



Hill & Lake Press

‘Where the biggies leave off...’

Published for the East Isles, Lowry Hill, Kenwood & Cedar-Isles-Dean Neighborhoods

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FROM URBAN COYOTE TO URBAN COUGAR, EULOGIZE OUR FELINE VISITOR

By Craig Wilson, Editor



(Photos Fox 9 News)

Craig Wilson is the editor of the Hill & Lake Press and lives in Lowry Hill.

Lowry Hill has always had a bit of a wild side under its staid surface, from solstice party shenanigans to neighbors settling matters with BB guns.

Yet it was still a surprise that a cougar was spotted sashaying across a Lowry Hill driveway late

one recent night, seeking fun and most likely looking for a mate. At least that's what the DNR suggested as the reason for the visit.

Tragically, its adventure in the big city ended on I-394, when it was hit by a car. A friend said she felt like a bit of magic was lost with that news, which is how many of us felt.

We were planning on doing a naming contest for the beautiful

feline visitor who graced our lives for a moment, but sadly it will now be a eulogy instead.

We hope you will contribute to that eulogy by sending us your thoughts about this big cat's visit and its heartbreaking end. We'll publish a selection of responses in January. Send by email to craig@hillandlakepress.org.

THE 2023 CITY COUNCIL ELECTION BY THE NUMBERS

By Marty Carlson



Katie Cashman wins Ward 7 City Council race. (Photo Peter Aehl)

Marty Carlson is a regular columnist and lives in Kenwood.

By the time this issue goes to press, the results of the 2023 municipal elections will not be news. Within the circulation area of this paper, readers will know that Katie Cashman defeated Scott Graham in Ward 7 to win Lisa Goodman's open seat, while incumbent Aisha Chughtai cruised to reelection with over 60% of the vote in Ward 10. What may be news, or at least of interest, is how exactly those votes broke down within each ward.

For starters, when students of politics talk about "off-year" elections like this being low-turnout, they mean it. In presidential election years, Minnesota has led the nation the past three cycles, with nearly 80% of eligible voters casting a ballot in 2020. By contrast, in the 2023 municipal election, total voter turnout stood at a mere 31.7%, i.e., only roughly three in 10 eligible voters cast a ballot. Locally, voter turnout was 37.5% in Ward 7, while in Ward 10 that number stood at 33.1%.

But within those aggregate numbers, there are interesting observations to be made, particularly in Ward 7. For example, in the final tabulation of this ranked-choice election, Cashman defeated Graham by over two percentage points (50.8% v. 48.5%). That would be considered a decisive victory in

Continued on page 6

A Glimpse at Hennepin Avenue á la 2024...



Hennepin Avenue's new look! The makeover of Hennepin Avenue, construction slated to begin in 2024, appears to be the first step of the city's vision for a more dense commercial and residential district to be developed along the corridor. On December 4, the City Planning Commission approved plans for a six story building to be built on the site, which faces Hennepin Avenue at the address of 2415 Emerson Avenue South. The building will house 32 studio apartments above two floors of office space and include six parking places. There will also be 32 long term bicycle spaces. Dean Dovolis, president of the board of the East Phillips Neighborhood Institute, noted for leading the recent successful effort to save the Roof Depot building from demolition in order to convert it into an indoor urban farm, is the architect/developer. On his firm's website it states that they "listen and respond to community desires and strive for engagement and consensus." (Photo DJR Architects)



Hill & Lake Press

Founded in 1976, Hill & Lake Press reports community news and events, educating and informing our neighborhood community members about issues of the day. Views expressed are not necessarily those of Hill & Lake Press.

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Our goal is to offer readers diverse perspectives on newsworthy events or issues of broad public concern to the Hill & Lake community.

Proposed Changes to the Mall Park

The park board has proposed making a number of changes to The Mall Park, which runs between Hennepin Avenue to the land between the lakes. The plan includes elimination of the north Mall street going west between Irving Avenue and Bde Maka Ska Parkway and replacing it with lawn.

I am concerned that the costs associated with eliminating this street exceed the benefits.

First, lost is an historic Mall design that Theodore Wirth designed himself in 1914 and included the removal of seven buildings to construct.

Second, 25 critically needed parking places will be lost to the nearby apartment houses which will drive parkers into the already crowded nearby neighborhoods.

Third, drivers going north from Lake Street will have to go through the East Isles neighborhood instead of going directly to the parkway, adding to congestion. And fourth, the street will no longer be used by the Art Fair to service vendors.

The benefits seem to be only the addition of a strip of lawn and a vague improvement of water drainage to the lakes. I think the park board should adopt the medical motto of "do no harm."

*Gary Farland
East Bde Maka Ska*

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Businesses Over Bikes

After reading Andrea Corbin's article, I was inspired to write supporting the Vibrant Lyndale organization and their petition.

Unfortunately, our city officials have not learned to listen and act honestly after its multi-million-dollar rebuilding of Bryant Avenue South with less parking for businesses and residents and two rarely used bike lanes.

Meanwhile businesses will be threatened along Hennepin Avenue and eventually along Lyndale Avenue all in the name of bicycles and scooters as the solution to fighting climate change and establishing Minneapolis' reputation as the "Bicycle Capital of the U.S.A."

From my viewpoint, the pendulum has swung too much in favor of the bicycle!

*Richard Charlson
East Bde Maka Ska*

Huge congratulations to candidate Katie Cashman on her win as Minneapolis City Council member representing Ward 7.

In Carol Becker's article in the November issue, "Balkanization of the Left," Cashman was alone in her condemnation of independent expenditure spending in our local elections, elucidating the problem of dark money seeking to influence local elections and exposing the misleading inaccuracy of these independent expenditure PACs having the ability to call anyone an "endorsed candidate."

Writer Becker seems to have missed the point entirely and engaged in the inaccuracy.

Most importantly Council Member-elect Cashman has a plan to "change campaign finance law to build transparency around independent expenditure spending, and to create public financing methods to keep

big money and dark money groups from influencing local elections."

Scott Graham speaking out of both sides of his mouth and in self-stated alignment with these illegal endorsements is part of the problem, and the voters have rightly rejected it.

Now I urge the Hill & Lake Press to check itself on the fear it can induce and quit calling a plan to deal with dark money and create workable solutions to campaign finance spending law a "balkanization" because that fear appears to serve to blind us to both the problem and its solutions.

*Mary Longfellow
Lowry Hill*

Audubon Winter Bird Count Returns December 17!

On Sunday, Dec. 17, the Cedar Lake Park Association will participate in the Audubon Society's 2023 Winter Bird Count, along with the Urban Bird Collective, the Loppet Foundation, and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board.

For the second year, these organizations are working together to coordinate this count on behalf of this community and its amazing and diverse collection of birds!

This year's count has been scheduled from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Afterwards, there will be an optional potluck and sightings sharing session from 1-2 p.m. at the Trailhead, 1221 Theodore Wirth Parkway.

To learn more about the Winter Bird Count and its history, you can visit: www.audubon.org. Please contact Mark Schmidt at boxert@comcast.net for more local information and to sign up to participate with the CLPA.

*Mark Schmidt
Cedar-Isles-Dean*



The new Bde Maka Ska Pavilion. (Photo by Tom Sheridan)

Please Support Hill & Lake Press

By Craig Wilson, Editor



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Craig Wilson is the editor of the Hill & Lake Press and lives in Lowry Hill.

As we move through these short winter days and look forward to the return of the light in the new year, we are filled with gratitude for your enthusiastic support of your neighborhood newspaper.

We have so much to celebrate over the past year including expanded circulation from 9,000 to 15,000 households, expanded coverage and the first Kids' Issue in decades.

We continue to strive to make it a more responsive and relevant paper, and are open to your suggestions, assistance — and financial contributions!

Please consider making a year-end tax-deductible charitable contribution to the Hill & Lake Press, your local news source working hard to cover the news "...where the biggies leave off."

**...Thank you
and may
your holidays
be bright.**

You Can Help Reform the Met Council!

By Mary Pattock



Mary Pattock (Photo anonymous)

Mary Pattock is a long-time contributor to the Hill & Lake Press and was an early and constant whistleblower on matters related to SWLRT (and beyond). She lives in Cedar-Isles-Dean.

Got good ideas on reforming the Met Council? The Metropolitan Governance Task Force invites you to share them at any of four public listening sessions, or

at any of its regular task force meetings. The task force, on which I serve as "public member," is charged with recommending changes in state law to reform the council.

Listening sessions will be held on:

Friday, Dec. 8, 2023, 2-4 p.m., Wilder Foundation in St. Paul

Thursday, Dec. 14, 2023, noon-2:00 p.m., Lake Elmo City Center, Lake Elmo

Friday, Jan. 5, 2024, noon-2 p.m., University of Minnesota Robert J. Jones Urban Research and Outreach-Engagement Center (UROC), Minneapolis

Tuesday, Jan. 9, 2024, 6-8 p.m., Scott County Government Center, Shakopee

Send an RSVP and sign up to speak at: <https://www.lcc.mn.gov/mgtf/meetings.html>

You may also speak — in person or remotely — during the last

15 minutes of regular task force meetings. Remaining sessions will be held on Wednesdays, 10 a.m. to noon, at the State Capitol, on Dec. 6, Dec. 13, Jan. 3, Jan. 10, Jan. 17, Jan. 24, Jan. 31. Go to this link and click "task force meetings" for more information: <https://www.lcc.mn.gov/mgtf/> Since the task force is required to report to the legislature by Feb. 1, I strongly urge you to testify earlier rather than later!

It's important for our neighborhood to be heard because the catalyst for forming the task force was the Southwest Light Rail project. Legislators of both parties were alarmed that the project exceeded its budget by a half-billion dollars, is four years behind schedule, and apparently severely damaged some of the homes of Cedar Isles Condominium residents.

Many people, including me, believe a fundamental problem is how council members are appointed. State laws has them appointed by and only accountable to the governor, whose agenda they are pledged to support. This

cheats the metro area of full-throated advocacy on its own behalf, produces council members who are non-responsive to the public, and contributes to the council being staff-driven.

Please testify! The effort is worth your time!

If we don't use this opportunity to change the Met Council, it will continue as it has, in my opinion, a reckless and arrogant juggernaut.



Everyone Is Entitled To My Opinion: The Problem is Bike Lanes, Not Bikes!

By Susan Lenfestey



Phil Vandervaat, on the "Left," and Andrea Corbin, on the "Right," are united in opposition to losing parking for businesses in favor of bike lanes. (Photos Anonymous)

Susan Lenfestey lives in Lowry Hill and is a regular contributor to the Hill & Lake Press. She cofounded the paper in 1976 and serves on its board of directors.

The animosity in discourse these days, even right here in River City, has taken the snap out of my bean.

The issues that most of us care about are the same — public safety, affordable housing, a humane solution to ending tent camps and cooling down our overheated planet. It's how we address these issues where we are split.

One of the big divides right now involves bikes. How could that be? Who doesn't love bikes? Who isn't proud that Minneapolis is one of America's most bikeable cities?

The divide really isn't about bikes, it's about bike lanes.

Those who push for more bike lanes, generally of the far-left persuasion, believe that restricting cars in favor of bike lanes will lead to a more pedestrian-friendly streetscape, encourage local shopping and curb carbon.

Those who resist more bike lanes, generally of the pragmatic left persuasion (like me), believe that the effect on carbon is insignificant, and that the impact on trees and small businesses will lead to dreary streetscapes and shuttered storefronts. We believe that we should change the kind of cars we drive and not the roads we drive them on.

Trying to tell those who are besotted with bike lanes that we share most of their values is a fool's errand. "Y'all are a bunch of climate arsonists!" ... "I hope your car breaks down and you're forced to see this neighborhood from the sidewalk!"

The most common response is that we should move to the suburbs if we love our gas-guzzling cars so much — overlooking the embarrassing fact that Lisa Bender, former City Council president and leading proponent of on-street bike lanes, has done just that. The divide at times feels like a chasm.

But recently I came across two allies from each side of the divide that gave me hope.

Andrea Corbin is a business owner on Lyndale who, along with others, has created the 70-member Small Business Alliance to push back against proposals to remove parking on Lyndale (between Franklin and Lake) in order to add bike lanes. She is a newcomer to activism — and already does live in a suburb! She was surprised to learn that I was a Democrat. "My Republican friends think that Democrats all want more bike lanes!," she told me.

The well-funded bike lobby may have met their match in Andrea, who is an indefatigable organizer, spending more time at City Hall and public hearings than on her own flower business, in order to make sure that small businesses on Lyndale are heard and parking is preserved.

Then I read an article in Southside Pride, a

lively monthly newspaper published since 1991 by "unrepentant Maoist" Ed Felien, about Phil Vandervaat, a professional sign painter who specializes in signs for small businesses. Southside Pride is an interesting read, with good coverage of familiar issues from a far-left perspective that generally echoes Felien's.

Reporter Stephanie Fox writes about Vandervaat, "His connection to so many small storefront businesses is why he sees the city's new policy to eliminate street parking to the advantage of bike traffic as a threat to the survival of many of those businesses."

Fox quotes Vandervaat. "At 46th and Cedar, they eliminated 40 spots. A woman with an antique business there can't even allow people to park there to unload." He continues, "I am an avid biker. I bike almost every day. But I go out there and no one is riding their bikes on commercial streets. I don't ride on major roads, and I don't know anyone who does. Taking out needed parking for a bike lane that no one is going to use ... it's maddening."

It's unlikely that Vandervaat and Corbin have met, but their shared views on the "maddening" push to add more bike lanes to city streets makes me think maybe we can bridge that divide after all.

It's a slim reed on which to hang our hopes for the future of our city, but I offer it to all of you anyway. May we all manage to agree on the goals and have a healthy and kinder new year.

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OPINION

By Sean Murphy

Uptown's Parking Fallacy



Hennepin Avenue South near the intersection with Franklin. (Photo Craig Wilson)

Sean Murphy is a technology entrepreneur and lives in East Isles.

Uptown's commercial woes are not due to a parking scarcity. It's time we look beyond the curb.

Yes, there may be less street parking, and it may feel obvious to associate its loss with the demise of Uptown's commercial corridor. But that would ignore this decade's massive and much more consequential changes for which neither parking, nor construction for that matter, ranks among the top causes for business decline.

Retail sales of apparel (especially outdoor gear), cosmetics and electronics have been decimated by e-commerce. I know this firsthand from years of running online businesses, including for Target.com. Of course, these were the exact same categories of retailers, chains mostly, that once occupied the Hennepin and Lake core.

Food delivery services have an equally profound effect on the economics of restaurants. These services not only erode the already slim restaurant profit margins, but they encourage a shift in consumer

spending. Now, customers can effortlessly order from eateries located beyond the neighborhood, which means fewer dollars are spent here.

Dry cleaners were already disappearing before the pandemic because of the steady shift to casual office attire. And now today's sweats-based work-from-home workforce has only made that tougher on these businesses.

In some cases, the demand for parking has declined. That's especially true at nightlife venues thanks largely to the widespread popularity of ride-sharing services like Uber and Lyft. These platforms are often the go-to choice for transportation, especially when alcohol may be involved.

The gym at the YWCA didn't close because of a lack of parking. It shuttered because how and where people exercise has changed. In addition, WeWork, Target, Prestige/Uptown Cleaners and Giordano's all had plentiful parking. All are gone.

There are so many social and economic shifts happening around us that it's misguided to attribute Uptown's commercial spiral to the loss of some parking spots.

These macro changes are real, consequential, and here to stay. Uptown will thrive again, but we must lift our eyes beyond a narrow fixation with where a handful of cars can park on a stretch of Hennepin.

Hennepin Avenue, Lake Street, the Mall, Franklin Avenue, Lyndale Avenue, the Uptown Transit Center and the Walker Library will all be upgraded or overhauled in the coming years. They're each deserving, if not overdue, for these improvements.

These investments will set the stage for Uptown's future for generations. To get it right we must imagine the future, not reminisce about the parked past.

I'm thankful to live in a city that has the financial good standing and wherewithal to invest over \$100 million in our neighborhood, our community and us. Other Midwest cities are looking on with envy.

The wonderful article in the November issue of the Hill & Lakes Press about Magers & Quinn is a reminder that Uptown has previously faced and overcome profound change. Our gem of a bookstore stands in what was once a Chevy car dealership. That urban dealership

was, in its era, a disruptive force — a signal that the streetcar age was coming to its final stop.

Today's transition isn't painless, nor is it all positive, but it is happening. And like the residents before us, we must work through this change too.

It's not easy to be optimistic when things are on the decline. But I am. I'm optimistic because of Uptown's unique and natural advantages.

Uptown is poised to prosper, thanks to several long-term factors: the beauty and appeal of our lakes and parks, the density of our neighborhood, and the diversity of our housing options, which together foster an environment ripe for innovation and renewal. Furthermore, Uptown's strategic geography makes it a natural crossroads for our entire region.

These immovable assets are our neighborhood's foundation. By investing in these assets, the city and county are playing the long game. If our community can play to these strengths then, like prior generations, we can make Uptown great again.

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THE 2023 CITY COUNCIL ELECTION BY THE NUMBERS, Front page

a presidential election, but in terms of the final tally, her margin of victory was only 177 votes. Put differently, a mere 80 votes constituted a full percentage point in this low-turnout contest.

Also, while the phrase “low turnout” appears throughout this article, three precincts (out of 12) in Ward 7 had among the highest turnout in the city, eclipsed or matched by only three precincts in Ward 12 (the open seat vacated by Andrew Johnson) and one in Ward 8 (the Andrea Jenkins/Soren Stevenson contest). The highest turnout was Precinct 1 (north Bryn Mawr), where Cashman decisively beat Graham 63% to 37% in first-choice ballots, with 54.7% turnout. Turnout in Precinct 2 (Kenwood and western Lowry Hill) was only slightly lower, at 54.5%, but there Graham bested Cashman by a more than 2:1 margin, 71% to 29% in first-choice ballots. In Precinct 7 (south Bryn Mawr), voter participation was 52.1%, and Graham won his home precinct with 59% of the first-choice vote.

Overall, Cashman bested Graham in first-choice votes in nine of the 12 precincts, with vote totals ranging from 77% (Precinct 6 – Downtown) to 51% (Precinct 9 – East Isles).

Interestingly, there was something of an inverse relationship between voter participation and candidate vote totals: In her top

three precincts, Cashman’s highest percentages of first-choice votes were in relatively low-turnout areas, whereas Graham’s three best were in higher-turnout precincts.

For Cashman, her top three first-choice vote precincts were: Precinct 10 (Stevens Square, 77% of votes, 29.1% participation), Precinct 6 (south Downtown, 74% of votes, 19.4% participation), and Precinct 11 (north Downtown, 71% of votes, 18.5% participation).

For Graham, his top three first-choice vote precincts were: Precinct 2 (Kenwood, 71% of votes, 54.5% participation), Precinct 4 (CIDNA, 61% of votes, 38.5% participation), and Precinct 7 (south Bryn Mawr, 59% of votes, 52.1% participation).

But, again, Cashman ran up margins in nine of 12 precincts, and that contributed to her overall 2% victory in the final count.

The story in Ward 10 was more straightforward. Looking again at first-choice vote totals, Aisha Chughtai beat her two main opponents, Bruce Dachis and Nasri Warsame, by crushing margins in seven of the ward’s nine precincts. In the two exceptions, Precinct 3 (East Bde Maka Ska) went for Dachis with 61% of the vote, while Precinct 8 (Lyndale) voted 59% for Warsame.

Overall, the 2023 municipal election calls to mind the adage, “the future belongs to those who

show up.” In an election where only eight precincts out of 137 citywide had greater than 50% voter turnout, victory belongs to whoever can motivate the greatest number of supporters to actually show up at the polls — and there’s a shockingly large amount of untapped potential in every single one of those 137 precincts.

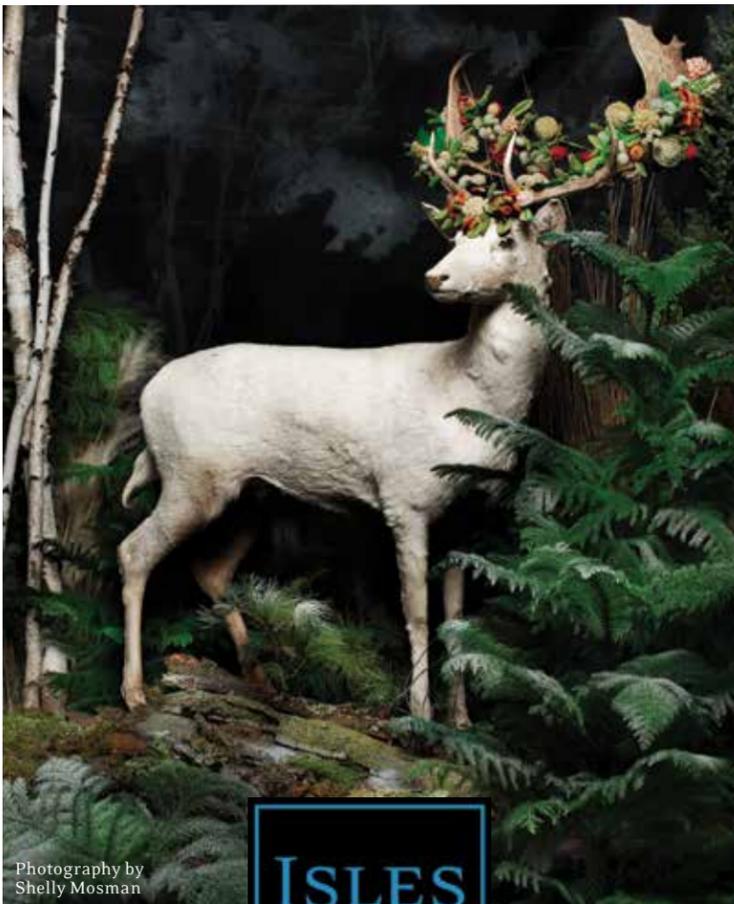
Some notes: In calculating vote percentages, only the top two vote-getters were compared in each precinct of these multi-candidate races. In no instance was there a precinct in which votes were relatively evenly split between three or more candidates. Instead, they all lopsidedly favored two candidates, such as Chughtai-Dachis in Precinct 3 or Chughtai-Warsame in Precinct 8. The remaining candidates had no material impact. Finally, ranked-choice voting is complicated. First-choice votes were used for comparison purposes because they accurately predict the result in roughly 97% of all Minnesota ranked-choice elections (although the Andrea Jenkins/Soren Stevenson contest stands out as a notable exception, with Jenkins coming from behind to win after the first ballot).

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Socialism, Huh? Let's Fact Check.

By Robert J. Tennesen



Otto von Bismarck German Chancellor 1862-1890.
(U.S. Social Security Administration Archives)

Robert J. Tennesen is a former State Senator serving from 1971-1983. He lives in Kenwood.

In the November issue of the Hill & Lake Press, Democratic Socialist leader Samuel Doten asserts that public schools, water and sewer utilities, Social Security, the U.S. Postal system and rural electrification were all socialist initiatives.

If so, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, Otto von Bismarck, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Horace Mann, Minnesota's Territorial Legislature, leaders of ancient Babylon and Rome, and other iconic historical figures must have been socialists.

Doten tacitly acknowledges that socialism has no precise meaning. To Eugene Debs, an early Socialist

Party leader and four-time presidential candidate, it meant abolition of capitalism and state ownership of the means of production.

To the utopian Shaker and Oneida communities, as well as religious monasteries, it meant living a communal life of shared labor and proceeds.

To the former Soviet Union and China, it meant confiscating private property by fiat.

And to the Labour Party in Britain, it meant nationalizing certain industries after World War II, industries that did not fare well in the arc of history since then.

Doten's idealism is commendable, but his facts need checking.

Social Security

Our Social Security system had

antecedents in the pensions paid to Civil War veterans and their surviving families, but its current form was based on Germany's social insurance program which was designed by conservative Chancellor Otto Von Bismarck and adopted by the Reichstag in 1889. President Franklin Roosevelt signed the Social Security Act in 1935.

Public Schools

In 1763 Prussian Emperor Frederick the Great issued a decree promoting "common schools." It expanded the existing schooling system significantly and required that all young citizens, both girls and boys, be educated by mainly municipality-funded schools from the age of five to 14.

Shortly after the American Revolution Thomas Jefferson, John Adams and other early leaders proposed the creation of a more formal and unified system of publicly funded schools, believing that preserving our new democracy depended on the competency of its citizens.

In the 1830s, Horace Mann, a Massachusetts legislator and secretary of that state's board of education, advocated for the creation of public schools that would be universally available to all children, free of charge, and funded by the state.

In 1849 the Minnesota Territorial Legislature enacted the first law pertaining to education. Each township was to have a school open to all persons between the ages of four and 21 years.

The U.S. Postal Service

Postal systems have existed for centuries. Benjamin Franklin oversaw the British mail services in the 13 colonies from 1753-1774. In 1775, before the Declaration of Independence was even signed, the Continental Congress turned the Constitutional Post into the Post Office of the United States, whose operations became the first — and for many citizens, the most consequential — function of the new government itself. James Madison and others saw how the postal service could support this fledgling

democracy by informing the electorate, and in 1792 devised a funding plan. By 1831 the United States had twice as many post offices as Britain and five times as many as France.

Water and Sewers

The earliest known sewers were used in the ancient city of Babylon around 800 B.C.E., and the first sewers and water systems in Europe were built in Rome around 500 B.C.E. Sewer systems have been in use for millennia. Archaeological evidence has revealed that the first major sewage system was constructed in the Indus Valley Civilization of India in the 2500s B.C.E. As populations and cities grew, lack of sanitation resulted in typhoid epidemics. Water and sewer systems became a necessity and were built in New York, Boston, Chicago and other cities in the 1800s.

Rural Electrification

FDR created the Rural Electrification Administration Executive Order 7037 in 1935, followed by passage of the Rural Electrification Act in 1936. The REA was implemented through creation of local co-ops that bought electricity wholesale and distributed it to farms through the co-op's own transmission lines.

The REA is personal to me as it brought electricity to our farm in 1948. The first appliance my parents bought was a refrigerator, replacing an icebox, and I no longer had to study by kerosene lamp.

Facts Matter

Doten is entitled to choose any definition of socialism he likes, but he should get his history straight.

As Chancellor Bismarck said in a Reichstag debate on the Old Age Assistance initiative in 1881, "Call it socialism or whatever you like. It is the same to me."

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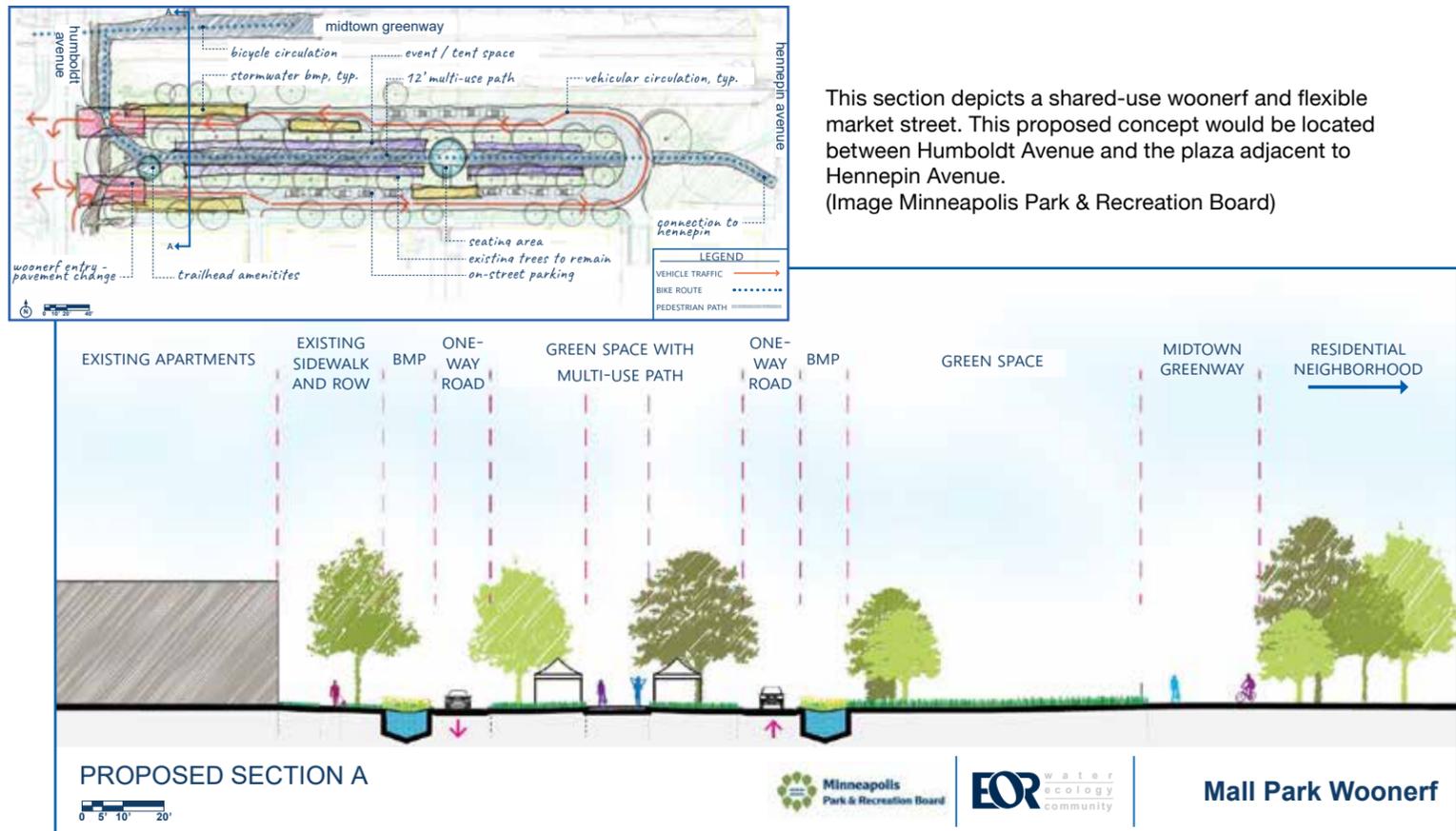


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The Mall Renovation: Perspective from a Neighbor

By Richard Harrison



This section depicts a shared-use woonerf and flexible market street. This proposed concept would be located between Humboldt Avenue and the plaza adjacent to Hennepin Avenue. (Image Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board)

Richard Harrison is a landscape architect and resident of East Isles.

For 22 years I've lived in an apartment in East Isles just off The Mall, the parkway that connects Hennepin Avenue to the lagoon between Bde Maka Ska and Lake of the Isles.

The Mall is slated to be redeveloped as part of a plan by the Metropolitan Council to replace aging sewer pipes and structures near Lake of the Isles. The Metropolitan Council has already completed work along Humboldt Avenue north of The Mall as part of this project.

The remaining sewer upgrades along The Mall, between Humboldt Avenue and Bde Maka Ska Parkway, will be implemented in coordination with planned improvements for the park, as approved in the Southwest Service Area Master Plan on Nov. 4, 2020, by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board.

Two public open houses were held on Nov. 8 and 14 at the Whittier and Painter Park recreation centers to receive public comment on updated concept plans developed by design consultants and the MPRB.

According to the park board's website, the public comment period has passed, but there will be a project update to inform the public of the MPRB's intentions, date TBD.

Three main goals

The park board aims to construct a "woonerf" on The Mall, a Dutch term for a shared-living street, between Humboldt Avenue and Hennepin Avenue. The MPRB defines woonerfs as creating common space shared by walkers, bikers and low-speed motor vehicles and using traffic-calming techniques to slow vehicle traffic while still accommodating parking.

A second goal is to create an improved, multi-use trail connect-

ing Hennepin Avenue and the Midtown Greenway, which travels parallel just north of The Mall.

The third objective is to remove two west-bound blocks of roadway, including parking places on the north side of The Mall between Irving Avenue and Bde Maka Ska Parkway, and replacing them with recreational green space. The east-bound roadway will not be removed so that alley access is maintained.

The hope is to create a more continuous, uninterrupted green space between The Mall and the lagoon at its west end.

Motivation for the Proposed Changes

The Southwest Service Area Master Plan, which includes The Mall, is the result of nearly two years of planning and design by MPRB staff, the community, and hired technical consultants.

According to the park board, "over 170 community engagement events were held and several different stages of input garnered thousands of individual comments on park plans, guiding principles, and the planning process itself."

Katie Jones, a pedestrian and bicycle advocate who served on the Southwest Service Area Master Planning Community Advisory Committee as a representative of Stevens Community, Whittier and the Wedge neighborhoods, said that it was an enlightening process to learn about the history, mission and policies of the park board.

Katie writes, "When we got to The Mall, I questioned how the layout and function of this parkland is serving the park board's natural resource stewardship and recreation mission. How are people, plants and wildlife being supported? How are health, well-being, community and the environment being promoted? Following those, the natural next question became: should this parkland be used as vehicle park-

ing, or would the mission be better served by adding green space? Through many discussions, it became clear to many committee members that providing more green space would support wildlife, enhance air quality and storm water management and provide greater recreation opportunities and experiences in nature in line with the park board's mission."

The Removal of Parking

The most contested issue is that parking would be largely eliminated — parking that is seen as critical to many residents and businesses in a high-density neighborhood with buildings that often lack off-street parking for residents, including me.

The park board suggested that parking is not typically allowed on parkways. While this is mostly true citywide, The Mall is certainly an exception to that rule, with parking having been allowed there for over a century.

According to Hennepin County archives, a 1953 aerial photo clearly shows cars parked there.

The Mall Apartments, built in 1915, has 18 units and at best 25% of tenants do not have cars. Most of the three-story apartments between Hennepin, the Parkway, The Mall and lagoon were built before WWII. With the exception of two buildings on Knox, 19 of these buildings do not have underground parking.

Today it is difficult to find a parking place on The Mall due to demand. This is exacerbated by entertainment venues like the Uptown Theater, which has a capacity of 1,600 people. The Uptown commercial district will eventually recover and thrive once again, increasing demand for parking.

I also think the MPRB is being a bit misleading by not being clear as to how many parking spaces would be eliminated. The removal of 25 spaces west of Irving Avenue

is noted, but the loss of parking east of Humboldt is not. There are currently 34 parking spaces on that block. Option A would reduce it to 14, and Option B to 10. That's close to 50 spots removed in total.

I'd like to think I'm not pro-car, and I bike when I can, but the reality is my job requires me to have a vehicle. Of course, if self-driving shared cars happen in the near future, then maybe the whole parking argument is moot. But the reality is that we are still an auto-centric city, IN TRANSITION. The big question is how long will the transition take to happen? Thriving commercial districts still need parking!

My Take

The Mall is a beautiful space. The historic design was meant to provide a leisurely walk from the Walker Library to the lagoon, sandwiched between the industrial railroad corridor to the north and busy lagoon and Lake Street to the south. It's an excellent example of a classic allée design, with a gently meandering walk flanked by maple trees. Some trees have been replaced, and pollinator gardens have been added, and it's home to bees, butterflies, rabbits, squirrels and many birds including a resident peregrine falcon that keep the smaller critters in check. Nature will balance itself out if only we will let it.

I'm hoping that the park board doesn't remove any trees and maintains the historic character of The Mall. It really should be a designated Historic District someday. Once this project is completed, it will be a great place for a future Winter Market, the Farmers Market and the Uptown Art Fair.

Overall I support many of the changes proposed by the park board because they will improve water quality, habitat and well-being.

A Brief History of The Mall

By David C. Smith



Fuzzy aerial photo of The Mall from 1952 shows what appear to be cars parked. (Photo Minnesota Historical Society)

The Mall history compiled and written by David C. Smith for the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board.

The five-block boulevard from Hennepin Avenue to the lakes was known as 29th Street Boulevard at the time of its acquisition in May 1912 until it was officially named The Mall on December 17, 1912.

The name was selected after the unusual action by the park board of requesting public input in choosing a name. Park board records indicate that the Lake Calhoun Improvement Association submitted recommendations and shortly after, the name “The Mall” was chosen.

The recommendations of the improvement association are not recorded, but it is likely, given the request for input, that the name chosen was among those preferred by the neighborhood group.

Acquisition and Development

Less than a month after the huge public celebration of the opening of the channel that linked Lake of the Isles and Lake Calhoun in July 1911, the park board received a petition requesting the park board to create a parkway from Hennepin Avenue to the new channel along the south side of the railroad tracks. That the issue was already being widely discussed, at least in the neighborhood, is demonstrated by the fact that the board received petitions at the same time from people who opposed the new parkway.

Those who wanted the parkway, a group organized under the name of The Lake District Protective Association, presented the park board with a check for \$460 in September to pay for the cost of appraising the land and the expense of assessing

the costs to property owners in the vicinity. With that as an inducement, the board proceeded to determine the cost of acquiring the land and building a parkway.

A couple contemporary developments in the neighborhood seemed to motivate residents to request that parkway. At the west end was the symbol-of-progress channel that connected the lakes. But perhaps as importantly, at the east end was the sparkling new classical Walker Library on Hennepin Avenue, which was also completed in 1911.

The true motivation for the Lake District Protective Association, however, may have been that the strip of land beside the railroad tracks was coveted by some who proposed industrial developments there. To many people, industrial use of that land would have been incompatible with the symbols of progress and refinement that stood at either end of it.

On October 16, 1911, the park board designated the land for acquisition and estimated that the total cost of acquisition and development would be \$123,349, with slightly more than \$80,000 to buy the land. The understanding from the beginning was that the total amount would be assessed on benefited districts—or property in the surrounding neighborhood.

The park board proceeded to prepare detailed lists of how much it would pay property owners and how much it would assess surrounding property for the costs and presented them in March 1912. A final round of community meetings was held to determine willingness to pay for the improvements and on April 1, 1912, a citizens group called the Committee of Six, composed equally of proponents and opponents to the plans for the mall,

agreed to defer to the decision of the park board in the matter. The park board took little time to confirm the damage awards and assessments, doing so on May 6, 1912.

The land taken for the parkway included seven houses, which were sold and removed from the land before road construction began.

The double roadway that was built is noteworthy in park history because it was used to test a new method of pavement: a two-course pavement of concrete and an asphalt-concrete mix. Park superintendent Theodore Wirth imported two paving experts, one from Winnipeg and one from Chicago, to assist with the construction. Wirth sought permission to pay the additional expenses of hiring the experts only after they had been paid and returned home, but the board retroactively approved those payments. Wirth deemed the pavement result such a success that the method was then used on other parkways.

Wirth changed his opinion on the surfacing material, however, within a few years. He determined that the asphalt concrete mix was too expensive and not durable enough. It was already apparent to Wirth within a few years that The Mall pavement would have to be repaired. This was at a time when more than half of the parkways in the city were still not paved at all.

In 1921, when the repaving was authorized, Wirth complained in his annual report that restrictions were needed on vehicles and loads on parkways because pavements could not withstand the heavy traffic to which they were being subjected.

In 1914 when the parkway was completed and landscaped, Wirth reported that it had become a fa-

vorite route of “automobilists” driving to and from Lake Calhoun and Lake Harriet.

The Mall was the site of another experiment in park engineering when in 1923 the Minneapolis General Electric Company installed test lighting consisting of 12-foot ornamental standards with 400 candle-power incandescent lights 100 feet apart along the parkway. Wirth noted in his memoirs that the cost of operation and maintenance of the lights on The Mall proved too costly for system-wide use.

In Wirth’s reminiscences of his first twenty-five years as park superintendent, published in the 1930 annual report, he included before and after photos of The Mall. He selected several other locations for before and after photos too, but his inclusion of The Mall photos attaches, from the distance of eighty years, an odd importance to a park property that did not play a very large role in the life of the city or in his own formidable portfolio of accomplishments.

The Mall largely disappeared from public and park board attention until in 1962 the City Council requested an easement along The Mall for street and parking purposes. The park board approved the easement until a howl of protest from the neighborhood forced them to rescind their action before the City Council had time to formally accept it.

The only significant development on The Mall since it was constructed was the closing of the intersection with Hennepin Avenue when the old Walker Library was replaced with a new underground library at Hennepin and Lagoon in 1981. The library board asked to purchase a piece of The Mall for the new library, but the park board refused. It cited its land policy, developed in the 1960s at a time when roads and freeways were encroaching on park property, which rejected the sale of any useful park land for any reason.

Roads being roads, however, the park board did spend over \$400,000 to repave the road and replace the lighting on The Mall in 1989. Now instead of providing a buffer between railroad tracks and apartment buildings, The Mall serves as a pleasant stretch of green alongside the bike trail that now occupies the former tracks.

Meet Your Neighbor

By Craig Wilson, Editor

Jeff Bengston and Isles Studio

Craig Wilson, editor of the Hill & Lake Press and Lowry Hill resident, interviews Jeff Bengston about his exquisitely curated shop, Isles Studio, located at 1311 West 25th St. off Hennepin in East Isles.

Where did you grow up and attend school?

I grew up on a farm on the Canadian border in North Dakota, where I had only eight classmates in school, but got to know birds, butterflies, wild animals, trees and other plants at an early age. I received a bachelor's degree in Biology from the University of North Dakota. Growing up on a farm and my degree in Biology explains my fascination with natural history.

What brought you back to Minneapolis from California?

I moved back to Minneapolis following the Loma Prieta earthquake in the Bay Area. I had lived in Minneapolis before and missed the slower pace that Minnesota offers. I now live in Lowry Hill.

Encountering Isles Studio for the first time is such a surprise. I'm sure that first-time visitors are astonished to discover such a sophisticated shop in the Twin Cities. We're lucky to have it in the neighborhood. What is Isles Studio?

Isles Studio is a home decor store. We sell everything from sofas, chairs, pillows, candles and incense, and books on interior design and natural history, to art by local artists, taxidermy birds, and framed butterflies. We feature products that can be found nowhere else in Minnesota, and in many cases nowhere else between Chicago and San Francisco.

How did you develop your aesthetic?

I have surrounded myself with things that I love, mostly inspired by nature. Nature inspires. If you look at great design, you can find inspiration from the natural world, whether from the shape and texture of a feather or fern or leaf or from the color of a bird, a flower, or a



Jeff Bengston is the owner of Isles Studio. (Photos by Jeff Bengston and Craig Wilson)

butterfly. I tell customers that they could choose one of our birds and decorate their entire home using the colors in the bird.

My aesthetic has evolved over time. The natural world has always been our underlying inspiration. We acquired some French lines early on and started traveling to Paris every September and January for a large design show, Maison&Objet. Our key vendors are French. These include Astier de Villatte, Trudon, Antoinette Poisson and others. These are vendors inspired by history. Astier de Villatte is known for their creamy white ceramics made of black terracotta in which they are preserving ancient shapes whether it is a vase, a cup or a bowl. Trudon has been making candles in France since 1643. Antoinette Poisson is recreating domino paper and fabrics found at Paris flea markets. As much as possible, I feature hand-made products that are truly works of art, such as vintage jewelry from Sandy Stewart, ceramics by Laura Zindel, original photos by Shelly Mosman, and paintings

by David Coggins, our Lowry Hill neighbor.

What are your favorite places to visit to find wares to sell at Isles Studio?

Our favorite place for finding products to sell is France, mostly Paris, but we have found lovely things in the Netherlands, Belgium and Italy, too.

What are some of your bestselling items?

Our bestselling items are ceramics from Astier de Villatte, pillows from Anke Drexel, and framed butterflies. The holiday season also brings in customers who are collectors of natural history. We have a great collection of taxidermy birds from artists in the Netherlands.

You have the exclusive rights to sell certain products. What are they and what makes them special?

We are the only retailer in the upper Midwest of Anke Drexel

pillows from Germany; Antoinette Poisson notebooks, domino wallpaper and paper mâché boxes; and Astier de Villatte ceramics, candles, incense and dish soap. The Astier de Villatte ceramics collection also includes exclusive designs by New York decoupage artist John Derian. Each piece is entirely handmade in Paris. The Anke Drexel pillows are handmade from silk. The Antoinette Poisson papers are all hand-colored on historic 18th century French patterns. The Astier de Villatte ceramics are hand-made following long-forgotten historic shapes.

Do you have any stocking stuffer recommendations for Hill & Lake Press readers?

I would suggest packages of Boissier candy from Paris; a miniature version of Audubon's Birds of America; intaglio sculptured soap of Diana, Cesar, or Hercules from Bridie Hall in London; incense from Astier de Villatte in Paris; decoupage mirrors by John Derian; notebooks by Epigram in Paris; ex-votos from France; hand-made Christmas ornaments; matchboxes; Bastide hand cream from Aix-en-Provence; scented soaps by Claus in Porto; and, for children, stuffed dolls by Parisian artist Nathalie Lété. I also have a collection of hand-made Victorian-style ornaments by Vintage by Crystal. Each ornament is one of a kind.

What other gifts do people like to receive?

Some of my regular clients have asked their partners for an especially gorgeous bird or a ceramic vase from Astier de Villatte, an Astier de Villatte John Derian Plate or a piece of Sandy Stewart's jewelry.

What are your hours of operation?

Our hours vary by the season. We're now open every day from noon to 5 p.m. until Christmas. Other seasons we typically open the same hours but only three days a week.



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Consider donating this giving season to support this work toward a cleaner, safer, connected community.

Wishing you good health in 2024!

Visit eastisles.org/join to:

- 1 **Donate** to support neighborhood events, resources and opportunities. 
- 2 **Subscribe** to our news and follow our social media to get updates on events and resources.
- 3 **Join a Committee** to address green issues, community safety, transit and more.



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Dec. 12 Tuesday, 6 – 8 PM
Jan. 9 Tuesday, 6 – 8 PM
 Grace-Trinity Community Church: 1430 W 28th St
East Isles residents, business owners/lessees, and non-profit, education and government reps welcome!

East Isles Safety Walking Club
Dec. 19 Tuesday, 5:30 – 7 PM
2024 Dates TBA
 Meet at Triangle Park: W 26th St & Irving Ave S
Get outside, meet your neighbors, pick up litter and contribute to community safety and spirit!

Winter Skating Party
Jan. 28 Sunday, 1 – 3 PM • snow or shine
 Lake of the Isles Ice Rink: 2500 E Lake of the Isles Pkwy
Stay warm with neighbors at our annual outdoor party! Gather for open skating, then thaw out with treats in the Warming House. Free skate rentals will be available for those who need them.

Dates subject to change—visit eastisles.org for the latest.

CIDNA Fall Festival

Photos by Tim Sheridan



East Isles-Wedge Midtown Greenway Clean Up

Photos by Tim Sheridan



The Hill & Lake Press is a non-profit newspaper funded and supported by its advertisers and neighborhood associations:

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Kenwood School: Native American Art in the Present Tense

By Keri Mabry

Keri Mabry is the Family Liaison at Kenwood Community School and a member of the Navajo Nation.

Kenwood's "Native American Art in the Present Tense" all-student art exhibit is on display through mid-December. Interested members of the public can email keri.mabry@mpls.k12.mn.us.

I grew up in Dallas, where my schools never had events to recognize Native American culture that I can recall. I couldn't have been the only Native student, but it felt that way.

Imagine my surprise when I arrived at Kenwood, which not only has an American Indian affinity group (shout out to MPS Department of American Indian Education!), but also an annual Native art residency.

Kenwood, rightly so I've found, has a reputation for empowering kids to be kind, creative and curious. This is aided in part by art residencies at each grade, graciously funded by Kenwood's PTA, and Principal Heidi Johnson's earnest commitment to honoring the myriad cultures and languages represented within the student population.

The Native American Art in the Present Tense residency originated in 2015 with Kenwood parent alumnae Heid and Angela Erdrich (Turtle Mountain Ojibwe), who approached former art teacher, Margaret Swenson, with the idea.

In collaboration with the Erdrichs and contemporary Native artists, Margaret developed a curriculum that was inaugurated at Kenwood in fall 2016. The residency's title reminds educators to avoid the pitfall of discussing Native cultural contributions in the past tense.

In 2018, the Minneapolis Institute of Art based its "Native Art, Native Voices" K-12 curriculum on lesson plans from Margaret and participating artists James Autio (Ojibwe), Gordon Coons (Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians

of Wisconsin and Chippewa/Ojibwa, Ottawa), and Marlena Myles (Spirit Lake Dakota, Mohegan, Muscogee).

This fall, I had the opportunity to help coordinate the residency. Thanks to support from Principal Johnson, PTA volunteers extraordinaire Amy Sanborn and Daisy Simpson, and Kenwood teachers, who were courageous enough to grant students access to acrylic paint in their classrooms, it came together beautifully.

Kindergartners met with Wookiye wiŋ (Dakhóta) to craft watercolor Dakhóta floral designs. First grade students painted colorful Ojibwe family clan designs with James Autio. Gordon Coons led second-grade students in creating large drawings with personal meaning in the Woodlands style. Hapistinna Graci Horne (Sisseton Wahpeton Dakota, Hunkpapa Lakota/Dakota) taught third-grade students how to make their own stamps, which they used to produce unique bandanna designs.

Marlena Myles inspired fourth-grade students to sketch original animal scenes, using bleeding tissue paper to add color. Fifth-grade students, guided by Angela Erdrich, sketched and painted fish that the Ojibwe catch in Red Lake, as often depicted by late artist Patrick DesJarlait (Ojibwe).

Being present in classrooms while students worked alongside the artists in residence was surprisingly emotional. I sat on the rug next to the kids, listening and learning with them, healing a part of younger me. We're still here, and I'm filled with hope knowing that Kenwood students are celebrating that fact.



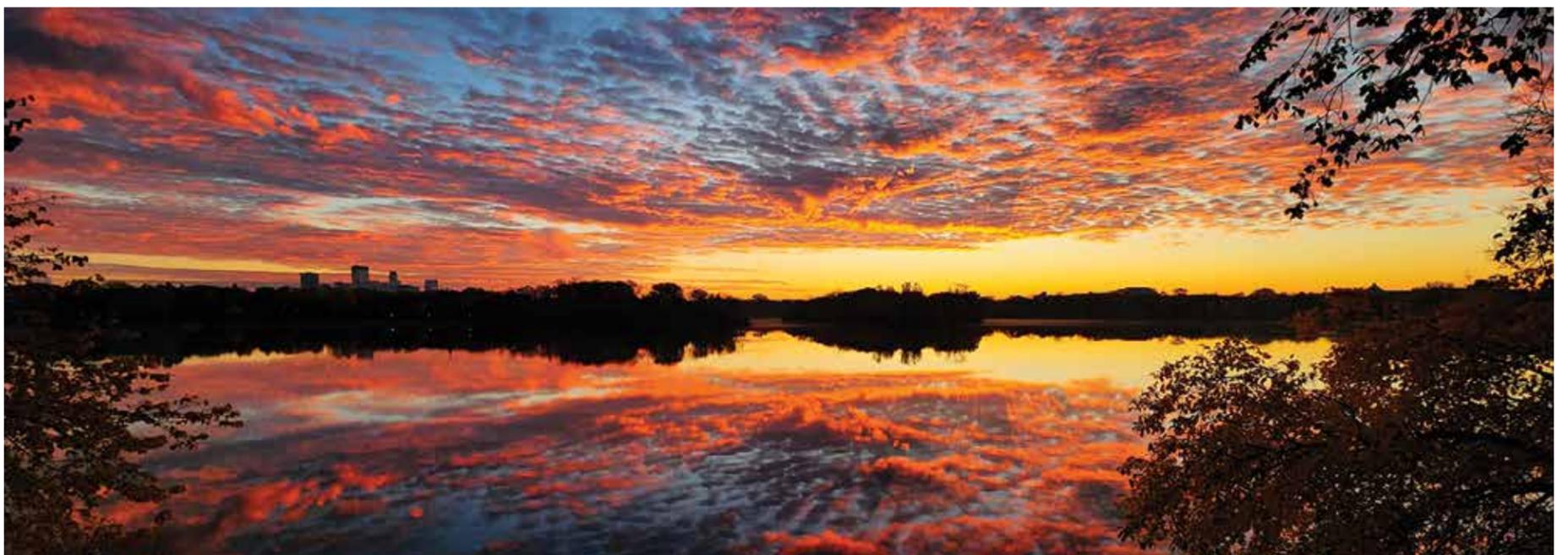
Artist-in-Residence James Autio consults with a first grade student.



Left: A fifth-grader works under the guidance of Artist-in-Residence Dr. Angela Erdrich; Right: A second-grader works on an Ojibwe animal clan design drawing under the instruction of Artist-in-Residence Gordon Coons. (Photos by Keri Mabry)



Artists-in-Residence James Autio, Dr. Angela Erdrich, Marlena Myles and Gordon Coons.



Lake of the Isle sunrise. (Photo by Tom Sheridan)

The North Minneapolis 'What We Want' Project at Isles Bun & Coffee

By Alida Mittau

Alida Mittau is a regular columnist and lives in Lowry Hill.

Most readers are fondly familiar with Isles Bun & Coffee on West 28th Street and Hennepin Avenue. I grew up looking forward to devouring their famous “puppy-dog tails” on special occasions — small, twisted versions of their mouth-watering cinnamon rolls — and I still treat myself to one every now and then.

What I didn't realize until relatively recently is that the shop also functions as a gallery. Owner Catherine Veigel and her husband, Jeff, describe it as a “third space” in Uptown that has provided a sense of place, belonging and community for over 20 years:

“As proud owners of Isles Bun & Coffee since 2000, we look for ways to pay our good fortune forward to our neighbors, near and far. Supporting local artists has been part of our business model since the beginning, and we specifically look for work that informs and enlarges the worldview of those who frequent our iconic Uptown business.”

From Nov. 3 through Jan. 29, the space is displaying a series of socially conscious broadsides by George Roberts, long-time resident of North Minneapolis, letterpress artist and owner of Homewood Studios.

The exhibit is titled, “The North Minneapolis What We Want Project.” It emerged from George's interviews with local residents, in which he asks what they want for their community. He places a bench outside of his studio on Plymouth Avenue, where he sits and waits until inevitably, someone stops and talks with him. At some point in the conversation, George asks, “what do you want?” and then proceeds to design and print a broadside poster of their response.

George notes, “My community, North Minneapolis — where I have lived and worked for 50 years — is often portrayed in the media and in the attitudes of people who do not live here as without assets, dangerous, impoverished or unworthy of careful listening.”

By taking his broadsides to other parts of the city, he aims to shift those attitudes and show that “the hopes and desires of North Minneapolis residents are just like anyone else's.” With the broadsides displaying answers like, “I want universal healthcare” ... “I want everyone to show more concern for one another” ...and... “I want people to take hold of education,” he seems to have accomplished just that.

On an early morning walk with my roommate in the first week of November, we stopped into Isles Bun & Coffee for warm drinks and a pastry and happily stumbled upon the exhibit. The shop was bustling with people eating, meeting and working, with the broadsides prominently displayed

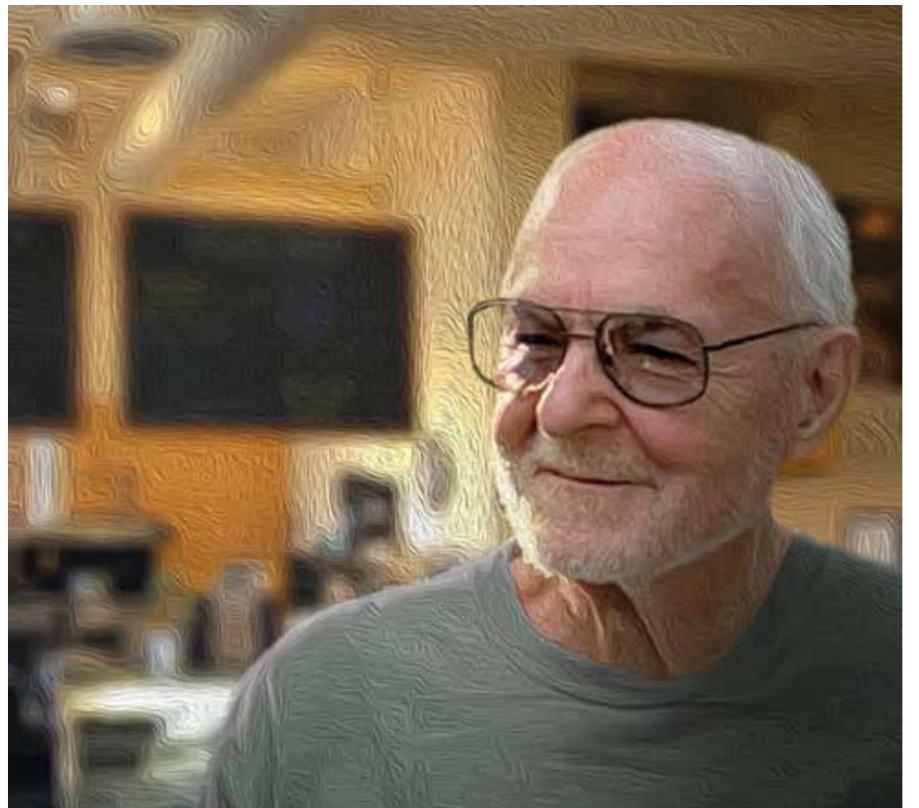
in the backdrop. The exhibit fit almost seamlessly into the space, and it seemed obvious that the patrons' hopes and desires could not possibly be dissimilar from George's interviewees.

Isles Bun & Coffee occupies an iconic building that harkens back to an earlier time when a streetcar ran down Hennepin and West High School stood across 28th Street. Now, as Kenwood Isles Condominiums, the space is an enduring reminder of the history of this community and neighborhood — one that has experienced its own set of challenges, especially over the last few years.

“The North Minneapolis What We Want Project” not only connects us to the residents of North Minneapolis, but also to our own hopes and desires for Uptown during a period marked by political divisiveness and economic unrest. The broadsides elicit a re-imagining of our outlooks on communities beyond our own, all while provoking contemplation on what we want for the future of this community.

Four of the broadsides from this series are available for purchase, and the remaining ones are given for free to small business owners across the Twin Cities who agree to display a broadside in a prominent window. If you are interested in displaying a broadside in your shop or purchasing one, you may reach out to George to set that in motion:

George Roberts
DownStairs Press
at Homewood Studios
2400 Plymouth Avenue,
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george@homewoodstudios.com
612 587-0230



Top: Owners Jeff and Catherine Veigel; Middle: Artist George Roberts; Bottom: What We Want exhibit. (Photos Alida Mittau)

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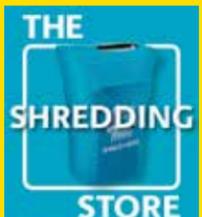
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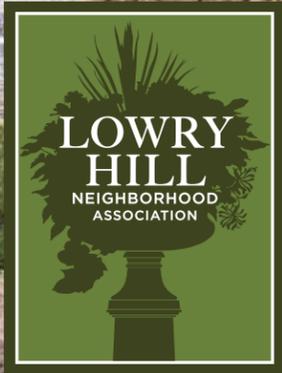
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LOWRY HILL NEWS - December 2023




DECEMBER NEIGHBORHOOD WALK

Saturday, December 16, 10 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
Meet in Thomas Lowry Park

Join us for a friendly walk around the neighborhood! This is a great way to stay active and get outside, meet neighbors, pick up litter, and build community.

JANUARY BOARD MEETING

Tuesday, January 2, 7 p.m. - 9 p.m.
Kenwood Community Center

All residents are welcome. If you have questions or would like to be on the agenda, please email us at lhna@lowryhillneighborhood.org.

Please consider Lowry Hill Neighborhood Association for your year-end giving.

LHNA relies on your financial support to fund programs, events, and advocacy for the Lowry Hill neighborhood. LHNA is a nonprofit tax-exempt organization and all donations are tax deductible.



Thank you for your generous support.

Sign up for the LHNA email newsletter at lowryhillneighborhood.org

Dear Neighbor

A monthly column by Dorothy Richmond

Dorothy Richmond is founder of the Dear Neighbor column and a longtime resident of Cedar-Isles-Dean.

Dear Neighbor,

It's the holiday season, so let's talk about birthdays. There's always a method to the madness, and I'll tell you why birthdays are important to consider at this time.

I'm not talking about little baby Jesus's — that one's been covered since before Halloween in every store and on that radio station that blares only carols from November through January, thereby generating earworms that last well into March.

This column is dedicated to those souls born between Hanukkah and the first week of the new year, the period that includes Christmas and Kwanzaa and no doubt many other occasions, too.

Here's why.

My daughter, Lily (now in her twenties), was born a few days before Christmas. Throughout her gestation, I was just happy my obstetrician reported that she was healthy, and I couldn't wait to meet her; that's all I thought about until a few days before she was born.

I was waddling through the Uptown Lund's in mid-December, exiting the produce aisle with my belly pushing the cart as much as my hands, when I was accosted by an angel. I say accosted because she stormed up to me with flames in her eyes, but her words made her an angel to me forever.

I have no idea who she was, where she came from — she had no cart or basket — she just appeared. So, I'll call her Anne, after St. Anne, the Patron Saint of Birthdays.

Anne pointed at my bulging stomach — long past anyone's wondering, "Is she pregnant or just putting on weight?"

Anne began her sermon with the same bluster as a rabid evangelical preacher: "You're going to have a Christmas baby. I was born on Christmas Eve and my birthday was an interruption in the holiday's celebrations. I never had a birthday party with friends." (I get it, who's free on Christmas Eve? Nobody.)

Anne barreled on, "I never got a birthday cake. I got Christmas cookies!" At this point there were tears in her eyes. "One year I begged my mother for a birthday cake, so she stuck candles in a fruitcake — a [expletive] fruitcake!"

Anne was clearly on a roll. "You know the worst thing? They wrapped my birthday presents in Christmas paper and wrote 'Merry Birthday' on them! And!!! They put my birthday gifts under the (same previous expletive) tree!"

At this point Anne had exhausted her trauma litany and added simply, "Do not do this to your child." And she strode off never to be seen again. (Maybe she vanished into thin air or was whisked off by a spaceship), leaving me not feeling weirded out, rather touched by an angel. Anne's words seared through me.

Lily was born, and that first year it didn't matter what I did, as a neonate has the cognitive skills of a goldfish, but as the years

accumulated, I thought of Anne's words and separated the birthday gifts from the Christmas ones by putting them on "the birthday table." There was always a bona fide birthday cake, the carols were replaced by any music but, and her gifts were wrapped in birthday paper: Aside from there being a lit tree in the midst of the merrymaking, for Lily's special day Christmas took a holiday.

Angels abound and surround us. Listen to them. All year long they deliver wise words you don't even know you need. But if you're open to them, you'll listen and pay heed. Every year I thank Anne — my St. Anne — for her message. May you be an angel to others, too.

Happy Holidays to all of you. And to those latecomer Sagittarians and freshly minted Capricorns, Happy Birthday as well!

— Dorothy



Second Church of Christ, Scientist, Minneapolis

A COMMUNITY OF SPIRITUAL THINKERS PURSUING INSPIRED SOLUTIONS THAT ELEVATE, HEAL, AND EMPOWER

Church and Sunday School Services

SUNDAY SERVICES
10:00 am – 11:00 am

SUNDAY SCHOOL
10:00 am – 11:00 am

WEDNESDAY TESTIMONY MEETINGS
7:30 pm – 8:30 pm

Child care provided at all church functions

Reading Room Hours

SUNDAY	9:30 am – 11:45 am
MONDAY	3:00 pm – 6:30 pm
TUESDAY	10:00 am – 1:00 pm
WEDNESDAY	6:30 pm – 8:45 pm
THURSDAY	9:30 am – 12:30 pm
FRIDAY	9:30 am – 12:30 pm
SATURDAY	Closed

CHURCH AND READING ROOM – 1822 Hennepin Ave South • Minneapolis, MN 55403 • secondchurchminneapolis.com

Ray Harris Honored: A Developer and Community Activist

By Helen Wilkie

Helen Wilkie writes on behalf of the University of St Thomas Opus College of Business.

Ray H. Harris of The Kenwood was inducted into the Minnesota Real Estate Hall of Fame in a ceremony at the Golden Valley Country Club on November 15. Harris, who was featured in a story by James

Lenfestey in our October issue, is known as Mr. Minneapolis for his love of the city and storied career taking on problems and challenges as a developer consultant and leader to improve the quality of life for Minneapolis residents.

A problem solver at heart, real estate was the mechanism Harris chose to make his city resilient,

welcoming, and successful for everyone. Over his sixty-year career, Harris worked with countless neighborhood groups, public sector entities and professional associations for rejuvenation, quality housing, services to the elderly, convenient commercial areas and community-based education programs.

His projects include Calhoun Square in Uptown, Greenway Gables and Berger Fountain in Loring Park, Orchestra Hall, Towerside Innovation District, Cedar/Riverside, Douglas School Townhomes, Sholom Alliance, Chiron School and acquiring the Sears property to make way for Midtown Exchange.

The Hall of Fame was established in 2010 by the Shenhon Center for Real Estate at the University of St Thomas Opus College of Business. The Hall of Fame goal is to honor, preserve and perpetuate the names and outstanding accomplishments of leaders across Minnesota who have made transformational contributions in real estate and demonstrated care and concern for improving their communities.



Left: Stuart Ackerberg, President of the Ackerberg Group and Chair of the University of St. Thomas Real Estate Advisory Board, presents Ray Harris with an award; Right: Stuart Ackerberg, Ray Harris and Andrew Babula, Director of the Real Estate Program at the Opus Business College at the University of St. Thomas (Photo Helen Wilkie)

Hill & Lake Press

SCAN HERE TO DONATE

HOMES FOR THE HOLIDAYS...

Thank you for your business and support this year—looking forward to 2024! Whether you're buying, selling or just need real estate advice, call on us to help.



2500 Sheridan Ave S • Under Contract • \$725,000



1821 Dupont Ave S • SOLD • \$625,000



5017 Gladstone Ave • Available • \$850,000



1225 LaSalle #1602 • Under Contract • \$169,000



4846 Thomas Ave S • SOLD • \$1,070,000



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