

Community REPORTER

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



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CIRCULATION 13,000

COUNCIL PERSPECTIVES

A Day in the Life of St. Paul Fire Department



REBECCA NOECKER
CITY COUNCIL
MEMBER, WARD 2
columnist

The woman next to me brushed tears from her eyes, and stared gloomily ahead as we rushed toward United Hospital.

We were in the back of an ambulance and the woman had just been resuscitated from a near-fatal fentanyl overdose in the bathroom at the Dorothy Day shelter.

She weepily told us that we should have just left her at the shelter, that when she was released from the hospital, she would have nowhere to go and no one to be with. The St. Paul Fire Department medics were calm, professional and as comforting as they could be as they placed electrodes to monitor her heartbeat and asked her age and medical history. She was 40 years old, I noted - just a year younger than me.

This was just one of three medical interactions I observed during a three-hour ride-along with the St. Paul Fire Department. I wanted to see up close the issues we talk about in the abstract at our Council policy and budget sessions, and I wanted to understand the challenges our fire crews face every day, how they fit into the overall social safety net that we're struggling to weave more tightly.

We toured downtown fire station #8, just across from the Penfield apartments and the soon-to-be-complete Pedro Park, met the staff and learned about their complicated shift schedule (24-hours every other day for four days, followed by a break). We saw the engines and the ambulances, termed "medic rigs," and the new equipment we've invested in to protect firefighter health, like an industrial-grade washer to remove carcinogens from firefighting uniforms.

The name "Fire Department" is actually a bit antiquated. The department does respond to fires, but the vast majority of its calls today are medical emergencies. All firefighters in St. Paul are either paramedics or EMTs. On our ride along we saw three incidents, all medical.

In the first, an elderly man who spoke only Korean complained of whole-body pain and light-headedness. The medic crew used Google translate to gather basic information on his symptoms, and transported him to the Regions emergency department. They informed us that he was someone they saw often, that he was staying in a shelter and receiving dialysis.

Almost immediately after transferring him to Regions, the team jumped back on the ambulance to respond to the second call. This one took us to the Union Depot light rail platform where a young man was experiencing severe fentanyl withdrawal - nausea, pain and profuse sweating. He also had a garish scar under his right leg that had been treated two days ago but wasn't healing properly. It was clear why - though the hospital had discharged him with a plastic bag full of bandage supplies and ointments, the man had nowhere safe to sleep and heal.

In addition to fluids and anti-nausea medication through an IV, the medic crew was also able to give this man Suboxone - a drug that makes patients feel well without needing to get high and that blocks the effects of fentanyl so a patient can't get high even if they tried. Our fire department has been piloting Suboxone since last year at the request of the City Council. It's a more sustainable approach to fentanyl addiction than Naloxone, or narcan, because it gets patients feeling well enough to accept transport to the

SPFD, PG 7

St. Paul Slowly Getting Back Online Following Cyber Attack

BY DAMIAN GOEBEL

The City of St. Paul is slowly bringing the last remaining systems online after shutting many of them down July 29 following a cyber attack on the City.



The initial attack, which City cybersecurity leaders said they caught on July 25, was a coordinated ransomware attack. Typically ransomware attacks will lock the systems of major institutions in an effort to extort a ransom to unlock access. The City of St. Paul says they did not pay a ransom.

Instead, they said they were able to catch the attack fairly early and retain access to critical systems while limiting the data the attackers were able to access.

Mayor Carter declared a State of Emergency in the city on July 29 and the Minnesota National Guard Cyber Protection Unit was deployed to assist the City to retrieve as much data as possible.

"We are the victim of a serious crime," said Office of Technology and Communications Director Jaime Wascalus in a statement on July 29. "In response, we have mobilized every available local, state, and federal partner to support our investigation and response efforts."

The attack left almost all resident-facing systems offline, many of which still haven't come back online yet. The City said they were most concerned with ensuring their emergency services were functioning before moving onto other systems, like libraries and recreation centers.

City employees started the process of resetting their passwords on August 11 and the City said it has added additional security software to 90% of their systems.

City leaders have said that, while there are sensitive systems the hackers may have gained access to, the city keeps very few records on residents and the likelihood of any personal data being stolen from the general public is low.

Where are City systems currently?

According to the City of St. Paul's website, they are making progress, but still have a ways to go. They are asking people to email the appropriate departments rather than calling for any non-emergency issues.

LOCAL ENHANCEMENT

New St. Paul Co-Living 'Duplex' Cracks the Code of Affordability and Low-Carbon Housing

BY BILL LINDEKE, MINNPOST

It's easy to feel hopeless about the housing crisis, especially if you live in St. Paul, where any hint of new housing on the horizon seems to fade like a mirage. But I have seen it with my own eyes: Little Mod, a (mostly) market-rate project providing 12 homes affordable at 50% of the area median income (AMI), built by a new development team called GRO. It's a lovely, modern "net-zero" infill project, with solar panels providing all of its energy. Halfway between West 7th Street and the Mississippi River, the new homes are close to transit and a dozen small businesses.

If that sounds too good to be true, there's a catch. In this case, residents rent "suites" of individual bedrooms and bathrooms, sharing the rest of the apartment's kitchen and living space between them. It's a "co-living" housing model that might just offer the kind of "one small trick" type of hack to untangle part of the Twin Cities' housing dilemma.

Cheap rent and community

The unique aspect to the new building on Stewart Avenue is that it's technically a duplex,

HOUSING, PG 4



Mayor Melvin Carter and department leaders provide briefing on digital security incident July 29, 2025.

For general, non-emergency questions or assistance, residents should contact DSI-InformationAndComplaints@ci.stpaul.mn.us (Monday-Friday, 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.).

Emergency Services

Emergency services remain fully operational - call 911 if you are experiencing an emergency. The non-emergency line, which includes public safety concerns, is also available at 651-291-1111. For all non emergency inquiries related to the Fire department, please email: FireEvents@ci.stpaul.mn.us. The impound lot is open but only accepting cash payment at this time.

City Services & Bill Pay Status

The City is not assessing late fees as they continue to bring bill pay systems back online. They also say that there are people sending fraudulent invoices from the City and that you should not click any links or email attachments if you are unsure of their origin.

Garbage Payments

Quarterly garbage bills are legitimate. Payment is due September 1 for April-June garbage service. Payments can be made with the return envelope provided or via the City's third-party payment vendor. Garbage related questions should be directed to garbage@ci.stpaul.mn.us.

St. Paul Public Library

All locations remain open with some services

impacted. Books can be checked out, materials can be returned and you can still attend any events, but there is no public internet access or printing at any library location.

Parks and Recreation

All rec centers, outdoor pools and the Como Zoo and Conservatory are open. General customer service questions and requests should be emailed to ParksCustomerService@ci.stpaul.mn.us. Reports of downed trees and debris from recent storms should be emailed to Forestry at Forestry@ci.stpaul.mn.us.

St. Paul Regional Water Services

St. Paul RWS is now able to accept online bill payments, but some online services remain temporarily unavailable. In the meantime, all customers will receive paper bills in the mail.

Public Works

For street maintenance questions or concerns, please call 651-266-9700 or email pw-stmaint24hrstaff@ci.stpaul.mn.us. For general Public Works questions or concerns, email publicworksinfo@ci.stpaul.mn.us. For fastest service and response time, please use the Public Works general online form.

Stay up to date with this which city systems are available and the latest news, visit stpaul.gov/news/important-information-city-services-during-digital-security-incident-1.



A new co-living duplex in St. Paul, where each unit will have six bedrooms and six bathrooms.



EDITORIALS & OPINIONS

NOTEBOOK RECOLLECTIONS

Rest in Peace, Mr. Positive

By Tim Rumsey

Sunday, August 3, 2025, 5:45 p.m.

West 7th's C.S.P.S. Hall was emptied out. Lights down, chairs and tables folded and put away.

The band was packing instruments and coiling microphone cables. The beautiful 140 year-old wood floor was being swept, polished.

This was Carl's party. The Mr. Positive memorial. Carl was surely watching us from above, likely aching to be behind a big pushroom.

Over 200 people had been there to miss him. To celebrate him. Friends and neighbors - Bill Quinn, Kent Peterson, Mary Garcia. Mike Hazard, Sue and Dave Thune, Becky and John Yust. Stuart Loughbridge. Carl's best friend and guardian, Karen Koepp.

Of course Karen was there. She was always there for Carl. His brother Robert, sister Barb and several other relatives were welcome, surprise guests.

About 10 proud as punch Bridgeview School teachers and staff were there in force. Carl was a famous BVS grad and then a sanitation engineer there for decades until he passed.

Marni, one of those teachers, said on mic, "Carl made good use of every gift he was born with."

C.S.P.S. program manager Dawn had arranged and watched over a magnificent celebration. Adult beverages were sold. Wonderful West 7th food gifted from Mancini's, Cosetta's, the Downtowner and Day By Day cheered up the many gathered digestive systems.

There were speeches, testimonials and we-love-you's from Carl's people. Humor, wisdom



R.I.P.
CARL "MR. POSITIVE"
BENTSON
10-27-1974 TO 12-18-2024

and sadness ran amok.

It was unanimous. Carl loved and was loved.

We won't be seeing Carl and his trusty three-wheeler all over West 7th anymore. Never hear his "how ya doing?" again. And never see his lights.

Everywhere his lights. On his three-wheeler bike or his helmet and orange jacket. On his yard trees and fence. And his house! Hundreds of holiday lights on his St. Clair Home. Every day, all day - all night, all year long.

Filmmaker Mike Hazard thinks Carl is light. Good friend Bill Quinn says Carl lights up the

world. Karen Koepp, Carl's person and close friend, says Carl is all about cleaning, helping and making things look good.

Carl was an automobile nut and loved the Minnesota State Fair. A good combination. For years, Carl went to the fair every day of its run and spent a lot of time with the classic car displays. He knew almost as much about the hot rods as their owners.

My brother Dan and I played music for many years at the Farmers Union state fair building from 1 to 9 p.m. Carl watched us one year and helped us load out our gear. I got to

drive my SUV into the fair grounds to get our stuff.

Then Carl rode around the fair with Dan and me at 9:30 p.m. We three all in my truck. While the fair was still near full-tilt! We all felt like big shots. We even ordered six pronto pups ("lots of mustard please") through the truck windows!

IN THE FAIRGROUNDS! From my Truck!!

There are lots of great Carl stories. His was the got-to go-to house every Halloween. A bottle of pop AND a big Hersey's bar per trick or treat! He'd pull in 130 kids! Sometimes having to give away his own food.

There's a recorded song about Carl (Dan Rumsey). He's been heralded in both the big Mpls and St. Paul papers and most of the neighborhood monthlys. There's even a fab movie about him by Mike Hazard on You Tube.

Of course W 7th Hall of Fame cab driver, Tex DuBois, knew Carl. Appreciated Carl. Tex told me he worried about Carl for a while but then figured out Carl was watching out for him. "The guy is some kind of Saint," Tex said, "or Arch Angel."

Carl was raised by his foster mom, Vashti Risdal in St. Paul's Mac-Groveland neighborhood. He often visited her grave site where he brought his own clippers to clean up her grave stone.

Then he'd recite his prayer to her:

*God, dear
you hold our hearts in the palms of your hands
Please give us your peace
We thank you
We love you
We miss you
Forever, Amen*

ORIGINSTORIES

Origin Story, Part the Fourth: *Les Français arrivent avec les Ojibwés*

BY JOE LANDSBERGER

In the 1500s eight thousand years of Dakota way of life and territorial integrity in Minnesota was challenged by European colonial powers. Following Christopher Columbus' voyage across the Atlantic to the New World in 1492, on May 4, 1493 Pope Alexander VI issued a Papal Bull, Inter Caetera-Among Other (Works) that established the "Doctrine of Discovery". The Bull stated that any land not inhabited by Christians was available to be claimed and exploited by European ruling families.

In 1608 Samuel de Champlain founded Québec, New France. In the 1600s French explorers, traders and missionaries came to the Midwest via Canada and the Great Lakes. They established trading posts to control the fur trade. French youth lived with local natives and quickly assimilated with the tribes, adopted their customs and language and became translators and intermediaries for trade out of Québec.

French fur trade followed this model through a series of native agreements amid conflicts with the Dutch and English. The coureurs de bois-forest runners encouraged Natives to trap and trade in exchange for European technology. Trade was unregulated until 1681 when the Compagnie des Cent Associés-Company of the Hundred Associates was granted a monopoly in the fur trade in areas controlled by France—including Minnesota. A system of licenses gave rise to the voyageurs-travelers who displaced the coureurs.

Forts and trading posts were built and treaties negotiated with Native groups throughout the Midwest. Goods and furs weighing tons, ingoing and outgoing, depended on the network of lakes and rivers via canoe and portages. Trading trips lasted months, over thousands of miles, with outgoing goods (cloth, ammunition and firearms, metal goods, liquor) bartered for pelts. In the summer trading season, voyageurs paddled canoes 36 by 6 feet on the Great Lakes. These could accommodate four tons (!) of fur bundles and trade goods that weighed 90-100 pounds each. During portages, voyageurs were expected to carry two bundles.

In 1659 French traders and missionaries first encountered the Dakota when they moved south with their Ojibwe allies into Minnesota via the Great Lakes. The French were interested in expanding the fur trade; the Ojibwe in Dakota hunting grounds; the Dakota in access to French trading goods. However the Dakota lost one of



Canoes in Fog, Lake Superior. Image 1869 Glenbow Museum-Frances Anne Hopkins.

their sacred sites at Mde Wa a —Spirit Lake/ Mille Lacs.

In 1671 Nicolas Perrot (c.1644-1717), a French explorer, interpreter and fur trader, claimed lands around Lac Supérieur-Lake Superior and the Upper Mississippi River for France, and finalized an agreement at Sault Ste Marie with 14 native tribes including the Dakota. In 1686 he constructed Ft. Saint Antoine on Lake Pepin. In 1679 the Ojibwe and the Dakota formed an alliance at Fond Du Lac at Lake Superior. Peace, trade and intermarriage lasted 57 years.

French employees were bourgeois (administration), engagés (logistics) and voyageurs. The last were hired specifically for their expertise in navigating waterways and handling canoes. Hivernants-winterers were voyageurs that wintered on the frontier. They courted and married Native women by Dakota customs, or a la facon du pays. They took advantage of the Dakota's embrace of kinship based on strangers' willingness to become Dakota, become kin, and provide for the Native family.

By the early 1700s, Native women were critical to the survival of the French. They were often from prominent families and provided tribal access as intermediaries in the fur trade. Their domestic skills included cooking, sewing, harvesting; processing furs and preparing meat; building shelters and repairing canoes. Their offspring, the métis-mixed blood, played an

important intermediary role in the economy and settlement of Minnesota, and emerged to become a distinctive community, particularly in Canada. Native networks helped to create kinship between tribes which benefitted the traders, and their offspring, the métis, came to dominate trade, with French as the language of commerce and early Minnesota.

The rendezvous was a great annual gathering of Natives, traders, trappers, voyageurs, and administrators, particularly at Grand Portage on the north shore of Lake Superior. It connected Montreal to 120 furring posts west of Lake Superior. Aside from trade, the rendezvous was a great social gathering fueled by alcohol, feasts, dancing, gaming/gambling and merriment. Three camps included company agents and clerks, the voyageurs often métis, and Natives. The event provided trappers a social event as a break from their isolation on the frontier, and an occasion to exchange tales of adventure, and possibly find work with the trading companies.

As the dependency on the fur trade increased, so also pressures on native customs and resources. Between 1702 and 1763 the French and English fought a series of wars in Europe and in North America. Each was dependent on shifting loyalties of Native allies, Dakota and Ojibwe, Cree in the north and Fox south. France gave up its North American territories to the British in 1763 and its legacy of 200 years of interaction with Native tribes, and the métis.

With colonization, Natives, who had held real power in the fur-trade era, were marginalized, no longer crucial to the survival or profit of Europeans and Americans who entered the area. The métis would continue to impact Minnesota for years to come.

You can find a copy of "The Origin Story of Fort Road/West Seventh Street, the Township/City of Saint Paul, the Territory/State of Minnesota: Glacial Age Forward" at your local library. Learn more and find Joe's upcoming conversations about the history of West 7th at josfland.com.

Community
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COMMUNITY NEWS & EVENTS

Golden Chow Mein to Remain on West 7th

"FINALLY! The news we've all been waiting for! Golden Chow Mein will continue with new owners!" Long-time employee Mary Erjavec announced on social media August 19.

Erjavec said owner Kwok Qu Ng had found someone to take over the business in October, which was when they originally had planned to shut down operations.

"The new chef has 15 years of experience in the Twin Cities," Erjavec said. "Qu is already working with him to ensure that it will be a smooth transition."

She said that transition includes keeping the menu as-is for the time being. Golden Chow Mein, which has been making traditional Cantonese fare on West 7th for 38 years, first announced its planned closure in April because the owner was ready to retire. The originally planned closing date in October was timed with the restaurant's license renewal.

Erjavec said she and Ng's final day will be October 22, with the new owner taking over shortly thereafter.



IN MEMORIAM: RICHARD KUTZ 1949-2025

Uppertown blocks celebrate the life of their neighbor Richard Kutz. From his birth residence on the fourth floor of the Paulina Building, Leech and West Seventh, to his home of 50+ years, his life centered on Leech Street. In the 1970s when St. Paul wanted to reroute the High Bridge on Wilkin and remove its classic homes, he was instrumental in keeping it on Smith. His residence was meticulously maintained until his last years of infirmity. He was seen daily picking up trash on local sidewalks and streets as he patrolled, proactively engaging in conversations along his way and even promoted its history in the "Origin Story." Conversation was his strong suit particularly with servers in restaurants who he often financially helped. He is survived by a son Patrick, childhood friend Joe Covolla, and of course, his neighbors.



Richard Kutz

Rest in peace, Richard.

~ Joe Landsberger.

have been feeling the effects of a major street reconstruction all summer.

To help those businesses out, the Grand Avenue Business Association has partnered with several of the affected businesses, the Macalester-Groveland Community Council and the City of St. Paul to start a Construction Crawl promotion in the area.

From August through October, a dozen local shops, restaurants and businesses are offering exclusive deals when you use the Construction Crawl Card. You can download a card at grandave.com/construction.

Participating businesses include Abbot Paint and Carpet, Baking Betty's, Fein Violins, French Meadow Bakery and Cafe, Healing Insight Acupuncture, Lakeside Orthodontics, Nothing Bundt Cakes, Patagonia, Pet Fresh Dog Wash, Sencha Tea Bar, Tumble Fresh Laundry and Zimmerman's Dry goods.

The street and sidewalk project on Grand started this spring and is expected to be largely completed this fall, with finishing touches, like bike racks, public art and any remaining clean up to be completed in the spring of 2026. Learn more at stpaul.gov/projects/public-works/pw2024grandavereconstruction.

CENTER FOR LOST OBJECTS LOSES LEASE

The Center for Lost Objects, located at 957 West 7th, announced on Aug. 21 that they need to find a new location.

"The new owners of my building have given me 60 days notice to vacate, and they're turning my space into an alcohol rehab clinic with sober living upstairs," owner Amy Buchanan said via social media.

The store, which specializes in eclectic art, antiques, oddities, vintage clothing and furniture, as well as hosts several vendors who make jewelry, apparel, letterpress stationery and greeting cards, and textiles, has occupied the space since 2017.

"Buchanan is committed to staying in the area, saying, 'I just signed a lease to move my residence closer to the business.'"

The eviction comes in a year in which the store experienced a ceiling collapse, which closed the store for several weeks in February and March.

In the meantime, she said the store would be having a "super sale," closing out much of their inventory in anticipation of the move. "Come and visit us while we're here, and wish us luck for the future - we're going to need it," she said.

FOR MORE COMMUNITY NEWS, VISIT

COMMUNITYREPORTER.ORG/CATEGORY/NEIGHBORHOOD-NEWS

GRAND AVE. CONSTRUCTION CRAWL

Businesses on Grand between Snelling and Fairview

BUILDING COMMUNITY The Air We Breathe



TIM JOHNSON
columnist

The kayaks sat on top of our car. Tents, sleeping bags, cooking gear, food and everything else one needs for four days in the Boundary Water Canoe Area Wilderness were packed inside. The weather forecast was perfect, sunny

days with temperatures in the mid 70's. We anticipated fishing, exploring the lakes with our kayaks, summer evenings around a campfire and in general enjoying the beautiful outdoors. Unfortunately the morning our permit gave us permission to enter, we turned around and headed back to St. Paul. The entire BWCAW was experiencing the same extreme air quality alert that folks were experiencing throughout Minnesota, including St. Paul. The reading registered at 170 or in the color coded alert system, purple, which means very unhealthy for everyone, not just the elderly or folks with health issues.

It is understandable that many folks ignore these alerts. Aside from a haze in the sky, the harmful particles we breathe are largely invisible, making these otherwise gorgeous summer days very alluring. We get through the long winter months in part by anticipating the joy of being outside, unencumbered by sweaters, jackets, long pants, all the clothing items that become necessary as the days shorten and the air cools. It is beyond frustrating to be told the choice we face is go outside and enjoy these longed for days, thereby risking your health, or stay inside with the windows closed. I have friends who chose the outside and hopefully they will not suffer as a result. But, the long-term consequences of breathing and absorbing the particles of this smoke-filled air are significant and include cardiovascular problems, asthma and there are some studies suggesting an increased risk of dementia. There is, of course, a solution to this growing

problem: address climate change, which is the central cause of today's proliferating wildfires and resulting smoke filled air.

Unfortunately, the same administration that is now actively engaged in denying our nation's history around race is the same administration actively engaged in dismantling efforts to combat climate change. The common denominator for both forms of denial is white supremacy, which is based on a system of domination and hierarchy. It can't be said often enough that white supremacy is an ideology, a belief system of white racial superiority and not an indictment of white people. The hierarchy of white supremacy is the reason this administration has fired a number of highly qualified People of Color and replaced them with white people whose main qualification is some connection with FOX news. White supremacy is the driving force behind renaming military bases after Confederate generals, purging national parks from references to race, attacking the Smithsonian for truth telling about slavery or treatment of Indigenous people. These overt acts of white supremacy are the haze, which we see. But, the reality of white supremacy is more like the dangerous particles of unhealthy air we cannot see. The ideology of white supremacy is often hidden in corporate and government policies, the way history is told, subtle preferences in hiring or housing, disparities in health care and the judicial system.

White supremacy is in the air we breathe and because white supremacy is based on domination, the earth is treated as a mere resource to exploit and climate change, like racial history, is an inconvenience to be denied. We are in a long term struggle to create healthy communities, with healthy air, with relationships of equality. We can ignore the bad air, but we do so at risk to ourselves and our children. The good news is that resistance to white supremacy, like the steps needed to combat climate change, can be taken at a local level, by people who care about their neighborhoods and the future we leave our children. Resisting the ideology of white supremacy can be as simple as planting a tree or welcoming someone new into our community. All of us have an influence on the air we breathe.

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COMMUNITY TRADITIONS

A Tail Wagging Good Time

By Damian Goebel

Grand Avenue is going to the dogs this month when Paws on Grand returns to the corridor September 7.

Local businesses along Grand will be offering dog-gone good deals for you and your furry friends. Adopt a Pet, shop the Pet Marketplace, get pet portraits and cheer on the Wiener Dog Races.

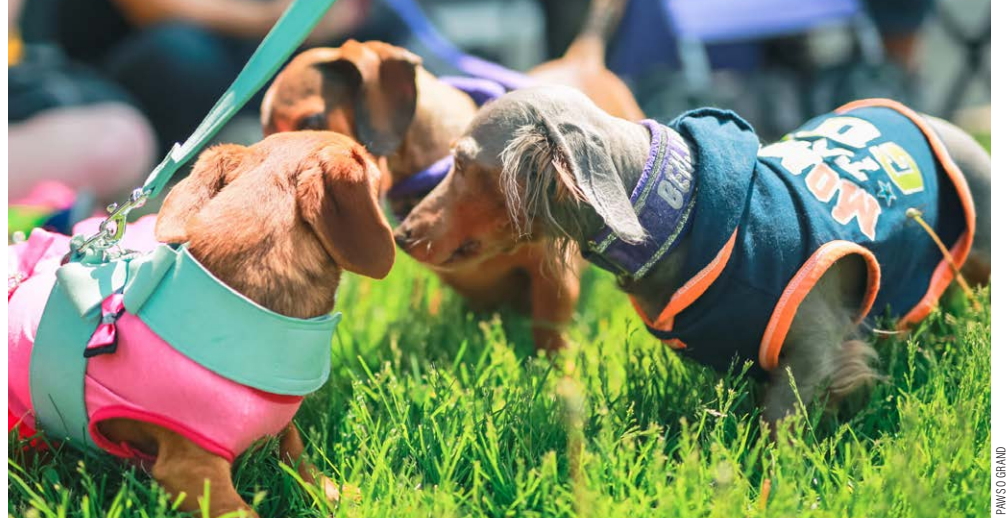
In addition to the pet marketplace and deals along the Avenue, this year's festivities run from 11 a.m. - 3 p.m., and include:

- 11:30 a.m. - Wiener Dog Race
- 1 p.m. - Paws for a Cause Walk begins at Pet Marketplace
- 1 - 2 p.m. - Blessing of the Pets at St. Paul United Church of Christ
- 3 - 4:30 p.m. - Happy Yappy Hour at Red Rabbit Patio

Support local animal rescues and nonprofits at Paws for a Cause Walk

Get ready to enjoy a leisurely stroll while raising awareness and funds for our four-legged friends in need. Starting at 1 PM, walk a mile along Grand Avenue with your furry friends to help support a great cause. The cost is \$25 per family and includes one special treat for your 4-legged friend.

Proceeds from this year's event support local animal rescues and nonprofit organizations Animal Ark, Animeow Control, Inspire and Flourish, Last Hope, Legends Rescue, MACC



PAWS ON GRAND

Pack, Minneapolis Animal Care and Control, Minnesota Pocket Pet Rescue, No Dog Left Behind, Pet Haven, Red Lake Rosie's Rescue, Safe Hands Rescue, Second Chance Animal Rescue, Snap!, The Bond Between, Tubman, Twin Cities Pet Rescue and Warrior Dog Rescue.

If you go
Paws on Grand, Sept. 7, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. Marketplace at Pet Evolution, 1074 Grand Ave.

More information, including a full list of vendors and how to sign up for the Paws for a Cause walk can be found at grandave.com/events/pawsongrand.



BILL LINDBERG/MINNEPOST

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HOUSING, PG 1

but with each "unit" boasting six individually leased bedrooms, each with personal bathrooms. That makes 12 new homes built on a 48-foot-wide lot that, according to the developers' research, has always been em

"Twenty- to 30-year-olds, that seems like who's targeting us," said Jake Zikmund, the project architect. "I'm a millennial, and Gen Z-ers, [we] have substantial amounts of debt. This is affordable housing, so if you're poor, you can't afford a studio. Where do you live? With everything that's happened — COVID, mental health — we're trying to create a space where people can be together."

Zikmund points specifically to the years after college, when young people saddled with loan debt enter the workforce and start experiencing the reality of 40- or 50-hour work weeks. In this context, cheap rent and informal community can be a godsend.

Each of the two duplex units contains six "suites" with rents for (most of) the units set at \$850, plus a \$75 all-encompassing utility charge. Combine all the suites together and you get two six-unit duplexes: 200 square feet of private space and 1,000 square feet of shared kitchen, a living room area, a washer and dryer, and a few nooks in which to lounge about. There's also a small outdoor area behind and underneath the back of the building.

It's different. I've not seen anything like it in the Twin Cities other than century-old single-room occupancy living designs. But though this is affordable, it's quite nice, with granite countertops and modernist detailing. It turns out that these kinds of "duplexes" are more common in coastal cities, where housing crises have tightened the screws on young renters. Given the lack of new housing, they might also make sense in the Twin Cities.

Good rental value

The two unique facets of St. Paul's zoning code make it possible to build this unique



Residents rent "suites" of individual bedrooms and bathrooms, sharing the apartment's kitchen and living spaces between them.

building. The first are recent zoning changes allowing up to three- or four-unit buildings on any residential lot. St. Paul recently enacted sweeping reforms to restrictive zoning, allowing more density into neighborhoods formerly restricted to single-family homes, ala the vast majority of mid-century suburbia. In St. Paul's case, the new zoning code allows up to four- (or six-) unit buildings to be built throughout the city. Without that change, building this duplex would not have been possible.

The city's other zoning nuance is its unrelated adult provision, which caps the number of non-related people in each unit at six. That's higher than in most suburbs, which cap the number at three or four. From there, the duplex math is pretty simple.

Inside the duplexes, each suite has a small one-bedroom space with a window and a lock on the door, a spacious closet, and (this is key) a personal bathroom and shower. Outside, in the shared space, tenants will find modernist spaces spread out on two floors including granite-countertops and a dual-fridge kitchen. It feels a bit institutional, like an elevated dorm, but for people who are open to co-living, offers good value for the rent.

General demographic change forms part of the context, alongside young people facing high rents and student loan debt. Over the



generations, household sizes have sharply decreased, with more single people needing places to live. Many of these folks don't need an entire detached house to themselves, at least not in their younger years.

And the selling point remains the affordability: 50% AMI is below a lot of the larger subsidized affordable projects elsewhere in St. Paul. In this case, the GRO development team got a pair of Ramsey County grants — one small start-up grant, and another that subsidized two of the units at 30% AMI — but that's a good return on investment for local housing dollars.

"The outcome of this is you have 200 square feet to yourself, 1,000 square feet of common space, [which makes] 1,200 square feet for 850 bucks," explained Alex Zikmund, the lead for GRO Development. "I think that is a compelling argument as opposed to even a well-done apartment complex like the Victoria [Flats] next door [across Otis Avenue]."

A sustainable model

The other appeal for young people is the project's sustainability. While infill density is inherently "sustainable" all by itself — carbon footprints of new homes built by walkable transit are much lower — in this case you also have a "net zero" carbon footprint. In other words, the building produces more energy than it consumes, thanks to its structural insulated panel (SIP) construction and the solar panels on the roof. Combined with how the building is cantilevered over stormwater infrastructure, the environmental impact is impressively small.

"I'm an architect, so design matters," said Jake Zikmund. "This site presented a lot of challenges, with 18 feet of grade change: How to build it into the valley? How to mitigate water runoff? How do we put solar on the roof? But we were able to shed all our water into rain gardens, and put all the solar on the roof and accomplished the task."

The other key variable, it must be said, is the lack of off-street parking, also made possible by 2021 reforms to St. Paul's onerous off-street parking requirements. Asked about that, Alex Zikmund pointed to the high cost of off-street parking, where building underground parking would have almost doubled the rents.

"Anything [more that] we do is going to increase rent," explained Alex Zikmund. "The question you have to always ask yourself is, is

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COMMUNITY NOURISHMENT

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Clean Up Saturdays to National Night Out

By Korinne Dennis

In the 90s and early 2000s, Saturdays were cleaning days. My grandmother would wake us all up, give us a broom, and send us outside to pick up trash, pull weeds from the sidewalk cracks and sweep our porch. Growing up in Philadelphia not only meant that you shared walls with your neighbors, but it also meant that sometimes, the trash was abundant. However, the proximity of your neighbors made what I'll now refer to as Clean Up Saturdays so much fun.

Ms. Johnnie would make us treats and iced tea. My grandmom let us play with the hose. Ms. Karen would bring her dog out so we could play with it. It wasn't just about cleaning, but about community, about the simple ways neighbors showed up for each other.

Fast forward to August 5, when I had the privilege of hosting National Night Out in Little Bohemia. As I looked around the street outside



Korinne and her pup hosted this year's National Night Out for the Little Bohemia neighborhood.

THANK YOU, PG 7

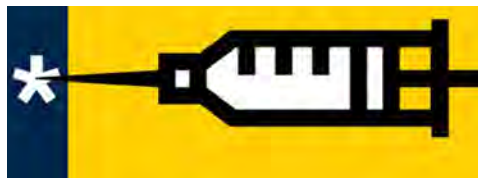
HEALTH LINE

Why Vaccines Matter This School Year

By Natasha Vo, MD

When I was in medical school, I signed up for a 10-mile trail race on the Superior Hiking Trail. It was a bold move—I wasn't a runner, let alone a trail runner—and I had no real idea what I was getting myself into. I'd hiked a few trails before, but running up and down rocky terrain for hours was a completely different challenge.

In many ways, I think of that experience when I consider how our immune systems face the upcoming school year and flu season. Just like I was unprepared for the demands of the trail, our bodies can be unprepared for the barrage of viruses and bacteria we encounter each year. Without vaccines, our immune systems are left to tackle unfamiliar and potentially dangerous infections without



a game plan or training—and that can lead to serious consequences.

After getting a taste of the rigor that is trail running (I tripped over several tree roots and turned around after a mile because my calves were sore), I decided I needed more training for my upcoming race. I wanted to feel confident going into race day that I was prepared for any obstacles that might come up. Muscle cramping? I learned to take salt tabs. Slippery declines? I learned to slow down and

adjust my footing. Over time, I collected these strategies because I had first-hand experience with smaller, manageable challenges before the real test. That's essentially how vaccines work. They give our bodies a preview of a pathogen (something that would make us sick)—just enough for our immune system to learn its patterns and develop a defense—without making us endure the full-blown illness. By the time the real “race day” arrives in the form of exposure to that virus or bacteria, our immune system is already trained and ready.

Some parents worry that children get “too many” vaccines, but the truth is that the number of antigens (parts of pathogens that stimulate the immune system) in today's recommended vaccines is a tiny fraction of what kids encounter naturally. Just going to the grocery store, visiting a playground, or riding

VACCINES, PG 6

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IN THE COMMUNITY

BEA'S BOOKS

An Ambitious Tale Despite Its Deficiencies

By Beatrice Cosgrove

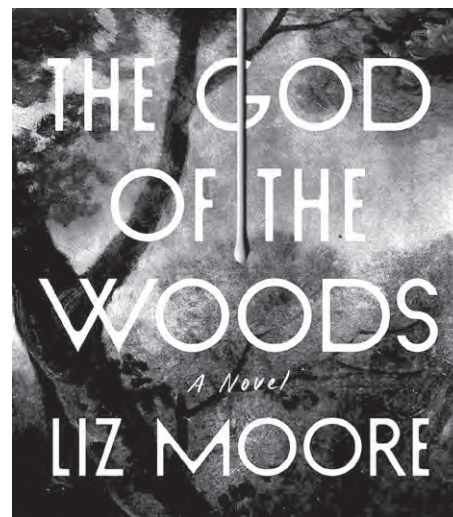
I often find myself enthralled with books before I finish them. Once I do, and they've marinated in my head for a while, my full opinion unfurls. "The God of the Woods" by Liz Moore was one of those books. I devoured it within a week or so, yet while ruminating on how to frame it in this article, began to discern some of the book's defective properties.

The first property lies in the manner Moore chose to tell the story, incorporating eight perspectives (varying in length and importance) to weave together two storylines and six time periods; a writer's nightmare, yet Moore managed it with skill. Was it the right choice? No, but we'll get to that later.

I liked to think of the two storylines like the confluence of the Minnesota and Mississippi rivers, two rivers, one a clear deep blue and the other a murky brown, swirling together to make one. The Van Laars, a wealthy family living in the Adirondacks, are an uncommunicative family with a host of secrets and the owners of Camp Emerson, a summer camp located on their property and founded by the first Van Laar to settle in the Adirondacks ("Peter I"). Barbara, the daughter of Peter III, now head of the esteemed family,

and Alice, his wife, hopes to attend Camp Emerson for the 1975 session. By mid August, Barbara is gone, mysteriously missing from her cabin. As the story progresses, Barbara's true character and that of the Van Laars begins to shine through, as well as the interlocking narratives of employees of the Van Laars and residents of the small town nearby that find their lives changed by the particular Adirondack property. The coincidental disappearance of Barbara's brother, Bear, over a decade earlier, is the string that wraps the time and perspective switches together, bringing the stories of two very different Van Laar children to a merging point like that of Minnesota's rivers.

As you may have noticed, there is quite a bit to unpack in that description alone. I'll begin with the aforementioned Defective Property Number One. The perspectives. Moore's plot alone is riveting and filled with opportunities to add depth and intensity, but writing in eight perspectives minimized those opportunities (unless of course, Moore chose to lengthen the 476-page tale), leaving me frustrated that I never got to know some of the most fascinating characters better (namely Alice). Property Number Two: I simply do not see the



chances of both Van Laar children going missing within approximately a decade of one another. Yes, I understand it is a fictional novel meant for entertainment purposes, but, quite plainly, it wasn't believable to me.

Although this novel had its defective properties, it was an ambitious undertaking that Moore executed with excellent organization and a solid objective. I must applaud the level of coordination it took to intersperse chapters and perspectives, in spite of the fact that it bruised the novel in the end.

FILM REVIEW

"Superman" a Rousing Portrayal of Humanity (and Super Fun!)

By Zach Murphy

Writer/director James Gunn has a pretty stellar track record when it comes to the realm of spunky, comical, and heartfelt superhero films. In this latest incarnation of "Superman," Gunn continues to prove he's got the magic touch. Not only is this film thoroughly enjoyable, but it's also a rousing portrayal of Superman at his most human.

When we catch up with Superman (David Corenswet), he's having a rough time. He's just lost his first battle, the public is casting him as a pariah, and he's even having relationship problems with his girlfriend, Lois Lane (Rachel Brosnahan). To make matters worse, the notorious Lex Luther (Nicholas Hoult) is concocting plans to eliminate Superman once



David Corenswet in costume as the character Superman

and for all.

Even with the cape on, Superman's characterization here is vulnerable, emotional, sensitive and empathetic. He takes a lot of hits along the way, both physically and mentally. There's also a global smear campaign against him that would send even the most experienced crisis management team running for the hills. Adding some comic relief is his foster dog named Krypto. This canine companion gives the film some extra cuteness while also bringing out the caretaker in Superman.

James Gunn opts for a decidedly lighter and kookier tone. It's even cheesy at times. And you know what? It works! After all, Superman is a guy who goes around wearing his underwear over his pants. It'd be foolish to

take him too seriously. But even amidst all the fun, the film doesn't shy away from real-world headlines, and it's all the better for it.

The proceedings deliver the spectacular action you'd come to expect. The combat scenes hit with force and gravity, and it's a blast to watch. By placing Superman in such desperate situations, he becomes quite an underdog, and it's easy to root for him. He's not only saving the world; he's also saving himself. When he says the line, "I put one foot in front of the other and I try to make the best choices I can," it feels sincere. The core of this film is really all about human kindness. Isn't that a sentiment that everyone should agree on?

"Superman" is now available to rent or buy on various video-on-demand platforms. Zach Murphy is an avid enthusiast of cinema, theater and storytelling. He lives with his wonderful wife Kelly in St. Paul. You can read more reviews at his blog, Fade to Zach.

VACCINES, PG 5

the bus exposes children to far more microbes than any vaccine schedule ever could. What vaccines provide is not random exposure, but safe, controlled training that prevents the devastating consequences of diseases like measles, whooping cough, and meningitis.

For school-age children, being up to date on vaccines is about more than just personal protection—it's also about protecting classmates, teachers, and community members. This concept, known as herd immunity, means that when enough people are immune to a pathogen, it becomes much harder for diseases to spread. That's especially important for those who can't get certain vaccines for medical reasons or for those with weakened immune systems.

Heading into the school year, the stakes are especially high. Classrooms, cafeterias, and school buses are the perfect environments for germs to spread quickly. A single case of a highly contagious illness like measles can infect up to 90% of unvaccinated people who come into contact with it according to the CDC. Even illnesses that seem "old-fashioned" or rare are only rare because vaccines have kept them in check. History has shown that

when vaccination rates drop, these diseases make a comeback.

Vaccination is not about eliminating all illness—just as my trail running training didn't guarantee I wouldn't stumble—but it greatly reduces the odds of severe outcomes. It turns potentially life-threatening

infections into something our immune system can handle with confidence. School, like trail running, is full of challenges. But with the right preparation—whether it's miles logged on a trail or immunity built through vaccines—we can face those challenges with resilience.



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Fall is a great time to get involved at the Federation. Subscribe to monthly newsletter to keep in touch.

UPCOMING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

• **Transportation & Land Use**, Sept 10, 6:30 p.m. Join us for neighborhood walk, free appetizers!
• **Board Meeting**, Sept 8, 7pm

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Fresh, Free Produce Available All Summer

Keystone Community Services Free Farmers Market events is back this summer, offering fresh, healthy produce at no cost to anyone who needs it. These drive-through markets are open to all with no registration required.

Many families face increased challenges during the summer months when school meal programs are unavailable, and grocery and childcare costs remain high. Keystone's Free Farmers Markets help fill this gap by providing nutritious fruits and vegetables to support good health and well-being.

The markets will take place from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at three convenient locations across the Twin Cities: Roseville Covenant Church Sept 5, and Oct 3, Galilee Lutheran Church Sept 19, and Oct 10, Allianz Field Sept 12.

Everyone is welcome at these markets. There is no sign-up or paperwork, and participation will not affect eligibility for any other food support programs. Each visitor receives a generous assortment of fresh fruits and vegetables. For more information, visit keystoneservices.org or call 651-645-0349.

Get in Gear with Express Bike Shop

Express Bike Shop, a nonprofit shop and social enterprise of Keystone Community Services, is open Tuesday - Saturday and we're here for all your biking needs! We sell high-quality refurbished bicycles at affordable prices. We are a full-service shop so can tune up your bike or update it to make it more comfortable. We also sell a variety of accessories like seats, locks, helmets, and more. Whatever your bike needs, we're here; give us a call at 651-644-9660 or stop by the shop at 1158 Selby Ave, St. Paul.



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Check highlanddistrictcouncil.org/calendar for more details.

BULLETIN BOARD

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Sept. 13, 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Forepaugh's Restaurant. \$45. Explore past and present culinary traditions along the West End, one of St. Paul's oldest neighborhoods, built along one of the city's oldest roads. From the early days of the Upper Landing to today's bustling West 7th Street, learn about the diverse culinary traditions of the people who have lived and worked here and sample food from some of the best restaurants in the West End. Info: mnhs.org/events.



GREAT NORTH STAR READ TOGETHER

Saturday, Sept. 20 11 a.m.-1 p.m. George Latimer Central Library. Bring your book, ebook, audiobook, or magazine for a community Read-In. No book? No problem! Choose one from our shelves! Info: sppl.org/events

2026 CITY OF ST. PAUL BUDGET ADDRESS

Sept 4, 10 a.m. Allianz Field, Stadium Club, 400 Snelling Ave N. St. Paul. Mayor Melvin Carter will deliver his Budget Address. Free and open to the public to attend. Doors open at 9:30 a.m. remarks begin at 10 a.m.

PEDRO PARK RIBBON CUTTING

Sept 4, 4-6 p.m. Pedro Park. Free. Info: stpaul.gov/departments/parks-and-recreation/design-construction/current-projects/pedro-park-project

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Sept. 14, 1-3 p.m. Pedro Park. Free. Join us at Saint Paul's newest Park! Featuring amazing food, lawn games, face painting, entertainment and fantastic conversations with neighbors. Info: facebook.com/events/s/9th-annual-ward-2-community-pi/1677176966334776.

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Sept 18-Oct 12. History Theatre, 30 E 10th St, St. Paul. \$15-70. Step inside the wonderful world of Doris Hines! This talented nightclub singer moved to Minneapolis in 1963, navigating the challenges of a troubled marriage while working hard to build her musical career and raise six kids in the post-World War II era. Even Nat King Cole urged Ella Fitzgerald, "DO NOT MISS Doris Hines!" Witness the powerful legacy of this unsung artist—with a four-octave voice that enchanted audiences across the globe, while her artistry stood as a pioneering force in the fight for equality. Info: historytheatre.com

THANK YOU, PG 5

my home, I felt a wave of emotion. I thought about those block parties back in Philly. My grandmother taught us the Electric Slide, my friends and I jumped double dutch, and my cousin failed miserably at the hula hoop. And I realized that same spirit of togetherness is alive right here in West 7th.

A few thank yous:

- To the DeGidios Family, you are loved and appreciated. Thank you for once again keeping us full!
- To Ruth and the 620 Club, a summer event is not successful without water. Thank you for your continued donation to our hydration station, aka coolers, haha.
- Thank you, Joe and the rest of the Get Up Mondays, for the AWESOME pop-up concert! Can we do that again next year, please? And

to the lovely family who wished to share their music with us as well, please do come back.

- Thank you, Wandering Leaf Brewery, for the gift card to allow us to give away to one lucky neighbor.
- Thank you, Girl Scouts, for your generous donation of freeze pops.
- Last but not least, thank you to every neighbor who made this event possible and who shared their favorite treats with us.

I want to say this: whether in Philadelphia or Little Bohemia, community starts with a good morning, a cup of coffee, or a shared joy of cleaning. As we head into another season, my challenge to you is to start something new in your community. Do you want to start a book club? Walking group? Craft night? You don't need to be on a governing board or very extroverted like me to start something you enjoy and watch it grow.

SPFD, PG 1

hospital and actually consider treatment.

This man, too, was brought to Regions where we hoped he'd accept a longer-term dose of Suboxone, one that would last 28 days (rather than the 24-hour dose we'd given in the ambulance) and give him a fighting chance to get long-term treatment.

Each call left me full of anxiety and questions. How did these people get into the situations they were in? What would happen to them next? How have we failed them so badly? What can I do to address these failures? And how do our firefighters manage to go from call to call to call, often seeing the same person over and over, while maintaining their composure, their compassion and their hope?

One of the medics who rode in back with us told us why she'd chosen to be part of the

team: she wanted to help people, she liked medicine and she wanted to be a small part of the solution to the much bigger problems she's seeing.

"I tell myself that I will be a comforting, compassionate presence for the 20 minutes I'm with someone," she said. "There are much bigger issues going on in their lives that I can't address, but I can be kind to them while I'm with them and that is what I do."

The final call was for a cardiac arrest which turned out to be the woman who had suffered the fentanyl overdose at Dorothy Day. When we reached the hospital emergency department, the medic team would relay the woman's vital statistics to the attending medical staff while transferring her to the ER's gurney, sanitizing the one she'd been one, and preparing to answer the next call.

HOUSING, PG 4

the resident going to pay for that? We're to a point where, with expensive construction, are you building a place that's affordable to live? Or are you going to build a place [where] you can park a car and keep it warm? Something's gotta give."

Personally, I remember "co-living" in my post-college period when I shared a rented house (aka a "college house") with a revolving group of 20-somethings. I loved it at the time. Given how the housing crunch affects young people, there needs to be more diversity in our housing stock.

Living in a 200-square-foot bedroom and sharing a kitchen with five other people is obviously not going to be for everyone, even if there are two fridges. But for certain folks at certain points in their lives, this is an encouraging new development. Elsewhere, subsidized housing takes years to construct, occupies whole city blocks, and single units often require half-million-dollar subsidies. In that light, this unconventional duplex is intriguing.

Construction on the Little Mod project

wraps up in about a month, and the first completed duplex is slated to start receiving tenants as early as next week. According to Alex Zikmund, initial leasing is the hardest part for a duplex like this, but there's been a lot of interest so far. Once it's fully leased, and tenants begin figuring out the everyday nuance of "co-living," filling vacancies sort of happens by itself, a lot like how it worked in my 20-something "college house."

The developers are planning on another project after this one is complete, a few blocks away. Let's hope this trend picks up steam in St. Paul, filling in vacant lots around the city with affordable homes for folks willing to try something new.

Editor's note: This version of the story corrects the line that Minneapolis "replaced its unrelated adult limit of four to five with a new 'intentional community' provision." In 2019, the City of Minneapolis eliminated all occupancy limits based on family relationships. It made intentional communities largely irrelevant.

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