

Community REPORTER

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BUILDING AN ANTIRACIST COMMUNITY

Gardening and the roots of racism



TIM JOHNSON
columnist

One of summer's joys is going for a walk in the neighborhood and appreciating the variety of gardening being done on city boulevards. On some blocks, one encounters raised gardens with things like green beans, tomatoes and peppers ripening on the vine. On other blocks one encounters flowers, shrubs and various blossoming plants adding beauty to one's walk, but also becoming a stop over for various pollinators. Last summer we hiked by a home whose garden had attracted 30 – 40 monarch butterflies, providing a strong reminder of how deeply connected we are with these pollinating creatures who help bring both beauty and nourishment into our world.

Whether gardening for food or gardening for beauty, one of the things that all urban gardeners share is an awareness that gardens must be tended. Left unattended or ignored, what one ends up with is an assortment of plants that provide neither the beauty we seek nor the food for which we hope. These are weeds. Gardens never just magically happen. Flowers and vegetables are the outcome of gardeners who have purposefully placed in the soil plants that are desired and remove those plants seeking to take over and dominate the gardens which they tend.

The very same dynamic is at work in our communities, state and nation when it comes to establishing neighborhoods and institutions where everyone has an opportunity to flourish in a way that brings forth their unique gifts and beauty. Racism is one of those invasive plants that regularly seeks to take over, dislodging the potential in our communities that otherwise exists.

As with the weeds in any garden, author Ibram Kendi in his book *How To Be An Antiracist*, argues there can be no neutrality when it comes to racism. Kendi states, "The most threatening racist movement is not the 'alt right's' unlikely drive for a White ethnostate but the regular American's drive for a 'race neutral one.'"

Either one tends the garden, removing the unwanted plants or one ignores the garden and lets those weeds dominate. Either one supports policies and ideas that are racist or one supports policies and ideas that are antiracist. There is no neutrality with racism. Ignoring the weeds is not an option, unless one is prepared to let the weeds take over.

Unfortunately, throughout the history of our country we have not only let the weeds of racism proliferate, but in fact have too often supported and encouraged their presence. Recently my brother was researching our hometown community newspaper archives looking for a story about our grandmother's funeral. Her obituary was found on the July 8, 1925 edition of the *Braham Journal*. On the same page as the obituary was an article about the Ku Klux Klan hosting a special event in the town park. The reporting made the event seem natural and unobtrusive, leaving the distinct impression the KKK was a welcome presence in town.

GARDENING, PG 3

Conservancy aims to make St. Paul a global destination with proposed river projects

SBY CASEY EK
t. Paul may soon have a smattering of new river-oriented projects that span the city's 17 miles of the Mississippi River thanks to the efforts of the Great River Passage Conservancy and its many partners, including the City of St. Paul.



Great River Passage Conservancy Founding Executive Director Mary deLaitre spoke with the *Community Reporter* about the three projects the organization is spearheading. They include the Mississippi River Learning Center, targeted for Crosby Farm Regional Park, A 1.5-mile river promenade spanning downtown St. Paul's river bluff, and the East Side River District, a restoration and optimization effort that seeks to foster the cohesion of Dakota sacred sites, industrial and civic uses for the 1000-acre area of the Mississippi River east of downtown.

Of all the projects, deLaitre said the Conservancy is tapping into the knowledge of the public at large, business leaders and numerous Dakota organizations, among many others, to help guide design and collaboration efforts. The projects will be publicly and privately funded, each with its own funding formula.

"Now the question is how do we make these projects happen," deLaitre said. "We don't want to squander public goodwill."

Mississippi Learning Center

The guiding principal behind design work of the Mississippi River Learning Center is creating year-round access to the Mississippi River's land areas, water and culture, deLaitre said.



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A rendering shows a future gathering area in Kellogg Park that could be part of the Great River Passage Conservancy's river balcony.

The learning center will be a headquarters for The National Parks Service, who are expected to lease the property from the City of St. Paul, and will function as a public gateway to the Mississippi River.

The project is now in the design process, and a final design is expected in the fall. Fundraising will span through 2023, and construction is tentatively targeted for two years starting in 2024. The site could be operational by 2026.

The Highland District Council leadership, who recently sent a proposal for a safe pedestrian crossing of Shepard Road at Alton Street to city planners, hopes to be an active collaborator with the Conservancy as plans materialize, according to HDC Executive Director Kathy Carruth.

"If we can all work together it would make sense and hopefully help make the vision of a safe crossing for the residents on Shepard Road to access not only Crosby Park, but the Sam Morgan Trail and the river," Carruth said.

The public can join an engagement meeting Aug. 11. from 6:30-8:30 p.m. Register online at bit.ly/3vcLjzb. The Conservancy is expected to reveal a 75% schematic design at the meeting.

River Balcony (Promenade)

At present those walking in downtown St. Paul lack easy access to the river. The Conservancy wants to change that. What they are proposing is a series of access points and landmarks spanning 1.5 miles that orient locals and visitors to the waterway. These eight main touch points would compliment and elevate already existing and future projects like Ramsey County's River's Edge project, deLaitre believes. Landmarks being proposed include a bluff walk and garden at Lambert's landing and an elevation cutaway that connects Kellogg Park with Second Street and a reimagining of the nearby county parking lot to include

RIVER, PG 2

White Squirrel Bar hits one-year milestone

BY CASEY EK

Those who know Kevin may have seen him in their backyards in the West 7th Neighborhood. Sometimes he's alone; other times he will be accompanied by others just like him—perhaps they are also named Kevin.

For many in the West 7th area, Kevin is a symbol of belonging, and spotting him and subsequently sharing the photo evidence is the official-unofficial sign that you are in on the neighborhood joke. It's a joke because there is not necessarily just one Kevin, there indeed may be many. It's also a joke because Kevin is the name given to all the white squirrels who famously roam the West 7th neighborhood.

Wife and husband, Dani and Jarret Oulman, were channeling this inside joke while naming White Squirrel Bar, 974 West 7th St. In case you get lost while searching for the establishment there is a Forest Wozniak mural of Kevin that covers the establishment's eastern side.

The mural, Jarret said, is an unambiguous showing of West 7th solidarity. But it also taps into something a bit deeper.

"Squirrels are survivors," Jarret said. "They are resourceful."

Since their opening last summer and well before, Dani and Jarret have had to channel their inner squirrels. After obtaining the space, which once housed the Fort Road Federation, in March 2020, the couple would need to wait over a year to actualize their vision for the building because of COVID lockdowns. Then, on June 1st, 2021, the day the indoor mask mandates lifted in St. Paul,



White Squirrel owners Jarret(left) and Dani Oulman behind the establishment's bar. (left) A portrait of Kevin, the neighborhood white squirrel often spotted in the West 7th area hangs inside White Squirrel Bar.

White Squirrel opened its doors, and since then it has been a nonstop celebration of the West 7th community.

Custom cocktails carry names like Little Bohemia Rhapsody, West End Girls, and Kevin's Raspberry Beret. If you stop into the intimate, unpretentious bar on Tuesdays, you are likely to catch Fort Road Federation Executive Director, Mary Cutrufello, alongside Trevor McSpadden rocking the White Squirrel stage, which is constantly filled with the sounds of local flavor. Also be sure to say hi to the portrait of Kevin, which will be at your right if you come in through the main door.

The owner of two other establishments—Amsterdam Bar in downtown St. Paul, which

is co-owned by his father John and business partner Josh Mandelman, and the 331 Club in Minneapolis, which he owns alongside his father— Jarret holds a special place in his heart for White Squirrel. That's because for the last 10 years the Oulmans have lived six blocks from the establishment and call the neighborhood it inhabits home.

A year after opening the small venue, Jarret often finds himself personally maintaining White Squirrel in ways he is not able to at his other establishments. He might be spotted touching up paint and working out scuffs on the wooden bar-top. Moments before his

SQUIRREL, PG 3

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Your involvement is requested

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

longer “Neighbors Speak Out” piece.
You can also contribute story ideas: We aim to cover a wide range of interesting areas in the neighborhood. Your ideas for stories and topics are always welcome. Discuss the many possibilities with the editor at editor@communityreporter.org.

– Casey Ek, Editor, Community Reporter



WEST END HEALTHLINE

How to Handle the Summer Heat

BY BRITTANY MCCOSH, DO

With outdoor activities in full swing and temperatures climbing, it is important to know how to manage those extra hot days and recognize signs of heat illness. Believe it or not, exertional heat illness (EHI) is among the leading causes of death in young athletes each year. Anyone who exerts themselves in heat is potentially at risk; and some are even at risk without exercising.

The first step in preventing heat illness is to understand possible risk factors. People more likely to struggle with the heat include those who have a low baseline physical fitness and have not been physically active in the heat recently. This means the body has not had time to adapt to the hot environment. In addition, you would also be at increased risk if you are male, older or younger in age (70+ years old and young children/ infants), do not drink enough water or drink alcohol before activity. In addition, those with heart disease and some medications/supplements can put you at risk for heat related illness. Review your medications with your provider if you have any concerns.

During an average day without physical exertion or time in the sun, a person should drink two to three liters of fluid per day, preferably water. An average water bottle is one half of a liter, which would be four to six water bottles per day. How do you know if you are drinking enough water? Check the color of your urine. It should be light yellow or clear. If it is dark yellow, you need more water! It is important to keep in mind that alcohol actually dehydrates people, and therefore is not

The first step in preventing heat illness is to understand possible risk factors.

a good fluid on a hot day. Working toward this basic goal is a good place to start in preventing heat illness.

Once exercising, a person should additionally drink .2-.3 liters of water for every 10-20 minutes of exercise; so about half a bottle of water. To further prevent heat illness, it is recommended that people pre-hydrate themselves with one to two bottles of water, starting two to three hours before planned exertion in the heat.

Some other prevention tips include taking breaks during exercise, acclimating to the heat over time by slowly increasing the amount of time in it, wearing loose and lightweight clothing and trying to plan exertion at cooler times of the day (usually in the early morning).

There is a spectrum of heat illness, ranging from heat cramps all the way to heat stroke. Muscle cramps, or heat cramps, during exercise in the heat is a likely sign that you need to drink fluid quickly. A person should pause for some rest and rehydration at this point.

Heat exhaustion is next on the spectrum. Signs of heat exhaustion include headache, dizziness, a lot of sweating, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, stomach cramping, weakness, and persistent muscle cramps. A body temperature is usually 101 to 104 degrees Fahrenheit at that time. It is critical to take action if you are experiencing these symptoms as your body needs to cool down.

Things to do at this time include spraying off with cool water, resting in the shade or an air-conditioned location, taking a cool bath or shower, taking off excess clothing, drinking fluids and consider putting ice packs around the neck, groin and armpits.

If a person is exhibiting confusion, odd behavior or altered mentation, they could be experiencing heat stroke and have a body temperature above 104 degrees. A fast heart rate and low blood pressure are also concerning signs. This is a medical emergency and 911 should be called. While awaiting help, submerging their body in ice water is ideal, but if not available get them out of the heat and apply ice cold towels or ice packs around the neck, groin, and armpits.

Prevention is key in these situations, but the awareness of signs and symptoms to watch for can be extremely beneficial. Let’s help keep our community safe by spreading our knowledge on prevention and signs of heat illness.

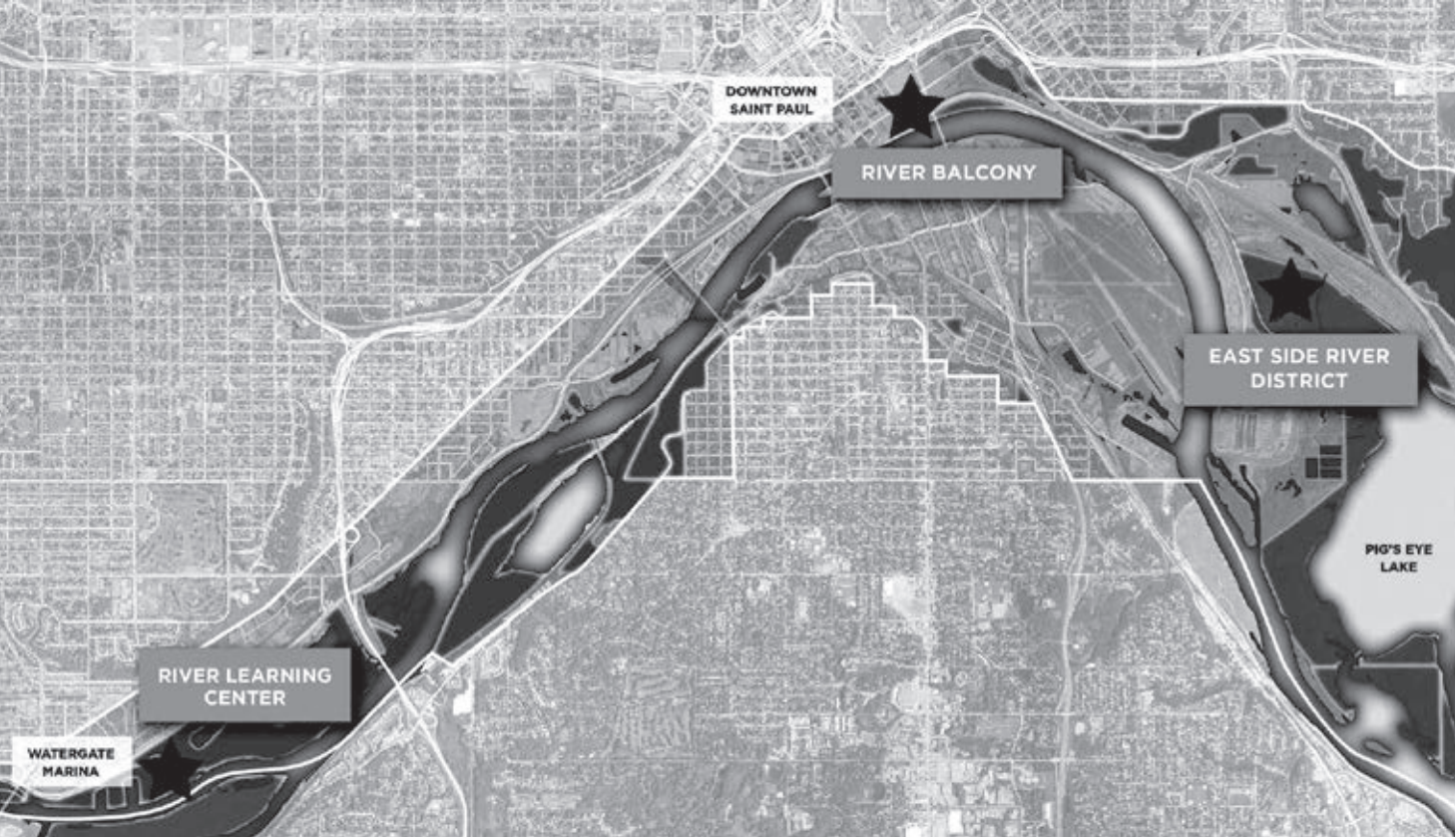
Brittany McCosh, DO is a family medicine doctor at Allina Health United Family Physicians, 233 Grand Ave, Saint Paul, MN 55102. 651-241-5200

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Our voices should not go unheard

Dear Editor,
I agree with the letter by Don Grundhauser regarding his letter entitled *Our Voices Should Not Go Unheard* published in last month's *Community Reporter*. There is no excuse for our elected officials (Sandy Pappas in his case) ignoring our letters and emails. Who do they think they are? I have had the same experience regarding my letters (letters by mail) to senators Amy Klobuchar and Tina Smith and Representative Betty McCollum. I have written two letters recently to each of them, one about Julian Assange and another about the war in Ukraine. Not one of them answered me. Just ignoring me either because they don't know what to say or just being plain ignorant or just that they don't care. I voted for these people in the past but do not know what I will do in the future.
I have also written to Councilwoman Rebecca Noecker, and we actually had a phone conversation. We didn't agree but at least she contacted me. I appreciated that.

Patty Guerrero
Fulton Street



A map shows the potential future locations for river-oriented projects spearheaded by Great River Passage Conservancy that may take shape in the coming years.

RIVER, PG 1

recreational spaces.
DeLaittre said public input has been overwhelmingly positive for the balcony project. To that effect, the conservancy was able to raise \$600,000 of public and private funds for the design process, but deLaittre believes that the river balcony project, the overall cost of which has not been estimated at the time of this article’s publishing, will pay for itself not only in the form of beautifying the city, but also in actual dollars coming from visitors from around the world. To ensure the project is completed with the considerations of business owners in mind, the Conservancy is partnering with Visit St. Paul, the St. Paul Downtown Alliance and others.
Viking River Cruises, which will host world-class tours on the Mississippi launching from

St. Paul could serve as a boon for downtown. A welcoming riverfront, deLaittre said, could make St. Paul a world destination as more new faces begin experiencing the city.
“The Mississippi River is very high on the bucket list [of international travelers],” deLaittre said. “This [the river balcony] puts St. Paul up there with Nashville and all of the other great river cities.”
The Conservancy is expected to release the completed schematic design for the river balcony project in September or October.
East River District
Hoping to “reveal, heal, connect and protect,” the Conservancy is hoping to help bring together the varied interests present in the East River District, a 1,000-acre area that includes the area bound by the Mississippi River on the south and west and the bluffs

to the east and north east of downtown. This area is on the Mississippi flyway bird migration route, and includes the Pig’s Eye Island Heron Rookery Scientific and Natural Area. The area has two barge facilities and plays host to dozens of species of migratory birds. Additionally, it is home to multiple sacred Dakota sites, so the conservancy is aiming to marry those uses in a way that is publicly accessible.
The East River District is still in the fundraising phase for the design process. So far, the Conservancy has raised about \$200,000 of the \$600,000 needed for the schematic design. Half of the raised funds came from a \$100,000 donation from REL.
For more information about about the projects, visit greatriverpassage.org.

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Community News & Events



2022 Summer Beer Dabbler

Tickets are on sale now for the 2022 Summer Beer Dabbler, set for Aug. 26 on Harriet Island from 6-9:30 p.m. With more than 130 breweries sampling over 400 beers, this premier summertime craft beer festival is not to be missed. Sample the best craft beer has to offer and take in the sights of the mighty Mississippi and downtown St. Paul. Tickets are \$20 for designated drivers, \$50 for general admission and \$70 for early access, which starts at 5 p.m. Tickets available at beerdabbler.com.

State Primaries are Aug. 9

State primaries are Aug. 9. Most local for West 7th area voters, Charles Barklind, who worked with the city's District Planning Council, and Bill Hosko, a local business owner, who most recently ran for mayor, are looking to unseat longtime Ramsey County Commissioner Rafael Ortega, who represents District 5.

U.S. District 4 Rep. Betty McCollum will attempt to stave off Amame Badhasso and Fasil Moghul for the Democratic nomination. The District 4 Republican candidates are May Lor Xiong, Jerry Silver and Gene Rechtzigel.

Polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. To find your polling station, visit ramseycounty.us/content/state-primary. For a full list of candidates visit : bit.ly/3aXxMVf.

Juan T. Parker at Friedli Gallery

This August, Friedli Gallery will feature St. Paul's artist's paintings which express colorful vision, movement and emotions through his life of joy and sorrow. His work includes landscape surrealism, graphic design and dance. Juan's art has played a pivotal role in overcoming and healing from obstacles in his life such as childhood bullies and later congestive heart failure and cancer with numerous hospital stays. Juan wants to share his passion for life as a survivor, having his art inspire and make a difference in this world. A reception will be hosted at Friedli Gallery Friday, Aug. 12, 6-8 p.m. More information at friedliartsgallery.com.

Dog Days and Art

Bring Fido on down to Dog Days and Art, on Saturday, Aug. 6, at Warehouse 2 (Harriet Island, St. Paul) to find exciting vendors that

both you and your furry friend will love. Find some delicious treats for yourself and your pet too, at the local food trucks. Best of all, Warehouse 2 art studios will be open to check out and purchase unique artwork. 9am-1pm: Outdoor festival; 9am-5pm: Open Studios Warehouse 2, 106 W Water St, St. Paul, Map: stpaulartcollective.org/venue/warehouse-2/

Music in Rice Park

This August listen live to Latin-inspired music from Twin Cities Latin Band (Aug. 11) and blues from Everett Smithson Band (Aug. 25) as part of the ongoing Summer Nights in Rice series. Summer Nights in Rice is presented by the Rice Park Association and Twin Cities Mobile Jazz Project and is supported by the Saint Paul Cultural STAR Program. For more information visit landmarkcenter.org/summer-nights-in-rice.

Councilmember Dai Thao steps down; council to announce replacement

Ward 1 St. Paul City Councilman Dai Thao announced he will be stepping down from his position effective Aug. 1. The city council then accepted applications through July 22 and planned for possible interviews on Aug. 3. The council is expected to announce a replacement Aug. 10. The appointee will serve through 2023. **Food truck festival at Union Depot** Stop by St. Paul's Union Depot Lot C, 390 E Kellogg Blvd., Aug. 6, for a day of good food, good music and loads of entertainment. More than 45 food trucks will be selling their unique street eats with global flavors ranging from Spanish paella to New Zealand meat pies to Maine lobster rolls. The MN Lottery I'MN

Stage will feature live music from local cover bands throughout the day, including Khalia & Blackwater (11am-2pm), Tyte Phitt (2:30-5:30pm), and Sumo Seven (6-9 pm). visit fb.me/e/1MEiS7Yuk for more information.

Grants available to local nonprofits

The St. Paul and Minnesota Foundation and its partners—Mardag Foundation and F.R. Bigelow Foundation— will be accepting grant applications from Aug. 8-29. Additionally, applications for funds through the community sharing fund will open Aug. 1, and applications for the management improvement fund will open Aug. 8. Grants will be awarded to organizations that can demonstrably uplift community through art, culture and vitality initiatives. To get started register online at bit.ly/3czZ2cX.

National Night Out in St. Paul

Saint Paul's National Night Out is Tuesday, Aug. 2, 2022. National Night Out is an annual nationwide event that encourages residents to get out in the community, meet neighbors, and partner with police. Events can be simple gatherings to large events. National Night Out has participation across all 50 states. This will be the 38th annual event.

Share your pictures with Community Reporter from your neighborhood's celebration, and you may end up on our social media feeds. Send pictures and a brief caption to editor@communityreporter.org.

IndiaFest Aug. 13

IndiaFest celebrates the rich heritage, traditions, diversity, and culture of India. A FREE event open to all, this year's festival is bigger and better than ever with internationally acclaimed Asian Indian dance and theater groups based in Minnesota as well as delectable Indian cuisine from local restaurants, foot-tapping live Bollywood music, exhibits, cultural displays, and an Indian bazaar. Food: Enjoy delicious cuisine from popular Twin Cities Indian restaurants. This festival consists of: Food, Culture, Exhibits & Parade, Activities, Bazaar, Student Achievement Awards. Minnesota State Capitol grounds, 75 Rev Dr Martin Luther King Jr Blvd., 11 a.m.- 8 p.m.

Are you participating in the Minnesota State Fair and want to be the first star of the Community Reporter's YouTube Channel?

The Minnesota State Fair is returning once again from Aug.25- Sept. 5, and with it will come a showcase of Minnesota's culture and talent. To celebrate, the *Community Reporter* is inviting our readers who are participating in the state fair to show off to fellow readers in the form of video via our newly launched YouTube channel: bit.ly/3yTwUJa. Are you interested in being featured or know someone who might be interested? Email our editor at editor@communityreporter.org.

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Irish Fair returns to Harriet Island

The Irish Fair is making its way back to Harriet Island Aug. 12-14. The fair will include over 150 music, dance, culture and interactive events across stage plus Croke Park Sports Field and other random fun. Visit Irishfair.com for ticketing information, a full schedule of events and ways to get involved.

GARDENING, PG 1

The journal states, "Last Monday the Klu Klux Klan held a free public meeting to which the community has been invited. The meeting was held in the Braham Highway Park and was largely attended. During the course of the evening a cross was set on fire and added much to the scene. Nine white robes knights of the order including the speaker were present for the evening and all conducted themselves in a most orderly fashion." During the 1920s, there were at least 51 KKK chapters in 87

Minnesota counties, including chapters in Minneapolis and St. Paul.

The roots of racism, like most weeds, run deep and unless the garden is carefully tended those weeds will return and seek to dominate. Whether it be the gardens on our boulevards or the garden of our local and national lives, if we are to enjoy the beauty and share in the produce, care and attention is required.

Tim Johnson is a retired pastor for the United Church of Christ.

SQUIRREL pg 1

conversation with *Community Reporter*, he watered White Squirrels plants, he pointed out.

"That's one thing I like about it being small, is that I can feel when we change or when we improve something," Jarret said. "You feel like your contribution is impactful."

Leading into the future, Jarret hopes that attention to detail will come through in the atmosphere guests feel at White Squirrel for years to come. In doing so, Jarret aims to continue harboring what he describes as a local community hub.

"I feel like we are doing what we set out to do," Jarret said. "And the place is doing what we were hoping it would do."



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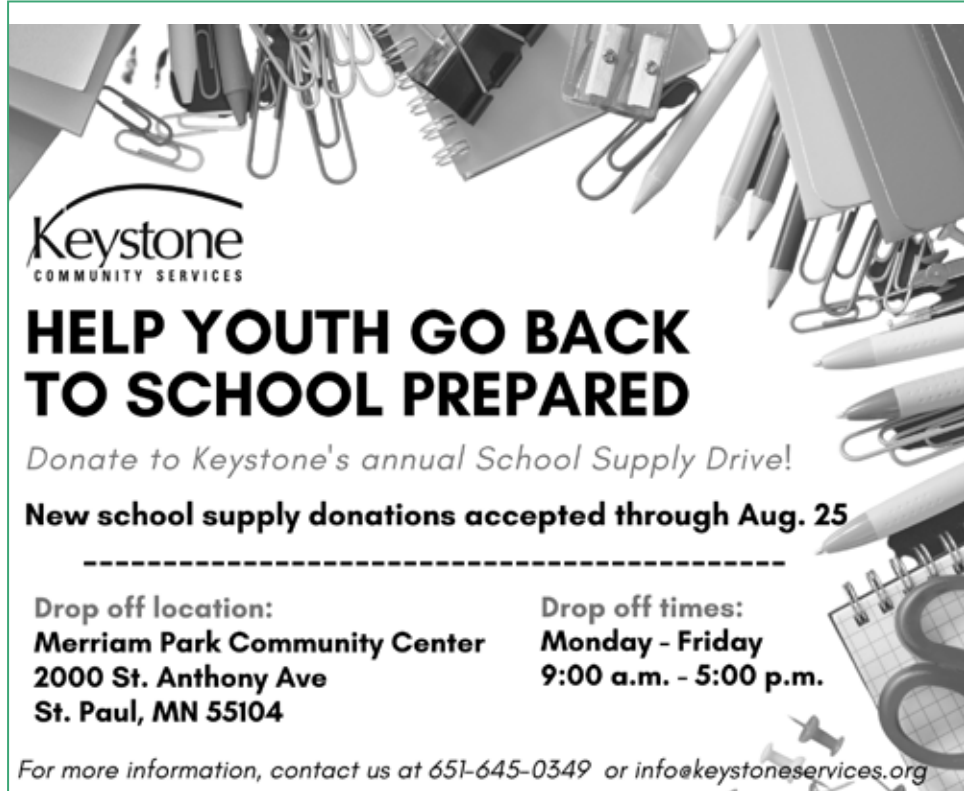


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In the Community

Keystone gets \$450,000 gift from Allianz

Insurance company Allianz Life on July 14 announced it will be contributing \$450,000 over the next three years to Keystone Community Services.

The funds will help the nonprofit, which distributes free food to the underserved, combat the rising cost of food and increased need after years of the COVID-19 pandemic and will help the organization reach more people in need.

“Keystone is a trusted partner in the community, helping neighbors increase and maintain their financial stability through food and other critical services, and we’re proud to partner with such a vital resource in the Midway,” said Jasmine Jirele, president and CEO, Allianz Life. “We’re committed to a more equitable and financially secure Twin Cities, and we know working with Keystone we can help make a real difference.”

With this latest gift, Allianz will aid Keystone in hiring another resource navigator and offering follow-up support. Keystone’s resource navigators help community members find the resources they need for longer-term solutions with things like legal services and education, health care coverage, financial services, and utility assistance. The company had already gifted funds to Keystone in 2020 and 2021 to help fund renovations at their new community food site, the opening of which is targeted for 2023.

“Keystone’s partnership with Allianz began over 10 years ago and we are thrilled to be the



Keystone Community Partners President Mary McKeown(left) and Allianz Life president and CEO Jasmine Jirele together at Allianz field with the Minnesota United mascot.

recipient of this significant three-year grant, which will expand services at our new site and throughout Ramsey County,” said Mary McKeown, president and CEO, Keystone Community Services. “Our neighbors count on us to be there when they need extra support and this investment by Allianz will help Keystone support more people with more food and resources.”

Allianz Life and Keystone are longstanding partners and have worked together to offer numerous community and food distribution events, including “Free Farmers Market” events at Allianz Field, with each event providing more than 400 families from the Midway neighborhood and surrounding areas with fresh produce.



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Community Nourishment

The Book Thief provides insight into what happens when we die



BEATRICE COSGROVE
reviewer

What happens when we die? That is the question we have asked ourselves for centuries. There are many, many answers to that query. Beliefs, thoughts, feelings and experiences surround those replies, but Markus Zusak's *The Book Thief* provides insight into one of those answers through its narrator: Death itself. After she is put into the care of foster parents Rosa and Hans Hubermann, nothing is the same for Liesel Meminger. The future is a puzzle with nearly all its pieces missing. But, things begin to shift after Liesel and Hans form a bond through books and words. As the story progresses, Liesel finds herself beautifully encapsulated in literature, while still surrounded by the horrific circumstances of World War II. Liesel and her

Himmel Street friend Rudy forge a friendship that will warm your heart and move you to tears as they both navigate their lives in the turbulent times of the 1930s and '40s. This book is raw, inspiring and passionate, it gives you the chance to form personal bonds with the characters and really feel their emotions. Death as the narrator is a genius move by Zusak, and the idea was executed magnificently. Death does give insight into future events, which made me slightly wary, but all in all, it was a risk for Zusak that turned out much better than expected. Diving into this book, I wasn't sure what to expect, but as I got deeper, it turned into a profound and exquisitely written novel that captured my heart and gave me more understanding of World War II life than any other book. I will admit, I cried (which I don't usually do!) and was actually really sad to finish the book. This book is worth a read, I recommend it to ages 12 and older.




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In the Community

Rubber hits the road for St. Paul rent control

After a May 1 rollout, St. Paul’s voter-approved rent control ordinance is being road tested as landlords across the city continue appealing the ordinance’s 3% annual rent increase cap.

Under the new rules, landlords can apply for exemptions to the rent cap if there are increases in property taxes, maintenance needs, unavoidable changes in operating expenses or capital improvement projects that affect the property.

At present, landlords can raise rents by over 3% so long as they self-certify that increases of over 3% and under 8% would allow them to cover their costs or provide reasonable returns. Any higher rate increase requires a special appeal. As of July 19, 76 landlords had applied for such an appeal.

Jim Lindquist and his son Matthew Lindquist, who together operate a property at 1029 Raymond Ave., were granted such an appeal on July 20 after the city council voted 5-0 (Dai Thao and Nelsie Yang absent). The Lindquists met with legislative hearing officer Marcia Moermond, who gave her stamp of approval for the exemption that allowed a 15% rent increase after determining the 3% cap would result in a loss for the Lindquists in 2022. She, however did not sign off on two other appeals in which the Lindquists asked for the 15% exemption to carry into a year from now and a third appeal



that asked for a more than 15% increase for an individual unit.

St. Paul with around 70,000 rental units, last fall voted by a 53% margin to approve the rent increase cap. The ordinance is said to be one of the strictest in the country.

But tenants are also speaking up about what they are calling unjust rent hikes from some landlords. On July 19, Hannah Gray, a tenant at Union Flats on University Avenue, and Katherine Banbury, who lives at 720 7th St. East, said their landlord, Dominium

out of Plymouth, said their 8% rent increase was unjust. Jack Cann, an attorney with St. Paul’s Housing Justice Center, believes the process that allows landlords to determine reasonable rate increases is flawed.

“What they’re asking for is a procedure in setting their exemptions that would guarantee them a return that is ridiculously higher than a reasonable return,” Cann told city officials.

The tenants’ appeals are being laid over until Sept. 1 when the city council will again consider them.

Some attention has also been put on utilities, an issue that will likely come up in public hearings as appeals from both tenants and landlords mount. Tenants, according

to multiple news sources, are complaining that landlords, in order to skirt the new ordinance, are making tenants pay for utilities in addition to 3% rent hikes. This for some has resulted in double-digit rate hikes. Landlords are arguing transferring utilities to renters is allowed.

Do you have a rent control story to share since the May 1 ordinance took effect? Let us know by email at editor@communityreporter.org.

Notebook Recollections: Walk This Way

Local staple Tim Rumsey walked to work most days from 1987 to 2000. He began as a form of exercise but kept at it for his love of local lore harvested through his interactions with people on the street. He began documenting his musings and eventually filled 53 pocketbooks with his observations. Here is just one tale.

BY TIM RUMSEY, MD

May 2022

I saw a dinosaur walking across the St. Clair – 35E overpass this morning. It was size-enough to navigate the sidewalk. Determinedly heading uphill like it was on its way to work. A briefcase would not have been any more out of place, well, other than another dinosaur carrying a briefcase to the office.

Okay, so it was an adult eastern wild turkey. Likely male. An upland, ground bird who could easily be described as ‘odd looking’. Beautiful feathers, sure. And, a bright red wattle. “But what’s with that beard,” one might say. Or even, “they look like dinosaurs.”

Well they are dinosaurs!

Excuse me?

Wild turkeys are dinosaurs. Listen to Dr. Steve Brusatte in William Morrow’s The Rise and Fall of the Dinosaurs, published in 2018. “Birds are a weird group of dinosaurs that evolved wings and developed the ability to fly,” Brusatte writes. And, “Evolution made birds from Dinosaurs.”

June 2022

Back to our briefcase toting Tom. I next saw him a half block uphill from the aforementioned overpass. At 5 p.m., he was fanning and flashing cars passing by to distract them from four females behind him. Protecting them as well as bragging.

The next morning he was pecking the ground for seeds, bugs or berries. Solo this time.

Let’s get this straight. Turkeys are dinosaurs?

Dr. Brusatte again: “. . . dinosaurs are still among us today . . . [but] the vast majority of dinosaurs died 66 million years ago.”

Of the triceratops, T-Rexes and giant Sauropods from Brazil, Brusatte writes, “The reign of dinosaurs ended and a revolution followed . . . “but a few stragglers made it through...the descendants of these remarkable survivors live on today as birds...”

Yikes! I’m still wondering a bit.

Early July 2022

This was hard. A quick exit off 35E to St. Clair. 7:30 p.m. One of the female turkeys lay still and battered off to the side of the exit ramp. Two feathers bent over in the light breeze.

July 9, 2 p.m.

On foot, I saw Mr. Turkey alone, or so I thought. We were five feet apart. Both of us are not moving. I said “hello,” out loud and his head snapped away from me to his left. I

looked to the left. There on the brown, burnt out boulevard was mom and four chicks. All pecking the ground. Dad walked slowly into the urban woods; mom walked slowly into the urban woods. Four chicks did the same. I lost them all in the underbrush.

One last blast from The Rise and Fall of the Dinosaurs: “The realization that birds are dinosaurs is probably the single most important fact ever discovered by dinosaur paleontologists.”

The bird-dinosaur link was scientifically proven in the 1970s by the study of remarkably preserved fossils of feathered dinosaurs from China, The Liaoning Fossils. These “fossils sealed the deal by verifying how many features are shared uniquely by birds and meat eating theropods like T-Rex and Allosaurus; not just feathers, but also wishbones, three fingered hands that can fold against the body, and hundreds of other aspects of the skeleton. There are no other groups of animals, living or extinct, that share these things with birds or the theropods.”

July 19, 2022 – 1:30 p.m.

On this very day, on a break from writing this recollection I took a walk. Three blocks from my home I encountered two female wild turkeys and eight chicks. When they sensed my presence, they all scrambled into the bushes and woods. I saluted them thinking, “Long live the dinosaurs!”

Summer with Saint Paul Public Library

By Terry Giinther
Library Manager

Saint Paul Public Library offers opportunities to enjoy reading and learning at home, at the beach, the park, the cabin or while traveling. The library is also a cool, welcoming place to spend a hot afternoon with a book or magazine.

West Seventh Library, 265 Oneida St., is one of the smaller library branches, but it is a neighborhood hidden gem. The books, DVDs and other materials are non-holdable, which means that some of the most popular novels, movies and more are on the shelf available for visitors to check out right away. Other library branches offer lucky day collections of non-holdable books and DVDs, but West Seventh Library’s entire collection is a Lucky Day collection for the patrons who visit.

George Latimer Central Library in downtown on Rice Park has a much larger collection offering three floors of books, magazines, computers, comfortable reading areas, a maker space for adults and more. It is the perfect place for any age to escape the heat and learn, discover and grow—or simply enjoy a good read in a quiet, comfortable



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space. Families with children can play and make themselves at home in the roomy play areas that include toys, games, and family computers.

Saint Paul Public Library is also portable. There are over a quarter million e-book, audiobook and magazine titles available to download using the Libby app to read or listen to using a smartphone or tablet. With a free library card, anyone can visit sppl.org/libby to bring the library with them wherever they go. If you don’t have a library card, visit West Seventh Library, George Latimer Central Library, or any other library location and get your card today: sppl.org/locations

West 7th Public Library Hours

The library at 265 Oneida St. is open Mondays, Thursdays 12:30-8pm, Tuesdays 11:30am-5:30pm and Wednesdays, Fridays 10am-5:30pm; closed Saturdays and Sundays.

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Months in the making, the Fort Road cookbook is finally available for purchase. For \$25, you can get a hold of about 85 recipes from your neighbors. The book features appetizers, main courses, and desserts alongside salads and other treats. The cookbook also features a 1937 West 7th community cookbook assembled by the West End Commercial Club Ladies Auxiliary. Pick up your copy at Brake Bread or the Federation office.

Upcoming Meetings, via Zoom
Info: fortroadfederation.org/calendar

- **Transportation & Land Use Committee**, Wed, 8/3, 6:30 pm
- **Board Meeting** - No meeting.
- **Community Engagement and Outreach** Th, 8/18 6:30pm

Stay in touch

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

Contact
Mary Cutrufello, executive director, 651-298-5599; mary@fortroadfederation.org; 882 West 7th, Suite 6, Rathskeller Building.

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Summer is back, and Keystone's food distributions are coming! Next event: Friday, June 10, 10am-12pm at Rice & Arlington Field, 1500 Rice St., St. Paul. Open to anyone in need, and no registration is required. Everyone who attends will receive five to seven varieties of fresh fruits and vegetables. We have free farmer's market events set up all throughout the summer across Ramsey County. For dates/locations: visit keystoneservices.org/events.

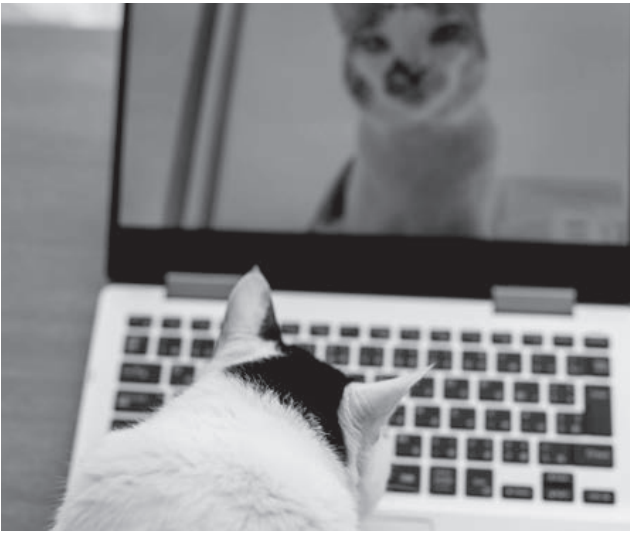
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Our volunteers help families get the food they need at our food shelves, deliver meals and groceries to homebound seniors, and ensure that kids stay on track to succeed in school. Visit keystoneservices.org/volunteer.

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Cat Video Festival
Join myTalk 1071 and the St. Paul Saints at CHS Field in St. Paul on Thursday, Aug. 4 at 6 p.m. for a celebration of videos featuring silly, heartwarming and lovable cats from Twin Cities' residents, TikTok and America's Funniest Home Videos! The event's charity partner this year is the Animal Humane Society. \$1 from each ticket sold goes to their mission to engage hands, hearts and minds to help cats and all animals! Admission: \$10 / VIP \$75 FFI: www.catfestmn.com

YWCA RACE AGAINST RACISM
YWCA Minneapolis is hosting Race Forward 2-Day weekend 2022, which includes a Community 5K run/walk. The 5K run/walk on Aug. 13 at Lake Nokomis is open to people of all ages, genders, and abilities. \$40 per person, with kids 10 and under being able to run for free.

BEGINNER DRUM CLASS
Wednesday, Aug. 17, 3:30-4:30pm. Play djembes to explore pulse and rhythms. Easy, energizing exercises will be utilized to build skills. Instructor: Jo Klein. Drums provided. Masks required. \$15 per participant. www.womensdrumcenter.org.

BEAT THE HEAT AT ST. PETE'S
Come grab a sweet treat to beat the summer heat on Wednesday, Aug. 3 from 7-8 p.m. St. Peter's Lutheran Church, located at 530 Victoria St. S., will be handing out free frozen treats.

BANDS ON THE BLUFF
Enjoy live outdoor music at the new Klas Overlook, featuring a stunning backdrop of the Wakpa Tanka/Mississippi River and Minneapolis downtown skyline. Aug. 12, 7-8:30 p.m. will feature the band Bluedog at Fort Snelling

MINNESOTA SCOTTISH FAIR STREET PARTY
The afternoon of Aug. 6 will feature musicians and performers followed by an evening of Ceilidh dancing with The Gunn Slingers. Music by Stephanie Claussen, Dick Hensold & Guests, The Northerly Gales, Laura Mackenzie, Dáithí Sproule,

Ross Sutter with Barry Foy, and Adrienne O'Shea. Stop by Celtic Junction Arts Center, 836 Prior Ave. North, to join in the fun. \$10-20.

BABY AND TODDLER STORYTIME
Join in a newly added Storytime at the George Latimer Library, 90 4th St. W.. Targeted for ages 0-3, but older siblings are welcome as well. We will read books together, sing songs, do baby bounces, and have age-appropriate toys to play with afterwards. This is a great opportunity for baby and toddler socialization! Info: Allie, 651-266-7034. Additional sessions: Thursdays, August 11, 18, 25.

FOOD SAVERS WEBINAR
Aug. 10 6:30-8 p.m. Learn how to save, store, and preserve seasonal fruits and vegetables to enjoy the best flavors and highest nutrition for as long as possible. This class introduces the many different methods of food preservation. Registration required: bit.ly/3AofXsv)

FOODMOBILE GROCERY DISTRIBUTION
West 7th Community Center 4-6pm Aug. 30. West 7th Community Center, 265 Oneida St, St. Paul. This event is open to anyone needing food support. Keystone will be distributing shelf stable groceries, produce, dairy, meat and other items in a safe, socially distanced manner. For more information about Keystone's Foodmobile visit keystoneeservices.org/food-shelves/foodmobile

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