




GRAND OAK OPRY
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DISTRICT PERSPECTIVE

Successful 2023 session for the Minnesota Senate



SEN. SANDY PAPPAS
columnist

As we enjoy the festivals, music and outdoor activities that make Minnesota summers so wonderful, the transformative 2023 legislative session has given us many more reasons to celebrate summer this year. On May 22, we marked the end of a historic session and delivered on the DFL's promises to build an economy that works for all Minnesotans. We passed bills to protect rights, expand freedoms and defend democracy, lower the costs of health care and child care and ensure safe communities, strong schools and a healthy climate for all.

I've spent several decades at the Capitol as a legislator, and this has been the best session of my entire career. We passed laws that will create more affordable housing and establish paid family and medical leave for all Minnesota workers. We made sure no student will go hungry in school and boosted teacher recruitment programs. We delivered \$3 billion in tax cuts—the largest package in state history—which will help seniors, renters, homeowners and working families. And we protected and expanded the fundamental rights of Minnesotans, including guaranteeing the right to reproductive health care.

I'm particularly happy to celebrate some new laws that I've spent years working on at the Capitol. One is the Earned Sick and Safe Time Act, which will allow all Minnesota workers to take time to care for a sick child, heal from an illness or recover from sexual assault, without fear of losing vital income. Another is the Secure Choice Retirement Program Act, which creates a statewide retirement savings program so that every Minnesota worker can easily save for their future and ensures financial stability in their later years. I first introduced both of these bills as part of the Women's Economic Security Act of 2014, and I'm proud to have seen them through across the finish line.

I made our community a top priority as I led the charge to pass a \$2.6 billion infrastructure and jobs bill. I secured funding for important and exciting projects in St. Paul and West St. Paul, including:

- \$28.5 million to complete the rebuild of the 3rd Street and Kellogg Bridge.
- \$8 million for the Mississippi River Learning Center in Crosby Farm Regional Park.
- \$6.2 million to design RiversEdge Park in downtown St. Paul, a terraced park from the bluff to the riverbank.
- \$2.5 million to build an inclusive and accessible playground for all children, including those with intellectual, developmental or physical disabilities, in the West 7th Neighborhood.
- \$2.2 million to remodel the Neighborhood House at the Wellstone Center.
- \$2 million to design improvements to Thompson County Park in West St Paul, which may include a pollinator promenade, creek restorations, Dakota Lodge renovations, a greenway rest area with picnic shelter and a sledding hill.

The laws we passed this session are popular and proven policies, and they'll improve Minnesotans' lives in the short and long term. As states across the country cut funding for lifesaving programs and deny their residents' fundamental rights, Minnesota has become a beacon of people-focused policy and will be a magnet for people to move here because they know their children will be safe and well-educated, their rights are protected and they have access to worker-friendly programs like paid family and medical leave.

From the North End to downtown, from the West Side to West St Paul, we're in this together to make life better for our neighbors, our families and all of Minnesota. We have made great strides this year after six years of gridlock, and I look forward to continuing this new era of listening and legislating in 2024.

United Family residents highlight work in the community

BY DAMIAN GOEBEL

Residents with the Allina Health United Family Residency Program were able to share their community outreach projects for the first time since 2019 on June 14, 2023 at the United Family Physicians Clinic.

One of the hidden gems of the West End, each resident physician passing through the program works on a community engagement project meaningful to them that has an immeasurable positive impact on the community. The 21 residents were able to showcase the 16 projects they are working on to improve health outcomes in the community.

The scope and scale of the projects vary greatly, from getting to know members of the community to providing inpatient resources and care, and even research. Each resident brings their own passions when deciding what to work on.

Broader community engagement
Second-year resident Brooke Gensler, who has been working with the Fort Road Federation's Outreach and Engagement Committee said she chose her project because of the long history United Family Physicians has in the West 7th Community.

"Something that drew me to this program was how strong the roots were in the community," Gensler said. "I wanted a broader focus to get to know the community and see how we can bridge that connection between clinic, medical care and community."

She said that she's been working with members of the committee to better engage communities of color, renters and people on the older end of the age spectrum in the neighborhood, both for the clinic and to be involved in the work of the Federation. This includes more efforts to be inclusive of these committees at events.

"I put on a summer social last summer and we're going to continue that this summer too," Gensler said. "Fairly simple, but I feel like that is where it starts."



Residents Ashley Wittrock and Brooke Gensler showcase their community engagement projects at United Family Physicians on June 14.

Addressing youth mental health
Fellow second-year resident Ashley Wittrock's interest lies more with preventative medicine for young people. "I really like adolescents, young adults, because I think that is a really good time to teach people about health," she said.

Wittrock said she chose to work with Change to Chill (changetochill.org), a service of Allina Health offering free, online mental health resources for teens. She said she has met regularly with them to find out how best to get their resources into the hands of those who need it.

"I was coming in like 'I'm a physician who loves these resources. How do we get it into our clinic? What does that look like?'" she said.

What that looked like was providing informational literature at well child visits, writing a "Healthline" article for the *Community Reporter* and working toward being able to provide Change to Chill resources in schools. As the project progresses, it continues to evolve.

"Now my focus is how to get physicians' ideas," Wittrock said. "We are working on a focus group and some questions and that would be pulled back to our clinic."

Advancing addiction medicine
Residents Brandi Portero and Amelia Underwood are both working on projects related to addiction medicine, but are coming at it from different angles.

Portero said she's been working with RS EDEN, an organization providing housing, reentry and substance abuse services, by giving talks about healthcare to some of their residents.

"I was doing some work with teaching," Portero said. "Like why you should care about primary care and going to a doctor and what that would look like."

She has since started expanding her work to include other organizations reaching similar populations, like Recovery Cafe and Face to Face, focusing on providing resources to those in need, including medically assisted treatment for addiction (MAT).

"A lot of it is just people being educated about what are the resources," Portero said. "Have our address, have our phone number and bring people in the door."

Underwood said her project has been focused on people receiving inpatient services from Allina Health already, informing them of the resources available to them for addiction recovery through their family clinic, including MAT for addiction.

"Not every primary care office or primary care practitioner is comfortable with medically assisted treatment and that is something we do

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Pilgrim Cleaners opens first St. Paul location

BY JERRY ROTHSTEIN

Pilgrim Cleaners & Launderers has purchased Skylark Dry Cleaning (1530 West 7th) and opened its first St. Paul plant and store. The location becomes Pilgrim's 28th Twin Cities operation.

Companies and communities may share a number of key characteristics, and the fit between Pilgrim and the West End is striking.

We are a neighborhood steeped in history and culture, mutual support and environmental concerns, and Pilgrim's corporate history and culture resonates in these areas.

Starting with patriarch Donald Rosen, three generations have guided Pilgrim's development. After serving in WWII, Rosen began selling cleaning equipment to the industry, became a partner in the Pilgrim/Johnny on the Spot chain, and sole owner in the early '80s. His daughter, Bonnie Engler, who worked behind the counter early on, at first did not seem likely to join the business. But after training as a nurse and years of practice, she became involved again, learned the business "from the ground up" working with her father, and ultimately bought him out in 2004. Bonnie's son Derek, who also worked "behind the counter," and also started their home and office delivery service is now Pilgrim's Vice-President.

As Pilgrim has grown, it has invested a lot of time and resources to become a green cleaner.



Pilgrim Cleaners newest location at 1530 West 7th St.

Green cleaning agents fully replaced chemicals by 2010. Advanced technology in equipment and cleaning processes have saved energy and water. Hangers are recycled and, more recently, polybags used to protect garments are recycled through a local company that supports careers and educational enrichment for young people while converting the plastics to building materials.

Pilgrim's operations have matured into a comprehensive system for all laundry, dry cleaning, tailoring and alteration services, with a home and office pick-up and delivery service. "Wet cleaning," a technique for safely processing

fine, delicate fabrics, is also an option.

Commitment to the community and "giving back" was something that Don Rosen taught his children and instilled in his business. His daughter, Bonnie, and grandson, Derek, started the Rose Foundation in his honor to support Pilgrim's community involvement including their Coat's for Kids program, collecting and cleaning thousands of winter coats each year and distributing them through more than twenty nonprofit organizations. Pilgrim's

commitment to the community was recognized with the *Minnesota Business Magazine's* 2018 Community Impact Award.

Derek Engler points out that Pilgrim's continued growth is supported by its strong community service and the relationships that it has built. After nine months on West 7th, Pilgrim has added several job opportunities at their facility and also invested a lot of time and resources in order to set the foundation for its long-term presence in the West End.

PILGRIM CLEANERS, 1530 West 7th, 612-379-2532, pilgrimdrycleaners.com. Hours: Mon-Fri 7-7; Sat 9-4.

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The power of a community newspaper is the community it serves. We need you, the people of the West End, to continue to tell the types of stories you want to hear. Give us a call, shoot us an email or leave us a message on social media to let us know what you want to know more about, what you are thinking about neighborhood issues or just to say "hi." If you wanted to take it a step further, you could always

write a letter to the editor, pitch us an article you want to write, donate or learn more about joining our board. We are always on the lookout for people who want to join the *Community Reporter* community in whatever way they can.
Thanks for your continued support and looking forward to hearing from you
-- Damian Goebel, Editor, *Community Reporter*

Staying safe in the sun



BY LAURA HURLEY, MD

Like bears coming out from hibernation, St. Paul has come alive as we welcome warmer temperatures and days full of sunshine. The longer daylight and more favorable forecasts provide a great opportunity to spend time outdoors. Activities such as tending to flowers and gardens, walking with friends or bicycling throughout the neighborhood, among many more, help support healthy bodies, decrease stress and improve our mood.

While enjoying the sunlight and the return to beloved summer hobbies, it is important to consider how to best care for your skin. Many may easily recall painful sunburns they received during prior summers, likely related to prolonged time in the sun. There is also an increased risk of future complications, including skin cancer, with each sun exposure. This is due to the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays. However, there are

ways we can help prevent these immediate and future outcomes! Here are a few tips for protecting your skin while still ensuring you can enjoy the best of what Minnesota summers have to offer.

Tip #1: Use sunscreen, and use it often

A well-known staple for summer fun, sunscreen helps protect our skin against the sun's harmful UV rays. When choosing which sunscreen to use, consider the SPF, or sun protection factor, number as listed on the bottle. The SPF helps categorize and indicate how much protection is provided, with higher numbers indicating greater protection. For days with any sun exposure, it is best to use sunscreen with SPF of 30 or higher. To ensure the best protection, it is important to apply sunscreen 15-20 minutes prior to going outdoors. Then, be sure to reapply sunscreen every two hours, following vigorous sweating or after getting wet. While we often think about sunscreen on bright, sunny days, but UV rays can still be absorbed by our skin on cloudy days. Be sure to consider this and protect yourself with sunscreen even on cloudy days outdoors!

Tip #2: Dress the part

In addition to sunscreen, strategic planning of clothing for outdoor activities can also help protect against sun exposure. With today's technologies, many companies produce clothing with materials and designs that provide sun-protective properties. However, simply choosing clothing items that help cover potentially exposed skin can help prevent sun



exposure. Such items could include long-sleeved shirts, pants, skirts and hats.

Tip #3: Planning your activities outdoors

Since UV rays are most prominent in the middle of the day, consider coordinating your time outdoors in the morning or later in the day. Sometimes, this isn't possible to do. In these situations, areas of shade offer an escape. Look for the shadows of a large tree for respite. When in doubt, packing an umbrella will ensure a shady space of your own.

Being outdoors provides many benefits for the mind and body. Yet, it is important to take steps to prevent painful sunburns now and decrease the risk of skin cancer in the future.

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

BUILDING AN ANTIRACIST COMMUNITY
Breathing the Same Air



TIM JOHNSON
columnist

Staying inside on a beautiful summer day because the air is unsafe to breathe is no small thing for those of us in the North Country for whom summer is all too short. As is often the case when it comes to social disruption, whether it is COVID, inflation or anything else, it is the most vulnerable who are hit the hardest. Still, the warning

to stay inside and minimize any outdoor activity when the air is laden with smoke applies to us all equally. We share the same air. We all need to breathe.

The final words of George Floyd continue floating in the summer air, "I can't breathe." Breath gives us life. Breath ensures life. Without breath, life slips away. But, there is something in-between breath and no breath, between life and no life. There is that space in which the air we breathe is present, but insufficient, constricted, blocked by pollutants and forces over which we have little or no control, smoke from Canada, climate change dryness and for George Floyd, the long history of racism that he was unable to escape.

We stay inside on a beautiful summer's day. We wait for the air to clear. What else can we do? Long for winter and the respite of a cold freeze? We know it is of no help to blame the Canadians, even though the smoke has been coming from their

dried out forests. We will go outside when we can, when we are told it is safe. Or perhaps, we will ignore the warnings, take a few years off of our life and breathe deeply the air filled with toxins. Whatever our choice, there is no escaping the longing we have for summer air to breathe freely, the ability to live uninhibited by these pollutants that keep us anxious, afraid, constricted. We want clean air to breathe. Who doesn't?

Long before George Floyd took his last gasp of air, he had been longing for breath free of the racism that has been lingering in our nation's air from the very beginning. "I can't breathe" has been uttered many times before, by Floyd and the long lineage of those who have yearned to breathe deeply, free of this toxin.

We all breathe the same air that is between breath and no breath, between life and no life, constricted, insufficient, for that which is possible if we could breathe freely. We stay inside the confines of limited friendships, limited relationships. We restrict where we go and when we go. Best to stay away from some neighborhoods or downtown at night or wherever it is that fear restrains.

Summer is short. Life is short. It is no small thing to be constrained by prejudices, fears, and, like climate change, the leftover consequences of policies and practices that existed long before any of us took our first breath.

Yet, we know another world is possible. It begins with the recognition; we all breathe the same air.

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

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Tim Johnson, Rebecca Noecker, Fort Road Federation and Tim Rumsey, M.D. – one of these is not like the others.

That one is Tim Rumsey's notes on Tim and Carl reflect the West 7th area and the others reflect a percentage that may be growing, but is not the majority.

Tim Johnson's column on transgender fear assumes that issue and white supremacy are on anyone's radar in the area. Hit and miss. What most of the hard working folks struggle with is the high cost of groceries, gas, rent, etc. This ever invasive ideology push on the public, in the schools is something on its own affecting a very small percent and the white supremacy in particular is not really an issue even though everything is blamed on it versus individuals who may think that way.

This same group, each with an audience and/or a column ignore one of the biggest negative disruptors to the area that will affect everyone. Trains going down West 7th. Their silence is the same as support, regardless of what residents think.

Rebecca also ignored the other big issue – raising taxes in general and Mayor Carter's referendum on a one cent tax for St. Paul. Just what we need!?!

The State has collected \$17 billion beyond what we need and the city raises taxes yearly but wants more.

The stories by Tim about Carl are really the heart and soul of West 7th, while the other three represent

a more vocal minority while the majority take a day at a time trying their best to keep family safe. No one mentions the crime which is probably one of the other biggest concerns, along with the high cost of living, not the "blame game issues," which are nonissues in comparison.

Green ideas, social engineering, are just insulting to folks following the law, raising families working hard to keep bills paid. The city continues in some areas to plant blocks of trees that are the same species - green idea! Plant a variety so the next tree bug doesn't decimate all the trees in a block/area!?!

It's not rocket science but it's what was repeated after elm diseases and now the ash. Same as 40-50 years ago and still for the third time we see them planting the same species on some blocks.

I know I would appreciate these leaders to focus on what the basics are – road maintenance, city services, police and fire, without raising taxes.

Our council and mayor also are in the process of stripping single family homes zoning with a plan to pile even more housing into every square inch. Those who benefit will be developers and renters not invested in keeping up properties. The future is a train running through high density, high crime if their vision continues.

Deb O'Neil, St. Paul

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here," Underwood said.

She said the goal of her project has been to work with other community organizations and clinics to increase the reach of MAT for opioid disorder and alcohol disorder by creating educational materials.

"When people are living with addiction, it takes many times engaging in some kind of care or engaging with someone who may offer resources or treatments before they are ready to engage," Underwood said. "So the more people we educate about what's available and the more broadly we offer our services or say we are doing this, the more times people hear it, the more likely they may be to engage."

Underwood said she was working with

Portero on the next phase of their projects to have an even bigger impact on their ability to reach people experiencing addiction in the community.

Primary Care for domestic violence survivors

Resident Katie Strandberg said her project is relatively recent, but no less impactful. She's been partnering with Esperanza United, a nonprofit mobilizing Latinx communities to end gender-based violence, to provide healthcare resources to their residents.

"I've been working with the shelter manager and she has identified that a lot of the people who are staying there, understandably, have been faced with a lot of trauma in their lives and maybe their health hasn't been on the forefront of what they are

thinking about day-to-day," said Strandberg. "But they get to a place that is more secure and stable and they are ready to start thinking about their health."

Strandberg said this especially includes managing chronic diseases like hypertension and diabetes.

"So far I've put together a couple of resources, more educational based resources, based on hypertension, diabetes, ways that you might incorporate things that you might make certain food choices that would benefit those conditions as a starting place," she said.

As a third-year resident, Strandberg will be graduating from the program soon, but said she hopes one of the incoming first-year residents will be interested in continuing her

work on this project.

Medical career exploration

Third-year resident Emma Ostby said she, along with first-year resident Bobbi Livengood, have been sharing their expertise in the healthcare field through a program called "The Ladder," allowing young people to explore careers in healthcare. They have partnered with Keystone Community Kids at the West 7th Community Center to provide monthly afterschool programming.

"We've been going there once a month, bringing healthcare related topics to them and talking about different careers within healthcare fields hoping to inspire some interest in pursuing these things in the future for them," Ostby said.

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Community News & Events



Justus Ramsey House

Justus Ramsey House reconstruction request for proposals

The West 7th/Fort Road Federation, along with community partners and stakeholders, are requesting proposals for the reconstruction and interpretation of the Justus Ramsey House. Those planning to participate must first submit a letter of intent by Friday, July 21, 2023.

After months of controversy, the 170-year-old house was painstakingly disassembled in February of this year and has been in storage since. Believed to be the oldest stone structure in either St. Paul or Minneapolis, the structure is listed on the National Register of historic places and the St. Paul City Council has twice designated the house as a protected heritage preservation site.

Questions about the RFP or process can be directed to Julia McColley, Executive Director of the West 7th/Fort Road Federation at 651-298-5599 or via email at julia@fortroadfederation.org

More details, including the full request for proposals, can be found at fortroadfederation.org/

St. Paul sidewalk poetry contest winners

On May 26, Mayor Carter announced the winners of the St. Paul Sidewalk Poetry Contest for 2023, a collaboration between the city, Public Art St. Paul (PASP), and St. Paul Almanac. The contest takes on special significance this year as it is the 15th anniversary of the Sidewalk Poetry Program, which is why 15 poems - three times the usual amount - were selected to be stamped into city sidewalks this summer.

The submissions featured from this year's contest encompass the diversity of St. Paul, with poems in English, Hmong, Somali and Dakota. The winning poems will be stamped onto St. Paul sidewalks beginning this summer, with PASP working with the city's Department of Public Works.

Sidewalk Poetry began as a way to create artistic expression out of a yearly city function - sidewalk maintenance. Sidewalk Poetry was created in 2008 through a partnership with Public Art St. Paul and former City Artist Marcus Young. The project was initially called "Everyday Poems for City Sidewalk." Since its inception, 73 distinct poems - stamped over 1,200 times - have

been embossed into sidewalks across the city.

For a full list of winners, and if you would like to see where there is Sidewalk Poetry near you, visit stpaul.gov/departments/public-works/sidewalks/sidewalk-poetry.

Minimum wage increase update

Effective July 1, 2023, the minimum wage hourly rate in St. Paul will be \$15.00 for Large businesses, \$13.00 for Small businesses and \$11.50 for Micro businesses. The minimum wage hourly rate for Macro businesses is \$15.19, which became effective January 1, 2023.

On November 14, 2018, St. Paul Mayor Melvin Carter signed into law a citywide Minimum Wage Ordinance. The signing followed a unanimous vote from the Saint Paul City Council to adopt the ordinance. The minimum wage ordinance implements minimum wage schedules depending on business size.

Under the ordinance, a Macro business employs 10,001+ employees. A Large business employs 101-10,000 employees. A Small business employs 6-100 employees, and a Micro business employs 5 or fewer employees. Employers must

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The program offers a different topic each month for the young people to explore. Ostby said they try to offer a hands-on approach in their mentorship.

"We talked about the cardiovascular system, so we brought in a bunch of stethoscopes and listened to our hearts, and each other's hearts and talked about blood pumping and what blood does and what the heart does and those sorts of things," said Ostby. "We talked about lungs at one point. We talked about infectious disease and why you should get vaccines and wash your hands."

Ostby said the program has existed in the Twin Cities in some iteration for about a decade. Right now, the program is reserved for youth participating in Keystone Community Kids, but she could see it being offered more widely in the future.

"For a future direction, we would like to open it up to more community folks. There might be folks beyond that programming that would be interested," she said.

Providing home healthcare for people struggling with mental health

First-year resident Lydia Tortorici said that access to healthcare is one of her biggest passions, and her project works to provide access to those who aren't able to access it

in traditional ways. She is partnering with Radius Health, a local organization providing pharmacy services for people struggling with mental illness.

"We are partnering with them to try to get people that they think are appropriate enrolled into our clinic for home visits so we can expedite primary care that's successful for people who are not great at making it into the clinic," Tortorici said. "They would otherwise fall through the cracks."

She said that, so far, she has done a ride along with them and starting to work on getting a workflow together. They have already started seeing a couple of patients.

"We have days blocked off on our schedule where we have a provider who goes out and sees people," Tortorici said.

She is hoping that, long-term, the project will include approval from the internal review board and publishing research for other communities to implement similar strategies for providing care.

In the short-term, she is excited to get this project off the ground and into more people's homes who would otherwise not be able to access healthcare.

"Just making sure that our work is valued and caring about every single person, even if they are not able to access our services the way we normally present them, is really important," Tortorici said.

count all employees whether employed full-time, part-time, jointly with another employer or on a temporary basis, including employees not located in Saint Paul.

Bush Foundation announces 2023 Fellows

The Bush Foundation has announced the 24 recipients of this year's Bush Fellowships.

Established in 1965, the Bush Fellowship program supports the development of social sector leaders in Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota and the 23 Native nations that share the same geography. Each Bush fellow receives up to \$100,000 over one to two years in support of a leadership development plan tailored to their needs and ambitions. Fellows can use the funds to advance their education, take advantage of networking opportunities and/or access leadership resources, workshops and training.

For a complete list of this year's Bush Fellows, see the Bush Foundation website at bushfoundation.org/news/2023-bush-fellows-think-bigger-what-possible.

Ramsey County approves \$14.4 million for affordable housing infrastructure

The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners approved \$14.4 million in funding on June 6, 2023 for eight affordable housing development projects. The investment comes from American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars, which satisfies the county's commitment to obligate the full amount of its dedicated ARPA funds, \$37 million, into deeply affordable housing infrastructure.

The newly awarded ARPA projects bring the total amount of approved funding to \$37 million. This matches previous action by the county board to invest in deeply affordable housing for individuals and families with household incomes less than 30% Area Median Income.

The city of St. Paul partnered on this effort - fully obligating an equal \$37 million into deeply affordable housing infrastructure. This will ultimately infuse more than \$74 million of federal funding for housing into local communities.

Projects awarded ARPA funding by Ramsey County in the last two years are expected to add 406 new deeply affordable rental units to the current housing supply, helping bridge the gap to affordable housing for residents. ARPA investments will have contributed to more than 956 new or preserved affordable housing units for low-to-moderate income renters.

To learn more about Ramsey County's affordable housing investments visit: ramseycounty.us/AffordableHousing.



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Good News!

Coral reefs are springing back to life, plastic islands are shrinking, we are paying more attention to our water and energy usage, and people are taking action to ensure butterflies and bees flourish on the island.

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Position Announcement: Executive Director

Dignity and Respect

Joseph's Coat is a free store providing goods and service to those in need within an environment of dignity and respect. Joseph's Coat maintains an inclusive philosophy toward the community's neediest and often most marginalized members. People of all ages, ethnic and cultural backgrounds, abilities, and challenges are welcomed and served.

DIGNITY • RESPECT
Joseph's Coat
VOLUNTEER • GIVE

Our Strength in Volunteers and Donors

We strive to foster a sense of community between those facing hardship and our volunteers and donors who are the strength and energy of Joseph's Coat. The nonprofit was founded in 1989 in response to the need for no-cost clothing, personal and household items by homeless people in St. Paul's inner city. Joseph's Coat was conceived as a place where volunteers would donate their time and resources to provide the needed items and would join with the people they serve to create a storefront community that extended welcome, acceptance and respect for all. Joseph's Coat operates under the direction of one full-time staff member and serves the community with 70+ hours of part-time support and over 440 volunteer donated hours per week.

Position Overview

The Executive Director manages the organization to ensure effective operations of a free store in line with our mission, creating an empowering and collaborative work environment for staff and volunteers alike. The Executive Director leads day-to-day operations, volunteer management, stakeholder communications and financial oversight to ensure the long-term sustainability of the organization.

Primary Areas of Responsibility

The successful candidate will have significant experience and skill in the following areas: Leadership and Vision; Hospitality; Community Relationships; Operations; Communications; and Financial Oversight.

Qualifications

The ideal candidate will bring an understanding of Joseph's Coat's operation and volunteer-based service model and be able to effectively engage our diverse communities in support of the people we serve. They will bring proven experience in operations with a firm commitment to building and supporting a collaborative work environment. A detailed summary of the requirements can be found at <https://mightyconsulting.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Josephs-Coat-Executive-Director-Job-Posting-Draft.docx.pdf>

To learn more, visit bit.ly/josephscoatjob

Community Traditions

Northern Spark art festival says goodbye



Artists play percussion instruments while illuminated at Northern Spark.



(above left) An attendee takes in one of the art installations at Upper Landing Park.



(above right) One of the many art installations at Northern Spark.



A visitor takes in a visual history of Northern Spark events.

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Community Nourishment

Grand Oak Opry kicks off 2023 season



BY DAMIAN GOEBEL

“The thing that weirds people out is you’re walking into our backyard,” Said Sean Kershaw, who along with his husband Tim Hawkins, operate the Grand Oak Opry out of their, well, backyard.

“We have volunteer greeters. We let people use our bathroom. People treat it with real respect and each other with real respect,” he said.

The pair have been hosting concerts from their home since 2014. Over the years, the concerts have grown from about 40 people for some of the first shows to over 500 for a Nur-D performance last year, according to Kershaw.

He said the germ of the idea started when he and Hawkins were married in their yard and had a performer from the Cactus Blossoms for the ceremony. After that they saw that they had a place where musicians could perform and make money.

“We didn’t want to make money, we ask for donations and all the money goes to the bands,” said Kershaw. “We ask for \$15,



Mike Kota performs on June 17 at the Grand Oak Opry.

people can pay money or pay nothing.”

A typical season has between five and seven bands, with six performing this year. Kershaw said that they are very deliberate about their lineup each year.

“We make sure we have a mix of gender, race and ethnicities. A lot of thought goes into the summer, but some of it is a hunch,” he said.

Kershaw said that shows are family friendly and usually done by 9:00 p.m.

Kershaw said he is really excited about this year’s slate of bands. “Mayyadda just blew people away last time,” he said. “This year she has an album release and it’s her birthday.”

“The Johnny Sincerely Orchestra is a local band on August 26. I’m really excited to have someone from the neighborhood,” he added.

Mostly, Kershaw feels very fortunate to be able to provide a venue for artists in his own backyard.

“Quietly, we realized it was a way to bring the neighborhood together,” he said. “This literally couldn’t happen without West 7th support.”

Upcoming Shows

- July 1, 8 p.m.: Mayyadda
- July 22, 7:30 p.m.: Peter Goggin Quintet
- Aug. 19, 7:30 p.m.: Rogue Valley
- Aug. 26, 7:30 p.m.: Johnny Sincerely Orchestra
- Sept. 2, 7:30 p.m.: Lady Midnight

GRAND OAK OPRY, 273 Goodhue St. W.; grandoakopry.com

ABBY'S ANGLE

Animal Farm strives to create a paradise of justice, equality

ANIMAL FARM

Written by George Orwell

Have you ever thought that robots may rule the world? Well, you’re wrong. It’s animals.

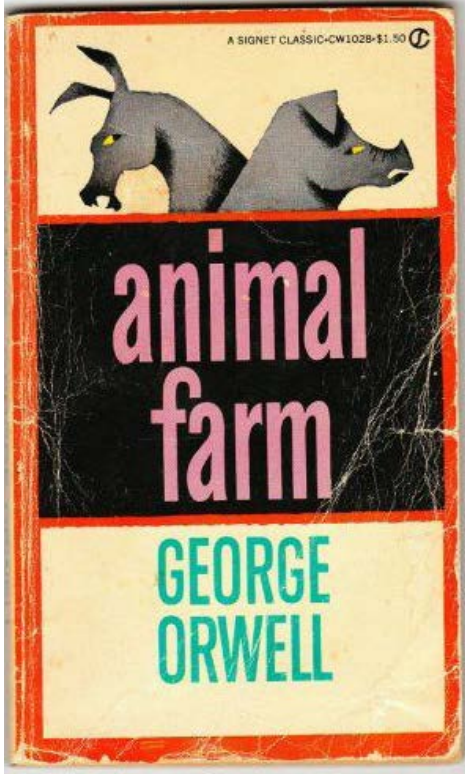
In “Animal Farm” by George Orwell, that statement practically comes true. “Animal Farm” is about the animals on a farm in England called Manor Farm rising up against their cruel farmer Mr. Jones. In taking over the farm, the animals renamed it Animal Farm and thus run it for themselves, striving to create a paradise of justice and equality.

Throughout their journey, the animals learn literacy skills and a government is established, their rules being inscribed on the wall of the barn:

1. Whatever goes upon two legs is an enemy.
2. Whatever goes upon four legs, or has wings, is a friend.
3. No animal shall wear clothes.
4. No animal shall sleep in a bed.
5. No animal shall drink alcohol.
6. No animal shall kill any other animal.
7. All animals are equal.

Animals with more experience in literacy change the established rules in order to better suit themselves (“All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others.”), which relates to the inspiration for the novel – the development of Russian communism under Joseph Stalin, a chilling story about the Russian revolution.

Overall, this book was decently good. As I personally did not enjoy the story itself all too much, I did like the analogy behind it. Changing the rules for one’s means and using political manipulations can still



be seen today and these observations by Orwell are sadly the truths about human behavior, making this book timeless.

I would recommend this book to older students and adults. The fact that I didn’t understand parts of the book makes me think that you need to be more mature to really understand the whole picture of this book.

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In the Community



Top 5 reasons to make Summer Spark part of your summer break

By Donicia Soliz, Library Manager

- Getting started is easy:** Stop by any St. Paul Public Library to pick up a Summer Spark Reading Log and a free book to keep. Participants set a reading goal and track their reading progress. As summer progresses, participants can choose up to two more free books to keep.
 - Personalized challenges make reading fun and keep kids busy:** Readers won't find required reading. Instead, the program offers fun and flexibility by encouraging readers to pick books they want to read and set their own reading goals.
 - Complete goals and get free books to keep at home:** As kids and teens complete their goals, they get additional free books. Library staff select popular books that appeal to St. Paul's diverse communities of kids and center BIPOC authors, creators and characters.
 - Discovering new titles, authors and genres is easy:** Saff can provide books that align with readers' interests and help participants explore new reads.
 - Families can stay for free events and activities:** West 7th Library offers Family Storytimes Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m., a weekly toddler and preschooler play program Tuesdays 3-5 p.m. An Out in Nature program for young children on July 21 from 10:30-11:30 a.m.
- Most students in St. Paul can check out books, e-books, audiobooks and more with Library Go, a library card for students that uses their student ID number as a library card number. St. Paul Public Schools, and many charter schools, automatically enroll their students in Library Go. There are no fines and no financial risks to families who borrow items with Library Go.
- WEST 7TH PUBLIC LIBRARY**, 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.



- WEST 7TH SUMMER SOCIAL**
Keg & Case Lawn, July 20 6-7:30 p.m.
Join neighbors for a night out at Keg & Case. Socialize, play games, and get connected!
- YOGA IN THE PARK**
Bay Triangle, July 17 7-8 p.m., free, donations appreciated. All abilities and ages welcome to attend. Join instructor Ginny from Heartwild Living for a relaxing evening in the park.
- AREA 2 AND 3 COORDINATOR NEEDED**
To learn more or see if you live in area 2 or 3, visit fortroadfederation.org. If you are interested, please contact us at fortroadfed@fortroadfederation.org
- Upcoming Meetings, via Zoom**
Info: fortroadfederation.org/calendar
- **Transportation and Land Use Committee:** Wednesday, July 5, 6:30 p.m.
 - **Board meeting:** Monday, July 10, 7 p.m.
- More details: fortroadfederation.org/calendar
- Stay in touch**
"Like" us on Facebook. Subscribe to e-newsletter.
- Contact**
Julia McColley, julia@fortroadfederation.org; 651-298-5599; 882 West 7th, Suite 6, Rathskeller Building.

Notebook Recollections: Just where is this walk you talk about

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
Sometimes people ask, "Just where is this walk to work that you talk about?"
Good question.
Port of departure is our house on Linwood Ave. on top of the St. Clair Hill.
During the time of these writings, 1997, the destination was United Family Medicine, 30 feet from Nick Mancini's Steakhouse and Las Vegas Lounge.
My walk is one mile from our house to the staff entrance. In between is a whole other world that before the walk was just part of the drive.
Now it's a gauntlet of history and humanity.
The walk goes like this.
Out the front door onto the sidewalk where our three girls learned to bike, roller-skate, hopscotch and jump rope. Then it's a half block to the Work Progress Administration stairway. Fifty-two deep concrete steps down through the woods to St. Clair. With big, dark green pipe railings and softball-sized joints. A bench on either side of the halfway point landing is lit up by an old green street lamp.
I always thought the steps were WPA, but Tex, who seems to know everything about West 7th, told me they were built in 1916 by the city, so Crocus Hill residents could get down to the St. Clair Streetcar line and West Seventhers could get up to Crocus Hill.
Some of Tex's foster mothers took these steps down every day to house clean. Mary Pesek took them up to get to Visitation, her private girls high school. Gerry Lauer took them throughout his life on frequent walkabouts.
My WPA stairs' history is squishy but whenever I remember all this, I grab the railing in a Walt Wittman-y way
Then it's down St. Clair, past the woods on either side of 35E.
There is half of a 100-year-old house foundation among the trees and bushes in the upper 35E woods. One of our clinic families was the last occupant before it was torn down in 1979. Its limestone and brick basement is built right into the hill, part of the earth itself. It's all overgrown now, but every spring the remaining lilac bushes still come to life and you know some kid used to pick them for his mother and they stood in a big glass jar in the kitchen inside what used to be this house.
On the 35E overpass, you can see the Schmidt Brewery castle overlooking the landscape and when the trees are without leaves, the Bridgeview School on the former Ancker Hospital site. Carl is the janitor at Bridgeview. Houses on the next four blocks of my walk include Carl's, the Pink Rock House and the House of the Incredible Smoking Bongs with its sacrificial Stratocaster guitar neck nailed seven feet up the trunk of a big elm.
Magic's Auto Repair operates out of a big double garage behind the Bongs.
The 90-year-old Lauer sisters live on the east side of the Bongs. Helen and Fidelis. They were childhood friends of Mary Pesek. They're Gerry's cousins. They once sat on the knees of the three original West 7th stone mason Lauer brothers. I've seen the sisters out in front of their home shoveling or hand mowing the lawn.
At the corner of West 7th and St. Clair is the Seventh Street Liquor Barrel. Our clinic and the Barrel share a number of clients including Tex. The walk turns left here past Cooper's Food, the Czech Hall and St. Stanislaus Czech-Catholic church. Then Mabel leftover dining car (now, Villa, Roma Pizza), two nice old, red brick offices and finally the salt mines themselves, United Family Health Center .
I got to know the neighborhood. Pets, the children, the houses. The car drivers, bus riders and backyard sitters. Some of the houses I pass are right on the sidewalk. Sometimes I brush against them. I can smell breakfast, lunch and dinner, see TV shows, hear yelling, crying and laughing.

HIGHLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

For more information, visit highlanddistrictcouncil.org/events

Summer Thursdays

Pizza and Movie at Sibley Manor July 13
Outdoor games and pizza provided by St. Paul Parks and Recreation Thursday, July 13, 6 p.m. Sibley Manor Apartments (1300 W. Maynard Dr.). Movie: DC League of Super Pets (PG).

Music at the Bridge August 10
Live music and food trucks Thursday, August 10, 6 p.m. Civic Plaza (2219 Bohland Ave.) in the Highland Bridge development. Food truck: Brick Oven Bus (pizza). Check website for more food vendors and music updates.

Sign up for e-newsletter

Get latest information about events, neighborhood news and development updates delivered to your inbox once a month. Subscribe at bit.ly/HDCenews

Upcoming meetings

Meetings at Highland Community Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy or join online via Zoom at highlanddistrictcouncil.org/calendar

Transportation – Tue, July 11 at 7 p.m.
Community Development – Tue, July 18, 6:30 p.m.
HDC Board – Thu, July 20, 7 p.m.

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

Keys Fest 2023: A night of fun and community

We are proud to announce Keystone's first Keys Fest! Join us on Monday, July 31 from 4-7 p.m. at Keystone's West 7th Community Center for a night of live music, food trucks, activities, and community fun! The event is free, but we encourage attendees to bring a school supply donation or cash contribution! Visit www.keystoneservices.org/events

Free Farmer's Market

With the help of our community, Keystone provides fresh fruits, vegetables and non-perishable items. We will offer at three community locations - Roseville Covenant Church, the Rice and Arlington Field and the Allianz Field. All are welcome. Participants will receive free, fresh fruits and vegetables. All events 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. Visit keystoneservices.org/food-shelves/more-food-programs/

Fare for All at West 7th

Shop for quality, nutritious foods at a discount and budget-friendly prices. All are welcome. Events: August 4, September 8 from 10 a.m.-12 p.m.

Spend Your Summer Volunteering with Keystone!

Now that school has ended, and summer is here, you may have a little free time to spare. 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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BANDS ON THE BOULEVARD - FREE LIVE MUSIC SERIES IS BACK!
Select Tuesdays, July-August. The Minnesota Historical Society's free live music series returns outside the Minnesota History Center in St. Paul this summer. On select Tuesday evenings, hear a different Minnesota band while enjoying food from local food trucks, lawn games and other family activities. Upcoming: Tuesdays (except July 4) by NUNNABOVE, Barbaro, The Northerly Gales (pictured), and Ecuador Manta. Activities start at 6:30 pm, so mark your calendars! Weather-permitting. Visit <https://mnhs.org/events>

ST. PAUL MOVIES IN THE PARKS
Outdoor films at parks and recreation centers around St. Paul are free and open to the public. Weather dependent and subject to change without notice. All children under 10 years of age must be accompanied by an adult. Rated R movies are 18+ events. Also pet friendly events (unless noted), and pets must be kept on a leash no longer than 6ft. Visit stpaul.gov/departments/parks-and-recreation/activities-events/summer-activities-events/movies-parks

SUMMER NIGHTS IN RICE
Select Thursdays, 5-7 p.m. Rice Park Reggae, jazz, Big Band, Latin, Salsa, and blues rock make up the 2023 line-up for this free outdoor summer concert series through September. Visit local downtown Saint Paul restaurants for happy hour, then head to Rice Park for music, community connections, and hot summer night dancing! Bonus: new "Lightwave" art installation on the Rice Park fountain, created by lighting artist Jeff Bartlett for Rice Park's Revitalization. Visit landmarkcenter.org/summer-nights-in-rice.

LANDMARK CENTER'S MUSIC ON THE CORTILE
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 July 12 and July 26 from 12-1 p.m. For information, visit landmarkcenter.org/music-on-the-cortile or call 651-292-3063.

RONDO COMMUNITY LAND TRUST - 30TH ANNIVERSARY BLOCK PARTY BASH
July 22, 1-4 p.m. 1041 Selby Ave. Celebrate the Rondo Community Land Trust "block party style" with BIPOC-owned food trucks, a beer garden, live musical performances and interactive community art projects. The first 250 attendees will get a free food ticket! Featuring Tali & The Tribe (Graydon Francis x IAMKAYE x DJ MidiEvil), Big Kiaa, Solana and Panasueco.

MID-SUMMER FOOD TRUCK EXTRAVAGANZA
July 15, 11 a.m.-7 p.m. Harriet Island. It's the highlight of the summer in the metro area! Bring your families, friends and neighbors out for a day of unique street eats with global cuisines from 40 Food Trucks/Trailers.

BEGINNING HAND DRUM CLASS
July 10, 5-6 p.m. Women's Drum Center. Class members play djembes to explore pulse and rhythms. Easy, energizing exercises will be utilized to build skills. Instructor: Jo Klein. Drums provided. \$15. Register: womensdrumcenter.org.

FITNESS IN THE PARKS
A free outdoor exercise program that brings a variety of fitness activities to many of St. Paul's beautiful parks. There is no registration required and classes are open to all fitness levels. All ages are welcome and no experience is necessary. Classes are ongoing daily through the summer. See the full schedule: stpaul.gov/departments/parks-and-recreation/activities-events/summer-activities-events/fitness-parks

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