

Community REPORTER

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



IN THIS ISSUE

Community News • Pg 3
Healthline • Pg 5
Notebook Recollections • Pg 6
Federation Update • Pg 6
Highland Update • Pg 6
Keystone Update • Pg 6
Library Update • Pg 6
Bulletin Board • Pg 7

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CIRCULATION 13,000

DISTRICT PERSPECTIVE

What I'm Excited About in 2025



REBECCA NOECKER
CITY COUNCIL
MEMBER, WARD 2
columnist

I love the freshness of a new year. It gives you a chance to take stock, recommit to priorities and get excited about new projects. In 2025, the prospects for our neighborhood feel particularly bright. Here are a few I'm especially excited to work on.

Riverview Corridor

Like many of you, I was deeply disappointed when the Riverview Corridor project was suddenly ended last year. Regardless of our views on the right mode of transit, we know West 7th Street is desperately in need of street repair and redesign to ensure pedestrian and bike safety, transit efficiency and a pleasant walking experience. What's been especially frustrating about the drawn-out Riverview process was the fact that those adjacent improvements have all had to wait while the new transit corridor was being designed. Now that the first process has ended, I'm committed to moving forward with a greater sense of urgency. City staff have been meeting with our partners at MnDOT, the Metropolitan Council and Ramsey County to develop an alternative proposal that can be released for public input early this year and I look forward to working with you to get this done.

Tree Preservation

A climate-resilient St. Paul is a green St. Paul. Our urban tree canopy staves off global warming and reduces the urban heat island that disproportionately affects low-income neighborhoods. However, as the gaping tree holes along West 7th remind us, we can do more to prioritize tree planting and maintenance along our major roadways. I've introduced an ordinance that will require the preservation of trees whenever the City contributes to construction or maintenance work on any public right-of-way in St. Paul. The ordinance stipulates that trees need to be retained, replanted in place if they can't be retained or replanted elsewhere in the city as a last resort. As we move more quickly toward an improved West 7th Street, trees need to be in the picture and I'm hopeful that this ordinance will ensure that they're given the priority they deserve.

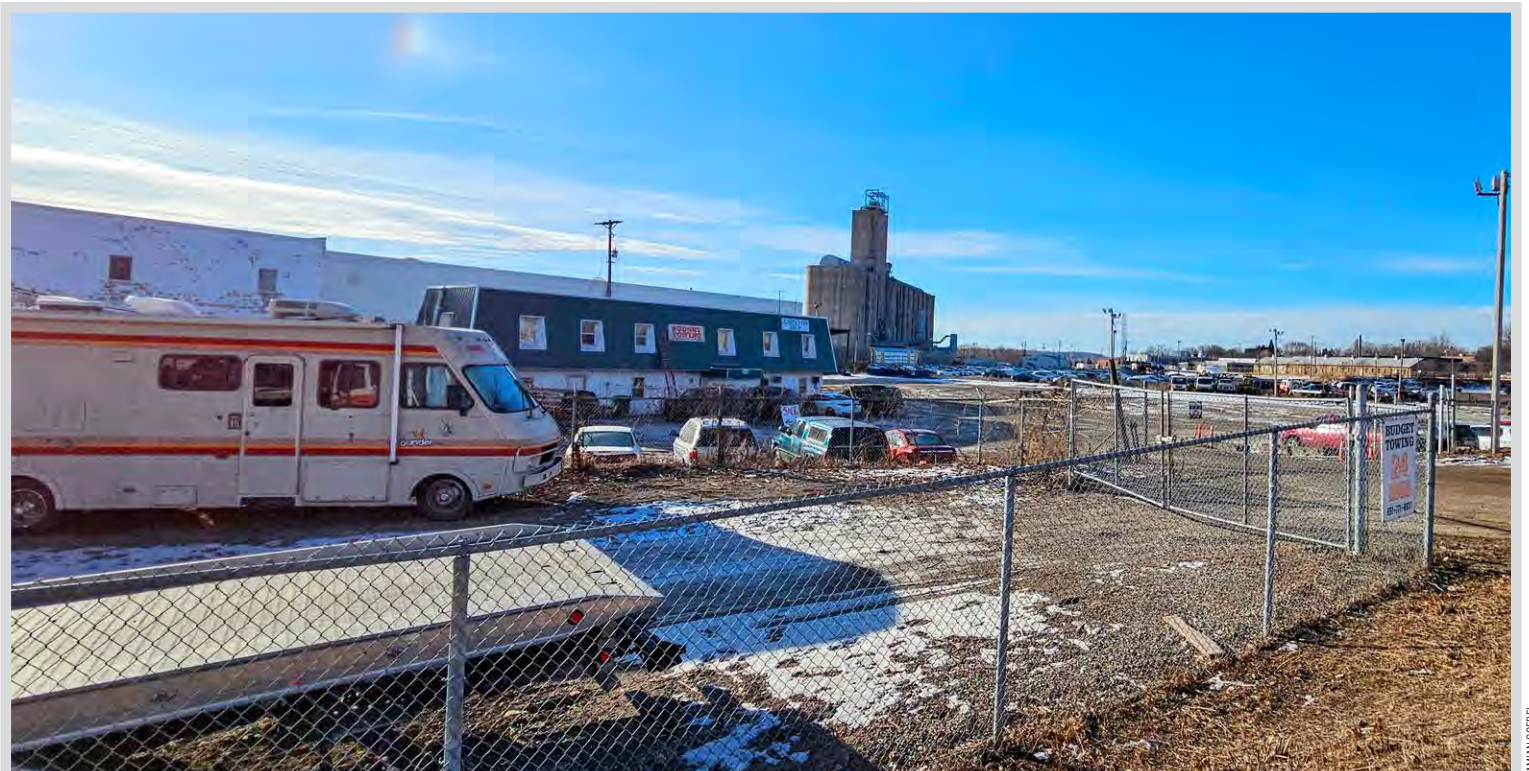
Revitalizing Commercial Corridors

The pandemic may be in the rearview mirror, but the local businesses we depend on – our coffee shops, bars, bike stores and barbers – are still having a hard time. Last year, the Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) created a new fund to support small businesses along our commercial corridors. The \$1.4 million fund will be distributed to business organizations or District Councils doing work to support neighborhood main streets. The funds can be used for events, marketing, signage, art, greenery and more. Unlike our Neighborhood STAR program, which can be cumbersome and which typically goes to individual businesses for specific projects, these funds will be easier to access and will encourage activities that support entire commercial corridors. I'm excited to roll this fund out in the first quarter of the year so our neighborhoods can start putting the dollars to work.

The Walnut Street Stairs

The longest outdoor stairwell in St. Paul

NEW PROJECTS, PG 2



560 Randolph Ave., currently used as a tow yard, is planned to be converted to a garbage truck depot and refueling station by FCC Environmental.

West 7th Neighbors Oppose New Garbage Truck Depot

BY DAMIAN GOEBEL

The facility on Randolph near West 7th runs afoul of long-standing city plans, according to the West 7th/Fort Road Federation.



West End residents are pushing back on a proposed plan that would see garbage trucks rolling through the heart of the neighborhood on a regular basis.

On January 21, the Fort Road Federation made an appeal to the St. Paul Zoning Commission about a proposed plan for a garbage truck depot to be built at 560 Randolph Avenue.

The five-acre site, along with the adjacent

540 Randolph Ave., was purchased by FCC Environmental, the City of St. Paul's new garbage hauler, last year with the intent of being their primary storage and refueling facility.

FCC plans a \$25 million investment of the site to house their 30 initial garbage trucks, which could increase to as many as 80, a dispatch facility and a compressed natural gas fueling station.

Not so fast though, say the West 7th/Fort Road Federation. According to their appeal to the zoning commission, long-range plans conflict with current zoning of the site, which has long been a part of the City's plan to build new housing and connections to the river.

In addition to finding the proposed use of the site to be in conflict with long-standing plans, the Federation has also expressed concerns about noise, air pollution, increased traffic, and threats to the Mississippi River corridor.

According to Meg Duhr, President of

Rally Against Garbage Depot

Feb. 6, 4:30 p.m. Schmidt Artists Loft

The West 7th/Fort Road Federation will host a rally in opposition of the project. Info: fortroadfed.org/fcc-trash-truck-site.

the West 7th/Fort Road Federation, FCC purchased the site in August of 2024 for \$4.65 million in an off-market sale.

"We do not know if other industrial sites in the city were considered," Duhr said in an email. "During the Dec. 4th meeting, an FCC representative claimed that other sites were explored but nothing else 'was on the market.' We now know that the 560 Randolph site was not on the market either."

The site had previously been sold in 2021 to a

GARBAGE DEPOT, PG 3

COMMUNITYHAPPENING

All Aboard: Brake Bread Adds a Unique Gathering Space

BY ABIGAIL HORTON

In late August, the owners of Brake Bread, a local bakery located at 1174 West 7th, struggling with limited seating and wanting a space for customers to connect with one another, made a purchase they thought could help solve their problems: a bus.

"The idea of the bus," explains Nate Houge, manager and co-owner of Brake Bread, "was that we just don't have any indoor seating anymore. We did before COVID, and then we ran out of space during COVID, and as production grew, we took over the lobby area. And then, when we opened up the walk up window, we still needed all the space we could get."

The first ideas, however, were something much different from a bus. "We reached out to a couple people that do awnings and vestibules," Houge continued, "but it was very expensive, and then, because it's on the sidewalk, you have to make sure that it meets city requirements, and there were lots of little details surrounding that which we just didn't have the money for." This led them to begin to look for a more mobile and affordable solution.

Houge's inspiration for using a bus for seating came from a visit to his oldest child in college a few years back. He recalled, "There's a drive-in there called Lucky's, and they have an old, '50s city bus that they turned into seating."

This set off the idea, and he began searching for suitable buses, finding two



initial options. However, he added, "One of them didn't run, and the other one had some other things going on with it."

During a Wednesday meeting with his co-owner, Micah Taylor, they were reviewing these two buses when a third option popped up. Houge explained, "My co-owner, Micah Taylor, checks in on Wednesdays. We had a meeting and I was like, these are the two buses I'm looking at. And pulled them up. And then this one," referring to the bus we were currently sitting in,

BRAKE BREAD, PG 2

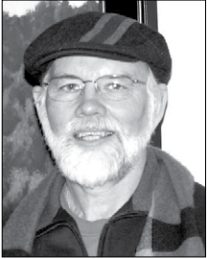
Brake Bread repurposed an old schoolbus as their new outdoor seating space. Brake Bread co-owner Nate Houge said "I think it's really important to create places where people can connect human to human because I think there's already lots of places where we can connect with our screens."





BUILDING COMMUNITY

Make Snow Where You Can



TIM JOHNSON
columnist

The winter landscape for the beginning of 2025, much like the winter landscape for virtually all of 2024, is bleak and barren. At best, there has been a light covering of snow, like a single bed sheet offered up as a replacement for a nice warm and thick comforter. Pull a comforter up around your head at bedtime and you know you are in for a pleasant, warm

winter’s sleep in a way that a single bed sheet can never provide. Look out your window at a thick blanket of snow and the possibilities for enjoying winter are endless. A slight covering is like a mocking annoyance, teasing you with the reminder of what might be if only there was enough snow. For my wife and me, an outdoor activity that makes winter more than a season of endurance is cross-country skiing. The thin bed sheet covering the ground in early January only evokes sad memories of better days on freshly groomed

trails. A challenge now faced by many of us seriously disappointed in the past election is the feeling we are facing a long season of endurance. The promise of our nation’s first female President who is also a woman of color has been replaced with the barren landscape of a person whose misogyny is often worn as a badge of honor. On the record for both verbally and physically assaulting women, promising to “protect women whether they like it or not” are all part of the litany that turn this election outcome into a season of endurance. Addressing the very real problem of immigration by instigating fear and hatred toward Haitians as pet eaters, while promising to put in confinement camps millions of people who live among us fosters a despairing spirit of endurance. Denying the reality of climate change, while falsely laying the blame for explosive California fires on efforts at inclusion and diversity for first responders, creates longing for a warm thick comforter to pull over one’s head. Yet, like with winter in Minnesota, the season framed by Presidential elections is too long to simply endure. In spite of the bleakness and bareness of this

landscape, there must be a better way than grinding it out in despair and resignation with the faint hope that someday a new season will come. It was the second week of January that my wife and I ventured over to St. Paul’s Battle Creek Regional Park with our cross country skis. Frequently after a fresh snowfall we enjoy heading down to Crosby Farm and the beautiful trails that take one through the woods and along the Mississippi River. But, Crosby like most other parks in the Metro area had little more than a light covering, nowhere near what is needed for skiing. Fortunately in 2024, the Metropolitan Council, Ramsey County and the City of St. Paul had joined forces to employ snow making machines at Battle Creek. Thanks to this freshly made snow, we were able to join many others, young and old, enjoying winter and an activity that makes this season much more than something to merely endure. The question those of who hoped for a different outcome in this past election might be asking is, what for us is the equivalent of a snow making machine? Even if much of the landscape around us looks bleak and barren, where can we invest ourselves, our time,

our energy and resources to create spaces and places that make the next four years a season that is filled with meaning and joy? Snow making takes different shapes for different people. We can fill the bareness by being more intentional about time with family and friends, or volunteering in our neighborhood, congregations, community serving organizations like the *Community Reporter* and District Council, or by making our voice known to elected leaders through letters and phone calls. We create snow by simply resisting the tendency to treat one another as commodities in a transactional culture, but instead insisting all our interactions from the grocery store to the neighbor next door are informed by a spirit of kindness and generosity. Each of us can decide what shape and form our snow making machine will take. Trying to endure a winter that begins in early November and can last through all of March into early April is likely to turn one into a complaining grouch. It is no way to live. The same holds true for the season of national elections. A better option, a healthier option, an option that goes beyond mere endurance is to make snow where you can.

COMMUNITYHAPPENING

More on Plastic Garbage and Recycling

In part seven of her series on plastics, Julie Borgerding July explains how we can reduce our plastic waste and some alternatives we can explore.

BY JULIE BORGERDING JULY

Plastic garbage, a lot of which could be recycled, is visible every single day. When I’m on a walk the items I see most are plastic bags, broken plastic cups, flattened plastic water bottles and straws, which become trash. Eventually it breaks down into tiny pieces either by lawnmowers or by the wind and sun and gets blown into the nearby dirt or gets washed into the sewer by rain, or blown around in the air. Plastic collected by garbage companies gets either incinerated causing air pollution or brought to landfills causing plastic chemical leaching.

Become involved in the reduction part of “reduce, reuse, recycle”.

While it is hard to avoid, we can all make drastic reductions in the amount of plastics making their way to landfills by being more selective at the store. One suggestion is to avoid buying #6 plastic cups and plates. While you can wash and reuse them a few times, they are not recyclable and become trash. Most Solo and Hefty cups are #6. If you have plastic, reuse it by refilling at stores like The Evergreen Collective on Grand Ave. You can refill liquid soaps and shampoos. Reuse plastic containers for



leftovers at restaurants or bring metal or glass containers. A lot of us reuse plastic bags, but as much as possible don’t take plastic bags at stores. Most get thrown away. Switch to biodegradable cups, bowls, utensils and bags to replace regular plastic zip lock bags. Bags used for composting food waste are relatively new. John Exner, a Dakota county environmental specialist, told me that unless the bioplastic item has the BPI (Biodegradable Products Institute) logo on it, it cannot be put into organics recycling and it becomes trash.

Merrick Inc. in Vadnais Heights does plastic bag recycling. They accept all colors of the following materials (labels are OK): pallet wrap & stretch film, case overwrap, product wrap, garbage bags/liners, toilet paper/paper towel/water bottle wrapping, salt bags, ice bags, non-paper bubble mailers & other plastic mailers, grocery/retail bags, Ziploc & other re-sealable food storage bags, bread bags, cereal/pasta bags, dry cleaning bags, newspaper sleeves, produce bags, but not the crinkly kind with holes, carpet overwrap, furniture foam wrap, heat sheets, mattress bags, wood pellet bags, bubble wrap and plastic bags marked with #2 or #4 recycle symbols. You can drop off some of these items at a variety of places around town, including Hampden Park Co-op, Hudson Grocery Co-op, Kowalski’s Market, River Market Co-op, Seward Co-op-Franklin and the Wedge Co-op. Make sure you check at the drop off site first, they may limit what they accept. Producers of plastic packaging and products will continue to produce and use it if we don’t say anything and continue to buy all the stuff that comes in plastic. We can write to companies (contact info or a website is often printed on packaging), change our plastic buying or both. In 2024 the Minnesota legislature passed a law stating that starting in 2029 producers of plastic packaging must pay for that plastic disposal or recycling. I just read that in France and Germany, Nestle is testing reusable, returnable, stainless steel containers for some products to decrease use of plastic. Do what you are able. Get educated on what you can truly recycle. Go to <https://eurekarecycling.org/what-can-i-recycle>.

NEW PROJECTS, PG 1

has been closed since fall 2020 and it’s sorely missed. I hear regularly from constituents who relied on the stairs for exercise and for a convenient way to move between Summit Avenue and West 7th. The \$9 million price tag to restore the stairway is daunting, but it represents a key opportunity for partnership. I’m grateful to Rethos, a nonprofit historic preservation organization, the St. Paul Parks Conservancy and the West 7th/ Fort Road Federation for coming together with the City to tackle this challenge. I especially love that we’re starting with storytelling – digging into our own history and telling the stories of those living both at the top and the bottom of the stairs over the decades. Collecting stories not only builds a case for the financial investment we need to restore the stairs, but it also builds our own sense of connection with one another and with our history. If you’re interested in learning more or joining the advisory committee, visit www.rethos.org. Taken together, these projects are a microcosm of what makes our neighborhood a wonderful place today and what can make it even better in the future: a bustling commercial main street, good transit options, safe and pleasant biking and walking, trees and greenery, well-maintained public infrastructure and a strong sense of our own history. I’m looking forward to the work ahead together.

BRAKE BREAD, PG 1

“was on there as a third bus.” Ultimately, the deciding factor was the price. Houge stated, “The other buses were \$3-4,000 each, and this one was \$1,500 and was in our price range.” That same day, Houge emailed the owner, who allowed them to buy the bus. The following day, Houge, Taylor, and their friend Jason, who all perform together in a band, had a show in Northfield, Minnesota. After the gig on Friday morning, they began their drive to Madison, Wisconsin to pick up the bus before driving it back through Wisconsin and into Minnesota. “We parked it here and then had to gut the whole thing,” Houge explains, describing the initial stages of renovating the bus. “All the seats came out, all the floors came out. Everything was bolted down and rusty, and then all the cushions came off, because those had rotted.” The renovation process involved repurposed materials coming from the community. However, they have added new pieces as well, such as heaters and a solar panel that will eventually power them. Other projects Houge tells me include “cleaning up the wiring, getting this table in,” pointing to the table on the floor in front of us, “which isn’t in right now, because that’s where all the heater work is going on, and then just cleaning it up.” Though currently not open to customers, the bus has already hosted an event – a graduation party for a student worker. “We had everything ready, everyone came on, and then we took some things apart, so it’s kind of a work in progress. And I think it always will be,” states Houge. The plan is to open the bus a few days a



week during the winter, initially on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, creating a space for people to connect with one another. “The hope is that it’s for people to gather, not to work, which is why I’m avoiding opening it up on Wednesdays and Thursdays for now. I think it’s really important to create places where people can connect human to human because I think there’s already lots of places where we can connect with our screens,”

Houge emphasizes. The bus will continue to change as people come and interact with it, and the owners are open to ideas of what the community would like to see from it. IF YOU GO *BRAKE BREAD* is open Wednesday-Sunday, 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. See their menu and more at brakebread.com.

Community News & Events

Ward 4 Councilmember, Council President Mitra Jalali Announces Retirement

Council President Mirta Jalali announced on social media January 24 that she would be retiring her post on the City Council effective February 5. She said in her statement that she would be leaving to focus on her health.

“Being an elected official is a privilege. It also carries human costs that are far less visible than the role you are elected to. It is not an easy job, and if you are doing it well, it shouldn’t be. But when your body is telling you that you shouldn’t be in the place that you come to work everyday, it knows something that you have to listen to,” Jalali said.

Jalali was first elected in 2018 in a special election after former Councilmember Russ Stark left his position for a job in Mayor Carter’s administration. Last year, she was part of a historic cohort of elected officials in St. Paul, the first all women and majority people of color council the city has even had.

She was elected as Council President in 2024 to lead the historic group.

Jalali said she will be taking a leave of absence beginning on February 5 while she transitions out of her role.

On January 28, the City Council elected Ward 2 Councilmember Rebecca Noecker to replace Jalali as President. They will appoint an interim member in Ward 4 until a special election can be held later this year.



Mitral Jalali

CITY COUNCIL TO BEGIN ASSESSING ADMINISTRATIVE FINES

The St. Paul City Council voted last month to allow a change to the city charter to give the council the authority to assess administrative fines for infractions to city ordinances.

St. Paul was the only major city in Minnesota without the power to administer fines, which, advocates said, limited their ability to enforce those breaking the law.

The change to the city charter allows the City to fine rule breakers without seeking criminal charges.

“Many of you have contacted me in frustration about powerful players getting away with illegal behavior – from downtown building owners locking skyway doors to large corporations denying their employees the wages they’ve earned,” Said Ward 2 Councilmember Rebecca Noecker on social media. “Until now, we haven’t had an effective way to hold those actors accountable. That all changed last night when the City Council unanimously approved a charter change that will allow us to impose administrative citations.”

Additionally, Councilmembers voted to approve the creation of a task force to study how the new rules affect equity in the city. The task force will study the action of the council over the next year to ensure the new fine structure does not disproportionately impact low-income residents and people of color.

The ordinance allows the Council to assess fines, but they must be considered and passed individually by the council. The new ordinance goes into effect in 90 days.

GROUP COLLABORATING TO REOPEN HISTORIC WALNUT STREET STAIRWAY

Rethos, the St. Paul Parks Conservancy, and the West 7th/Fort Road Federation, in collaboration with the City of St. Paul, are embarking on a fundraising campaign to repair and reopen the historic Walnut Street Stairway. This initiative aims to reconnect St. Paul’s neighborhoods, restore a vital piece of the city’s infrastructure, and celebrate the diverse stories of communities connected by the steps.

FOR MORE COMMUNITY NEWS, VISIT
COMMUNITYREPORTER.ORG/CATEGORY/NEIGHBORHOOD-NEWS

The Walnut Street Stairway, connecting Summit Avenue near the James J. Hill House to Irvine Avenue below, has historically served as a vital passage through St. Paul’s landscape. However, the stairway’s closure due to wear and environmental factors has left a gap in the city’s connectivity.

Learn more, and apply to be on the committee: rethos.org.

SCHOOL BOARD SHIFTS ELECTIONS

The St. Paul Board of Education voted to shift their elections to even years to align with new rules for City Council and Mayoral elections in St. Paul.

On November 5, St. Paul voters approved a shift in city elections for Mayor and City Council from odd to even years. On December 3, the School Board voted 6-1 to move their elections to even years in line with city elections. As part of the resolution, the 2025 election was cancelled and current Board members’ terms will be extended by one year. The next school board race will occur in November 2026.

PUBLIC WORKS TO TEST ONE-SIDED WINTER PARKING

St. Paul Public Works will begin testing new winter parking rules on February 2 in Highland Park and Payne-Phalen. In Highland Park, the pilot area is bounded by Fairview Avenue, Ford Parkway, Snelling Avenue and Montreal Avenue.

The new rules allow for cars to be parked on one side of the street for one week, then switch sides for the following week. The pilot will be in effect until April 12.

During the pilot, Public Works crews will be treating and plowing all streets in the pilot area for any winter weather related event. Streets outside of the pilot areas will still follow existing rules for snowfalls and, especially, snow emergencies.

On-street parking in the pilot areas will alternate weekly between the even and odd numbered sides of

the streets. Parking is permitted on both sides of the streets on Sundays between 3-9 p.m. when people should be moving vehicles to the other side of the street where permitted.

City crews will be ticketing and towing vehicles that are not parked according to the alternating one-sided parking rules beginning February 17. They will be issuing warnings during the “education phase” of the pilot from February 2-16.

The test is being put into effect after the record-setting snow season of 2022-23 left crews unable to keep streets safely clear of snow.

Find more information, including interactive maps and schedules, at STPaul.gov/NewSnow.

MINNESOTA AUTHOR WRITES NEW NOVEL WITH A WEST 7TH SETTING

Pete Gallagher, a West End native and now a Shoreview resident, recently released his new novel “Backwashed.”

The novel is a murder mystery set in contemporary West 7th St. Gallagher says it is a story of damaged people finding each other.

Gallagher, who is originally from the West 7th area, retired from the City of St. Paul after thirty-four years, most spent in the engineering sector as a technician and supervisor. He grew up on Clifton Street and is an old St. James School and Monroe High alum.

“My efforts in writing fiction have always centered on the ambient attitude of my old St. Paul neighborhood, and populating the place with characters who have evolved from within that collective energy,” Gallagher said.

“Backwashed is available through retail booksellers, at ItascaBooks.com, online through Barnes & Noble and Amazon or by request from public libraries.

a public hearing.

FCC’s service in St. Paul is planned to begin in April.

GARBAGE DEPOT, PG 1

developer called Optimistic Partners with the intent of building mixed-use housing. Those plans were put on hold by the developer in 2022, along with many other proposed housing projects in the city, when the City Council passed a rent control measure.

The site has been used by a towing company for the past few years prior to the sale.

FCC Environmental was awarded the City of St. Paul’s trash collection contract last spring, replacing the multiple carriers

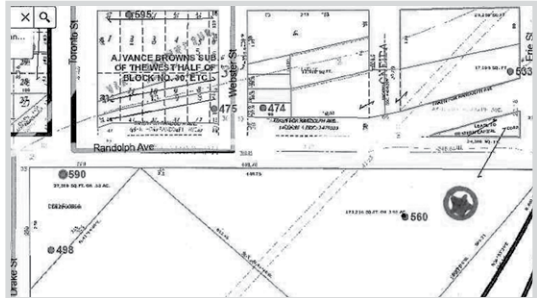
serving the city in the first iteration of City’s garbage collection contract. They will provide garbage collection service to 90% of the city’s 1-4 unit housing, including residential trash, bulky items and yard waste.

A global company based in Spain, the proposed depot is a major piece of FCC’s expansion to St. Paul.

The site is currently zoned for light industrial uses, which FCC contends their depot and refueling station falls within the definition of.

However, according to the federation, the current zoning conflicts with over 20 years of city planning, including the City’s 2040 Comprehensive Plan, which calls for the parcel to be rezoned for mixed-use development, and every version of the Great River Passage Plan, which calls for “river-oriented redevelopment opportunities.”

The West 7th / Fort Road Federation is awaiting word on their appeal, including if they will be given



Current zoning of 560 Randolph Avenue.



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Community Traditions

Winter Carnival Kicks Off With Grande Day Parade

The Winter Carnival Grande Day Parade was held January 25 on Grand Avenue this year for the first time in the 139 year history of the celebration.

The kick-off of the “Coolest Celebration on Earth” has historically been held downtown and along West 7th St. in St. Paul.

The Grand Avenue Business Association (GABA) partnered with Winter Carnival planners to bring the parade to Grand as a way to continue their efforts to reinvigorate the avenue, according to past GABA President Chris Jensen.

Check out more images of the event at communityreporter.org/grandedayparade.



Artist Heather Friedli, who owns Friedli Gallery at 934 West 7th, designed this year's Winter Carnival buttons.



The year's Winter Carnival royalty waves to the crowds on Grand Avenue during the Grande Day Parade on January 25.



Floats in this year's St. Paul Winter Carnival Grande Day Parade.



The 139th Annual St. Paul Winter Carnival Grande Day Parade took place January 25 along Grand Avenue this year.

Community Nourishment

Twin Cities Record Show Stops at Summit Brewing

On February 15, The Twin Cities Record Show will take place at Summit Brewing Company, 910 Montreal Circle, in the Ratskeller from 12:00-4:00 p.m. Featuring a variety of LP and 45 RPM records, CD's and other music memorabilia for sale, the event will have free admission and anyone is welcome to attend.

"It's going to be similar to a trade show," explains event manager Tim Schloe "Vendors will be set up outside the Ratskeller, and then people will be able to eat and drink in the center of the room." Schloe adds, "People can expect to find anything from blues to jazz to country, to classic rock to even more current releases," Schloe adds, "Our vendors carry a little bit of everything, and then we've got some vendors that specialize in certain areas and cover most genres of music you can think of."

Schloe, who has been collecting records for years, has extensive experience with record shows. "I've been putting on record shows for over 20 years and I started buying and selling records before that," he says, "And I was collecting records and I finally reached the point where I went, well, these are the records that I want. What do I do with the records that I don't want? And then that's when I discovered records shows and spent some time doing those as a vendor and getting an understanding of how the shows work and how they are structured."

Through visiting shows, Schloe got to know many of the vendors, many of whom will also



Tim Schloe operates Twin Cities Record Show events, which is visiting Summit Brewing on February 15.

be selling their wares at some of the 10 the upcoming events he is hosting.

Schloe first got involved in music at an early age. "I've been collecting music ever since I was able to talk," he recalls, "My parents would take me to the mall to find music, since the nearest store was far from where we lived." As he got older, he began to listen to music on the radio and then started collecting records.

Today, he collects mostly British '80s and '90s independent band records. He is excited for the upcoming show and to get music into



the hands of new people.

For those who might need cash, an ATM will be available on-site, and most vendors will accept debit and credit cards.

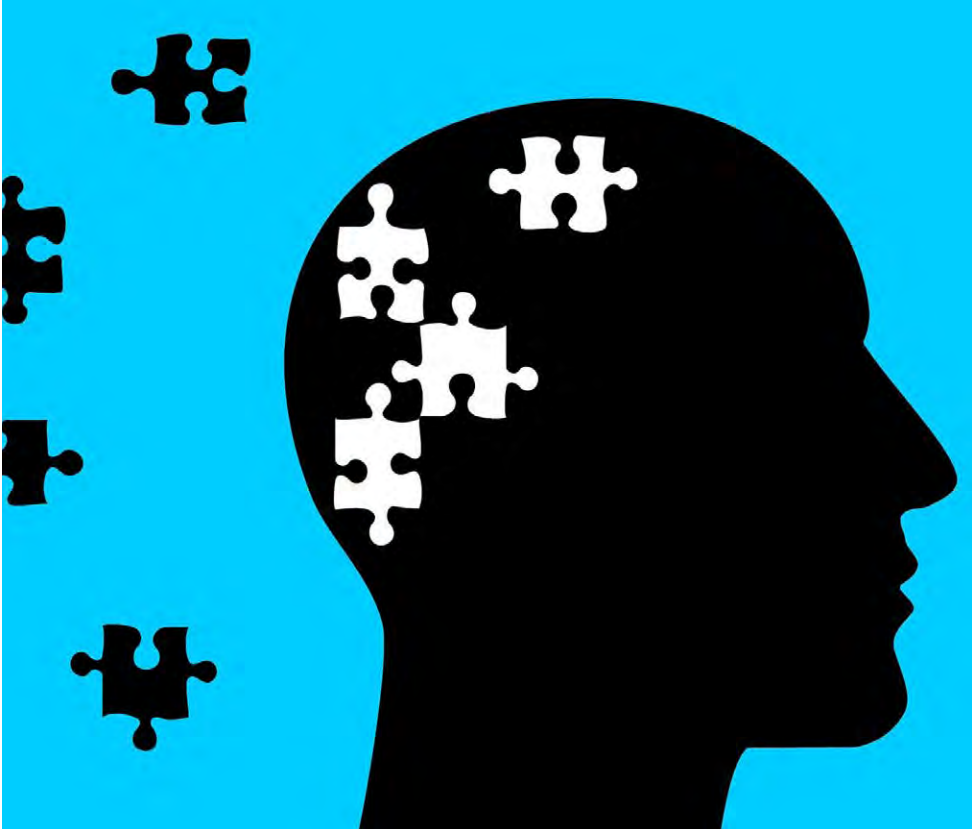
Schloe encourages anyone who wants to get rid of records or CD's to bring them to the show. "If people have records or CDs that they want to get rid of, they can always get in touch with me and bring them to the show," Schloe emphasizes, "I'm happy to look at them. Part of why I do this is to really get music that people may have tucked away back out into people's hands."

For more information about the Twin Cities Record Show, contact Tim Schloe at twin-citiesrecordshow@gmail.com or visit www.twincitiesrecordshow.com.

IF YOU GO
TWIN CITIES RECORD SHOW. Feb. 15, 12:00-4:00 p.m. Summit Brewing Ratskeller. Free Admission.

HEALTHLINE

Risk Factors for Dementia: Steps You Can Take Today



BY MORGAN ZANDER, M.D.

While age and genetics are major risk factors for dementia, there are many things you can do to reduce your risk or delay onset. The 2017 Lancet Commission on dementia identified 12 modifiable risk factors for dementia: high blood pressure, hearing impairment, smoking, obesity, depression, physical inactivity, diabetes, social isolation, excessive alcohol use, traumatic brain injury, less education and air pollution. The good news is that all these factors can be improved, and every little bit helps! Here are some steps you can take to protect your brain health.

Prioritize Cardiovascular Health

Conditions like high blood pressure, diabetes and high cholesterol can increase your risk of dementia by damaging small blood vessels in the brain. To protect your cardiovascular health:

- Stay active: Try to get 150 minutes of moderate aerobic exercise per week like brisk walking, cycling or swimming.
- Adopt a heart-healthy diet: The Mediterranean diet has been associated with a lower risk of cognitive decline. It stresses plant-based foods and healthy fats (fats that are liquid at room temperature)

- Manage chronic conditions: Work with your primary care physician to keep blood pressure, blood sugar and cholesterol levels under control.
- Keep Your Mind Engaged**
- Lifelong learning and socialization are great ways to keep your brain healthy. The brain benefits from activities that challenge it, such as:
- Learning a new skill or musical instrument.
 - Challenging the mind-body connection, like learning a new dance or yoga.
 - Staying in touch with friends and family, or joining a group activity.
- Prioritize Quality Sleep**
- Sleep plays a critical role in brain health. During deep sleep, the brain clears toxins, like beta-amyloid, a protein associated with Alzheimer's disease. Poor sleep or conditions like sleep apnea can increase your risk of cognitive decline. To optimize your sleep:
- Aim for 7-9 hours of sleep per night.
 - Maintain a sleep schedule, even on weekends.
 - Minimize distractions in your bedroom, especially cell phones.

- Quit Smoking and Limit Alcohol**
- The single greatest thing you can do for your health and longevity is to cut back on smoking. Smoking increases inflammation and damages small blood vessels throughout the body, including the brain.
- If you smoke, consider seeking support to quit (schedule an appointment with your PCP, call 1-800-QUIT-NOW)
 - Limit alcohol to no more than one drink per day for women and two for men.
- Address Stress and Mental Health**
- Chronic stress and untreated depression or anxiety can impact memory and cognition. To mitigate these effects:
- Seek help if you experience symptoms of depression or anxiety.
 - Experiment with mindfulness and meditation in whatever way works for you
 - Reconnect with old hobbies or a trusted friend
- Get Regular Check-Ups**
- Regular health screenings can identify and address risk factors. Early intervention can make a meaningful difference.
- The Takeaway**
- Small, consistent changes today can pay off big in the long run. Every little change makes a difference!

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

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In the Community

NOTEBOOK RECOLLECTIONS

The Last Time I Saw Mr. Positive

BY TIM RUMSEY

The last time I saw Carl Bentson, he was laying on his back on his front steps. Eyes closed, glassy, kitty-wampus. His head on the lowest step.

Carl's best friend, Karen Koeppel, called me down to his house.

"I think Carl's gone! 911 and the police are here now."

I zipped down.

Karen had taken Carl to his 19th chemo session at Regions.

"It went well," Karen said. "Carl had two sweet rolls after his treatment."

Karen drove him back to his St. Clair house and watched him walk up his front steps and put his key in the slot.

"All of a sudden, Carl slumped to the top step, keeled over backwards and slid down the stairs."

The paramedics did their best. Electro-shock, airway support, chest compression. IV. Adrenaline.

"We lost our angel on earth," Karen said to me as she put a red and brown car blanket over him.

I will admit, I cried at that moment.

"He was heaven sent, but heaven put out a recall," Karen said.

How could this be? Carl gone? Mr. Positive bit the dust? Sure, he had the bad esophageal cancer but, Carl himself said he was going to live another 20 to 30 years.

I had lunch with him two weeks previous. As he ordered a piece of pumpkin pie with extra whipped cream, he said before you go in the box, you've got to enjoy life.

I patted Carl on his shoulder and teared up again. Mr. Positive cheerleader and lightning bug of West 7th.

Back on the sidewalk, Karen said maybe



Carl Bentson

she'd have Carl's memorial at the Chezh hall with nicer weather. Spring. Dave Thune's band could play and Pat Mancini's band and my brother's band.

Karen said "I will do Carl's obit with his friend, Bill Quinn. He'll go to the same cemetery as his grandma, Vashti."

Then there were the two adult tricycles, three lawn mowers and two snowblowers.

"School," Karen said. "Carl's beloved Bridgeview would welcome his machines."

West 7th's artist extraordinaire, Stewart Loughrey had done Carl's portrait in Waldeman's two months previous. John Yust had me bring Carl and pick him up an hour and a half later.

Oh my good Lord! Carl is gone.

We will never hear his snowblower or

lawn mowers ever again. Never see his year-round holiday lights or see the likes of him again.

We're all frigged now!

Or maybe not.

He had prepared us to be better citizens. Better human beings who watched out for each other, worried about each other.

Friend, Bret Byefield says Carl will never be forgotten. Never be replaced. He left us with his invitation to be a better friend and neighbor.

Carl's last snowman was put up by his neighbors the day after he passed.

The last time I saw Carl Bentson he was lying on his front steps. The lights were out. The machines were still. But his goodness and grace will never leave us.

Celebrate African Americans and Labor with St. Paul Public Library

This February, St. Paul Public Library invites the community to honor Black History Month with a signature event, "Doc-N-Dine & Discuss Family Affair," on Thursday, February 20. From 5:00 to 7:30 p.m. at the Arlington Hills Recreation Center, attendees will enjoy a unique evening blending food, film and conversation.

Designed by and for the Black/African American community, this event celebrates the national 2025 Black History Month theme: "African Americans and Labor". This intergenerational program includes a family-friendly dinner, thought-provoking discussions and creative activities aimed

at fostering connection and reflection. The event will also feature a screening of a portion of the documentary She Did That, which highlights the accomplishments of African American women entrepreneurs and their lasting contributions to society. While the event was specifically designed with the African American community in mind, all are welcome to join in this celebration of history and connection.

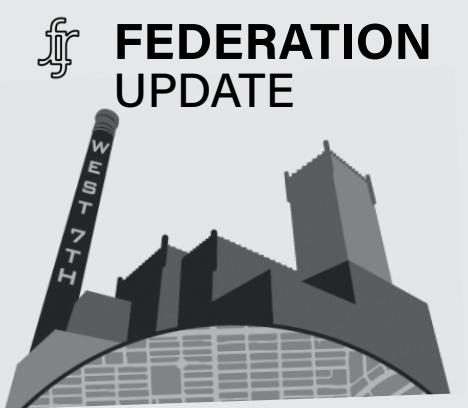
St. Paul Public Library's Black History Month programming extends beyond this event. Throughout February, library branches will feature curated book lists, themed displays, and self-directed table activities designed to engage visitors in



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this year's theme. Additionally, the library's Black History Month landing page (sppl.org/black-history-month) offers resources for further learning and exploration.

For more information about the event and other Black History Month programming, visit sppl.org/black-history-month.



FEDERATION UPDATE

WINTER WALK & TALK, FEB 22
Community walk (under 1 mile), coffee and a FREE breakfast at Day by Day Cafe to discuss ways to make our neighborhood a better place to live, bike and walk. Connect with like-minded individuals and share ideas for positive change. Register: fortroadfed.org.

SEEKING COMMITTEE MEMBERS
We're seeking committee members to focus on collecting stories from the community about the steps and exploring their historical role in connecting neighborhoods. More info: www.fortroadfed.org.

UPCOMING COMMITTEE MEETINGS
• **Transportation & Land Use**, 2/5, 6:30 p.m.
• **Board Meeting**, 2/10, 7 p.m. Gatherings at Station 10
• **Engagement & Fundraising**, 2/20, 6:30 p.m.

STAY IN TOUCH
"Like" us on Facebook. Subscribe to e-newsletter. More information at fortroadfederation.org

CONTACT
Julia McColley, julia@fortroadfederation.org;
651-298-5599; 395 Superior Street, St. Paul



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

Make a Difference by Volunteering at Keystone

Keystone provides food support to over 11,000 individuals every month. We are able to provide support for so many in our community thanks to our wonderful volunteers! Volunteer opportunities are available Monday – Friday during the day as well as Wednesday evenings. Shifts may be as short as an hour, with most running from 90 minutes to three hours. Our volunteer shifts are flexible – come help out once a month or weekly or somewhere in between.

Have a vehicle and want to deliver food and a friendly face? Meals on Wheels delivers Monday-Friday from 10:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. and Grocery Delivery ahs shifts Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, 12:00 – 1:30 p.m.


Do you love exploring Ramsey County and being outside in MN all seasons? Our Foodmobile has 30 distribution sites each month in 2.25 hour shifts

Do you want to help 10,000 community members receive food support at the Keystone Community Food Center? The Market and Warehouse has multiple shift opportunities

Volunteering at Keystone is a fun and meaningful way to show care to your community and a great way to give back this holiday season. Our volunteer staff will work with you to find a role that fits your interests and schedule. To learn more about volunteering at Keystone and fill out a volunteer application, please visit keystoneservices.org/volunteer.

Community Kids Free After School Program

Students in grades K-8 are invited to participate in Keystone's FREE after school program, where they'll have the opportunity to receive homework help and engage in other learning opportunities and fun activities. This program takes place from 2:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. at the West 7th Community Center. For more information, please call 651-289-5493 or visit keystoneservices.org/youth-families.



HIGHLAND

DISTRICT COUNCIL

For information, visit highlanddistrictcouncil.org/events

CALLING ALL HOME IMPROVEMENT BUSINESSES
The Home Improvement Workshop Day returns March 8, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. at Cretin-Derham Hall. Attend one-hour workshops for homeowners and renters in Highland Park and Macalester-Groveland. Seeking home improvement business to present. Deadline to apply is Feb 7. macgrove.org/hiwd.

BLOOD DRIVE ON FEB 7
Highland Park Community Center Feb. 7, 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Make appt at highlanddistrictcouncil.org.

PRESIDENTS' DAY FAMILY WINTER PARTY
Sledding party at the Highland Park Community Center Feb 17, 12 to 2 p.m. Cookies and hot cocoa provided. Free event. If snow, activities inside.

HIGHLAND PARK TRIVIA NIGHT ON FEB 20
Test your knowledge while supporting Highland District Council. \$50 per team. Prizes awarded. Proceeds support events and community efforts in Highland Park.

UPCOMING COMMITTEES MEETINGS
Highland Community Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy highlanddistrictcouncil.org/calendar.

- **HDC Board** – Thu, 2/6, 7 p.m.
- **Transportation** – Tue, 2/11, 7 p.m.
- **Community Development** – Tue, 2/18, 6:30 p.m.
- **Community Engagement** – Tue, 2/24, 7 p.m.



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VULCAN SNOW PARK AND THE STATE SNOW SCULPTING COMPETITION
Through February 2. Minnesota State Fairgrounds. Free. Organized by the St. Paul Winter Carnival Vulcans, the State Fairgrounds will be full of family fun activities, including a snow maze. More info at wintercarnival.com.

BUCKET BRIGADE'S 'TIL DEATH
Through Feb 15. Art House North Theater. \$20-\$50. In its 13th season, this hit musical comedy uniquely celebrates lasting love by having real-life married couples play married couples onstage. Three couples have returned to the roles: co-creators and Bucket Brigade co-founders Jeremiah & Vanessa Gamble, Nathan & Stephanie Cousins who originated the roles of quirky newlyweds Leslie and Freddie, and Anna & Damian Leverett who return to the show for their 8th consecutive season. Info: bucketbrigadetheater.com.

DOGGIE DEPOT
Feb. 1, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Union Depot. Free. Follow Union Depot on social media for highlights of local vendors, rescues, dog products and adoptable pups. Learn more at uniondepot.org/doggiedepot.

MAYOR'S CUP HOCKEY GAME
Feb. 1, 11 a.m. TRIA Rink. Free. Honorary captains Mayor Carter and Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey. Features on-ice challenges, live interviews with World Junior alumni and in-game commentary. Info: wintercarnival.com/event/mayors-cup.

PAINTING WORKSHOP
Feb. 2, 1 - 2 p.m. Landmark Center. \$12.50. Join artist Gina Nicolae Johnson in a step-by-step painting workshop. No previous experience or supplies needed; all ages welcome. Secure your ticket at horamn.org/2024/12/12/painting-workshop-2.

MUSIC UNDER GLASS
Select Sundays and Wednesdays through Feb. 12, 4:30-6:30, Como Zoo Conservatory. Free. A unique experience of wandering through the tropical gardens at dusk, while enjoying live performances by local musicians. Info: comozooconservatory.org/mug2025.

DRAGOBETE
Sundays in Feb, 1 - 3 p.m. Landmark Center. Free. February is the month of Lupercalia, the holiday of purification in the Roman tradition, where St. Valentine has its origins. Info: hora-mn.org/2024/12/12/dragobete.

OSBORN PLAZA IMPROVEMENTS - OPEN HOUSE #2
Feb 3, 4 -6 p.m. Osborn370 Building. The City of St. Paul Parks and Recreation Dept. is seeking feedback on a concept for Osborn Plaza (376 Wabasha St. N, Ward 2, District 17). Info: brett.hussong@ci.stpaul.mn.us or 651-266-6420; stpaul.gov/departments/parks-and-recreation/design-construction/current-projects/osborn-plaza-improvements.



THE ROOT BEER LADY
Through Feb. 23. History Theatre. \$30-\$69. The story of the indomitable Dorothy Molter, the last legal non-indigenous resident of the Boundary Waters. The story reflects the beauty and hardships of Molter's solitary yet satisfying life beginning in 1934. The play, funny and passionate, explores her independence, fortitude, and love of nature. Molter pushes back against the premise that her time in the North Woods made her the "Loneliest Woman in America," as the *Saturday Evening Post* claimed in 1952. Dorothy's story will delight all, young and old. Info: historytheatre.com/2024-2025/root-beer-lady.

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