

# Community REPORTER

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

## COUNCIL PERSPECTIVE

### Making St. Paul green this spring



REBECCA NOECKER  
CITY COUNCIL  
MEMBER, WARD 2  
columnist

Spring is finally here — or at least, I hope it is. As I write this on April 17, the air temperature is 33 degrees and a blanket of snow covers the roof outside my office window. But as an eternal optimist, I'm confident that by the time you're reading this, spring will have sprung. In honor of the emerging green, here are a few things we're doing to make St. Paul greener and more climate-resilient:

**No Mow May** - In April, the City Council passed a resolution I authored to officially recognize *No Mow May* in the City of St. Paul. For the month of May, residents are encouraged not to mow their lawns as bees and other pollinators emerge from dormancy and search for flowering plants for food. Research in Wisconsin showed that households that participated in *No Mow May* had more bees and more varieties of bees in their lawns than households that didn't participate. St. Paul joins other Minnesota cities such as Edina, New Brighton and Rochester in suspending restrictions on tall grass and weeds during the month. Enjoy the month off of mowing and know you're helping pollinators and protecting our local ecosystem at the same time.

**Restoring Our Tree Canopy** - Emerald Ash borers have devastated our urban forest, but we're making strides in replanting the trees we've lost. We're also taking advantage of the opportunity to train the next generation in maintaining our tree canopy. Through an innovative youth jobs partnership with Tree Trust, many boulevard trees in front of St. Paul residences will be planted and maintained by young people this year. Restoring neighborhood trees while giving young people good-paying jobs and work experience is a win-win to celebrate.

**Electric Vehicles** - The city is working hard to make electric vehicles and charging stations accessible to all St. Paul residents. Our initial buildout of the EV Spot Network and Evie Carshare will be complete this year, with 38 public charging locations in St. Paul. Evie Carshare has over 5,000 members in St. Paul and Minneapolis, collectively taking an estimated 300 trips per day in zero-emission vehicles, and we've been awarded funding to expand Evie to even more neighborhoods in 2024. We're also making progress in the move toward electric vehicles in our city fleet. I'm proud that our St. Paul Fire Department will be home to the first all-electric fire truck in Minnesota, which should arrive in late 2024. The truck will operate out of the new Fire Station 7, which is expected to be completed in 2025, and will include the needed charging infrastructure.

**Renewable Energy** - City buildings are becoming increasingly green. We won federal funding to convert the primates building at Como Zoo to geothermal energy, and the new North End Community Center and Wakan Tipi Center will both use a combination of geothermal and solar energy. At the same time, we're using our influence to encourage private players to move toward clean energy. The city was part of a coalition that successfully advocated for Xcel Energy to accelerate their conversion to renewable energy in the coming years. Xcel now aims to provide 85% carbon-free electricity by 2030 and 100% carbon-neutral electricity by 2040.

**Tracking Our Progress** - To reach our ambitious climate goals, we need to know how we're doing. I'm excited about the newly launched St. Paul Climate Dashboard, which will track our progress on the goals in our Climate Action and Resilience Plan. You can check out the dashboard and see how we're doing at [climateaction.stpaul.gov](https://climateaction.stpaul.gov).

## Fort Road Federation looks ahead, celebrates 50 years

BY CASEY EK AND DAMIAN GOEBEL

The Fort Road Federation's leadership honored the past while looking ahead at the annual Federation meeting, which marked the district council's 50th year of operation.

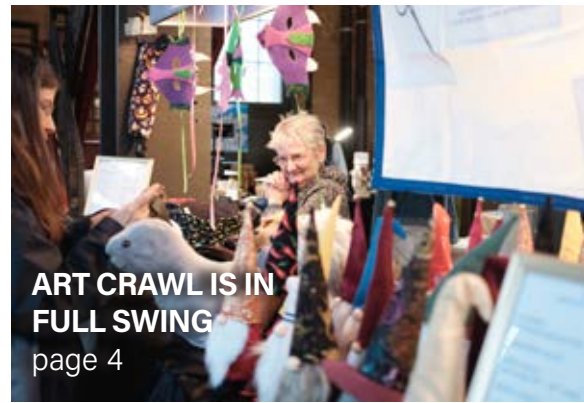


Constituents, who packed into Summit Brewing April 25, had a chance to reflect on the body's storied history with community engagement. In her acceptance speech for the Community Service Award, local community advocate, who as a lawyer played a pivotal role in keeping an ethanol plant out of what are now the Schmidt Artist Lofts, Diane Gerth said the West 7th community isn't known for letting things happen to them.

MEETING, PG 2



Constituents from the Fort Road Federation's three areas filled the house at Summit Brewing for the annual meeting.



ART CRAWL IS IN FULL SWING  
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The newly elected Fort Road Federation board members are (back from left) First Vice President Maria Sarabia, Area 2 Coordinator Maggie Rock, Area 1 Coordinator DJ Devin, Treasurer Andrew Greenlee, (front from left) Area 3 Coordinator Tanya Fabyanske, President Meg Duhr, Area 2 Coordinator Annie Reiersen, Secretary Ruthanne Atkinson, Area 1 Coordinator Paul Hardt and (absent) Area 1 Coordinator Ryan Bresnahan.



Diane Gerth (left) accepts the Community Service Award from Maria Sarabia, the Federation's first vice president.

## New West 7th piercing shop aims to change perceptions

BY CASEY EK

When many people picture the quintessential piercing studio, they might conjure images of rough bikers set to heavy metal music, but Hail Mary Piercing, 678 West 7th St., is aiming to change perceptions while changing customers' experience.

Scheduled to open April 28, after this issue went to press, the piercing studio is queer-owned and operated, and its operators want everyone to know that all are welcome. Among other strides, the studio had planned to donate some of the proceeds from their grand opening to a yet-determined local queer organization.

Hannah Girtman, who owns the shop alongside locally renowned tattoo artist Ransom Bennett, said she learned from her peers in the metro that creating a warm, welcoming space is a benefit to their customers and their business.

"The people in those businesses have only done better, and the clients have been happier," Girtman said.

"My goal since the get-go was to make a place where everyone feels comfortable and everyone feels safe," she later added.

The stuffed animals on the store's vintage couches might be the focal point if not for the bright pink walls and radiators throughout, which eschew the intimidating piercing shop stereotype.

Hail Mary piercer Adrianna Doheny, who opted for a more subdued paint job in her work area, said the store's appearance is just one of many factors that set it apart from other piercing shops.

"Working here is exciting because we're facilitating an experience rather than just giving someone a piercing," Doheny said. "It's not just in and out; I really want to know what you have going on and what this (piercing) means to you and give you the time and energy."

Both Girtman and Doheny, who met several



Hail Mary Piercing owner Hannah Girtman(right) alongside shop piercer Adrianna Doheny within the store at 678 West 7th.

years ago while working at another shop, said their past clients have been "chomping at the bit" to get into the store and that the West 7th business community has been equally welcoming.

Walk-in only, the store's model lends itself to customers' whims. Girtman said that many shops had to abandon the walk-in model with the pandemic, so she's thrilled to potentially bring treasured memories to new clients.

"I remember being 18 (years old) and sitting around with my friends and giggling and being like 'let's all get our noses pierced,'" Girtman said. "I'm excited to be able to bring that back a little bit. You can wake up that day and say 'I've been thinking about getting my nose pierced for six months and I've been too

scared, but I can today."

Girtman said the shop will offer piercings on an a la carte basis, and customers can expect to pay about \$40 per single service and up from \$35 per piece of jewelry. Hail Mary for the moment will not offer genital piercing.

Customers can rest easy knowing that Girtman and Doheny are both licensed piercers who use only high-grade jewelry in order to prevent irritation to penetration sites.

For people getting their first piercing, Girtman said it's important for them to remember that there is no typical customer.

"I have my sweet little 16-year-olds who are coming in to get their noses pierced; I have my lovely older women who are 75," Girtman said.





# Community REPORTER

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Ailie Deloia  
adeloia.cr@gmail.com

**STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER**  
Elisha May Jacobsen  
elishamayart@gmail.com

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## MEETING, PG 1

“We haven’t been real polite at city hall  
sometimes, but I think that’s the kind of good  
trouble we need to keep pushing,” she said to  
applause.

Gerth also accepted a Community Service  
Award on behalf of Jerry Rothstein, a former  
editor for the *Community Reporter* and longtime  
community voice.

**Looking ahead**  
“West 7th is poised for a renaissance,” Gerth  
said, noting a resurgence of community  
organizing amid wide-sweeping city challenges.

This renaissance is reflected among the  
issues the federation is planning to tackle,  
including a focus on housing challenges across  
the district, the future of the Justus Ramsey  
House and refining the district plan, a guiding  
document for the Federation for the next 10  
years.

Outgoing Federation President Karen  
Voracek told the crowd that the district plan  
is well underway, but “we’re still seeking  
feedback,” with a draft expected to be  
submitted by mid-June to city staff.

**Board elections**  
The Federation community also elected a  
slate of new leaders, offering complementary  
views on how to continue their work. Meg  
Duhr, who previously served as an Area 1 coor-  
dinator and on the transportation and land use  
committee, was elected the incoming president  
of the Federation. She said that she was excited  
to work on the “great things and not so great  
things going on in our neighborhood.”

Incoming Area 1 Coordinator Paul Hardt  
echoed the sentiments of Gerth. “I want to  
establish a political committee that would have  
some actual influence at city hall,” he said.

In their nomination speeches, each of the  
candidates expressed their passion for combin-  
ing their expertise and their desire to give back  
to their community. “I have the wonderful gift  
of energy and time,” said Maggie Rock, newly  
elected Area 2 Coordinator. Sometimes, that’s  
all it takes to make a difference.

**Fort Road Federation's newly elected  
officers**  
President: Meg Duhr, First Vice President:  
Maria Sarabia, Secretary: Ruthanne Atkinson  
and Treasurer: Andrew Greenlee.  
For a full list of the Fort Road Federation  
Board visit fortroadfederation.org/board-of-  
directors-and-staff

# Editorials & Opinions

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

## Your involvement is requested

As a nonprofit organization we are governed by a Board of Directors, and we  
have openings for community members to join.  
We encourage your involvement in the creative side of things. We have cor-  
respondents, 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.  
-- Damian Goebel, Editor, *Community Reporter*

## BUILDING AN ANTIRACIST COMMUNITY

### Transgender fear and white supremacy Culture



**TIM JOHNSON**  
columnist

The transition from Carl  
to Catherine unfolded  
slowly, one small step at a  
time. Sitting in my office,  
Carl wanted to know if the  
congregation would accept  
him if he came to church  
wearing a woman's blouse.  
I assured him the answer  
was yes. Little by little Carl  
shared with me his story of  
growing up knowing he felt  
more like a female than a

male. Little by little Carl's outfit expanded to include a  
woman's dress, shoes, a wig and makeup. Carl had all  
those things in his house, but up until he began wearing  
them to church, he had never worn them in public. Little  
by little Carl started presenting himself as the person he  
felt to be on the inside.

Eventually he asked if I might accompany him to the  
county registrar to get his name changed from Carl to  
Catherine at which point the “he” was dropped in favor  
of “she.” Catherine reported that, as Catherine, she was  
the happiest she had ever been. For those at church  
who had gotten to know Catherine, her new found joy  
in life was unmistakable. There was lightness in her  
presence that had never been there for Carl. She had  
come a long way from the all too common thoughts of  
suicide that had been so much a part of her life.

In a recent National Institute of Health Study it was  
reported that 82% of transgender individuals have  
considered killing themselves and 40% have attempted  
suicide. This past December, the Guardian reported  
on a study done by the Trevor Project in which they  
found 50% of transgender and non-binary youth in  
the U.S. had considered suicide in the past year. The  
rate is particularly high in states pursuing aggressive  
anti-transgender legislation, but it is quite high in more



*Artwork by Tema Okun*

White supremacy culture's  
number one strategy is to  
make us afraid. When we are  
afraid, we lose touch with  
our power and become more  
easily manipulated by the  
promise of an illusory safety.

- Tema Okun

progressive states as well.

One has to wonder, why does a person's transgender  
identity generate so much anxiety, fear and outright  
hatred? Why are people so much on the margins of  
society seen as such a threat? In a highly influential

work written by Tema Okun, she identifies a number of  
characteristics of white supremacy culture, which offer  
insight into this question. (whitesupremacyculture.info/  
characteristics.html).

At the top of the list is white supremacy culture's  
capacity to generate fear of the other. She states,  
“White supremacy culture's number one strategy is to  
make us afraid. When we are afraid, we lose touch with  
our power and become more easily manipulated by the  
promise of an illusory safety.” This is the strategy long  
employed against black bodied people and remains  
most intense with fear of young black males. Okun goes  
on to identify other characteristics of white supremacy  
culture, all of which work in service of maintaining the  
superiority of one group of people over another, which  
is the essence of white supremacy. To speak of a white  
supremacy culture is to simply acknowledge that white  
supremacy is more than individual prejudice, but rather  
maintains itself in cultural traits that do harm to us all.

Okun operates with the firm conviction that white  
supremacy can be undone. One good place to begin is  
with our acceptance and welcome of neighbors and  
community members who are transgender.

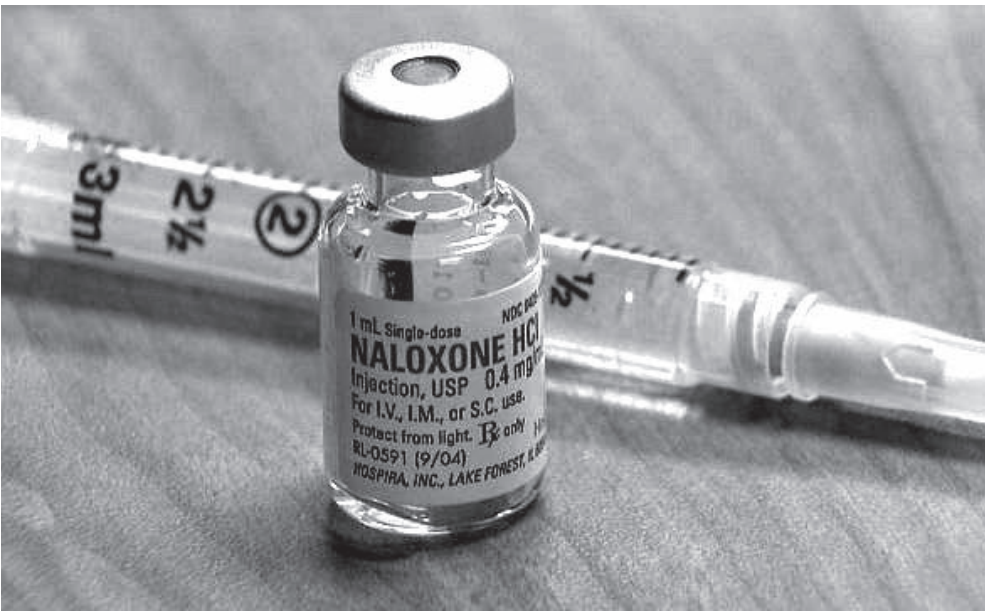
As Carl slowly evolved from Carl to Catherine, one  
of the more conservative elders at the church who had  
become friends with Carl, and who remained constant  
in that friendship as Carl evolved into Catherine,  
expressed his discomfort when he one day asked me  
“what's up with Carl?” My response was that I didn't  
fully understand what she was going through, but that  
I didn't find it necessary for us to fully understand so  
much as to accept Catherine for who she is now. By  
shifting the issue from understanding to accepting,  
the elder in the church was able to continue staying in  
relationship with Catherine. For Catherine and many  
others, acceptance makes all the difference.

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



## WEST END HEALTHLINE

### What to know about Narcan becoming available over the counter



**BY STEVEN QUAM, MD**  
There have been some exciting new developments  
this spring as America continues to try to address the  
opioid epidemic. According to the *New York Times*, over  
100,000 people have died from opioid related deaths  
in each of the past couple of years. Common opioids  
include prescription drugs like oxycodone or morphine  
as well as street drugs like heroin. Recently, the opioid  
epidemic has become even more deadly as the potent  
opioid fentanyl has been added to a variety of street  
drugs. Fentanyl is a drug with legitimate medical  
purposes, but when used recreationally it can have  
unintended consequences. Opioids such as fentanyl  
can cause the body to breathe too shallowly and slowly.  
Many people who use drugs can be unaware of fentanyl  
contamination in the drugs they are using, and this can

result in a deadly overdose.

Naloxone, brand name Narcan, works by reversing  
the effects of opioids rapidly. It is often given as a  
spray into someone's nose. This reverses the effect of  
opioids and can allow somebody who has accidentally  
overdosed to start breathing again. While naloxone  
is very effective to prevent overdose, it needs to be  
readily available to be able to save a life. Thirty states  
(including Minnesota) have already expanded access  
to naloxone by creating standing orders that allow  
anybody to get access to naloxone through a pharmacy  
without a prescription. This still requires meeting with  
a pharmacist in person and asking for the medicine.  
This is similar to getting a flu shot and makes naloxone  
more accessible but still requires taking the initiative  
to meet with a pharmacist. While this is better than

having to get a prescription medication, it does create  
a barrier for many people who do not realize it is available  
without a prescription and may not have another reason  
to visit a pharmacy. It can be intimidating for many folks to  
meet with medical professionals like pharmacists to ask  
for naloxone. This is why naloxone is often still not readily  
available when an overdose happens.

In March of this year, the Federal Drug Administration  
took an essential step to expand the access of naloxone.  
They granted the ability to have naloxone be sold over  
the counter, similar to buying a bottle of acetaminophen  
(Tylenol). This is expected to fully take effect by late  
summer 2023. When this happens, anybody will be able  
to go and get naloxone at a store that sells other common  
medications without having to speak to anybody first. This  
should make it much easier and hopefully less stigmatizing  
for anybody to get access to this life-saving medicine.  
Naloxone is not only an essential medicine to increase  
the safety of people who use opioids, either prescription  
opioids or as street drugs, but it's also a great medicine  
for anybody to have on hand. This is because naloxone  
can give you the ability to save the life of a stranger on the  
street, in a restaurant or on the bus if they have overdosed.

Some people may have questions about naloxone. One  
common question is how you can tell whether a stranger  
may benefit from naloxone. The answer is that naloxone is  
worth trying on anyone who is found to be unconscious  
and you cannot wake up. After somebody receives  
naloxone, it is essential someone calls 911 so further rescue  
interventions can be taken to make sure they stay safe and  
stable. Another common question is whether naloxone  
encourages opioid use. Research has clearly shown that  
naloxone saves lives and does not encourage more use  
of opioids. Naloxone is a way to help reduce the harm of  
opioids. While naloxone does not cure opioid use disorder,  
it gives people another chance to treat their chronic  
disease. In the end, there is no downside to carrying  
naloxone with you wherever you go.

Keep your eye out for over-the-counter Narcan this  
summer!

*Dr. Quam is a family physician at Allina Health United  
Family Physicians, 233 Grand Ave, Saint Paul, MN 55102,  
phone 651-241-5200.*



# Community News & Events



## Mayor Carter delivers "State of Our City Address"

Mayor Melvin Carter delivered his annual "State of Our City" address on Tuesday, April 18, at the Oxford Recreation Center. During his nearly 30 minute speech he highlighted many of the city's accomplishments in the past year, including strides made in gun crime reduction and progress toward St. Paul's sustainability goals. He also laid out his priorities for the upcoming year, which include pursuing a 1% sales tax ballot measure in St. Paul and an amendment to the city's legislative code requiring the safe storage of firearms. Watch the address: [stpaul.gov/state-our-city-2023](http://stpaul.gov/state-our-city-2023)

## Minnesota Museum of American Art hosts a sneak peak of their progress

Join Executive Director Dr. Kate Beane and the Board of Directors to celebrate the M's exciting progress. With State of Minnesota bonding dollars confirmed, construction on the expanded museum will begin, and the M is racing toward a fall 2023 reopening.

Enjoy entertainment, refreshments and an art auction featuring artists like Harriet Bart, Jose Dominguez, Luis Fitch and others. The pinnacle of this energizing evening will feature

Dr. Kate Beane who will celebrate the M's progress and share what's on the horizon. Proceeds from this event will support operating costs associated with reopening the M's doors, bringing more access than ever to co-curated exhibitions, partner programs, and the M's permanent collection. Ticket levels - \$75-\$5,000. Info at [mmaa.org/momentum/](http://mmaa.org/momentum/)

## Ramsey County announces 2023 road construction projects

The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners

approved \$36 million in funding for roadway, bridge and sidewalk construction in 2023. A list of projects is available at [ramseycounty.us/roadwork](http://ramseycounty.us/roadwork). Updates will be provided online and via an interactive map as construction season progresses — including detours and timelines. Subscriptions for project updates via email and text message are also available. Major projects include the Lexington Parkway extension to Shepard Road in St. Paul.

## Riverview Corridor project public review

The Riverview Corridor is a 12-mile planned transportation connection, planned along West 7th Street, between downtown St. Paul, MSP Airport and the Mall of America. County staff are to present the Riverview Corridor project team's recommendations for the modern streetcar or best bus alternatives for the transitway on May 8 to the Community Advisory Committee from 5 to 7:30 p.m. Following the presentation, the next step is for the project team to present their findings to the Policy Advisory Committee on May 18. More info: [ramseycounty.us/residents/roads-transportation/transit-corridors-studies/riverview-corridor/meetings-events](http://ramseycounty.us/residents/roads-transportation/transit-corridors-studies/riverview-corridor/meetings-events)

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## 25TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

# Nevertheless, WE PERSISTED!

Friday, May 19th 2023

## Twin Cities Women's Choir Celebrates 25th Anniversary

TCWC will celebrate 25 years of elevating the voices of women by presenting the concert, "Nevertheless We Persisted" May 19, 7:30 p.m. at Roseville Lutheran Church, 1215 Roselawn Ave W, Roseville. Tickets: \$12-\$22. Tickets: [bitly.ws/CUNZ](https://bitly.ws/CUNZ) For information: 612-333-8292; [hervoiceproductions.org](http://hervoiceproductions.org).



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## COMMUNITY KIDS SUMMER DAY CAMP

### REGISTER TODAY!

Youth entering grades 1-9 can sign up for Keystone's Community Kids Summer Day Camp at the West 7th Community Center! Participation is 100% free, and youth will enjoy a variety of enrichment and learning activities.

Program runs Monday - Friday from 12:00 - 6:00 p.m.  
from June 20th - August 11th.

For more information or to register:  
visit [keystoneservices.org](http://keystoneservices.org) or call 651-645-0349.



# Want to join me in making a difference?

We're raising money to digitize *The Community Reporter's* 50-plus years of archives and make them freely available online. The work will be performed by staff at the Minnesota History Center. Your donation will make an impact, whether \$1 for a page or \$8 for a complete issue.

## Community Reporter Archives GoFundMe Campaign

<https://gofund.me/3eb3fca0>

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# Community Traditions

## Schmidt Art Crawl welcomes local art buffs

From April 21-23, the Schmidt Art Crawl welcomed wave after wave of local art hounds on the hunt for their next wall adornment, fantasy children’s book or wearable garment among many other wares. The Schmidt event landed on one of four weekends of the St. Paul Art Crawl this year. The next chances to see all your favorite local artists will be May 5-7 when the crawl comes to Merriam Park, Payne Phalen and South Como. Learn more: [communityreporter.org/spring-art-crawl-season-is-upon-us](http://communityreporter.org/spring-art-crawl-season-is-upon-us).



MaryBeth Garrigan (left) and Petra Lommen displayed works from their Avian Night Sky series.

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Ron Brown entertains Schmidt Art Crawl guests with timed live sketches April 21, 2023.



A Schmidt Art Crawl patron meanders through the Schmidt Artists lofts during the event.



Painter MaryBeth Garrigan, among numerous paints within the Schmidt painting studio, works on a piece.



An artist vends fabric gnomes and other textile works at the Schmidt Art Crawl.



# Community Nourishment

## Mississippi River flooding closes roads, parks

On April 24, The Mississippi River saw the highest water levels since 2019, closing portions of Shepherd and Warner Roads and multiple parks, including Crosby Farm Park, Harriet Island Pavilion and Dock, Hidden Falls, Victoria Park and Upper Landing. The city's impound lot was also temporarily relocated for the duration of the flooding.

According to the City of St. Paul, the river reached a flood stage of 17.93 feet, just missing being one of the top-ten largest flooding events on the Mississippi in St. Paul, though the crest is expected to reach nearly 19 feet at its peak, potentially putting it into the largest floods on record. Major flood stage is considered 17 feet.

This year's flooding is so far the 15th largest historic highwater mark for the river in St. Paul. The expected crest of 18.7 feet would fall just short of the 19.02 foot crest in 2011 to put it into the top 10 floods recorded, according to the National Weather Service. This year's flooding is expected to be well shy of the all-time record for high water along the Mississippi from the 26.01 feet recorded in April of 1965 and about a foot below the 2019 mark of 20.19 feet.

City officials expect the closures to continue until flood waters recede and everything can be cleared and safely reopened for public use. In the meantime, they ask that the public not cross any barricades and use caution when exploring areas near the river.

Keep up with the latest flood information: [stpaul.gov/departments/emergency-management/flood-information](http://stpaul.gov/departments/emergency-management/flood-information)



(top) The trails at Upper Landing Park are completely submerged on Monday, April 24. (middle) The picnic pavilion at Crosby Farm Park near Watergate Marina is inaccessible. (bottom) High water signage greets visitors at Crosby Farm Park.

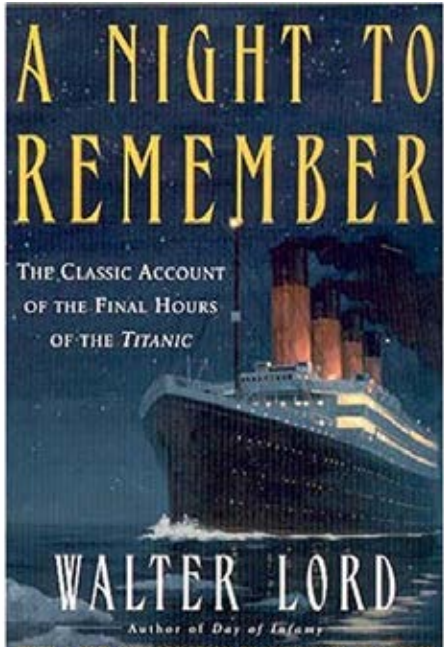
### ABBY'S ANGLE

## A Night to Remember is a marvelous read

First published in 1955, "A Night to Remember" by Walter Lord remains an iconic account on the fatal collision of the Titanic and the behavior of the passengers and crew. Lord tells how this disaster turned some people into animals fighting for their own survival while others sacrificed their lives. There are stories of partners staring at each other's eyes as one was lowered into the water, gentlemen tipping their hats in their full evening dress and hundreds trapped below the deck who sought help in vain.

While the story of the Titanic is well known, Lord keeps it taut as the book switches through different perspectives as the "unsinkable" ship went down. The interviews that Walter Lord conducted is what brought this story to life in a completely new way. This book was the first I had read about the Titanic and it was a wonderful start to my interest in what really happened that gloomy night in April of 1912.

The story of the Titanic is horrific but also interesting. Lord made the story about the people and not just the event. From a woman deciding what to bring up to the deck with her not knowing that she wouldn't be coming back, to a first class



passenger who refused to leave her Great Dane on the ship so she perished with her dog. It's about more than a luxurious boat

that didn't survive its Atlantic crossing, it's about the loss of 1,500 people and the story of the last 3 hours of their lives.

However, it is still a marvelous book! I would like to recommend this book to any person who wants to learn about the Titanic. This classic account will be the only book you need. As this book deals with large amounts of death, it would be suitable for readers 13+.

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# In the Community

## West 7th Library showcases students’ art on migration



**By Brianna Trinidad Sprung, Library Manager**

At St. Paul Public Library, we welcome all people to connect, learn, participate and grow. I would like to personally welcome community members to West 7th Library to enjoy a unique display we have at the library right now.

We are hosting a unique collection of stories created by 3rd and 4th graders at St. Paul School of Northern Lights.

In December, elementary school teacher Magda Thulson of St. Paul School of Northern Lights reached out with a project her students did about migration. The study of Monarch butterflies led to a connection with Carolina Ortiz, a local DACA recipient born in Zacatecas, Mexico. Carolina visited with Magda’s class and the students were able to hear her story firsthand.

Afterwards, the students interpreted her words in their individual voices and compiled them into a collection of stories and images that is currently on display at West 7th Library. We welcome you to stop in and visit the display. You can also scan a QR code to listen to the students talk about their project.

Thank you to teacher Magda Thulson for connecting with library staff member Kerri to share her students’ work with the community at the library.

**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.

## Notebook Recollections: Mr. Positive

*Local icon 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. He continues writing about his observations to this day. Here is just one tale.*

**BY TIM RUMSEY, MD**

**May 4, 1999**

May 4, 1999 Carl “Mr. Positive” Bentson has a new, silver three-wheeler bicycle with a beige awning. He was putting lights on it when I passed by this morning.

I asked him, “How many lights?”

“One-hundred twenty,” Carl said.

“How many batteries a month?”

“Two hundred, twenty five.”

Carl isn’t the lightning bug of West 7th for nothing.

Carl is surrounded by light. Father John Clay and Pastor Walt Witzke say he is all light. All goodness.

The outside of Carl’s house is a 24-hour smorgasbord of holiday lights at any one time. Changing colors, like changing seasons – Christmas, sure. Halloween, Thanksgiving. Easter. Armistice Day. Joan of Arc’s birthday.

He has big-beam lights on his lawn mowers and blowers. We know about his bicycle. It’s a movable shrine. He even has red and orange reflectors sewn into his green highway work vest. Then there’s the crowning touch of the searchlight on his helmet. Carl is light.

**May 8, 1999**

On the way home tonight, Carl was sweeping his front steps. He called out to me asking how my Ford Bronco was.

“OK,” I said. “It’s getting old.”

“1974,” Carl said. “V-6.”

“How can you tell the year? They all look the same to me.”

“I know,” said Carl. “Automatic or shift?”

“Shift,” I responded.

“Better gas mileage.”

Carl has never driven a car. He’s a bike rider. And in West 7th he could walk wherever he wanted to go, anyway. Coopers. St. Stans. Mancini’s. The clinic.

But Carl lived, breathed and dreamed cars. He knew everything about every car ever built. Everything. Model years, costs, colors, engine sizes. That was a given. He knew wheel-base lengths, gas mileage, tire sizes, discontinued models and models on the way. He hung out at car shows and dealerships, rallies, and parking lots. He could smell the make of a car, and not just when it was new.

“Media” Mike Hazard believes that in a previous life, Carl could have been a car.

**May 12, 1999**

At 3 a.m., a purple 1976 Plymouth Duster with shiny, baby moon hubcaps traveling down St. Clair at 80 miles per hour jumped the curb at Carl’s, blew through his wood-rail fence and climbed the front stairs of his house before partially lodging itself in Carl’s living room. Perhaps the driver’s alcohol anesthetized state saved his life. Although Carl later said it was the 409 cc engine and reinforced steel frame.

The driver was ambulated to United Hospital.

Police photos were taken.

You could almost make out a cartoon-like imprint of the Duster into the front, right wall of his house.

At 3:15 a.m., Carl was outside in his pajamas and green highway vest inspecting. His conclusion: “The car is no good anymore.”

Carl was fired up. He talked to the police and the wrecking crew, and any rubber-neckers who stopped for a look.

I do believe Carl was disappointed when they braced up his house and extracted the Duster.

West 7th All-Star cab driver William “Texan” Dubois was not impressed when he heard the story. Just another testosterone, alcohol and petrol tale. He did allow that Carl’s automotive magnetism probably drew the vehicle in.

**May 14, 1999**

Up ahead, coming downhill on my side of St Clair near 35E, I see Carl on his three-wheeler. Even though it was only early evening, he was all lit up and twinkling. He slowed down to talk.

Just then, a rusted-out, big green old Buick burped and listed down St. Clair toward Carl and me. Its right front headlight was blinking on and off. You could smell it as it slowly passed.

“Now there’s a piece of crap car,” I said to Carl.

“Not bad,” Carl replied. “A little.”

## Keg and Case sued over alleged loan default

*Minneapolis / St. Paul Business Journal* is reporting that Keg and Case Market is being sued in Ramsey County court for alleged default on its construction loans.

MidwestOne, the Iowa based lender who made the initial mortgage to Keg + Case, is claiming that the market has defaulted on over \$5.4 million remaining on the original \$8.1 million in loans taken out for the purchase, construction and improvement of the old Schmidt Brewery keg house.

According to the court filing, the bank is suing to foreclose on the property, with the hope of recouping the outstanding debt through a sale.

Opened in 2018, Keg and Case Market has struggled with tenant turnover and through the COVID pandemic. None of the market’s nine vendors are named in the lawsuit.

- Damian Goebel



KEG AND CASE FACEBOOK

## FEDERATION UPDATE



**Upcoming Meetings, via Zoom**  
Info: [fortroadfederation.org/calendar](https://fortroadfederation.org/calendar)

- **Transportation & Land Use Committee**, Wed, 5/3, 6:30 p.m.
- **Board Meeting** - Mon, 5/8, 7 p.m.
- **Community Engagement/ Outreach Committee** - Thu, 5/18, 6:30 p.m.
- **Blood Drive** - Tue, 6/6, 10 a.m., Palace Community Center, 781 Palace

**Stay in touch**  
"Like" us on Facebook. Subscribe to its e-newsletter [fortroadfederation.org](https://fortroadfederation.org).

**Contact**  
Julia McColley, 651-298-5599; [julia@fortroadfederation.org](mailto:julia@fortroadfederation.org); 882 West 7th, Suite 6, Rathskeller Building.



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**[keystoneservices.org](https://keystoneservices.org)**

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

**Keystone’s Community Kids After School Program**

Learning is fun, engaging and challenges participants to become curious and confident learners. Keystone’s after school and summer program is FREE! We offer academic support and tutoring, and a variety of enrichment activities. Register your child (K-9 this fall). Call 651-298-5493 or email [info@keystoneservices.org](mailto:info@keystoneservices.org)

**Get your bike ready at Express Bike Shop**

Spring is finally here and that means biking season is upon us! Express Bike Shop is open Tue-Sat and can help with all your biking needs. Selling high-quality refurbished bicycles at affordable prices. Full service includes tuneup, updates and retail store. 651-644-9660 or stop by the shop at 1158 Selby Avenue in St. Paul.

**History Tours are back!**

Keystone’s History Tours with Dave Bredemus will feature unique historic facts, stories and great food. 2023 tour season includes six day trips around the Minnesota area. For more info, tour dates and locations: [www.keystoneservices.org/seniors/history-tours](https://www.keystoneservices.org/seniors/history-tours)

**Fare for All at West 7th Community Center**

Shop for quality, nutritious foods at a discount and budget-friendly prices. All are welcome. Events: May 5, June 2 and July 7 from 10 am - 12 pm.

**Help Community Reporter grow**

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BIKE TO SCHOOL DAY IS MAY 3

This nationally celebrated event encourages kids to bike to school and shows families just how wonderful it is to get to school by bike or foot. Join in encouraging events at your school or simply trying it with your family. You are encouraged to participate in as many elements of this promotional activity as you are able, and share your results by posting on Facebook page using the hashtag #MNBikeDay or send a note to [saferoutes.dot@state.mn.us](mailto:saferoutes.dot@state.mn.us). Learn more at [dot.state.mn.us/mnsaferoutes/news-events/bike-to-school-day.html](http://dot.state.mn.us/mnsaferoutes/news-events/bike-to-school-day.html)

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THE BOOK LADY'S LIBRARY POPUP SALE

Jeanette Kamman, aka "The Book Lady" was a notable character within the St. Paul

community. Now, the community has a chance to get their own piece of Jeanette Kamman's private collection (holding over a whopping 300,000 books.) Organizers intend for the community to acquire free and low-cost books from the library as a way to find books a new, loving home. Jeanette was a librarian of the unloved, and they want to honor her by getting her collection back out to the public. 678 7th St W, Lower Level or in back St. Paul. Every Friday - Sunday through May 21. Info: [thebookladylibrary.square.site/](http://thebookladylibrary.square.site/)

FLINT HILLS FAMILY FESTIVAL

For over 20 years, the Flint Hills Family Festival has brought communities together through the power of the arts, welcoming over a million students, teachers, and families since its conception in 2001. Join the fun in 2023 for more thrilling performances, student matinees, art-making activities, and workshops. During the Flint Hills Family Festival, exciting Saturday performances inside the Ordway are just \$5 to attend. Plus, so many more outdoor performances and activities throughout the Festival, including Koo Koo Kanga Roo's closing performance free on Saturday, June 3 at 3:15 PM—are all interactive, kid-friendly, and free! Learn more at [ordway.org/festival](http://ordway.org/festival)

RAMSEY COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS  
ANNUAL PLANT SALE MAY 20

Ramsey County Master Gardeners will host their annual plant sale on May 20, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Church of the Holy Childhood, 1435 Midway Pkwy, St Paul. The sale includes a large selection of native plants, vegetables, favorite and unique varieties of tomatoes, herbs, annual and perennial flowers, houseplants, quality garden gloves, and other great items to get your garden growing strong. Funds raised support Master Gardener community and youth education programs in Ramsey County. Cash, checks, and credit cards are accepted. For more information, visit [RamseyMasterGardeners.org/plantsale](http://RamseyMasterGardeners.org/plantsale).



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