growth and renovation without gentrification. Finding the balance between progress and everyday life.”

What skills or strengths would you bring to the Federation’s Board of Directors?

“I have many years of experience advocating policies and positions with them. My career and long service on the executive board of the Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota put me equally at ease in the political, business and non-profit spheres.”

What is your connection to the West 7th neighborhood?

“I have been a member of the Federation working on various people to enjoy and contribute to the life of our community. I want to live in a community with schools, local businesses that earn the vast majority of our spend- ing — and the common vision for this part of our city.”

Nicole Loran
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What is your connection to the West 7th neighborhood? I have lived in the neighborhood for over 15 years. I also have a business, started my family, and restored my historic home. We love West 7th!

The words: a home. We love West 7th!

Meghan Redmond: Candidate for Area III Coordinator

What makes the Federation mission meaningful to you? Why are you interested in being a Board member? To have a vibrant community where all can live, learn, and grow, there needs to be physical, social, and economic opportunities for all. The Fort Road Federation is a steward of the community to ensure the neighborhood has these qualities into the future. As a community that loves this community and has a family, I am invested in making sure that our community remains vibrant.

What do you see as the greatest opportunities for our community? The greatest opportunity is to be a strategic player within the development of the Riverview Corridor. The community is at a critical juncture and we must acknowledge our history, but not let history limit our potential to grow and evolve our community in a healthy and productive way. Included in this is to be forward thinking to the challenge all communities will face as our population ages and the importance of developing a meaningful way is important.

What do you see as the primary challenges for our community? I think we as a board need to figure that out, by better engaging more of the community. We have honed in on a couple of things from feedback from neighbors, including affordable housing, transportation and green initiatives.

Margaret Hinrichs (home owner): Candidate for Area I Coordinator

What makes the Federation mission meaningful to you? Why are you interested in being a Board member? I have lived in West 7th for over six years. I worked in the area in the 80’s for two years, as a black organizer for West 7th Community Center. I love the history, and diversity of the area.

What do you see as the greatest opportunities for our community? Greater involvement of young people, LGBTI people, and POC. We have a lot of people living in our community that don’t have a lot of representation, including our substantial homeless community. West 7th as a community is privileged in being a representative for so many groups and it would be great to see those groups participating in more community events in spaces that are accessible to those people.

What do you see as the primary challenges for our community? Lack of representation and lack of resources for lower income and young people in the area. We are also in a time of a lot of isolation for people. Many people young and old are starved for community.

What skills or strengths would you bring to the Federation's Board of Directors? My past experience as a social worker in nonprofit organizations with a goal of personal and community well-being.

The words: a home. We love West 7th!

Meghan Redmond

What do you see as the primary challenges for our community? The West 7th Neighborhood is in demand with new restauranteurs and breweries, small businesses, and housing being developed at a rapid pace. In addition, longtime residents need access to amenities and services to meet their changing needs, new residents need community resources for growing families, and our growing artistic community needs opportunities to showcase their work. Ensuring that our neighborhood is diverse and inclusive ethnically, economically, and socially; be walkable, approachable, and supportive of all of our residents’ needs, is our primary challenge.

What skills or strengths would you bring to the Federation’s Board of Directors? I have more than 12 years of professional experience in volunteer management and community engagement — currently with AAHP. In addition, I am a resident of our neighborhood. West 7th is in the midst of multiple transitions. Our neighborhood is in demand with new restauranteurs and breweries, small businesses, and housing being developed at a rapid pace. In addition, longtime residents need access to amenities and services to meet their changing needs, new residents need community resources for growing families, and our growing artistic community needs opportunities to showcase their work. Ensuring that our neighborhood is diverse and inclusive ethnically, economically, and socially; be walkable, approachable, and supportive of all of our residents’ needs, is our primary challenge.

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The Impacts are Not Equal

So much has changed in all our lives over the past few months, and by the time you read this I’m sure much will have continued to change. Things we look for—granted as part of our normal daily routine—have been changed. Some of us are now working from home, many while trying to adjust to distance learning. Some of us no longer have jobs to go to, and days have been filled with trying to navigate unemployment and other programs newly created to aid and help those without jobs due to the global pandemic.

The daily activities that used to consist of perhaps just a quick stop at the grocery store on the way home to pick up those last few items for dinner, or a weekend Target run to get household essentials, now look dramatically different than even a few weeks ago. Limited people are allowed in cereal stores; people are wearing masks to protect others, and people are standing far apart while waiting to check out are all part of this new normal.

This has been difficult for everyone, in many ways. The impacts of COVID-19, however, are not equal and as a City we are working hard to ensure we can provide the best safety net possible, to fill in and help people where the federal or state government isn’t able. We will continue to work so that everyone in St. Paul has access to ways to help themselves and their families make it through this challenging time.

We are fortunate to have good leadership at the state and municipal level, with shared priorities of helping our fellow Minnesotans and St. Paul neighbors, and goals of working together as a community. I have been personally grateful to see so many friends and neighbors following the guidelines and recommendations of our medical community and encourage everyone to continue to be diligent in their daily life to ensure we are each doing all we can to slow the spread of COVID-19. Our daily actions directly impact our health care professionals, and their ability to safely continue their heroic efforts to keep us all healthy and safe.

We have a long road ahead of us and of a fluid situation. Stay informed, be responsible, protect yourself, protect others, stay healthy and stay safe.

The Best We Can Do

I appreciate the chance to share my impressions of how life has changed during COVID-19. Of course, it’s a different world, both professionally and personally, and I have found that there are many aspects of “normal life,” but I have seen a lot of change in my life as well. I’ve always thought that it’s important to be open to situations where the new ways are better than the old, so I’m trying to stay observant for that.

Personally, it has been like night and day. My calendar before this was full of business and constituent meetings, multiple events every week, and visits to the capitol in Washington or St. Paul. In between, I often walked from my building downtown to the courthouse or other locations and ate lunch and drove around several restaurants throughout my district. Then my calendar was emptied. Many of those meetings have been rescheduled or canceled.

However, virtual meetings have made civic life more accessible for the many St. Paulites who are normally on those limits, virtual meetings have made civic life accessible for the many St. Paulites who are normally in-person gatherings resume?

As we confront what is sure to be a severe budget crisis, can we ignore the temptation to choose short-term fixes that will just get us past the current emergency, and instead seize the opportunity to rebuild our budget from the ground up — fund what’s working, cut what’s not and do our work in new ways to save time and money?

Finally, we must confront this pandemic’s glaringly disparate impacts on our diverse income and racial communities, and our neighbors and children of color. Can the pain of this crisis motivate us to root out the inequities that continue to divide us and help us back up?

I believe we can do all this and more. Despite the pain and uncertainty of this moment, we can make meaning out of it by learning from the new options it presents. And we can emerge stronger and more united than ever.

Different Paths are Possible

The psychologist Edward de Bono once proposed a seemingly contradictory idea: that you can be “blocked by openness.”

He explains it like this:

Once you get used to taking a certain route to work, you’ll continue taking it every day.

But if you’re morning routine is blocking your way and you’re forced to find an alternate route, you may stumble upon an entirely different—perhaps better—path that you’d never have found otherwise. In other words, the openness of your regular road was actually a kind of impediment — it was blocking you from discovering another way.

I haven’t been taking very many roads lately — to work or anywhere else. Like all of us, I’ve been staying home, trying to adjust to the new reality of a global pandemic.

It’s been a struggle to balance being a City Council member and a mom-turned-homeschool teacher, tuning into emergency operations center calls, while reviewing my kids’ worksheets on double-digit addition and parts of speech. I miss seeing my components face to face — so much so that when we meet on screens, not in coffee shops. And I’m frustrated that the magnitude of this crisis makes it hard to help the residents and business owners in my ward who are struggling.

But in the midst of all these challenges, I’ve found myself thinking about Dr. Bonos point and wondering how this crisis might also be an opportunity, how this blockade might shake us out of our old routines and open us up to new and better ways of doing things. During this pandemic, we’ve shown that city government can act quickly and cut through red tape when necessary. We’ve launched emergency relief programs, sanctioned curbside take-out and reduced licensing fees — in days, not months. Could we make this efficiency and flexibility the new normal, even after the crisis recedes?

Social distancing has required us to adopt new technology to hold City Council and other public meetings remotely. Though online platforms have their limits, virtual meetings have made civic life accessible for the many St. Paulites who are normally unable to attend in person due to work, childcare, transportation or other constraints. Can we continue to use technology to help people engage, even once in-person gatherings resume?

As we confront what it means to be a severe budget crisis, can we ignore the temptation to choose short-term fixes that will just get us past the current emergency, and instead seize the opportunity to rebuild our budget from the ground up — fund what’s working, cut what’s not and do our work in new ways to save time and money?

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I’m sitting outside in my yard, for the most of these days. I’m noticing my backyard birds. They live here. I’m the one who likes to jump in my car and go somewhere to look for birds, and look whenever I arrive; for the adventure. Instead, this spring, I’m content to sit in my yard. I have a lot of birds, considering I lived most of my backyard landscape in a vain attempt to reduce bird seed. On the other hand, it is pretty exciting to most of my backyard landscape in a vain attempt to reduce bird seed. I do hear the high pitched, dull hummm. Interstate-Highway-35, is 1,555 miles long, it travels north to south; Duluth, MN to Laredo, TX. During the Dwight, D. Eisenhower, Administrator, in 1956, The National System of Interstate and Defense Highway was enacted. Our four mile neighborhood stretch of I 35E was the last to be constructed and was granted a lower speed and a weight restriction, after severe community action — see publishing. rchs.com/wp-content/uploads 2021 02-7 RCHN.Winter.2014.Milton.pdf.

I’ve had a pair of chickadees hollow out a downy woodpecker’s hole in the boulder stump of the willow tree, to lay their eggs.

The males mating display is a somber. They are such tiny birds. I also have crows with an active nest on the henhouse. Robins are calling me out for worms.

I like, “Ya, I got this robin,” and turn on the hose to bring up the worms. Then they hop over for a wupply one.

A pair of northern cardinals like the spruce tree a lot. The elderberry bush and the bridal view is all I like, “Ya, I got this robin,” and turn on the hose to bring up the worms. Then they hop over for a wupply one.

The hummingbirds really like the crepemyrtle, Charlie, the dandelions, the Canada violets. The hummingbirds really like the crepemyrtle, Charlie, the dandelions, the Canada violets and the wild purple violets. So don’t pull them up anymore. They are the early pollinators.

A little worm shown up, so the chattering is here!!! He was building a nest in the neighbor’s tree across the alley.

The males do build nests. 90% of the female to choose from. The chimney swifts returned to their summer residence over at Global Arts Plas on Osceola. They fly overhead as they come into roast for the night after flying all day long.

And then just as I was going to come in for the night, the night hawk squawked. It means summer is near. It means mosquitoes are active. It means a nighttime serenade. Earlier, my son Myles and I took a walk down to Crosby Farm and found a patch of mosquitos off the beaten track.

What is missing this year is the red winged Blackbird that had its annual two week layover on our block. The males come two weeks earlier than the females to scope out a nest. I sure miss his trilling. Best to be birding these days. khallevalfy@gmail.com.
shocked and deeply saddened to lift the veil on the true state of affairs. Was it a case of things we didn’t know we didn’t want to know, or couldn’t afford to know? When COVID-19 emerged, our low-income workers faced a new dilemma: they might be more likely to be laid off or ill or be designated essential and sent to work in high-risk environments without personal protective equipment or adequate testing. (Note: by early May, 40% of Americans with household incomes below $40,000 lost a job. Of those earning more than $200,000, the figure was 13%.)

Also, by early May, 7% of small business owners (who have created the most jobs for decades) reported being out of cash; 9.5% of small business owners (who have created the most jobs for decades) reported being out of cash; 9.5% of small business owners (who have created the most jobs for decades) reported being out of cash; 9.5% of small business owners (who have created the most jobs for decades) reported being out of cash; 9.5% of small business owners (who have created the most jobs for decades) reported being out of cash; 9.5% of small business owners (who have created the most jobs for decades) reported being out of cash; 9.5% of small business owners (who have created the most jobs for decades) reported being out of cash; 9.5% of small business owners (who have created the most jobs for decades) reported being out of cash; 9.5% of small business owners (who have created the most jobs for decades) reported being out of cash; 9.5% of small business owners (who have created the most jobs for decades) reported being out of cash; 9.5% of small business owners (who have created the most jobs for decades) reported being out of cash; 9.5% of small business owners (who have created the most jobs for decades) reported being out of cash; 9.5% of small business owners (who have created the most jobs for decades) reported being out of cash; 9.5% of small business owners (who have created the most jobs for decades) reported being out of cash; 9.5% of small business owners (who have created the most jobs for decades) reported being out of cash; 9.5% of small business owners (who have created the most jobs for decades) reported being out of cash; 9.5% of small business owners (who have created the most jobs for decades) reported being out of cash; 9.5% of small business owners (who have created the most jobs for decades) reported being out of cash; 9.5% of small business owners (who have created the most jobs for decades) reported being out of cash; 9.5% of small business owners (who have created the most jobs for decades) reported being out of cash; 9.5% of small business owners (who have created the most jobs for decades) reported being out of cash; 9.5% of small business owners (who have created the most jobs for decades) reported being out of cash; 9.5% of small business owners (who have created the most jobs for decades) reported being out of cash; 9.5% of small business owners (who have created the most jobs for decades) reported being out of cash; 9.5%

Of those earning more than $100,000, the household incomes below $40,000 lost a job.

[Note: by early May, 40% of Americans with household incomes below $40,000 lost a job. Of those earning more than $200,000, the figure was 13%.] The comprehensive report was written by Alison Lomax, Minnesota Compass (763-602-3645, info@minnesotacompass.org) Director, and Dr. Rachel Buechley, Research Scientist, and gives more perspective to these results. (“What’s finding is that Minnesota was kind of on shaky ground coming into this pandemic already,” she said, pointing to a nine-year trend of the number of workers earning more than $100,000. “There was a significant factor in one’s vulnerability to the health conditions mentioned above. Low income, lack of health insurance, having accessing costs as a higher percentage of income; and a general sense of inequality around supports that are essential for everyday living.”)

Challenges related to poverty, employment, and access to transportation. These also drive more to food insecurity, rising concentrations of Asian, Black, Hispanic, and Latino residents. While viruses do not discriminate, both the policies and institutions are not neutral in how they affect our communities. People living in the highest risk neighborhoods also shoulder a disproportionate share of health care jobs.

In all, 13% of workers face a new dilemma: They might be more likely to be laid off or ill or be designated essential and sent to work in high-risk environments without personal protective equipment or adequate testing. (Note: by early May, 40% of Americans with household incomes below $40,000 lost a job. Of those earning more than $200,000, the figure was 13%.)

Our findings give an idea of where targeted outreach, education, and community health efforts may be most critical.

To read the complete report and learn more about outreach, education, and others to deal with COVID-19 in the context of all the pre-existing issues that make life so fragile for so many in our region, see minnesotacompass.org COVID-19 overview.

memo...
Our neighborhood responds in many ways to upheaval

We change our businesses
We give to others
We express appreciation
We honor our heroes
We prepare our community (Victory!) gardens
We care for our pets
We hope
We say goodbye

2020 Community Service Award Dinner
Wednesday, September 16, 6–9pm
Mancini’s Char House
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Diane Gerth and Jerry Rothstein

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All appropriate coronavirus guidelines will be followed.

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