

Community REPORTER

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COUNTY PERSPECTIVE A new way to recycle food scraps from home



RAMSEY COUNTY COMMISSIONER, DISTRICT 5 RAFAEL ORTEGA columnist
Ramsey and Washington counties are working together to bring residents a new way to recycle food scraps from home—the food scraps pickup program! Over 20% of household trash in Ramsey and Washington counties is food scraps like fruit peels, eggshells, coffee grounds, bones and more. By separating your food scraps, you can help turn them into soil instead of waste. Recovering food scraps from trash provides health, environmental and economic benefits to the community.

The program is currently available to residents of Maplewood, North St. Paul, Cottage Grove and Newport and will continue to be introduced into neighborhoods in the coming years. It will still be some time before this program is available to the City of St. Paul as we work closely with facilities and partners on expanding infrastructure to sort food scrap bags across the two counties.

How does the program work?

The food scraps pickup program uses special compostable bags called 'food scrap bags' that will be co-collected with your trash and later sorted for composting. These food scrap bags are specifically designed for the program—they are thicker than compostable bags found at the grocery store and are designed to withstand the trip in a garbage truck before they are sorted.

To participate, you must use the free program-provided food scrap bags. Eligible residents can order their annual free supply of food scrap bags at FoodScrapsPickup.com or call 651-661-9393. The bags will ship directly to your home! Once you receive your order, simply collect your food scraps in your food scrap bags, then once the bag is full, tie a knot at the top and place the bag inside your trash cart or dumpster for collection.

When this is available in St. Paul, here's how it will work:

- Order your free food scrap bags.
- Collect your food scraps in the bags. Once a week or when the bag is full, tie a knot at the top to close the bag.
- Place your bag inside your trash cart or dumpster for collection.

• Done! Food scraps will be composted. One of the exciting new technologies that make this possible are small "robots" that can identify the food scrap bags and separate them at our recycling and composting center.

When will I be able to participate?

To see if the program is currently available to you, visit www.FoodScrapsPickup.com and click 'Sign Up'. We are not ready to introduce it to St. Paul right away, as we get all the parts of the process working, but I know our residents are excited.

In the meantime, you can join St. Paul residents who collect scraps in bags and utilize one of Ramsey County's many food scraps drop-off sites! Find the closest drop-off site to you and start putting your food scraps to work: ramseycounty.us/residents/recycling-waste/collection-sites/food-scrap-food-scrap-dumpster.

Questions?

Visit FoodScrapsPickup.com for more resources including how-to videos, frequently asked questions and collection and storage tips! To contact a customer service representative, complete a contact form on the program website or call 651-661-9393.

The program website, resources and phone line are all available in English, Spanish, Hmong, Somali, Oromo and Karen.

Planning for the Riverview Corridors get back on track

BY DAMIAN GOEBEL

The Riverview Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) held their first public meeting in months on December 13 to review the current status of the planned transit project.

Project planners presented the current plans for the corridor, including updates to what rail and enhanced transit could look like on West 7th between downtown St. Paul and the Mall of America and changes from some of their initial plans.

Two streetcar options

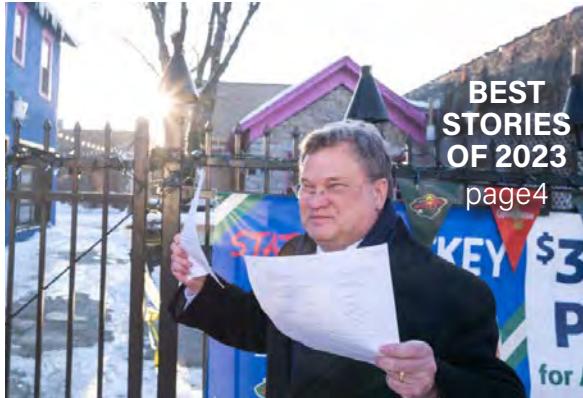
Ramsey County presented two versions of modern streetcar the PAC will be asked to evaluate in the coming months. The first option has dedicated center-running lanes for passenger cars until the Grand Ave station along West 7th, similar to the Green Line on University Avenue. The second is a mix, with dedicated center-running tracks from Mall of America until the cars reach the Otto/Victoria area, where the train cars will then shift from center-running to side running and be in mixed traffic and operate more like streetcars, with stations curbside. They said option two would require less infrastructure and preserve more on-street parking, but would be in mixed traffic for a large stretch of West 7th.

Bus Rapid Transit

Project planners also presented an option for Arterial Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), similar to the A Line on Snelling Ave., which they say will largely follow the route 54 service currently operated by Metro Transit. This version of the project would see 16 new stations built along the corridor from Mall of America to just outside of Downtown. Once within downtown, buses would use the existing infrastructure.

New Highway 5 bridge

As part of the project, Ramsey County laid out a vision for replacing the Highway 5 bridge over the Mississippi River, which would have to take place if rail is chosen in the corridor. The proposed bridge would be a double



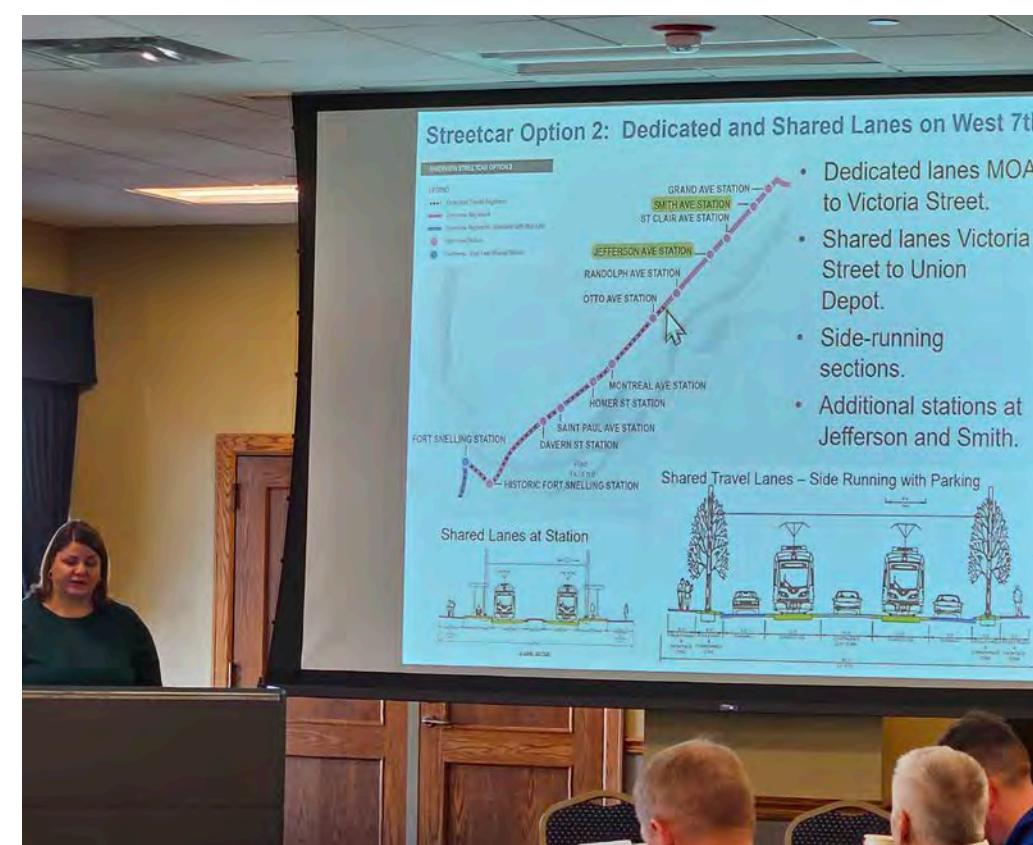
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Ramsey County staff explain one of the streetcar options on West 7th

decker, with three automobile travel lanes and two dedicated lanes for streetcar. The second level would be dedicated to bicycle and pedestrian traffic, as well as have the potential for holding events and ceremonies for the adjacent Bdoté area and Fort Snelling.

Alignment through downtown

County staff shared that, since their last conversation with the PAC, they have made significant changes to the proposed path through downtown for streetcars. Instead of connecting to the existing Green Line tracks, the project is now proposed to travel along Kellogg Blvd. for either of the streetcar options.

Additional stops considered

Project staff said that, as part of planning for streetcar, two additional stops, one at Jefferson Ave. and one at Smith Ave. are

being considered. They said these stations were identified along with the request for the alternative to fill in some of the gaps between stations to focus on local trips and development opportunities.

"If the solution was simple, it would have been done already"

Russ Stark, the Chief Resilience Officer with the City of St. Paul and a member of the PAC acknowledged that this was the first time the group had discussed many of the changes, including the second streetcar option presented.

"Some people in this room have talked about this corridor for 40 years, let alone 20, and if the solution was simple it would have been done already," he said.

RIVERVIEW, PG 2

COMMUNITY TRADITIONS

138th St. Paul Winter Carnival starts January 25

BY DAMIAN GOEBEL

The "Coolest Celebration on Earth" is officially kicking off its 138th year of ice sculpting, parades and celebrating all things winter on January 25.

This year's St. Paul Winter Carnival will feature favorites from years' past and add a few new twists for families to enjoy during its 10-day run.

2024 Winter Carnival Buttons

The buttons for the 138th St. Paul Winter Carnival button designs were unveiled December 2 at Union Depot. The four buttons for this year's Carnival were designed by artist Kao Lee Thao, a Frogtown native and the first member of the Hmong community to design the Winter Carnival buttons.

Each button comes with a new Winter Carnival Fun Pass, which provides deals to numerous local businesses. And as a bonus, the Fun Pass gives you a chance to win exclusive prizes and experiences such as a night stay at Great Wolf Lodge or two tickets to the Tim McGraw Concert at Xcel Energy Center on April 20.

The 2024 Winter Carnival buttons will be available for sale now. Prices are \$5 for one and \$19 for the collector's pack of all four. A limited edition four pack with a commemorative glittery snowflake pin will also be available during Winter Carnival for \$20. Buttons may also be



2024 Saint Paul Winter Carnival buttons. (top right) Kao Lee Thao is the first Hmong artist to design the buttons.

WINTER CARNIVAL, PG 7

Dear West End,

Thank you for your generosity

Over the past few months, we've asked you to support the *Community Reporter's* work to bring you the news of the West End. Our free paper isn't free and we've been overwhelmed with the outpouring of financial support from our community.

We want to continue to bring you the stories you want to see in the West End, and every dollar provides us with even more ability to provide that service to you.

In the coming months, we hope to continue to raise funds for some of the big plans we have in store, but we are off to a great start of reaching our \$30,000 goal.

From the bottom of our hearts, thank you!

Damian Goebel
Editor

P.S. It's not too late to give a gift to the Community Reporter.
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BUILDING COMMUNITY

The Northern Lights and the beloved community



TIM JOHNSON

columnist

The Northern Lights never appeared. Still, we were both glad we made the drive. It was a Tuesday evening and on the evening news we heard the prediction that the following two evenings offered the possibility these mysterious and marvelous wonders might be making an appearance. With no commitments the next morning, we got in our car and drove north, finally coming to a stop on a dirt road, about 30 minutes from Hinckley. We sought a place that was largely free from human light. We sat in that spot until 2 a.m., warming ourselves with a blanket, occasionally turning on the car and playing cribbage to pass the time.

I have seen the Northern Lights twice before. Once I saw them in Canada, with an amazing array of colors, covering a good portion of the sky, putting on a performance that would capture the energy of dancers finally getting to provide a post COVID performance. The other sighting was in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area.

They were less spectacular, but every bit as special, because I was sharing them with my son. My wife has yet to see the Northern Lights. They failed to materialize that evening, though the following night there were reportedly a number of sightings in the Northern portion of the State, as far south as Minnetonka. We stayed overnight in a former Motel 8, now rebranded the American Inn. The next morning we drove home, slightly disappointed, but ready to try again the next time opportunity presents itself.

One thing is certain, if we had been unwilling to make the effort and leave the comfort of home, our chances of seeing the Northern Lights on that evening would have been zero. The same is true in shaping and creating communities that can flourish as places for the young and the old, people of all races and cultures, as well as the fluidity of gender identity and sexual orientation. As Parker Palmer says in his book, "A Hidden Wholeness," when it comes to creating community we are all leaders. Palmer states, "Leadership is a concept we often resist. It seems immodest, even self-aggrandizing, to think of ourselves as leaders. But if it is true that we are made for community, then leadership is everyone's vocation, and it can be an evasion to insist that it is not. When we live

in the close-knit ecosystem called community, everyone follows and everyone leads....I lead by word and deed simply because I am here doing what I do."

Getting out to see the Northern Lights, as beautiful as they might be, is not everyone's passion, it may not be your passion, but we all have a stake in creating a community of belonging or utilizing the image of Martin Luther King, Jr., we all have a stake in creating "the Beloved Community". We may only occasionally get a glimpse of what such a community might be like. Communities of belonging no more beckon to our will or expectation than do the Northern Lights. It may be we have to rely on the testimony of others to keep us motivated and believing that such a community can exist. Yet, when the Beloved Community captures our imagination we are motivated to get up and go see what is possible. If we come home disappointed, as we often will, we also know the effort remains worthwhile and we will be ready to try again.

As Parker Palmer reminds us, we are all leaders, if only by our example. The question is what type of leader will we be? Will we be a leader that looks for those small opportunities that come our way in libraries, grocery stores, congregations, apartment buildings where in

simple, but important ways lets others know they belong and are welcome? A smile, an introduction, an offer of support can be in any given moment precisely the type of leadership that is needed. Leaders can chair committees and have important visible roles, but no less important are leaders who knit together the fabric of community by all-inclusive acts of kindness and charity.

I would be remiss in failing to acknowledge that simply supporting this community newspaper is one simple way in which you can play a role in creating a community of inclusion. The Northern Lights, with all their wonder, beauty and mystery still beckon. The same can be said about the vision of a Beloved Community, held by Martin Luther King, Jr. and many others.

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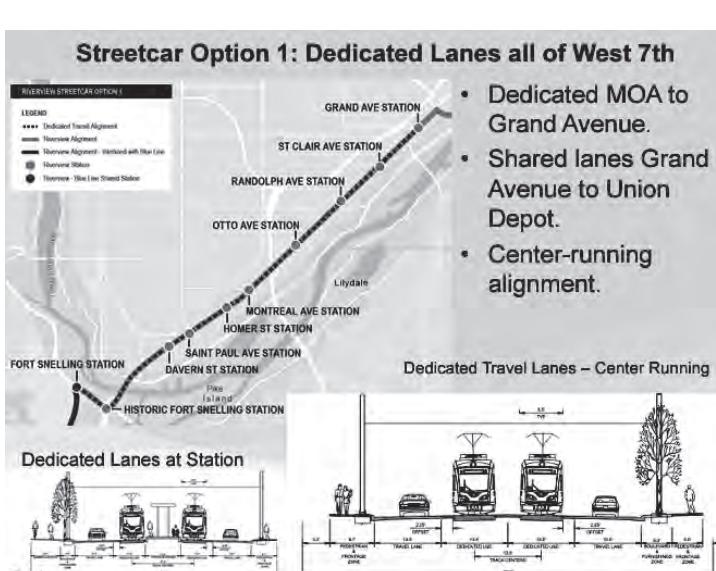
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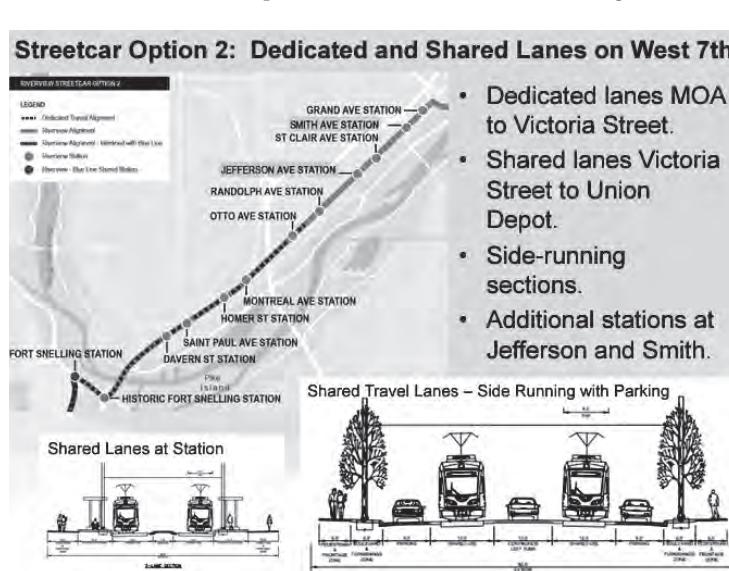
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An overview of streetcar option 1



An overview of streetcar option 2

Community News & Events

Minnesota has its next State Flag

The next flag of Minnesota has been selected. The State Emblems Redesign Commission voted for a final design that includes the conceptual shape of Minnesota in dark blue and the rest of the flag in light blue. The flag has a single eight-pointed star pointed north on the shape of Minnesota.

On Tuesday, the Commission voted on modifications to the original submission known as F1953. Those modifications included the symmetry of the shape of Minnesota, the direction of the eight-pointed star, and the colors.

The State Emblems Redesign Commission was established in the 2023 legislative session to develop and adopt a new design for the official state seal and a new design for the official state flag no later than January 1, 2024.

As outlined in state legislation, the Minnesota Historical Society is providing administrative support to the State Emblems Redesign Commission.



RAMSEY COUNTY BOARD APPROVES 2024-25 BUDGET

The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners unanimously approved the 2024-2025 county budget on December 12.

The county's approved budget for 2024 totals \$808,498,799 which represents a 2.9% overall budget increase from 2023. The 6.75% levy increase for 2024 was driven by a shift away from federal and state one-time resources that were available during the emergency pandemic. The approved budget for 2025 totals \$835,076,779, with an 3.3% budget increase from 2024 and a maximum 4.75% levy increase that is proposed to be reduced once estimates for future cannabis sales tax revenue can be incorporated.

The 2024 budget was mitigated by a \$6 million increase in county program aid from the State of Minnesota. This increased state aid provided a 1.76% levy decrease from initial budget planning targets and helped keep the county's long term levy growth at a more moderate level. Looking at the period of 2015-2025, the annual average levy growth to Ramsey County taxpayers was 3.3% and from 2021-2025 (COVID era) the annual average levy growth was 3.5%.

Learn more at ramseycounty.us/your-government/budget-finance

ST. PAUL EDUCATORS AND DISTRICT FILE FOR MEDIATION IN CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS

The St. Paul Federation of Educators jointly filed for mediation Friday with the St. Paul Public Schools in hopes of more quickly resolving differences in the current round of contract negotiations.

St. Paul educators have been working without a contract since July 1 and have had multiple public negotiation sessions with the district, with no agreements and few counter offers from either side.

"We feel this is the next step for us to take to get a fair contract that values and respects our work and ensures we have the schools our community deserves," said Leah VanDassor, SPFE president. "We look forward to continuing our talks with the district - with a mediator or without - and are ready to get this contract settled."

State law requires the district and unionized employees to bargain every two years. Negotiations began in May between SPFE and the district.

SPFE last went on strike in 2020. The union last took a strike vote in 2022.

ST. PAUL GRANTS OVER \$2.3 MILLION TO 41 NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESSES AND ORGANIZATIONS

More than \$2.3 million in grant funding is being invested into 41 local capital improvement projects thanks to the City of St. Paul's Neighborhood STAR program.

A mayoral-appointed board of up to 21 members - three from each of St. Paul's seven wards - reviewed applications and made funding recommendations to the Mayor and City Council prior to approval at the December 13 council meeting.

This year's Neighborhood STAR awards will leverage over \$3 million in additional capital investment in St. Paul, and will largely support small businesses or organizations, identified as having less than \$1 million in annual revenue and/or fewer than 20 employees. Two-thirds of this year's grants were awarded to organizations led or owned by minorities and over half owned or led by women.

For more than 25 years, the Neighborhood STAR program has used a portion of a half-cent sales tax for capital

improvements in St. Paul via an annual competitive grant round. This funding was authorized by the Minnesota State Legislature in May of 1993, and the St. Paul City Council officially established the STAR program in 1994, which includes support for both the Neighborhood STAR and Cultural STAR programs, which provides funding for arts and culture programs in St. Paul.

For the list of recipient, and to learn more, visit stpaul.gov/departments/planning-and-economic-development/economic-development/sales-tax-revitalization-star-0

MUSIC FESTIVAL COMING TO HARRIET ISLAND

The inaugural Minnesota Yacht Club Festival will take place at Harriet Island Regional Park, July 19-20, 2024.

The first-ever festival will bring fans together for two days of performances across two stages with no overlapping sets between the 20 artists.

In addition to the bands, the festival is planned to feature historic riverboat rides, comfortable lounges, exclusive food options, air-conditioned restrooms and more.

No bands have been announced at this time.

Learn more at minnesotayachtclubfestival.com

GRANTS HELP AGING MINNESOTANS STAY IN THEIR HOMES

Over \$9.5 million in new state grants will help aging Minnesotans stay in their homes longer through services such as caregiver support, housekeeping, retrofitting to prevent falls and other assistance.

Live Well at Home grants will go to 45 organizations to support aging Minnesotans. Research shows that people are happier and have better health outcomes when they can live in their homes longer, rather than moving into institutionalized care like nursing homes.

Among those receiving grants was Keystone Community Services for a pilot project to implement screening referrals for 600 low-income older adults in Ramsey County who rely on Keystone food assistance. Funds will help improve their nutrition, physical activity and social connection.

RESULTS OF ST. PAUL GUARANTEED INCOME PILOT SHOW INCREASED EMPLOYMENT, IMPROVED OUTLOOK

Data is in for the nation's first mayor-led guaranteed income pilot to use public dollars, and results show positive trends in employment, physical and mental health, and other indicators of well-being and quality of life.

Mayor Melvin Carter and the City of St. Paul launched the People's Prosperity Pilot in 2020 during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. It was the second-ever mayor-led guaranteed income pilot, and the first to use funding from the CARES Act, along with state and private philanthropic dollars. Results of the People's Prosperity Pilot were studied by the Center for Guaranteed Income Research (CGIR) at the University of Pennsylvania.

Researchers found that the number of people employed increased from 49% at the beginning of the pilot to 63% six months after the program ended. While actively receiving guaranteed income payments, families also maintained or improved their financial stability, allowing them to save money and smooth income volatility. There was a 7% increase in participants transitioning to better quality homes during the guaranteed income program.

Recipients showed few symptoms of anxiety or depression and had favorable levels of well-being across

the three subscales of general health, physical limits and physical functioning. When payments stopped there was a decrease in average general health. The percentage of participants reporting feelings of high hope progressively increased throughout and beyond the study from 15% at baseline to 21% at the end of the program and 22% six months after the program ended.

The research findings from St. Paul build upon the similar results from the first-ever mayor-led guaranteed income program in Stockton, CA, which provided 125 families with \$500 per month for two years. Set up as a randomized control trial, researchers found statistically significant gains in employment, financial stability, mental health and overall well-being.

Learn more and read the full report at stpaul.gov/departments/financial-empowerment/guaranteed-income#people-prosperity-pilot.



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Community Traditions

LOOKBACK

2023 in the West End



St. Francis de Sales 50th REUNION



KEYSTONE TRANSITIONS

ART CRAWLS

newest Executive Director in March. Get the whole story: communityreporter.org/tag/fort-road-federation

ART CRAWL(S) FOR ALL THIS YEAR

The St. Paul Art Crawl celebrated another year of showcasing local artists over multiple weekends. With one in the spring and one in the fall, there was art for all this year. Get the whole story: communityreporter.org/tag/st-paul-art-crawl

HAIL MARY PIERCING

Hail Mary Piercing, which opened in April, is not your stereotypical piercing shop and is aiming to change perceptions while changing customers' experience. Get the whole story: communityreporter.org/new-west-7th-piercing-shop-aims-to-change-perceptions

MOMS DEMAND ACTION

Gretchen Damon and Emily Benzie, part of Moms Demand Action, talk about sensible firearm restrictions as the group gets results in 2023. Get the whole story: communityreporter.org/demanding-sensible-action-against-gun-violence

UNITED FAMILY PHYSICIANS RESIDENCY PROGRAM

For the first time since 2019, residents with United Family Physicians were able to highlight the work they are doing in the community. Get the whole story: communityreporter.org/united-family-residents-highlight-work-in-the-community

GRAND OAK OPRY

"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 concert venue out of their, well, backyard. Get the whole story: communityreporter.org/grand-oak-opry-kicks-off-2023-season

ST. FRANCIS DE SALES 50TH REUNION

On June 3, 1973, the eighth graders at St. Francis de Sales attended the 9:30 a.m. Mass; all dressed-up and well coiffured. While most students seemed elated to be moving on to high school, they also knew they were all leaving something very special behind. Get the whole story: communityreporter.org/st-francis-de-sales-plans-50th-reunion

HOMELESS ASSISTANCE RESPONSE TEAM

The City of St. Paul has taken a unique approach to homeless encampments – meeting them where they

are to provide services and a little HART. Get the whole story: communityreporter.org/providing-services-for-the-unhoused-with-hart

2023 ELECTION WAS A BIG ONE

This year was a big one for politics in St. Paul, with a new dynamic on the city council and school board, and a new 1% sales tax coming our way. Get the whole story: communityreporter.org/tag/election-2023

ANCKER HOSPITAL RIGHT IN OUR BACKGROUND

Tim Rumsey provides us with a bit of history on what was once the regional hospital for St. Paul, right in our own backyard. Get the whole story: communityreporter.org/a-piece-of-ancker-hospital

JOSEPH'S COAT WELCOMES NEW LEADER

Joseph's Coat, a St. Paul free store, providing goods and services to people in need in an environment of dignity and respect, welcomed their new executive director, Rebecca Bedner, in September. Get the whole story: communityreporter.org/josephs-coat-welcomes-new-executive-director-rebecca-bedner

FOREPAUGH'S GET'S A NEW LEASE ON LIFE

On September 25, the HPC approved the demolition and reconstruction of the front porch of the historic Forepaugh mansion, with the restaurant reopening a possibility. Get the whole story: communityreporter.org/hpc-approves-forepaughs-porch-reconstruction

COSSETTA'S IN THE PANETTOLE WORLD CUP

In 2013, Dave Cossetta decided to add a quest to his and his team's agenda: To Master the Art of Panettone and Pan d'Oro. In 2023, they were the only U.S. based team to qualify for the Coppa del Monde in Milano, 2024. Get the whole story: communityreporter.org/cossettas-will-represent-the-us-at-the-world-cup-of-panettone-in-2024

DAY BY DAY CAFE OWNER GREG EKBOM CELEBRATES 50 YEARS OF SOBRIETY

Long-time employee at Day by Day, Saul Garcia, said wanted to mark the occasion by surprising Ekbom because he has meant so much to the recovery community, and the West 7th community, in St. Paul. He contacted the Mayor's office to have November 26, 2023 officially recognized as "Greg Ekbom Day" in the city. Get the whole story: communityreporter.org/greg-ekbom-celebrates-50-years-of-taking-it-day-by-day

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Community Nourishment

Holy buckets it is cold! Staying safe when it is freezing outside

BY MATTHEW BURGSTAHLER, MD

Being a transplant to Minnesota, I have heard the strangest sayings about the winter cold from locals such as, "could be worse," or "at least it isn't snowing" and "it wouldn't be so bad if it wasn't for the wind." I have respect for those that brave the cold winter weather and continue to stay active. Physical activity helps just about every system in our body. While it may be old hat for a lot of you, for many of us Minnesota transplants it is important to learn about cold-related emergencies and how to prevent and treat them.

"Extreme cold" in some areas of the country is right around freezing, which is often when Minnesotans think about putting away their shorts for a few months. However, when temperatures do drop significantly below normal and especially as wind speeds pick up, heat can rapidly leave your body. This extreme cold can lead to serious health problems and dangerous situations, especially for those most susceptible, such as those without shelter.

Frostbite is an injury caused by freezing and can permanently damage the body. If you notice white or grayish-yellow skin, firm or waxy skin or profound numbness do not wait—take action! Get inside. Do not walk on feet or toes that have signs of frostbite if possible. Do not rub frostbitten areas or massage. Put the areas in warm-to-the-touch water or use body heat (such as an armpit). Do not use a heating pad, heat lamp, the heat of a stove or fireplace or radiator as affected areas are often numb and can easily burn. Gradually warm the area and seek medical care if ongoing discoloration or concerns.

Another common cold weather health emergency is hypothermia. Hypothermia is a significant and potentially dangerous drop in body temperature, usually 95°F (normal being 97–99°F). This low body temperature



can occur from cold water immersion or staying out in cold environments for a prolonged time. Risk factors for hypothermia include: reduced ability to move around, low body weight and intoxication from alcohol and/or drugs. While hypothermia is most likely at very cold temperatures, it can occur even at cool temperatures (above 40°F) if a person becomes chilled from rain, sweat or submersion in cold water. If untreated, hypothermia can be deadly.

In order to be careful this winter season, please wear appropriate clothing including several layers of loose clothing. Your goal is to keep your body warm and dry. Layers provide better insulation. Consider wool, silk or polypropylene as an inner layer. Try wool, goose down or fleece as an insulation layer. As an outer layer, focus on water and wind resistance. Tight clothing is not helpful as it reduces blood



circulation. Make sure to cover and protect your ears, face and hands and wear boots that are ideally waterproof and insulated. Including a thermometer and chemical hot packs in a first aid kit is also an excellent prevention idea. When getting hot with activity, put a stop to sweating by shedding layers as sweat causes your body to lose heat faster.

Be aware of the following signs and symptoms of low body temperature while outside in the cold: shivering, confusion, feeling very tired, fumbling hands, a pale or swollen face, memory loss, slurred speech and drowsiness. Later signs include a slow heartbeat, slow, shallow breathing and going in and out of consciousness. In babies, look for bright red, cold skin and very low energy. If you notice these symptoms, in yourself, a loved one or a stranger, please seek help and work on ways to warm the person.

Get the person into a warm room or shelter. Remove any wet clothing the person is wearing. Warm the center of the person's body. Chest, neck, head, and groin. Warm drinks can help increase body temp, but do not give alcohol. Do not give beverages to an unconscious person. Once warm, keep the person dry and wrap their body, including head and neck in a warm blanket.

Please continue to get outside and move your body, but prepare for the cold! Have a plan for what you will wear and how you can get help if you are concerned about frostbite or hypothermia. Check the weather, layer and stay dry when you are outside in the cold. Hope to see you out there!

Dr. Burgstahler is a family physician at Allina Health United Family Physicians, 233 Grand Ave, St. Paul, 651-241-5200.

ABBY'S ANGLE

Making time for the to be read list

BY ABIGAIL HORTON

This month, I thought I'd try something new, an idea taken from my fellow reviewer Beatrice Cosgrove, which is what's next on my to be read list. As winter sets in, I'm looking forward to spending many cozy days with a good book. And what better way to start than with a book from my bookshelf?

First up is "Red Queen," book one in the Red Queen series by Victoria Aveyard. In a world divided by blood, red or silver, the reds being the commoners and the silver being people who possess god-like superpowers, for 17-year-old Mare Barrie, a red girl in the poverty-stricken slums, it seems like nothing will ever change. That is until she begins to work at the silver palace, she discovers a deadly power of her own. As the silvers try to hide her, they declare her a long-lost princess. Knowing one misstep could lead to her death, she works silently to help bring down the silver regime. I am excited to finally read this book in the coming months. It has been on my shelf for quite some time, but the plot seems interesting, and it has received countless positive reviews, which sets it apart from other books on my shelf.

Next is a classic, "The Hate U Give" by Angie Thomas, the first in The Hate U Give series. The story follows 16-year-old Starr Carter, who moves between two worlds, the one of her

poor neighborhood and her fancy suburban prep school. The balance between these two worlds ends when Starr witnesses the fatal shooting of her childhood best friend Khalil at the hands of a police officer. As the news breaks loose, untrue stories begin to be shared about Khalil and his death, but all everyone wants to know is what happened that night. And the only person alive is Starr. But what she does or does not say could upset her community and endanger her life. While I am ashamed to say I have not read this classic, I look forward to reading it. After reading the excerpt for this book, it seems like a greatly touching and

Good News!

Every year, we donate to a nonprofit of our choice and this year we've chosen to help provide sustenance for wolves in the Minnesota wild.

These friends of ours in turn inadvertently keep bald eagles, magpies, and deer healthy in their habitat. So hooray for that. The more you know!

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We're raising money to digitize Community Reporter's 50+ years of archives and make them freely available online.

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Community News for the Twin Cities
January 2024

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In the Community

NOTEBOOKRECOLLECTIONS

Recollection of a recollection

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. This column was previously run in the community reporter of December 2009.

BY TIM RUMSEY, MD

This January, as you read this column, Mr. Positive is oozing Christmas spirit. And his house as well.

His winter holiday lights were up before Thanksgiving. Windows are still wreathed, fences garlanded. There are red bulb ornaments on any still standing vertical vegetation.

The tale that follows is a real story. People's names have been changed. Mr. Positive is the only real person mentioned, which is interesting, because in real life he's almost too good to be true....

The day, after her white toy poodle, Cindy, died, Marcella Horak fell down her basement steps and fractured her pelvis and three lumbar vertebrae. This was May, 1985. She was 86 years old. The paramedics took her to United. It's amazing she survived.

I called her 93 year old brother, George, in California with the news. I could feel his panic, hear his fear. Marcella was his older sister, his lifetime, go-to-person.

And to top it off, he didn't think he'd be able to get back to Minnesota. Ever.

Marcella stayed a week at United and then transferred to St. Mary's Home on the far western end of 7th Street.

There was talk of never returning home again. Her house was 103 years old. She was born there. Raised a family there. Lived her

entire life there. The only bathroom was on the second floor. The stairways were steep and treacherous. The wiring and plumbing was old. The home with which she had become so intimate was now her enemy.

Her brother George called for updates every week.

Eventually, Marcella did go back home. West 7th block nurses came three times a week, she got daily Meals on Wheels. But it was nip and tuck. She spiked a fever every few days for two weeks. She ate like a hummingbird. She lost weight.

I had an otherworld experience at Marcella's on a house call the July after her fall.

I knew her well but had never been in her home.

Mr. Positive had told me that Marcella's house was Christmas all the time.

I saw it that day. The living room completely decked out. The most real fake tree I've ever seen. White-flocked. Silver-tinsiled. Red bulbs, blue lights. Santa figurines on every branch.

The music was all holiday, all the time. There were foil-wrapped boxes and snow globes on every available surface. And four different Baby Jesus crib sets.

I had been standing in the middle of a Christmas orgy. All on a sweaty, stifling, 94° July day.

Marcella was moving a little better. And she was glad to have a visitor. Then she showed me probably the only non-Christmas item in her entire house. A framed 1907 black-and-white snapshot of herself in her first communion outfit. All white. Dress, leotards, shoes, flowers. Even a white parasol. She was nine years old, standing in front of this very house, squinting into the sun. The innocence of that photo startled me, knowing what was ahead. Her mother would die five years later. Her father, one year after she married. Her husband and her two

children would all go before her. And here we were, 78 years later.

Marcella made three emergency room visits that summer for dehydration. She refused admission each time. She was given IV fluid and, at her request, sent back home.

I tried to get Marcella started on a living will, but she said her brother would know what to do.

In October she was hospitalized for pneumonia. She went into full heart-lung arrest on her third day at United. The whole resuscitation team swooped in. Two interns did CPR. Anesthesia intubated her. She was shocked three times. She got IV cardiac drugs and right into the heart cardiac drugs. Nothing worked.

I got the call at the office in the middle of the hullabaloo. I drove right over to the hospital.

Marcella's body had stopped working by the time I got there. She was in heaven. Doctors and nurses trailed out of the room.

Then it was just Marcella and me. I looked into her face. The little first communicant. Her eyes were wide open. I gently closed her lids and patted an arm. I wondered who would finally take down her Christmas decorations. I used the phone on the wall to call her brother. He asked me to describe how she looked.

I turned Marcella's way. I said she was peaceful. What I didn't say is that EKG strips flowed off her bed into piles on the floor. There were red and blue capped medication ampules and empty syringes scattered over her bed. The emergency cart had two drawers fully pulled out. And the five o'clock West 7th afternoon sun beamed through a window directly onto Marcella.

I told her brother about the light and all he said was thank you so much.

A Hmong couple with four young children moved into Marcella's house the next spring. Mr. Positive volunteered their first lawn-cutting. I'm reasonably sure Mr. P. also tried to talk them into a permanent, living room holiday display.

FEDERATION UPDATE



2ND ANNUAL HOLIDAY DECOR COMPETITION

Nominations will be accepted Dec. 11-Jan. 5. Submit a photo and address of your nomination at fortroadfederation.org via Google Form.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Transportation & Land Use Committee: Jan. 3, 6:30 p.m.
Board Meeting - Jan. 8, 7:00 p.m.
Community Engagement/Fundraising - Jan. 18, 6:30 p.m.

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.



January at the West 7th Library

By Donicia Soliz, Library Manager

At West 7th Library, 265 Oneida Street, we're offering one-to-one Tech Help on Thursdays, 2-4 p.m. where you can learn how to use your smartphone, e-reader or tablet. We can also help you set up email, format a resume and more! Drop in or call to set up an appointment.

Our popular outdoor family storytimes and playdates have moved inside for the season. Bring your kids for stories and fun every Wednesday from 10:30-11:30 a.m. or some fun with friends on Tuesdays from 3:00-5:00 p.m.



WEST 7TH PUBLIC LIBRARY, 265 Oneida St. Hours: Mon, Thu 12:30-8 pm, Tue 11:30 am-5:30 pm and Wed, Fri 10 am-5:30 pm; closed Sat-Sun.

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SEEKING PRESENTERS FOR HOME IMPROVEMENT WORKSHOP DAY IN MARCH 2024
The Macalester-Groveland Community Council, Highland District Council's Home Improvement Workshop Day returns with 45-minute to one-hour workshops. We're seeking presenters for the March 9, 2024! Info: macgrove.org/hiw. Workshop space is limited.

BULKY TRASH - 2-3 ITEMS

St. Paul residents have 2-3 bulky items (2 for small carts and 3 for medium and large carts) included in their garbage program each year. Call your hauler to schedule pick up. Details at stpaul.gov/departments/public-works/residential-garbage.

RECYCLE HOLIDAY LIGHTS

Drop off old and broken string lights and miscellaneous electrical cords to be recycled at any St. Paul Public Library now through January 22, 2024.

ADDITIONAL CARDBOARD RECYCLING

Drop off your extra cardboard 24/7 now through January 2, 2024 using the dumpsters outside the St. Paul Police Western District at 389 Hamline Ave. N. All cardboard must be flattened. Call Eureka at 651-266-7678 if you'd like to set extra cardboard next to your recycling cart.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Highland Community Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy with an online option. Zoom link and meeting agendas at highlanddistrictcouncil.org/calendar.

- HDC Board Meeting - Jan. 4, 7 p.m.
- Transportation Committee meeting - Jan. 9, 7 p.m.
- Community Development Committee meeting - Jan. 16, 6:30 p.m.

Jumpstart Your New Year's Resolutions

Are you looking to start the New Year off by moving your body? Join our programs for health, fitness and social activities for people age 55+. Learn more by calling 651-645-0349 or visiting our website at keystoneservices.org.

Foodmobile Bringing Food Shelf to the Neighborhood

Keystone's Foodmobiles (mobile food shelf) travels throughout St. Paul and the northern suburbs of Ramsey County to bring nutritious food to people in need. For more information about where our Foodmobile stops, you can visit our website at keystoneservices.org or call us at 651-645-0349.

Fare for All at West 7th Community Center

Fare for All allows you to shop for quality, nutritious foods at a discount and budget-friendly prices. All are welcome! The upcoming Fare for All events at West 7th Community Center are January 5, and February 2. The events will all run 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. For information, please visit keystoneservices.org/events

Enjoy ZOOM Social with West 7th Community Members!

Can't make it out of the house, but you still want to be social and have a good time? Join us with your beverage of choice, and let's talk and laugh. If you are interested in joining ZOOM Social, please call the West 7th Community Center at 651-645-7424.

Play Pickleball!

For people age 55+. Novice and advanced Pickleball matches are played for fun and include similar levels of play. Pickleball is offered at the Merriam Park Community Center, Monday-Thursday, from 9:15 - 11:45 a.m. The cost is \$2 per session. To get a good and enjoyable workout, please call the Merriam Park Community Center at 651-645-0349 to sign up for your first game of Pickleball!

WINTER CARNIVAL pg 1

purchased at Cub Foods, Spire Credit Union, City and County Credit Union, local retailers or online at wintercarnival.com.

Mark your calendars

The 2024 St. Paul Winter Carnival will kick off on Thursday, Jan. 25 at 5:30 p.m. with the "Light The Park" event in Rice Park. The 2023 Royal Family will lead the festivities with the telling of the Winter Carnival Legend to confirm the start of the "Festival in Old St. Paul." A Countdown to Carnival will be conducted with attendees lighting up provided glow sticks to officially start the 10-day celebration.

In addition, there are events planned throughout St. Paul for the 10 day run of the event (even a few leading up to it), including:

Jan. 25-27 - Ice Carving Competitions

Artists will carve 300-pound blocks of ice during the first weekend of Carnival in Rice Park. The multi-block teams will have 48 hours to finish their masterpieces with 20 blocks of ice. On Sunday, artists will have five hours to carve in the single block competition.

Jan. 26-February 4 - Vulcan Snow Park and Snow Sculpting Competition

The Minnesota State Snow Sculpting Competition kicks off January 26 at the Minnesota State Fair Grounds. The sculpting competition culminates with the awards announcement on Sunday, Jan. 28, with the

sculptures on display until February 4.

Jan. 27 - King Boreas Grande Day Parade

This daytime procession will feature dozens of bands, floats, and of course, the newly crowned King Boreas and his Royal Family. The parade will begin at 2 p.m. near Smith Ave., travel down West 7th Street, and conclude in Rice Park.

Feb. 3 - Vulcan Victory Torchlight Parade

Vulcanus Rex and his Krewe will bring the heat and light up the streets of downtown St. Paul. This parade starts at 5:30 p.m. at 5th and Wacouta and makes its way to Rice Park. Afterwards, follow the 2024 Krewe to the library steps for the ever-dramatic Overthrow of Boreas. The ceremony will be followed by fireworks.

New this year, for the duration of the carnival, a 120' x 50' warming tent in Rice Park will be a gathering place for Carnival goers to warm up and enjoy live entertainment and music, beverages for all ages, play bingo and pull tabs and get some Winter Carnival merchandise. Guests are encouraged to bring non-perishable food donations for Hallie Q. Brown Community Center and the Winter Carnival Day of Good.

That's not to mention the dozens of events that are on the calendar or still being planned. The majority of events are free or low cost. For the most current information, event registration and tickets (if necessary), visit wintercarnival.com.

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They're baaaaAAack! These popular gnomes are back for a third #Gnomevasion!! The Gnomes have taken over St. Paul parks and green spaces (soon-to-be snow covered spaces). The Gnomes are hidden throughout our parkland so our parks & rec crew have teamed up to help you hone in on their locations. The Gnomes are hiding in some of St. Paul's best places to take a winter hike or walk. This is a fun activity for all ages and a great opportunity to get out and about in the beautiful cold-weather season. Can you find the whole Gnome family? Learn more and find the Gnome clues at st paul.gov/news/gnome-scavenger-hunt

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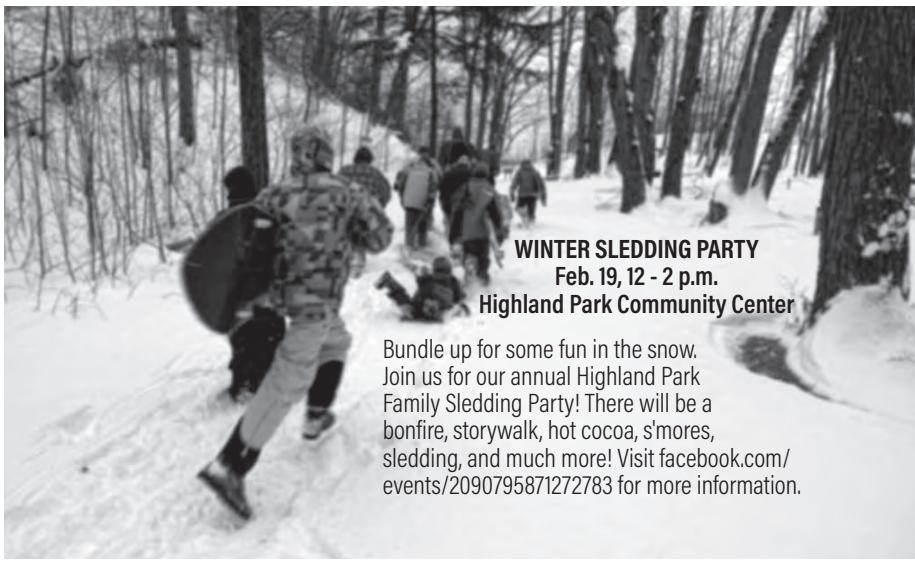
Jan. 4, 12 p.m.-1 p.m. Landmark Center. Free Hosted by composer Abbie Betinis, our popular Courtroom Concerts take place in the Landmark Center in downtown St. Paul. This series features accomplished musicians and composers from the Twin Cities and surrounding area, as well as occasional musical newcomers to the area. Free and open to the public. Learn more at schubert.org/event/free-courtroom-concert-artaria-string-quartet-2/.

MUSIC UNDER GLASS

Sundays and Wednesdays through Feb. 7, Como Conservatory, Free. Join us in the tropical gardens and beat the "winter-blahs" as live, local musicians play blues, bluegrass and ballads from 4:30-6:30pm on select Sundays and Wednesdays. Free concert. Beer and wine available to purchase. No reservations required. Standing room only. Visit comozooconservatory.org/como/winter-music-series/

Minnesota Boychoir Concert

Jan. 7, 1 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. Landmark Center. Free. Members of the Minnesota Boychoir perform their annual Winter Concert. Learn more at



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