

Community REPORTER

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COUNCIL PERSPECTIVE Summer fun in St. Paul



ST. PAUL CITY COUNCIL MEMBER
CHRIS TOLBERT
columnist

During my final summer as Councilmember, I am looking forward to enjoying a full schedule of family friendly events and festivals across St. Paul. With Grand Old Day back and celebrating its 50th year as the official kick-off to summer, I want to share some other amazing activities and events happening around the city over these cherished summer months!

SUMMER FESTIVALS AND EVENTS

As a board member of Visit St. Paul, I frequently utilize their exhaustive list of all the great happenings and events around St. Paul (visitsaintpaul.com). Below are a few of the many events I am looking forward to this summer!

Soon the 25th annual Twin Cities Jazz Festival (June 23-24) will kick-off in Mears Park. I am excited to see headliners that include, Christian McBride, Davina and the Vagabonds and more! Grab a lawn chair or blanket and come down to Mears Park for food trucks, local drinks and jazz.

Presented by Public Art St. Paul, the WAKPA Triennial Art Festival is taking place all summer long from June 24-September 16. WAKPA means RIVER in the Dakota language, a name that recognizes the great rivers that define our lives and landscapes, while also acknowledging that the Twin Cities inhabit Dakota land. I'm excited about the connections this festival will bring to the Mississippi River which include opening ceremonies on Raspberry Island and Crosby Farm Park walking tours.

The surname Tolbert is as Irish as a leprechaun planning St. Paul's street grid. That said, Irish Fair returns to Harriet Island on August 11-13. All are welcome to celebrate all things Irish with music, dance, family activities and good craic!

HIGHLAND PARK WATER TOWER

Once again, the Highland Park Water Tower will be open to the public on July 15-16 from 9 am to 5 pm. No one can beat the views of the majestic Mississippi River valley, beautiful downtown St. Paul skyline and our western suburb. The tower was designed by notable architect Clarence Wigington and completed in 1928. While the 127-foot tower is no longer in service, staff from St. Paul Regional Water Services (SPRWS) will be present to talk about our amazing water system and share information on the SPRWS Lead Free program. Replacing all lead water pipes in the next ten years is a high legislative priority and St. Paul is leading the way.

FREE SUMMER SWIMMING LESSONS

Starting this year, St. Paul is rolling out a new program to offer free swimming lesson scholarships at Como Regional Park Pool, July 24-August 4. St. Paul Parks and Recreation is partnering with four local organizations to award 300 youth scholarships for an introductory swimming lesson and water safety program. St. Paul residents may apply. Two scholarships per session are also available for all other swimming lesson sessions at Como Park Pool and Highland Park Aquatic Center. To apply, call 651-642-0390 during normal business hours Monday thru Friday, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm.

It's an honor to serve as your Councilmember and feel free to contact my office at any time by emailing ward3@ci.stpaul.mn.us or calling 651-266-8630.

Regards, Chris Tolbert
Councilmember Ward 3

Local artists look to create West 7th Arts District

BY DAMIAN GOEBEL

When artist Brooks Werner first moved to the Twin Cities, he said all he heard about was Northeast or South Minneapolis as the places to live and create his art. Then a friend suggested the Schmidt Artist Lofts.



"I was like, 'heck yeah, I want to live in this building,'" he said.

Now Werner, along with artist and gallery owner Heather Friedli, wants the West 7th neighborhood to be as synonymous with art as those places across the river by taking steps to create a West 7th Arts District.

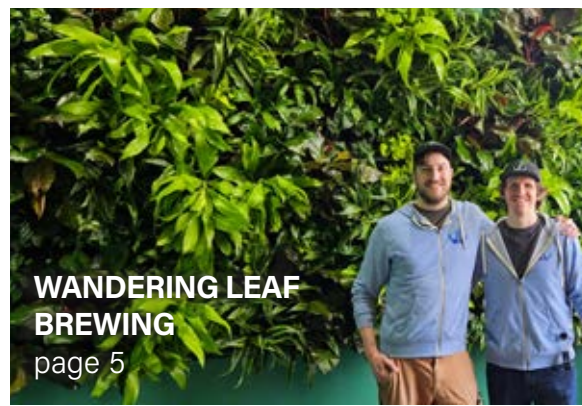
"Many people think of Northeast as the place to go and get art," said Friedli, "we want the same for West 7th."

Friedli and Werner are kicking off their plan on June 7 with a community listening session to begin creating ideas and identifying people who are interested in helping build the district's plan and priorities. They are hoping this includes as many of the artists in the area as possible, as well as some local businesses and community members.

They said their goals for the arts district include highlighting West 7th artists who live and work in the community, increasing arts tourism and protecting the district from overdevelopment, all while staying grass roots.

"This is about bringing the community together," said Friedli, "the wider community, not just the artists."

They are hoping their partnerships will extend beyond the traditional definition of artists,



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BREWING
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CIRCULATION 13,000



Local artists Brooks Werner and Heather Friedli in front of Friedli Gallery and Studios.

including the many vintage and tattoo shops in the area, restaurants and other creative spaces.

While there are no defined geographic boundaries for the district yet, Werner said he is hoping a broad representation from the neighborhood will be able to participate in the listening session to help co-create what the district will be. He said this would include, "ideation, creation, local resources and bringing other collaborators who don't flow through us."

Friedli added that she sees the listening sessions as a place to see who wants to be involved and then create a vision for how they can help the community.

"We want to be there for support," she said. "Not so much change, but support existing things with a dash of flavor."

They are hoping to kick off the arts district as early as this summer with an event featuring

live music and local art for sale, with other initiatives to follow.

Friedli and Werner see creating an arts district as an important step in the evolution of the West 7th neighborhood to attract visitors, artists, businesses and residents to the area.

"The more cool things we have, the more people will come and stay," Friedli said.

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

West 7th Arts District Inaugural Community Q&A

Wednesday, June 7, 6:00 pm. Schmidt Artist Lofts multi-purpose room

Follow the West 7th Arts District on Facebook and Instagram @ W7artsdistrict

Demanding sensible action against gun violence

BY MARGARET KINNEY

According to the Minnesota Violent Death Rating System, on average, firearms are used in 45% of suicide deaths, 65% of homicide deaths, and 54% of interpersonal violence deaths. In an average year, 442 people die and 680 people are wounded by guns in Minnesota. It also seems daily that someone in St. Paul is killed or injured by someone using a firearm.

In response to the Sandy Hook Elementary School massacre, one of the many mass shooting events in our recent history, Shannon Watts, a New York State mother of five, started Moms Demand Action in 2012. Watts began a Facebook dialogue to encourage and empower Americans to be able to reduce gun violence. People began to start chapters in their states, and Moms Demand Action has grown to a national nonprofit, bipartisan organization which hopes to curtail the current levels of gun violence. In Minnesota, the St. Paul chapter is one of 14 Minnesota groups around the state.

I was eager to learn more about Moms Demand Action (MDA), so I sat down with two of its St. Paul chapter members: Gretchen Damon, a retired teacher and currently a gardener at St. Catherine University, and Emily Benzie, a St. Paul family physician.

Damon said she joined MDA in 2016, wanting to be active somehow in helping to reduce gun violence, seeing it as intertwined with so many other aspects of our society. Benzie said she joined for basically the same reasons in 2018, after the Parkland, Florida high school shooting.

Curtailling gun violence in this country, and in this city, strikes me as an overwhelmingly challenging task, so my first question for these two Saint Paul women was about what MDA has



Gretchen Damon and Emily Benzie of Moms Demand Action

been able to accomplish in Minnesota so far.

"Over the years," said Damon, "MDA, has been able to build relationships with many community activists and policy makers."

"More and more stakeholders are coming together and pulling for results," said Benzie. "Faith communities, physicians, teachers, business owners, firearms owners, veterans, women's health advocates and high school students."

The two women have noticed that they have seen a shift in potential for change in Minnesota government, saying our current

state representatives are more willing each year to talk about gun safety and violence prevention. MDA volunteer members have influenced the political climate by door knocking before elections, instituting a writing campaign to elected officials and supporting prevention-minded candidates. Some MDA members have gone on to become elected members of state Congress.

The duo said one way they've been successful is by participating in the state legislature's annual advocacy day. MDA members show

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Community REPORTER

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Editorials & Opinions

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Greetings from your new editor

I am very excited to begin my journey as the new editor of the *Community Reporter*. I'm proud to continue the more than 50-year legacy of providing the West End neighborhoods of St. Paul with news and opinions that come directly from and impact you and your daily lives.

The strength and consistency of the West End is something that drew me to this position, but also the interesting point in time the area finds itself in. With major planned redevelopment and infrastructure projects, along with the changing demographics, I want the *Community Reporter* to be able to continue telling the stories of the rich and robust history of the area while exploring the impacts of the changing landscape on the people who live here now and in the future.

And none of that can happen without you. We want to hear from you about what you are interested in. Story submissions are very welcome, and you can always send a letter to the editor, but it doesn't have to start with that high bar of entry.

Shoot me an email with a complaint, give me a call with an idea you have for a story, let us know what you're thinking about something on Facebook or Instagram or look for me hanging out in the neighborhood and say "hi." The *Community Reporter* has always been a reflection of the people, places and events in its coverage area and I want to make sure it continues to reflect the diversity and long history of the West End.

About me
I love St. Paul. I was born and raised in the Dayton's Bluff neighborhood and have called the city home for almost my entire life (with a quick pit-stop in Phoenix). I currently live in the Lex-Ham neighborhood with my wife, kids and dog Vinnie.

After studying communications at Hamline



Damian also love superheroes.

University, I've worked in nonprofit communications, public relations, outreach and marketing for the past 15 years — about a decade of which was spent on issues specific to St. Paul. Prior to that, I held several editorial positions at the *Hamline Oracle*, Hamline's weekly independent, student-run newspaper, and was co-Editor-in-Chief of the *Century Times*. Steeped in knowledge of transportation, land use, community organizing, agriculture and environment through my past work, I hope to bring my relationships and knowledge of issues in St. Paul to my reporting in the West End.

Damian Goebel
editor@communityreporter.org; 612-986-8026



Casey Ek and Bridget Ireland-Ek are preparing for an "adventure year."

Thanks to our departing editor

In Casey Ek's two-year term as Editor of the *Community Reporter* he brought his creativity, curiosity and energy together to help produce a fascinating array of articles and graphic illustrations of the many emerging issues for our West End community.

Now, he and his wife Bridget Ireland-Ek have planned an "Adventure Year" that will allow them to have three-month visits to four different parts of the country. Bridget is an Occupational Therapist and will do four rotations to support staffing needs in several locations, starting in southern Minnesota and including California, New England and North Carolina.

Casey will concentrate on his creative work, producing multimedia documentaries and podcasts. He'll also return to Guatemala, where he has been hired to document the work of a religious mission there through a series of video interviews. His previous work in Guatemala can be viewed on YouTube — just search "Casey Ek."

Bon voyage and "happy trails" to you both.

BUILDING AN ANTIRACIST COMMUNITY

Grandpa: An identity to celebrate



TIM JOHNSON
columnist

As we heard the joyous news that our grandson had been born, I knew I had no qualms or hesitation about being known as grandpa. It might have something to do with having lived and grown up with my own grandfather, a man who we loved and respected. In either case, I was ready for this new role. I delight every time we see our son or daughter-in-law and our grandson's outstretched hands are accompanied by, "go to grandpa". It is, for me, a name of endearment.

It was especially jarring therefore when, exiting a coffee shop on Grand Avenue, the person entering as I was leaving looked at me and said, "there you go grandpa". On this man's lips "grandpa" sounded more like an insult than a term of endearment. He wasn't exactly young himself, with plenty of gray in his beard, but he also knew nothing about me, whether I had children or grandchildren. Grandpa on his lips sounded more like a term of diminishment, as in you are well past the age of bringing value into this world. Perhaps it was overreacting, but it was hard to read any kindness or charity in the words he used or the way in which he said them.

The comment lingered with me throughout the day and it caused me to think about the many slights and at times innocent sounding comments to which people are subjected because of gender, sexual identity, race or disability of some sort. One can add to that list, age.

As an older white male, I have lived my life largely free of being discounted or diminished by virtue of a social grouping to which I belong or have been assigned. It would be a serious stretch to equate a late in life slight associated with age to a lifetime of dealing with comments and actions that serve little purpose other than to diminish. As a young clergy

member, I often heard female colleagues speak about how they were talked down to by parishioners in ways that would never happen to a male or would have their voices ignored by male colleagues. In those years, it often led female clergy to leave the ministry. Being referred to as "grandpa" in a way that sounded and felt diminishing merely offers a window into what others have contended with for a long time.

In his book, *How To Be An Antiracist*, Ibram X. Kendi recalls an experience from his childhood of a young shy black girl who musters the courage to raise her hand for the teacher's attention. As Kendi recounts, "The teacher looked at her, looked away, and instead called on a White hand as soon as it was raised." Kendi then references the term "microaggression," coined in 1970 by Harvard Psychiatrist Chester Pierce. It was a way of distinguishing the daily slights to which black people are subjected against the macroaggressions of racist policies affecting such things as housing, education and the judicial system. Kendi has since dropped the term microaggression in favor of what he considers a more accurate description of racist abuse. Cumulatively this often daily abuse affects one's mental and physical health in a host of ways.

In many respects, racist policies are easier to address because they can be named and with enough political will changed. Our capacity to diminish one another by assigning negative attributes to people due to a particular identity is in many respects more challenging because it asks a measure of charity, kindness, understanding and respect from each of us. Yet, at the same time it does offer us the opportunity to become the type of change we wish to see in the world, simply by attending to our own interactions and how we treat those around us.

For me, being called "grandpa" is an identity I celebrate and in so doing am reminded that we all have identities to celebrate and affirm.

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

of color have an easier time of it? Seriously?)

This is a consistent practice in his columns. Whatever the problem, white people are at fault. I'm reminded of the shooting at the Truck Park bar on West 7th a little over a year ago in which the victim, the shooter and the person who sold guns to the shooter were all black. Yet Johnson, as usual, blamed that incident, and gun violence in general, on "whiteness."

Yes, building an antiracist community is a worthy goal. But promoting victimhood and indiscriminately demonizing large segments of the population is not the way to achieve it.

Paul Bard

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up to the many hearings and give testimony, bringing along survivors of gun violence to share their stories, including research and statistics about gun-involved deaths.

At an even more local level, MDA members attend St. Paul City Council meetings, where they have found an ally for their cause in Councilmember Rebecca Noecker, who represents Saint Paul's Ward 2. (Benzie and Damon agree, "She gets things done.") Through Noecker, MDA members have found a bridge to Mayor Melvin Carter, who has been especially supportive around the issue of securely stored firearms, wanting to make citizens aware that most stolen guns are taken from vehicles.

"In fact," said Benzie, "as we expand our collaboration with other concerned citizens, many of these groups we work with were represented at a recent meeting with the St. Paul City Council."

MDA members can also be found at a booth or table at public events, such as Safe Summer Nights, where they talk informally to visitors, or they share educational materials on gun storage safety.

Benzie and Damon said MDA is always looking to further diversify its membership, as they are really "mothers and others." MDA also gives out gunlocks, devices that temporarily disable firearms. Whenever possible, MDA members share statistics with members of the public, such as the fact that if a firearm is available during a domestic dispute, a woman's chance of being shot goes up five times.

When I asked about the most pressing challenges, I was told a big one is opposition from people who believe in no regulation of firearms. MDA is not against the Second Amendment or gun ownership, but they are pro a culture of responsible gun ownership.

I asked what gives members of MDA continued hope. Damon answered, "I am still really motivated to do this work. It's hard work. A staggering amount of firearms have been purchased in the past three years. We run into obstacles but it's really hard to give up because when I hear stories from survivors, I think it's not fair that so many families are living with gun violence trauma. It seems so solvable if we could be sensible."

Benzie added, "I am optimistic, because

MINNESOTA FIREARM SAFETY LAWS IN THE WORKS

AT THE CAPITOL
On May 19, Governor Walz signed into law a historic \$880 million spending measure to include two new laws regarding firearms. The first would expand background checks on private gun sales, and the second proposal would create red flag laws, where family members or law enforcement officials could ask a court to take guns away from someone who poses a risk to themselves or others.

AT CITY HALL
The St. Paul City Council is planned to vote after this article went to press on an update to the city's firearm discharge ordinance, requiring all firearms to be safely stored and secured with a locking device, with all ammunition

there are so many stakeholders pulling in the same direction to make our city and state safer, which really is different from when we first joined the group. We've seen promise to make substantial changes. My hope for the future is to be able to get back to a place when children don't have to think about getting killed in school or public spaces."

For more MDA information visit momsdemandaction.org.

Some of the organizations aligned with Moms Demand Action include:

- studentsdemandaction.org — young activists, having grown up in the midst of America's gun violence crisis, are committed to ending gun violence in our communities.
- everytown.org — a movement of nearly 10,000,000 everyday Americans working to end gun violence.
- theviolenceproject.org — a St. Paul nonprofit empowering citizens to take action to stop mass shootings.

Margaret Kinney is a West End visual artist and board member for the Community Reporter. The Community Reporter acts as the fiscal agent for St. Paul Moms Demand Action.

Community News & Events



St. Paul updates bicycle plan

Staff from the City of St. Paul are in the process of updating their original 2015 bicycle plan. The proposed update calls for increasing separated bikeways, planning for new routes and greater emphasis on operations, maintenance and funding of the bikeway system. The Department of Public Works is asking for comments on the draft plan through June 30. Learn more and provide feedback at stpaul.gov/departments/public-works/transportation-and-transit/bike-saint-paul/saint-paul-bicycle-plan

West 7th properties petition to join Downtown Improvement District

Commercial property owners along West 7th Street to Grand Avenue in downtown St. Paul have submitted petitions to City Council to join the St. Paul Downtown Improvement District (SPDID). Those properties include St. Paul institutions, Alina Health, Children's Hospital, Hampton Inn and Suites, Maharajah's, Patrick McGovern's and Tom Reid's.

Participation in the district provides additional services to the neighborhood, from trash and graffiti cleanup to having Street Team ambassadors providing directions to visitors and being an extra set of eyes and ears for public safety. While the City Council will need several weeks to go through the process of amending the existing ordinance to expand the SPDID, some services have already begun in the area as of May 1, thanks to funds from Knight Foundation.

DFL endorses Jost for Ward 3 City Council seat

On Sunday, April 30, Saura Jost defeated Isaac Russell for the DFL endorsement at the Ward 3 convention for the seat being vacated by current Councilmember Chris Tolbert. Russell subsequently announced he intends to continue his campaign despite losing the endorsement. Ward 2 incumbent councilmember Rebecca Noecker was endorsed by the DFL earlier in March. All seven city council wards will be on the ballot in this November's election.



Saura Jost



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ONEIDA SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY

APPLY TODAY - APPLICATIONS DUE JULY 14

Scholarships are for adult learners, age 18+, who live in the West 7th neighborhood.

Funds must be used for education or training expenses only. Grant amounts range from \$1,000-3,500.

Visit keystoneservices.org for full details, or call 651-645-0349 for more information.

SCAN THE QR CODE FOR THE APPLICATION





Abdirahman Kahin meets President Joe Biden at the SBA Awards Ceremony.

Abdirahman Kahin of Afro Deli and Grill named small business person of the year

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) named Abdirahman Kahin as the National Small Business Person of the Year for 2023 at the National Small Business Week awards ceremony in Washington, D.C. on May 1. This award recognizes entrepreneurs who demonstrate exceptional leadership and create sustainable, thriving businesses in their communities.

"Abdirahman has pursued the American dream of business ownership — overcoming challenges, launching multiple food businesses, pivoting during COVID, and lifting local neighborhoods along the way. He combines great ideas with hard work and diligence, and we are honored that SBA has been a part of his successful and ongoing journey," said SBA Administrator Isabella Casillas Guzman.

Afro Deli and Grill opened in 2014 in Minneapolis and quickly expanded to four locations across the Twin Cities, including Seventh Place in downtown St. Paul. The fast-casual restaurant is focused on healthy, fresh African fusion cuisine.

Help Community Reporter grow for the next 50 years!

Send recollections or other editorial contributions to editor@communityreporter.com

Donate to our fundraising campaign at givemn.org/organization/Community-Reporter or by sending a check to: The Community Reporter, 265 Oneida St., St. Paul, MN 55102.



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Community Traditions

Sleeping is not a luxury, it's a necessity



BY FERNANDA RIBAS, MD
The month of May brings with it sunlight, flowers and graduations; however, since 1985 May has also been recognized as Better Sleep Month by the Better Sleep Council. The purpose of Better Sleep Month is to promote how important getting adequate, restful sleep is for both physical and mental well-being. Today, we know a lot about how sleep works and how vital it is to our health. Despite this, many popular myths about sleep are still out there. How many have you heard?

MYTH #1
My body will adapt to little or no sleep; I can just drink an extra cup of coffee.
As much as we like to think that we can train our bodies to get less sleep, science says the opposite. Between work, school, family and friends, life can be busy. Some people think that sleep can stand in the way of productivity, but a good night's sleep is not a luxury. The body cycles through four different phases of sleep to restore itself. A good night's sleep will allow you to go through the cycle several times. Each cycle takes about 90 minutes, and going through 4-6 of these cycles a night is critical to avoid



damaging mental and physical health outcomes. This means that adults are supposed to get between seven and nine hours of sleep per night. Extensive research has been done showing that sleeping less than seven hours each night consistently increases the risk for cardiovascular disease, diabetes, obesity, low tolerance of chronic pain and depression.

MYTH #2
I can make up for my sleep loss on the weekends.
Many people build up a sleep debt—the difference between how much sleep they need and how much they get—during the work week. If you sleep five hours a night instead of the recommended seven, by Friday you will have missed more than a full night of sleep. Even if the hours are made up, some preliminary research has shown that people who attempt to make up sleep on weekends have worse health outcomes. It is possible that yo-yo-ing back and forth; changing the sleep cycle, is more disruptive than having consistently less sleep. Always getting at least seven hours of sleep a night is the best way to keep your health in balance.

MYTH #3
Snoring is overall harmless.
Loud snoring is one of the most common symptoms of sleep apnea, a disorder where an individual can stop breathing while sleeping. Some outcomes of having untreated sleep apnea include cardiovascular problems like hypertension, complications with medications and surgery, an increased risk for strokes and irritating sleep-deprived partners. If you do snore, have excessive daytime sleepiness, have been observed in the middle of the night stopping breathing or are being treated for hypertension, talk to your doctor. Sleep disorders do not go away

on their own, and you may require medical treatment.

MYTH #4
Drinking alcohol before bed will improve my sleep.
Alcohol may allow you to fall asleep more quickly, as it has sedative properties. However, alcohol disrupts the sleep cycle later in the night. In other words, it can severely impact the quality of sleep. This will often lead to insomnia symptoms the next day. Alcohol specifically disrupts the rapid eye movement (REM) portion of the sleep cycle. REM sleep plays a significant role in ensuring mental concentration and mood regulation while awake. The result is that you wake up feeling sluggish and less refreshed. Excessive drinking may also cause tolerance, and lead to someone needing more alcohol each night to fall asleep. Alcohol use for sleep has been associated with worsening insomnia, sleep apnea and circadian rhythm abnormalities. It is recommended that you stop drinking at least four hours before bedtime to give your body time to process the alcohol.

MYTH #5
If I can't fall asleep, I should stay in bed.
If you can't fall asleep, staying in bed is one of the worst things you can do. If it is taking longer than 15-20 minutes to fall asleep, staying in bed can just reinforce sleeplessness and connect the bed unintentionally to frustration. Instead, it is better to get out of bed and do something relaxing, such as meditation, reading or deep-breathing exercise. Wait to get back in bed until you are drowsy. This will help promote falling asleep quickly.

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

COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT
EVENT

Wednesday, June 14 • 5:30-6:30pm

Allina Health United Family Physicians Clinic

233 Grand Ave, St. Paul

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Community Nourishment

Foliage and fermentation at Wandering Leaf Brewing

BY DAMIAN GOEBEL

First entering Wandering Leaf Brewing Company, 2463 West 7th St., you might think you mistakenly walked into a greenhouse rather than a brewery.

“I love plants,” said Matt Holton, co-owner of the brewery. “We have 300 square feet of planters, not including the living wall.”

Holton, who has a horticulture degree from the University of Minnesota and worked in the wine industry for several years, said he wanted to “bring in the horticulture vibe” to the space.

Holton, along with his co-owner Rob Reisdorf, opened the brewery on April 27 in the former Family Dollar site in Sibley Plaza. They landed on West 7th as their new home after hearing the vision their landlord, Paster Properties, had for the shopping center, which included restaurants on either side of their brewery and building out a patio space (slated to be finished in mid-June) that can be shared with a future tenant for events. They also realized the South Highland area of West 7th was a prime place for a destination brewery.

“It’s missing a bar or brewery near here,” said Reisdorf. “Breweries are kind of like our bars,” he added when comparing the Twin Cities to other metro area bar scenes.

“But it’s also like a coffee shop,” said Holton. “You can bring your kids here and not worry about people slamming drinks.”

The pair said that they really wanted to create a space for the community to enjoy. This includes their beer selection, which they said will have a rotating mix of two hoppy beers, two lighter beers, two darker beers and two that are “funky” on their 16 taps.

“We don’t have a preference over what style of beer we brew,” said Holton. “We want to make a place for the community to come.”

Holton said that, while he started homebrewing 13 years ago, the seeds of the idea for opening a brewery started during the early days of the pandemic, when he and Reisdorf would spend every weekend brewing beer together. Eventually, he said, they reached the state mandated limit of 200 gallons per year. Even then, starting their own brewing business seemed out of the question.

“We really tried to talk ourselves out of it,” Holton said. The pair made a business plan, which Reisdorf said his wife Amy “polished” for them, and talked it over with more



Matt Holton and Rob Reisdorf show off their living wall at Wandering Leaf Brewing.

than a dozen breweries in the metro before realizing their plan could work.

Running their operation quickly became a family affair. The brewery is co-owned by Holton, Reisdorf and their wives, Jennifer Holton, who handles the financials, and Amy Reisdorf, who has been working on their marketing. Holton also said his younger brother handles a lot of their social media.

The rest of the core team is rounded out by Jen Hall, their Director of Hospitality. “We wouldn’t have opened in April without her,” said Reisdorf.

Even with their team in place, running their business is a big undertaking.

“A brewery is like seven businesses in one,” said Holton. This includes things like managing their retail space, beer production, events, food handling and distribution.

They started building out the site in September of last year and said that, since

opening their doors, business has been good.

“Opening week was crazy and it’s been steady ever since,” Reisdorf said. “The community has been great, they’ve come out and supported us. They are happy someone is here.”

The pair said now that the space has opened, they are thinking about next steps for their business, including retail distribution to liquor stores.

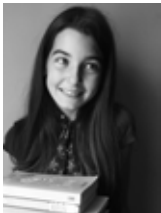
“When we first started this adventure, we thought distribution was a pipe dream,” said Reisdorf. “Now that we have the ability to sell 12 and 16 ounce cans, it has changed our thinking.”

While the pair said local distribution isn’t imminent, they do sell 24.5 ounce crowlers on site.

WANDERING LEAF BREWING COMPANY, 2463 West 7th St, St. Paul. Hours: Wednesday through Friday, 2-10 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, 12pm-10 pm.

BEA'S BOOKS

They Both Die at the End delves into what it means to live



BEATRICE COSGROVE
reviewer

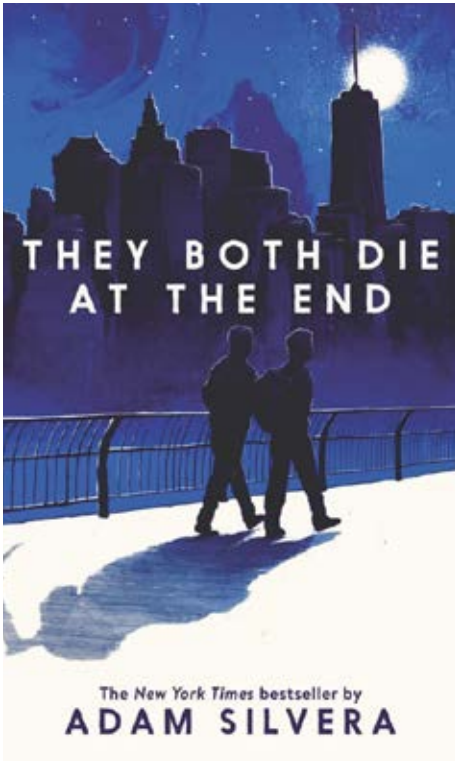
THEY BOTH DIE AT THE END

Written by Adam Silvera

“Mateo, I regret to inform you that sometime in the next twenty- four hours you’ll be meeting an untimely death.”

This is the call Mateo Torrez gets on the evening of September 5th, 2017, beginning the heart-rending journey of *They Both Die at the End*. The whole book happens in the span of 24 hours, opening up with the unfortunate call and continuing down Mateo’s train of thought...what would he do? Would he spend the last hours of his life alone in his apartment? And more importantly, how the heck would he even convince himself to leave it? At first, he planned to stay in his apartment, but eventually, he joined an app called Last Friend. This is where Mateo and Rufus cross paths. Rufus is a teenager living in a foster home, struggling with a breakup and haunted by his parents and sister’s death. When Rufus gets the call from Death Cast, he immediately thinks it’s a joke, but as reality begins to set in, he re-examines his relationships and strikes out on his own, downloading the Last Friend app and agreeing to meet Mateo at his apartment through the platform. The unlikely pair set out to journey together through the last hours of their lives and find not only fulfillment but romance as well.

They Both Die at the End made me cry (twice!), but it was such a well-written book I couldn’t put it down and finished it within a couple of days. The story is



told from both characters’ perspectives, with a few interludes from other points of view that appear to be completely random, but eventually tie the storyline and the characters together through fate or destiny or some other universal force that determines what the tapestry of life looks like for each person, pulling threads and adjusting the intricate patterns. As I looked at life through the lens of someone who knew that they would die an “untimely

death” I delved into the difficult topic of my own life and what it means to truly live (some very nice early morning thoughts if I do say so myself).

This novel is most definitely one of my favorites. I would recommend avoiding this book if you’re struggling with anxiety, stress, depression or something similar, as it deals with extremely heavy topics. All in all, I would recommend this book to ages 13+ and anyone who wants an excuse to bring up the meaning of life in a conversation.



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In the Community



 SAINT PAUL
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WEST 7TH

West 7th Library is ready for summer fun

By Brianna Trinidad Sprung, Library Manager
Explore the outdoors with Family Storytimes happening outside on Wednesdays from 10:30-11:30 a.m. starting June 7. Staff will read books, sing songs and lead kids in fun interactive activities followed by playtime for families with toys provided.
A new play program for toddlers and preschoolers, called Playdate, kicks off in June with drop-in time to play and make new friends every Tuesday from 3:00-5:00 p.m. There will be extra toys and a great opportunity for families with young children to socialize and play together. If weather permits, Playdate may be moved to the lawn outside.
West 7th Library is also hosting an exploratory nature program for littles this summer. The Out in Nature program, happening on June 16, July 21 and August 18, from 10:30-11:30 a.m., offers families with young children a fun way to participate creating nature-inspired crafts and encouraging curiosity in the world around them with games and activities.
The annual Summer Spark reading program for ages 0-18 begins on June 1 and runs through August 31. Summer Spark encourages everyone to get into good books all summer long, and to get started, kids and teens can visit the library to sign up, pick up a reading log and pick out a free book to keep. To learn more about Summer Spark, visit sppl.org/summer.

West 7th Public Library Hours
The library at 265 Oneida St. is open Mondays, Thursdays 12:30-8 pm, Tuesdays 11:30 am-5:30 pm and Wednesdays, Fridays 10am-5:30 pm; closed Saturdays and Sundays.

Notebook Recollections: A Little About Me

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
For the past four years I've written about so many interesting West 7th people and their interesting lives. Mr. Positive. Tex. Frank Heller. Mabel Knutson. The Lauer families. Blessed Thomas Mitchell. Dr. Ravi and Dr. Macken. Daisy Bennett. Mary Pesek. Johnny Paul. Walt Wietzke. Father John Clay. Dennis Morgan and his boys.
This month, let's talk about me. "Solo Mea."
For starters, I'm retired. 47 years of family doctoring on West 7th St. Grateful.
I read a lot of books. Well, three anyway. All Frank Heller recommendations. By the end of the third book, the first one looks so good, I start all over.
I had a physical exam! With the great Dr. Ravi. I experienced many things. Waiting, filling out stuff, waiting. Dr. Ravi touched all the bases as they say. Then I gave blood and urine and spent a little more time waiting. Everything was performed with respect

and dignity even though it took place in the parking lot – NOT.
Then Dr. Ravi gently gave me his verdict. A little overweight, a little out of shape. Labs pretty good. Blood sugar borderline. Just short of normal. Or more scientifically, as Ravi put it, "two circus peanuts shy of diabetes."
It was all treatable - the dreaded lifestyle changes!
William "Texan" Dubois, West 7th cab driver extraordinaire "comped" me a ride home from my physical.
I spilled Dr. Ravi's verdict of me to Tex as we pulled away from the clinic.
Tex went silent and leaned forward to beat a red light at St Clair. Sixty miles-an-hour in a 30 will do that.
"You could use a little weight management," Tex said. He slowed closer to the speed limit. "I dropped 12 pounds last month."
"Cool," I said.
"Right," he said. "Walk to work."
"Whadayah think I've been doing for the last eight years?" I said. "Sure, I'm retired. But I walk everywhere."
"I won't give you free livery passes anymore. Everybody wants to give you a ride. Don't take all those patient rides."
Tex said he could be my trainer.

We had reached my home.
"Thank you, Tex. For the ride and counsel."
"Food for thought has no calories," Tex said.
Mr. Positive would be supportive. "Good," he'd say. "You're good."
At night, every night, 8:15 PM sharp, I go outside to make sure the lawnmower is in the garage. Winter or summer. I make sure the front and back gates are shut and all the doors are locked.
Then I look to see that all the inside lights are off and the windows rolled down. Twice.
Did I mention I was retired?
One last thing. How about we talk about my 75 year old body's elimination functions?
Ok, maybe not.
How about this? Readers could write me (cuneiform), care of United Family Patients. Please print "Elimination Function Questions" in large, bold, red Sharpie on the front of the envelope.
Be reassured that clinic staffers will handle your written questions with BBQ tongs and hockey gloves.
Daisy Bennett would appreciate that professionalism.
Well, enough about me. Next Month: somebody interesting. PLEASE.

FEDERATION UPDATE

fortroadfederation.org



NEW FEDERATION T-SHIRT DESIGN
The Federation is partnering with Weird Ink Society to sell West 7th Neighborhood merch. Show your West 7th spirit and buy your swag at fortroadfederation.org.

JUSTUS RAMSEY HOUSE RECONSTRUCTION
The Federation continues to partner with Historic Saint Paul to finalize a RFP for the Justus Ramsey House. Details will be released publicly once finalized.

BLOOD DRIVE JUNE 6
The Federation is hosting a blood drive at Palace Community Center on June 6, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Appointments can be made online.

AREA 3 COORDINATOR NEEDED
The Fort Federation seeks a coordinator for Area 3. The boundaries are south side of Armstrong Ave., I-35E, West 7th St., Homer St., Mississippi River. Interested? Email fortroadfed@fortroadfederation.org.

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

Stay in touch
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Contact
Julia McColley, julia@fortroadfederation.org; 651-298-5599; 882 West 7th, Suite 6, Rathskeller Building.



WEST 7TH COMMUNITY CENTER
265 Oneida, St. Paul
651-298-5493
keystoneservices.org

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

Oneida Scholarship applications due July 14

Scholarships available for adult learners, ages 18+, who are residents of the West 7th neighborhood of St. Paul. Must be enrolled in a certificate or degree granting postsecondary training or educational program. Funds for education or training expenses. Grant amounts \$1,000 to \$3,500. Visit keystoneservices.org or email info@keystoneservices.org.

Keystone's Community Kids Summer Day Camp

A FREE Summer Day Camp that is fun, engaging and supports youth to become curious and confident learners. Features reading, math, recreation, enrichment, field trips and more. Open to grades K-9. Info/register, call 651-298-5493 or email info@keystoneservices.org. Funded by Federal 21st Century Learning Centers administered through the Minnesota Department of Education.

Fare for All at West 7th

Shop for quality, nutritious foods at a discount and budget-friendly prices. All are welcome. Events: June 2, July 7 and August 4 from 10 a.m.-12 p.m.

Spend Your Summer Volunteering with Keystone!

Use your spare time this summer by becoming a Keystone volunteer! Help families get the food they need at our food shelves, deliver meals and groceries and ensure that youth stay on track to succeed in school. Visit keystoneservices.org/volunteer


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VENDED SCHOOL MEALS COMPANIES**
The School of Leadership for Public Service is soliciting invitations for bid for vended school meals. The Vendor would provide meal services according to United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) regulations and guidelines as well as State of Minnesota Department of Education policies and guidelines.
Vendors and/or their representatives may submit bids for The School of Leadership for Public Service via email to Donna Swanson, dmlswanson@gmail.com.
The school board reserves the right to accept or reject any and/or all proposals or to accept the proposal that it finds, in its sole discretion, to be in the best interest of the school district.
A pre-bid meeting will not be scheduled. A copy of the IFB will be available by email at dmlswanson@gmail.com by Thursday, June 1, 2023.
Potential bidders are asked to email their questions to Donna Swanson at dmlswanson@gmail.com by Thursday, June 8, 2023. All bids must be submitted no later than 3:00 pm due on Friday, June 23, 2023.
All bids should be delivered via email to Donna Swanson at dmlswanson@gmail.com and be clearly marked: **Vended School Meals Bid.**

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LANDMARK SUMMER WALKING TOURS RETURN
Landmark Center's Saint Paul Walking Tours return in June. Led by Landmark Center Volunteer Association, tour participants will explore the Rice Park neighborhood, Kellogg Park neighborhood and the beautiful Mississippi riverfront Wednesdays at 10 am, June through August. Landmark Center's Saint Paul Walking Tours are free, but reservations are required. Tour groups are limited to 20 participants. Reservations can be made online at landmarkcenter.org/saint-paul-walking-tours or by calling Sydney at 651-292-3063.

WEST 7TH PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNITY MEETING WITH CHIEF AXEL HENRY
Join neighbors for public safety updates and conversation with Chief Axel Henry. There will be time for Q & A on June 8 from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. Registration required. Learn more and register at fortroadfederation.org/calendar

NORTHERN LIGHTS.MN'S FINAL PROGRAM, A NIGHT ON THE RIVER
Northern Lights.mn will host their final late-night art festival Saturday, June 10 from 9:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m at Upper Landing Park. In contrast to the energetic flurry of past Northern Spark festivals, this final event invites you to slow down and spend a quiet evening of collective listening and remembering. Read more about the artists and projects at northern.lights.mn/a-night-with-the-river

BRAZILIAN DRUMMING WORKSHOPS
The Women's Drum Center has partnered with Colleen Haas, Ph.D. in Ethnomusicology, for two workshops on June 17 that will focus on the exhilarating sounds of Brazil. Class size is limited, and pre registration is required. \$30-\$50. Register: womensdrumcenter.org.

LANDMARK CENTER'S MUSIC ON THE CORTILE
Lunchtime concert series begins June 14. Step away from your desk or travel to downtown St. Paul for a free concert featuring dynamic music from diverse genres, performing in the historic Musser Cortile. Performances will be June 14, June 28, July 12 and July 26 from 12-1 p.m. For information, visit landmarkcenter.org/music-on-the-cortile or call 651-292-3063.

STP PRIDE FESTIVAL AT RICE PARK
STP Pride Festival is taking place on June 10, 10 a.m.-7 p.m. The Festival will feature over 50 local BIPOC & LGBTQIA+ vendors, food courts, adult beverages and live performances and music, including a youth stage from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. ALL LGBTQIA+ people and allies are welcome to attend and celebrate at this free event. Learn more at stppride.org/festival

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