



MAKING UPTOWN GREAT AGAIN! THE MINNEAPOLIS ARTS & CULTURE VIBRANT STOREFRONTS INITIATIVE GAINED INTEREST FROM A SURPRISING PLACE LATE LAST MONTH: THE WHITE HOUSE

By Molly Mogren Katt



Make Uptown Great Again is coming in 2025! (Image: Christopher Bohnet)

Molly Mogren Katt is a writer, entrepreneur and mom who launched *Hey Eleanor!* on Substack to document facing her fears. She lives in the Wedge.

“I see a fantastic opportunity to make Uptown great again,” President Trump said from the Oval Office on Tuesday, as American cheese from his Jucy Lucy dripped down the bib covering his shirt and jacket. “We’ll make it the Riviera of the Middle West with that waterfront.”

The city’s Arts & Culture program will subsidize up to \$50,000

a year for two years in rent in previously vacant storefronts. Trump wasted no time in sharing his plans for the neighborhood.

“Seven Points?” he said, making air quotes with his fingers. “We’re gonna bring back the name Calhoun Square — John Calhoun, a great American — and turn it into Tesla’s midwestern flagship store.”

The former Urban Outfitters space, also available through the Vibrant Storefronts initiative, would make for a shopping experience Trump knows every American craves.

“My friend Mike Lindell — great guy, great Minnesotan — makes the best pillows. Great pillows. I love a pillow that feels like a polyester bag filled with tiny cotton balls.”

The My Pillow store will not only sell its namesake product, but cheap, scratchy towels; fake mustaches; red “Make Uptown Great Again” hats; and throw blankets featuring crying bald eagles. Trump proposed a plan requiring all Ward 10 and 7 residents to vote at the store so “Mike can keep an eye on things.”

Next, he spoke of plans to buy

Magers & Quinn out of their lease. “I saw photos of the shop and honestly? Too many books. And too many books without pictures.” He’s enlisted DOGE to use AI technology to identify and burn any books with DEI-encoded words, such as equality, transition and they.

“You wouldn’t believe how many books include the word they, it’s unbelievable,” DOGE head Elon Musk told the Hill & Lake Press editorial team, as he skipped down Hennepin Avenue holding his son’s hand. When asked the son’s name, Musk replied, “Um, you know, I can’t keep track anymore.”

Other changes Trump mentioned? Tearing down Lunds and Byerlys to build a 36-story Trump hotel, complete with first-floor food court to combat the area’s lack of fast food options (“a McDonald’s? That’s it?”) and combining Harriet, Bde Maka Ska, Isles and Cedar Lakes to create one big lake called The Lake of America. “It’ll be a great lake. The greatest lake. To my knowledge, there is no greater lake in Minnesota, let alone America.”

When asked how he will fund the overhaul, Trump said, “Canada will pay for it.” Construction begins fall of 2025. (April Fools)

UPTOWN FARMERS MARKET COMING SUMMER 2025

Page 3

Devastating Tree Vandalism at Cedar Lake: A Community in Mourning

Page 9

OPPONENTS OF THE MALL REDESIGN SUFFER SETBACK AT PARK BOARD

Page 11

THE RISE UP CENTER HAS YET TO RISE

Page 13

Llama-rama at Kenwood School

Page 20



Make Uptown Great Again is coming in 2025! (Image: Christopher Bohnet)



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. Our copy limit is 300 words (750 words for a commentary) and we reserve the right to edit for clarity and length.

Violence Interrupters in Uptown

Given all the recent news about violence interrupter programs city-wide, I read with interest about the sudden violence interrupter program in Uptown (“The Mystery of the Missing Violence Interrupters,” March issue).

How was the decision made for the violence interrupters to come to Uptown for such a short duration? How are the violence interrupter contracts decided? Has anyone seen them yet? And why is a City Council member telling them where to go? Is it indeed because the City Council can, in fact, address public safety concerns voiced by their constituents?

I’ve frequently heard the ball being punted back to the mayor’s office because they are allegedly solely responsible for public safety under the new strong mayor system. While I agree that their presence is needed, this strikes me as a bit of an eleventh-hour decision.

Our city needs to wake up to the idea that residents need accountability for how it spends our taxpayer dollars. The violence interrupter program, once a promising component of comprehensive safety, is now riddled with lack of oversight from the Council, and corruption.

When will our elected officials hear the pleas of businesses, visitors and residents who have zeroed in on public safety challenges as a primary impediment to what would be a thriving commercial corridor adjacent to our neighborhoods? Longtime businesses in Uptown continue to pack up and move to more stable parts of Minneapolis or its first-ring suburbs. Our current Council is not delivering on a core responsibility of city governance.

Quinton Courts
East Isles

Thank You Molly!

The last edition oozed with challenging the invested leadership in our community to look inside. “We have met the enemy and it is us.”

You walked into the lion's den with Molly Mogren Katy’s opinion article. She should be Queen. She absolutely nailed it.

And I say this from a financial perspective. The reason I live here (financially) is due to the real estate law of value. Location, location, location. No matter how bad things get, proximity to the lakes and the sports stadiums won’t change.

Where do you find three Cathedrals lined up in a row as one goes to go watch the Twins?

My daughter lives in Linden Hills and 44th and 50th and France rock. Our real estate crushes theirs. We can do this. Thank you. Thank you.

David Larson
Lowry Hill

Kenwood Plant Sale Coming Up

Kenwood School is busy getting ready for its annual Plant Sale, held on the school playground May 2nd - 4th. The sale is open to the community and offers a wide variety of annual flowers, pollinator friendly plants, greenery, herbs, vegetables and hanging baskets.

Parents plan the sale and fifth grade kids unload plants and set it up. Proceeds help fund the annual fifth grade trip to northern Minnesota. This year's trip will bring Kenwood fifth graders to the YMCA Camp Widiwagan in Ely near the Boundary Waters Canoe Area. This trip has been a treasured tradition for 5th graders at Kenwood for many years. The kids travel with school friends, learn new skills, and find joy in the beauty of the natural world in northern Minnesota.

Plant Sale Hours:
Friday, May 2nd – 2 p.m. - 6 p.m.
Saturday, May 3rd and
Sunday, May 4th – 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Amy Sanborn
East Isles

Aloha from Volcano

Aloha, I am Herb Wilson, the father of editor Craig Wilson. I live in Volcano Village, on the north slope of Kilauea Volcano on Hawaii Island. Over the years, I have had the privilege of receiving the Hill & Lake Press, which I have read eagerly to keep up with the goings on in Craig’s community. I am always impressed with articles submitted because they are as entertaining as they are informative, largely due to the wit and skills of the writers.

Most recently, I was impressed with an article by Susan Lenfestey about the 2025 Luminary Loppet winter spectacle. It has me wanting to experience the event in person, despite the fact that as a Native Hawaiian, I am intimidated by your Minneapolis winters and have always visited

my son during your exceptional summers. Craig’s recent visit to Volcano Village and Kilauea Volcano rewarded him with one of our most spectacular eruptions in a while — a fountain of lava. But, because of your hills and lakes and the intrigue inspired by your writers, I am planning more visits to Minnesota and seriously considering a visit during the next Luminary Loppet.

I wanted to share with your readers that in ancient times, when Hawaii was being settled by Westerners and the written language and printing press were introduced by Christian missionaries, our indigenous people were captivated by the new tool, like we are by social media today. More than 200 local newspapers sprung up across the islands, reporting the happenings of the day and sharing stories that had previously been preserved in songs and chants. Although written in the Hawaiian language, these newspapers are the source for academic research today!

That said, it doesn’t surprise me that Craig Wilson (a Native Hawaiian) is attracted to the Hill & Lake Press, which serves the same purpose of chronicling the present, while celebrating the past and charting the future. And the passion of its contributors and interviews with politicians demonstrate the same fervor that Indigenous Hawaiians had more than 100 years ago. You are concerned and guarded about your natural environment, your classic buildings, your parks, even your neighborhoods and street intersections!

While many of your ancestors may not be indigenous to Minnesota, you are all the collective "melting pot culture" of the Minneapolis that has evolved over many generations. You have every right to be proud and concerned about your present and your future.

The Hill & Lake Press is but one vehicle for voicing and preserving your culture. Embrace it! Keep up the good work!

Herb Wilson
Volcano, Hawaii



While visiting his dad, editor Craig Wilson witnessed an eruption at Kilauea Volcano on Hawaii’s Big Island on March 4, sending lava soaring over 600 feet into the air in a magnificent fountain. (Image: Craig Wilson)



A rare blood moon lunar eclipse lit up the sky over Minneapolis on the night of March 13–14, 2025. This stunning event, captured by photographer Ryan Jandl, showcased the Moon’s deep red hue during totality.(Image: Ryan Jandl)

UPTOWN FARMERS' MARKET COMING SUMMER 2025

By Dan Sutton



The new Uptown Farmers Market logo. (Image: design by Scott Thares of Wink)

Dan Sutton and others are advocating for a refresh of the East Isles Farmers Market this summer. In addition to serving on the board of the East Isles Neighborhood Association with Jonathan Beck, co-leader of the Farmers’ Market initiative, Dan Sutton is the founder and CEO of Roundpeg, a national brand strategy consulting firm. He lives in East Isles.

Come summer, residents of the Hill & Lake area and surrounding communities will have a new destination for Thursday evenings. Thanks to a strong, multi-neighborhood, all-volunteer effort, an Uptown Farmers Market will launch on June 12 outside of Seven Points. The market will run Thursday evenings, from 4-8 p.m. through September 25, along Lake Street and the Girard Avenue Plaza, between Lake Street and 31st (one block east of Hennepin Avenue). Mark your calendars!

The Uptown Farmers Market is focused on activating the core of the Uptown business district. Building on the success of the East Isles Farmers Market, the expanded concept will provide a fresh, weekly community touchpoint for the eight collaborating resident associations immediately surrounding Uptown, with the ultimate goal of attracting visitors from across Minneapolis and the nearby suburbs.

The effort has been in development for the past 18 months, after the EINA made the decision in 2023 to pause the market that used to run in the park along the Mall, west of Hennepin. Last summer, pop-up markets were held across the area in order to build a partnership among neighborhood associations and collect

opinions from residents. The overwhelming response at the end of the 2024 season was that an expanded, more central market could play a key role in activating Uptown. As a result, the EINA board agreed to serve as the initial fiscal sponsor to get the project off the ground. As news spread, the concept grew and momentum accelerated, and a dedicated multi-neighborhood team of Uptown area residents stepped forward to lend their time, make connections and apply their expertise to bringing the idea to life.

Amy Sanborn, who has served on the EINA board for many years, and past president/current vice president of the Kenwood School PTA (an area “super-volunteer,” if you will), summed up her experience to date, “I’m so impressed with [the team] and the work they’ve done for the UFM. It’s a true joy to work on this project.”

Uptown small business owners have also supported the effort. Judy Longbottom, who owns and runs the Hennepin Avenue UPS Store and is providing an in-kind printing sponsorship, points out that the “only way things are really going to continue to improve is if we all keep pitching in.”

Added Michaela Holden, the founder and principal at Lucent Blue Events + Design (whose office is at Seven Points), is spearheading the placemaking and event programming strategy:

“A vibrant Uptown is what originally drew so many residents to the surrounding area — and we know it’s ripe for a comeback. Yes, it’s been strained, and yes, it’s seen better days ...

but I’d suggest that it’s a phoenix about to rise from the ashes. What’s great about the Uptown Farmers Market is that it will become a DESTINATION for all ages. Not only will it offer fresh produce and great local food, but we’re planning so much more, including music, kids’ programming, chef demos, and even a beer garden, if we can get our permits lined up. I’m excited for its potential, both to bring more vibrancy to the area, as well as to help revitalize Uptown’s business district.”

Indeed, I’m excited as well. As chair of the committee, working behind the scenes to rally the troops and secure funding has become a second job! However, the need is so clear and the response so universally positive. Neighbors and local businesses recognize that the market is a major first step in Uptown’s turnaround. We’re off to a great start. However, it takes a lot of time and effort to get an effort like this off the ground — especially in such a relatively short period of time.

That’s where readers of the Hill & Lake Press can play a vital role in the market’s success. In addition to funding via civic grants, corporate sponsorships and neighborhood associations, we are aiming to raise another \$25,000 in charitable contributions prior to launch. And we’re already well on the way with significant, unsolicited donations from Steve Havig of Lakes Area Realty, The Wedge Community Co-ops and Uptown commercial property owners Tim Prinsen, George Zeller and others.

But Uptown needs and deserves our collective investment. If you’re in a position to make a tax-deductible donation, please visit <https://uptownmarket.org/> or use the QR code below.

While you’re on the market’s website, we hope you’ll subscribe to the mailing list as well to stay informed on new developments and upcoming volunteer opportunities.

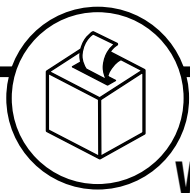
No matter what, we hope you’ll choose to make Thursday evenings at the market a cornerstone of your summer routine — the more we all show up, the brighter Uptown’s future will become.

We can’t wait to see what the community builds, together.

→ MAKE A FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION?

VISIT –
uptownmarket.org
or scan this QR Code.





EVERYONE IS ENTITLED TO MY OPINION: WHY YOU SHOULD ATTEND YOUR CAUCUS, AND WHY IT SHOULD BE YOUR LAST

By Susan Lenfestey

Get ut and Caucus

CITY-WIDE CAUCUS
IS TUESDAY,
APRIL 8, 2025
7-9 P.M.

Be part of the process –
Every voice counts!

Susan Lenfestey is a Hill & Lake Press founder and board member. She lives in Lowry Hill.

If you live in Minneapolis, you probably know that the mayor and all members of the City Council are up for reelection this November. But you may not know that the critical first step to that election is the precinct caucus on April 8.

Some states have party primaries to cull the field of candidates down to who will be on the final ballot with party endorsement. Minnesota has caucuses. There are 13 wards in the city, and they are divided into precincts. You attend the precinct caucus based on where you live. At this point, locations have not been finalized.

Turnout at a caucus is often small, perhaps 30 or so people, so you might think it's like voting for student council. But in a hotly contested federal election it's often larger. In 2007, the year Clinton and Obama were running for the nomination, we had nearly 300 people at our caucus.

A certain number of delegates is allotted to each precinct, based on a

magical formula having to do with previous caucus turnout. This is a city election, so this year those who are elected delegates will go on to the ward convention in May, where

“The thinking behind the caucus system was that anyone could run and get endorsed, no money required, whereas wealthy candidates could afford a pricey primary campaign.

However, over time it's become apparent that it is difficult for many people to get to a caucus due to work, childcare or other issues, and they have a hard time following the process once there.”

City Council candidates will vie for DFL endorsement. Candidates who receive the endorsement go on to the November ballot. (Delegates will also be elected to the city convention, where candidates for mayor and Park Board and Board of Estimate and Taxation will vie for endorsement.)

Those who aren't endorsed can run in November, but the endorsement confers huge benefits, including funding, inclusion on DFL sample ballots and so on. In this one-party city, candidates with the DFL endorsement win 95% of the time.

At the caucus, delegates are selected in a number of ways. Some years there may be 12 allotted slots and only 12 people who want to fill them. Other years there might be 12 slots and 30 people who want to fill them. That may lead to “walking subcaucuses” where people divide into smaller groups based on the candidate they support and run for delegates out of that sub-caucus. We'll stay out of those weeds for now.

The important thing to know is that turnout for caucuses is about 2% of eligible voters. For party loyalists, those 2% choose who the other 98% get to vote for in the fall.

The reason this should be your last caucus is because it's a truly flawed way to start the electoral process. We need to do away with them and move to primary elections instead.

The thinking behind the caucus system was that anyone could run and get endorsed, no money required, whereas wealthy candidates could afford a pricey primary campaign.

However, over time it's become apparent that it is difficult for many people to get to a caucus due to work, childcare or other issues, and they have a hard time following the process once there.

With so few people bothering or unable to attend, it is relatively easy to swing the endorsement. Recently the left wing of the party has done a great job of getting their supporters to turn out for caucuses, while the more centrist have been slow to catch up.

This year, the Minneapolis DFL, which tilts far left, initiated a

pre-registration option saying that it will save time at the caucus. (Note. You do NOT have to register to attend your caucus. Just show up.) On the form you can state your candidate preference, and your desire to run as a delegate.

According to Conrad Lange Zbikowski, chair of the Minneapolis DFL, no data will be shared until 7 p.m. on April 5. Where will that data be stored until then, and what could go wrong with a candidate getting access to information about the numbers and preferences of caucus attendees ahead of time?

Zbikowski says the goal is to be totally transparent, but this sure seems like an invitation to shenanigans.

So if you want a say in which candidate advances to the November election with the DFL endorsement, hie thee to your caucus. Then get to work on persuading the mavens of Minnesota politics that it's time to vote out the caucus system and move to elect a primary system instead.

MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD AT THE 2025 CAUCUS!



• FIND YOUR CAUCUS LOCATION:

Caucuses take place at the precinct level. Use the Minnesota Secretary of State's Polling Place Finder to locate yours.

• MARK YOUR CALENDAR:

The city-wide caucus is set for Tuesday, April 8, 2025, from 7-9 PM. Arriving early ensures a smooth check-in and full participation.

• CAN'T MAKE IT IN PERSON?

Submit a Nonattendee Form by Saturday, April 5, 2025, at 6:59 PM to have your say even if you can't attend.

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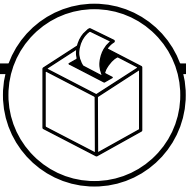
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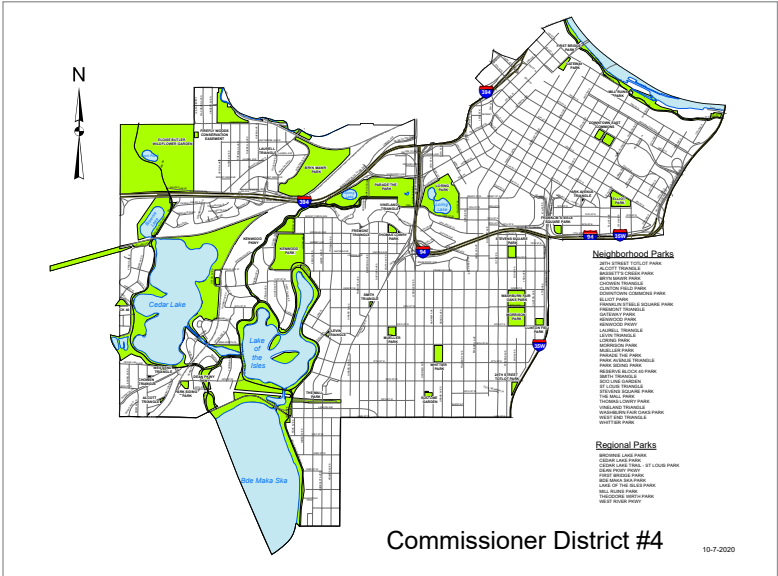


DISTRICT 4 PARK BOARD CANDIDATES

By Terry White

Terry White is a regular contributor to the Hill & Lake Press. He publishes the Better Minneapolis newsletter and lives in Field.

At the DFL caucuses on April 8, attendees will be asked to choose a Park Board candidate to replace Elizabeth Shaffer, who is running for City Council in Ward 7. As of now, three candidates are in the race.



ANDREW GEBO



Andrew Gebo. (Image: gebo4parkboard.com)

Gebo moved to Minneapolis in 2018 from San Francisco and calls Loring Park home. He states that he has more than a decade of experience in finance and technology, wants to nurture neighborhoods and believes the Park Board is a unique opportunity to cultivate and strengthen communities.

Key points:

- Community advocacy
- Workers' rights
- Public transportation champion

More information is available at — gebo4parkboard.com.

JORDAN LEICK



Jordan Leick. (Image: jordanforparks.org)

Leick describes himself as an optimistic Minneapolis progressive who serves as a Capital Long-Range Improvement Committee (CLIC) appointee, vice president of the Marcy-Holmes Neighborhood Association, and a board member of the new East Bank Neighborhoods Partnership.

Key points:

- Parks are some of our most important third spaces
- Bridge-builder
- Brings valuable experience to the table

More information is available at — jordanforparks.org.

JODY WYNEN



Jody Wynen. (Image: jordanforparks.org)

Jody has lived in District 4 for 14 years. She is a runner, dog walker, cyclist and outdoor enthusiast with an intimate connection with Minneapolis Parks and trail systems.

Key points:

- Protect, preserve and enhance Minneapolis Parks
- Keeping our parks clean and safe and beating back invasive species
- Maintaining public services year with trash removal and functional restrooms

More information is available by following Jody on Instagram at [Jody4ParkBoard](https://www.instagram.com/Jody4ParkBoard) or her website — jody4parkboard.carrd.co.

SPRING IS HERE. TIME FOR A SCOOP.

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LOWRY HILL 1007 W FRANKLIN AVE SO. MINNEAPOLIS, MN

KINGFIELD 4301 NICOLLET AVE SO. MINNEAPOLIS, MN



Sebastian Joer



ARTrageous YOUTH FEATURED ARTIST EXHIBIT

By Amanda Vallone



Top: Edison Ungemah, Age 13 and East Isles Resident, Bottom: Neighbors enjoying the featured artist exhibit. (Images: Amanda Vallone)

ARTrageous Adventures hosted its kickoff series of Youth Featured Artist Exhibits with East Isles resident, Edison Ungemah. Edison's show titled "Potential Energy" showcased his love of how machines work as well as his series of roller coasters and buildings. If you have a young artist that would like to be considered for a future art showing, please reach out and email: artrageousadventures.info@gmail.com



Hill & Lake Press

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- East Bde Maka Ska Neighborhood Association (EBMSNA)



- East Isles Neighborhood Association (EINA)



- Cedar-Isles-Dean Neighborhood Association (CIDNA)



- Kenwood Neighborhood Organization (KNO)



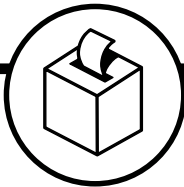
- Lowry Hill Neighborhood Association (LHNA)



- West Maka Ska Neighborhood Council (WMSNC)



WEST MAKA SKA
neighborhood council



COREY VEST JOINS WARD 7 CITY COUNCIL RACE

By Terry White



Corey Vest (Image: Facebook)

Terry White is a regular contributor to the Hill & Lake Press. He publishes the Better Minneapolis newsletter and lives in Field.

The following interview has been abridged for space considerations. Vest entered the race later than the other candidates and was therefore not included in the previous issue, which featured interviews with incumbent Katie Cashman and challengers Elizabeth Shaffer and Paula Chesley. Please visit hill-andlakepress.org to read the other candidate interviews.

There is a new candidate for the Ward 7 City Council seat: Corey Ryan Vest, who lives near The Mall in East Isles in Uptown. Originally from the Chicago suburb of Downers Grove, he has been a Minneapolis resident for 20 years and works as a database consultant.

Vest had a unique upbringing that included attending the prestigious Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy in Aurora, Illinois. He considers his world perspective an asset in the race.

Vest is an active member of the DFL, serving as director of State Senate District 61 and Congressional District 5. He is also a member of the state central committee and the DFL party affairs committee.

Why are you running to be the next Council member representing Ward 7?

If I had to pick one thing that started me on the journey, it would be the Uptown transit station in spring of 2023. It gave me the sense that things were going sideways. Specifically, folks were hot boxing at 10 o'clock in the morning. And for folks who don't know what that term is, hot boxing is sharing secondhand smoke in an enclosed space. It was a group of regular unhoused folks, homeless folks that were living in Uptown that would use the bus stop to smoke fentanyl. Seeing that daily I began to wonder after two or three weeks, why isn't anyone doing anything about this? I think it's a bit corrosive to the soul

to walk by that every day and get a sense of no one is doing anything about it.

It's the sense that there's slow urban decay that's taking hold in the city. It's homelessness, it's mental illness, it's drug addiction. It's litter on the ground. It's a sense that nobody's paying attention to the details. For me, the Uptown transit station was emblematic of that.

What do you believe are the top priorities of Ward 7 voters?

I kind of go back to the slow urban decay. You can say it's public safety. You can say it's affordable housing. You can say it's adequate public services. I think it all tends to come under the same umbrella. Just a sense that the city is no longer doing things as efficiently, as predictably and dependably as they used to.

What differentiates you from the other candidates seeking the DFL endorsement?

I would say that I just have lived a very unusual life. And basically, I feel that gives me a perspective that maybe the others don't, who I think followed a more traditional path.

I just feel like I want to walk into the middle of all this and shout, what are we even doing here? We get locked into this vote for or against something without ever considering that maybe we can look at the issues from a different perspective. I think I come from that more skeptical background. I find myself more curious about class equity these days than racial equity.

Uptown has seen a lot of businesses leave and vacant buildings. What is your plan to revitalize the area? Is there more the city could be doing to keep and attract business to the area?

This is one of those issues that I feel everybody has a very short-term vision and lack a solution for. Uptown is not going to be fixed in a year or two, or an election or two. This is a long-term project. It fell apart slowly. It's going to require

just as much time to build it back up. This didn't just happen with Covid.

I don't think we can just magically go find somebody else to solve Uptown problems with \$100,000 a year, or a quarter of a million there. I love art and culture as much as the next person. I'm very bohemian at heart. The great streets programs and these artistic funding grants are wonderful ideas that, in the end, may not actually fix the problem. They're one arrow in the quiver, but they're not going to win the war. I think we need more good old fashioned business development work. I think city councilors have a role in being a cheerleader for their neighborhoods.

The Minneapolis charter requires that there be 1.7 police officers for every 1,000 people. That is approximately 730 officers. In January 2025, there were 579 sworn officers. Do you support increasing the number of officers to be in compliance with the charter? How does Minneapolis get there?

We need to keep pushing to recruit more police officers. There's a lot of people who are paying attention and know this. We're facing a wave of retirements — between 100 and 150 officers in the next three to five years. I certainly do think we need more officers.

But there's also a sense of if you are a young person who's thinking about getting into law enforcement, is Minneapolis really the city where you want to do that? Do you see people on the City Council who are thankful that you are willing to give your life in public service? It does not feel like that.

As concerns the Neighborhood Safety Department, those City Council meetings were focused on invoicing. There were concerns about the finances and invoices not being paid, or that these groups weren't providing the necessary paperwork, things of that sort. One of those details was that they were paying some groups through phone apps. I always imagined that if you were on a city contract, you had to have a registered business account and checks and purchase orders and invoices. I don't understand why they wouldn't have done it that way from the beginning.

My bigger concern, though, is that if some of these groups are having that much difficulty with invoicing, then where are the operational walls? Where are the incident reports? Because without that you have no metrics, you have no way of doing operational oversight, which I think is the real issue. The police have to provide these things in their work. Are the non-police violence interruption groups held to the same standard?

Do you feel Mayor Frey deserves a third term as mayor? Is there common ground you believe you can work with him on?

I tend to think third terms in American politics are notoriously difficult. There's a reason that

we don't like to give people third terms. There's a calcification of the bureaucracy, if you will, if you've been mayor for eight years. You've essentially appointed most people in city ranks, or at least a majority of them. So, there's loyalty issues and monoculture issues. I think residents could expect me to

“If I had to pick one thing that started me on the journey, it would be the Uptown transit station in spring of 2023. It gave me the sense that things were going sideways. Specifically, folks were hot boxing at 10 o'clock in the morning. And for folks who don't know what that term is, hot boxing is sharing secondhand smoke in an enclosed space.”

be a genuine swing voter on most issues and that, above all else, I am a practical operations guy. I'm not going to be an ideologue who gravitates to one side or the other. I think that Ward 7 in some ways is a perfect place for that. I consider myself a free agent on the mayor's race.

Mayor Frey is the number one cheerleader for the city. He is the man with a bullhorn out there trying to drum up business and tourism and give us all faith that tomorrow is going to be a better day. I think any councilor ought to work sincerely and honestly with any mayor on that front. I think some folks want to stand on the sidelines and root for maybe not failure but a lack of overwhelming success. I would never do that.

What do you like to do in the summer when you have free time? Are there any other facts about you that you'd like to share that will help voters understand who you are as a person?

I get around on an electric scooter. I haven't owned a car in 20 years. You'll see me with sunglasses and my hoodie and hair blowing in the wind. Beyond that, I'm trying to get out and see as many little indie plays as possible. For having lived in the city for 20 years, I have not really taken in as much of the local art scene as I would have hoped.

Just getting out and seeing different neighborhoods. It's a wonderfully small city in some ways, and it changes from block to block.

For more information about Vest's campaign, coreyformpls.org

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DEVASTATING TREE VANDALISM AT CEDAR LAKE: A COMMUNITY IN MOURNING

FELONY VANDALISM RESULTS IN THE LOSS OF SIX MATURE TREES VALUED OVER \$60,000

By Steve Kotvis



The devastating aftermath of tree destruction along Cedar Lake.
(Image: Steve Kotvis)

Steve Kotvis is an occasional contributor to the Hill & Lake Press covering issues related to parks and ecology. He lives in Bryn Mawr.

In the tranquil hours between February 26 and 27, a grievous crime unfolded along the west side of Cedar Lake, near Cedar Lake Parkway at Franklin Avenue West.

Under the cover of darkness, an act of felony vandalism resulted in the illegal cutting down of six mature trees, a devastating blow to the natural beauty and ecological balance maintained by the Cedar Lake Park Association, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, and an active community of volunteer park stewards.

Two park stewards were the first to report the offense to the Park Board’s Forestry Department. Valued at an estimated \$60,000, these trees, some more than 30 years old, were an integral part of Cedar Lake Park’s unique natural experience.

Among the lost trees were three magnificent burr oaks, along with three other high-quality species. The presence of these trees not only enhanced the aesthetic appeal of the park but also played a vital role in supporting local wildlife and providing a serene escape for residents and visitors.

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board has swiftly initiated a thorough investigation into this senseless act of vandalism. Efforts include the involvement of the park police, who are taking the lead in the investigation, as along with the communications team that initiated online communications, on-site signage aimed at gathering informa-

tion from the public, and actively responding to inquiries from local media to raise awareness and encourage community vigilance.

“Under the cover of darkness, an act of felony vandalism resulted in the illegal cutting down of six mature trees, a devastating blow to the natural beauty and ecological balance maintained by the Cedar Lake Park Association, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, and an active community of volunteer park stewards.”

The destruction of these trees is not just a loss of greenery but a blow to the community's spirit and its commitment to preserving the natural environment. As the investigation continues, the Park Board is also exploring options for replanting and restoration, though it acknowledges that the loss of such mature trees cannot be easily rectified.

This incident serves as a stark reminder of the vulnerability of our natural resources and the need for collective vigilance. The Minne-

apolis Park and Recreation Board remains steadfast in its mission to protect and enhance the city's natural spaces, ensuring that such an act of vandalism does not go unpunished or unnoticed.

In the meantime, community members are encouraged to honor the memory of the lost trees by participating in local conservation efforts and supporting initiatives aimed at preserving the natural habitats of Minneapolis. The hope is that, with collective effort and resilience, the community can recover and continue to nurture nature that makes Minneapolis so special.

→ **SEEKING PUBLIC ASSISTANCE:**

Anyone with any information regarding the vandalism is urged to contact the park police immediately. The community's cooperation and solidarity are essential in addressing this grievous crime and preventing future acts of environmental destruction. Call (612) 230-6550

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Lowry Hill Update

We want to hear from you! LHNA wants to know what Lowry Hill residents consider their neighborhood priorities. Lowry Hill is bound by I-394 on the north, I-94/ Hennepin Ave on the east, 22nd St on the south, and Lake of the Isles Pkwy, Logan Ave, and Morgan Ave on the west.

Did you know storm drain street trash pollutes our lakes and rivers? Winter can be especially bad, as debris breaks down in the elements. But adopting a drain is free, and takes only minutes to maintain: mn.adopt-a-drain.org

And our website is getting a facelift soon—the sleeker, more user-friendly site will go live later this season.

♦♦ Stay dry out there! ♦♦



Lowry Hill Board Meetings

Apr. 1, May 6 1st Tues. 6:30 – 8 PM

Kenwood Community Center: 2101 W Franklin Ave

All residents are welcome! If you have questions or would like to be on the agenda, please email us:

lhna@lowryhillneighborhood.org

Earth Day Cleanup / Lowry Hill Walks

Apr. 19 • May 17 3rd Sat. 10 – 11:30 AM

Start + end at Sebastian Joe's: 1007 W Franklin Ave

Join us for friendly walks around Lowry Hill! On April 19, we'll join neighbors in Kenwood and East Isles for the annual Earth Day Cleanup!

Lowry Hill Annual Meeting

May 20 Tues. 5 PM social, 6 – 7:30 PM meeting

First Unitarian Society: 900 Mt. Curve Ave

Gather to hear from local leaders, learn about LHNA's achievements, and elect our new board members. Consider applying for the board on our website!

Support Lowry Hill

LHNA relies on your support to fund neighborhood programs, events, and advocacy. We are a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, and all donations are tax deductible: donorbox.org/support-lhna

lowryhillneighborhood.org

for full details, newsletter sign-up and more

East Isles Update

Half our board seats go up for election this spring. Voices from the renter and business communities are encouraged to join the table. Nominate yourself or others online by Apr. 15.

Save the dates for our Apr. 15 Annual Meeting and Apr. 19 Earth Day Cleanup! These are both great ways to meet your neighbors and get involved in East Isles. Monthly Lake Cleanups will continue through fall.

Safety Walking Club continues to meet first Saturdays monthly. Get to know your neighbors, and put presence on the streets while picking up debris.



We're raising funds to get Uptown Farmers Market off the ground in 2025—your founding support will help secure a market manager, local vendors, musicians, cooking demos, positive advertising for Uptown, and more!

Visit uptownmarket.org to donate, apply to be a vendor and volunteer.

East Isles Safety Walking Club

Apr. 5, May 3, June 7 1st Sat. 10 – 11:30 AM

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!

2025 Annual Meeting

Apr. 15 Tues. 6:30 PM social, 7 PM meeting

Grace-Trinity Community Church: 1430 W 28th St

Gather to hear from local leaders and vote for new board members. Nominate now at eastisles.org!

Earth Day Cleanup

Apr. 19 Sat. 9:30 AM – 12 PM

Check-in: Euclid Pl & E Lake of the Isles footpath

All lakeside neighbors are invited! Free cleanup supplies, coffee and treats at check-in.

Lake of the Isles Cleanups

May 10, June 14, July 12 Sat. 9:30 – 11:30 AM

Check-in: Euclid Pl & E Lake of the Isles footpath

Like on Earth Day, check-in for cleanup supplies, and bring family and friends for any amount of time!

East Isles Board Meetings

May 13, June 10 2nd Tues. 7 – 9 PM

Grace-Trinity Community Church: 1430 W 28th St

East Isles residents 16+, business owners/lessees, and nonprofit, education and government reps welcome!

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

Visit eastisles.org/join to:

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



OPPONENTS OF THE MALL REDESIGN SUFFER SETBACK AT PARK BOARD

By Marty Carlson



The left drive lane pictured here is set to close and be converted into parkland. Neighbors oppose the change, citing concerns over lost vehicular access and parking in an area already constrained by the lagoon, lakes, and business district. They are supported by District Commissioners Cathy Abene and Elizabeth Shaffer. Advocates, many from outside the area, argue that parks should prioritize people over cars, with backing from At-Large Commissioners Meg Forney and Tom Olson. (Image: Google Earth)

Marty Carlson is a regular contributor to the Hill & Lake Press.

Opponents of the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board’s proposed redesign of The Mall park, in the East Isles neighborhood, suffered a setback on March 5, when the Park Board voted down a staff-drafted resolution that would have required the Metropolitan Council to restore two blocks of westbound parkway to its current condition after major sewer work is completed this summer.

The root of the controversy, covered in detail in last month’s issue of the Hill & Lake Press, dates back to the Park Board’s 2020 Southwest Service Area Master Plan, which recommended abandoning sections of both east- and westbound parkway and parking at The Mall and converting that area to green space. Many local residents oppose the proposed change, including renters in the apartments that line the southern boundary of the park.

Because of the park’s relatively low Park Board priority ranking, the master plan proposal likely would have remained dormant for some time, but for the fact that the Metropolitan Council will be performing major subsurface sewer work in the park this summer.

That sewer work will require removal of large portions of The Mall’s westbound parkway. That, in turn, opened the question of whether, once the work is finished, that portion of parkway should be returned to its existing condition, or sodded over with grass, as envisioned by the plan.

By a 5-4 vote, Park Board commissioners voted for the latter option, not to require the Met Council to restore the existing westbound roadway. Prior to voting down the resolution, introduced by District 4 Commissioner Elizabeth Shaffer, several commissioners spoke out against it.

At Large Commissioner Tom Olsen spoke first, describing the resolution to restore the parkway as “a betrayal of our shared values as a Park Board,” and characterizing opponents of the redesign as “a well-connected minority” who sought to undercut “over two years of planning at the eleventh hour.” Olsen said that passing the resolution would send the message, “You have to be the right person, in the

right room, with the right board allies, at the right time, if you want your voice to be reflected in our parks.”

In a similar vein, District 3 Commissioner Becky Alper described opponents as “a small minority,” and asserted, “You can’t have a park if you have parking.” Alper went on to state, “We have a great plan here, we have a plan that had an incredible community input that went into that development, that the board of commissioners approved... and to vote ‘yes’ to this resolution today is really just to throw all of those procedures and planning processes right into the garbage.”

Alper’s characterization of community input conflicts with the recollection of Craig Wilson, a member of the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) for the Southwest Service Area Master Plan, who said the CAC was charged with making recommendations for no fewer than 42 neighborhood parks, six potential parks, and three park search areas in southwest Minneapolis. Wilson said that the CAC discussions for The Mall, specifically, took less than 30 minutes, and had relatively limited community input due in part to the very large number of parks under consideration at that time. The Park Board vote to approve the project occurred in November 2020, during the height of the pandemic.

Speaking in favor of the resolution, Board President Cathy Abene began by noting that “for certain members of our community, cars and parking are political now... it’s a political movement.” Noting her background as a civil engineer, Abene observed that the master plan is a “concept plan” only, and that there was no feasibility study associated with it. She said that portions of the plan related to road closures had already been deemed infeasible by the fire marshal, and that it made sense to hit “pause” on the plan to determine overall feasibility before taking steps to implement it.

Commissioner Shaffer noted similar concerns when reached for comment on this article. Said Shaffer: “Advancing a small portion of The Mall master plan now without understanding the design elements that may need to be amended is bad process, especially when fire access issues have been identified in the plan’s eastbound closures. We don’t need any more expensive infrastructure projects to cor-

rect. It would be more constructive for park and city staff to understand potential design limitations prior to community engagement.”

Such arguments from Shaffer, Abene and others were unavailing; commissioners voted down the resolution 5-4. Voting no: Becky Alper, Meg Forney, Billy Menz, Steffanie Musich and Tom Olsen. Voting yes: Cathy Abene, Charles Rucker, Elizabeth Shaffer and Becca Thompson. This may not be the final chapter, however. Word is that unaddressed legal issues may force the issue to be reexamined. Stay tuned.





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THE RISE UP CENTER HAS YET TO RISE

By Terry White



Located on the north side of the Midtown Greenway, the former YWCA site is prime Uptown real estate with southern exposure, easy access to the Chain of Lakes and the Mississippi River, and within walking distance of Uptown. (Images: Ryan Jandl)

Terry White is a regular contributor to the Hill & Lake Press. He publishes the Better Minneapolis newsletter and lives in Field.

The Rise Up Center, slated to occupy the former YWCA at 2808 Hennepin Ave. S., has yet to rise. The YWCA announced the building’s sale on its website on March 28, 2024. The sale was originally scheduled to close in June 2024, but there have been repeated delays. According to a March 18, email from President and CEO of the YWCA, Shelley Carthen Watson, they “are steadily moving toward a closing date.”

For now, the building remains vacant on a nearly two-acre lot with no published timeline for the renovation to begin. The 60,000 square foot regional hub is intended to offer pre-apprenticeships, jobs and training in green energy and other sectors. Led by BIPOC organizations, it aims to train 3,000 Minnesotans annually while promoting economic prosperity and net-zero carbon standards. The projected total development cost is \$23.86 million.

The group planning to buy the building, Tending the Soil, is a coalition of nonprofits and unions, including UNIDOS MN, the New Justice Project, Minnesota Training Partnership, Unite Here Local 17, SEIU Local 26 and the Building Dignity & Respect Standards Council. We contacted UNIDOS MN and Tending the Soil for this story but were unable to reach representatives.

Cryptic Politics

We also asked Ward 7 Council Member Katie Cashman for information and were directed to contact UNIDOS MN. State Sen. Scott Dibble, DFL-61, provided the following: “These are important goals rep-

resenting core Minnesota values, which is why last session we authorized \$9 million to help support the project. The coalition will need to secure other revenue sources to complete the project. The funds are not yet under contract. The project is being carried out by Tending the Soil, so questions about the timeline would best be directed to them.”

The City Council awarded the Rise Up Center \$274,500 at its March 14 meeting based on a request for \$213,415 from a Metropolitan Council Livable Communities Tax Base Revitalization Account grant. The funding is designated for "the installation of a vapor mitigation system and for the abatement of lead-based paint and asbestos-containing materials." This grant is one of several the group has received prior to it owning the building and beginning renovations.

The lack of progress and communication on this project is worrisome.

A flier from the Minnesota House states there will be a Green Training Pre-apprenticeship Program, a Community Safety Specialists Apprenticeship and a High-rise Window Cleaning Apprenticeship.

According to promotional materials, in addition to training, the regional hub will feature a first-of-its-kind worker cooperative for immigrants, an on-site childcare center and affordable, cooperative multifamily housing with high-quality homes near what their promotional materials claimed was a rapidly gentrifying Lake Street. The vision also includes offices and space for the public to gather.

The state designated \$9,651,000 in Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED)

funding for the project last year. The appropriation was signed by Governor Walz on May 24, 2024. Nine million dollars is designated to “design, redesign, renovate, construct, furnish and equip the Rise Up Center, a building located in Minneapolis, that will house a workforce development and job training center, administrative offices and a public gathering space.” For broadband internet,

“The more readers and residents learn about this project, the more questions arise about the planning behind it. Considering its public funding support, a community meeting with a detailed presentation by Tending the Soil and the elected officials supporting the project is a reasonable request.”

\$651,000 is designated. Tending the Soil is trying to raise matching funds through private foundations and donors.

A current bill, House File 72, could complicate the project. The bill would prohibit nonprofit organizations that receive state funding from using that money for political activities. As of March 3, the bill was under review by the Senate Elections Committee. Its intent appears to be stopping the practice of circular funding, in which nonprofits and other orga-

nizations lobby the state for funding and then use that funding to organize campaigns on behalf of the legislators who directed grants to them.

At this stage, a reassessment of the project, its timeline and its funding are necessary.

The site, an important location in Uptown, remains in limbo as a complicated mix of city, state and private funds are pieced together to keep the project afloat.

Residents are understandably confused about how much of their tax dollars are funding the training, meeting and housing hub, and whether its services might overlap with those provided by Hennepin County.

Part of the reassessment must include long-term costs. For example, if the nonprofit buys the building, what tax revenue will it generate? If Tending the Soil and its various groups move in, how will they be funded in five or 10 years? According to house testimony by Tending the Soil Executive Director, Cat Salonek Schladt, the building itself will be a cooperative with various organizations paying rent or owning sections of the facility.

It’s possible that the hub will reach its operational potential and train 3,000 people a year. To achieve that, it would likely require at least 100 full-time staff. By contrast, South High School educates about 1,300 students annually.

The more readers and residents learn about this project, the more questions arise about the planning behind it. Considering its public funding support, a community meeting with a detailed presentation by Tending the Soil and the elected officials supporting the project is a reasonable request. It would be useful to know what has happened and what is planned for the location. If the community is expected to support the Rise Up Center, a presentation would help solidify that support and address community concerns.





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CIDNA Annual Social & Meeting - Wednesday, May 14th 6-8pm
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MEETING MY HEROES IN INDIA: THE BIRD-RESCUERS OF “ALL THAT BREATHES”

By Phil Lowry



From left: Salik Rehman, Mohammad Saud, Mohammad Umar and Nadeem Shezard; An injured raptor. (Images: Phil Lowry)

Phil Lowry is a retired physician and lives in Lowry Hill.

My wife and I had never been to India, but it was always a place that captured our imagination. We celebrated our 30th wedding anniversary by taking a trip there in February. It was a three week small group tour (Odyssey Unlimited) that included seeing the “golden triangle” area and a flight to Varanasi, the place I most wanted to see.

Varanasi is reputedly the holiest city in India, that place on the Ganges where millions of Hindu pilgrims come to immerse themselves in the river, with funeral pyres burning on its banks. It was an amazing way to end our trip, but I must say, the first day may have been even better.

Just before we left for India, my daughter told us to watch “All that Breathes,” which won the Grand Jury Prize at Sundance and the Golden Eye award for top documentary in Cannes, both in 2022, and was nominated for an Academy Award in 2023.

It’s a quiet, reflective film, but one you won’t forget easily. Directed by Shaunak Sen, the film tells the tale of two brothers, Nadeem Shehzad and Mohammad Saud, as well as their friend, Salik Rehman, who work tirelessly to rescue and rehabilitate black kites.

These handsome raptors are members of the hawk family and survive mainly by scavenging scraps from garbage and meat-processing plants.

I was so impressed after seeing “All That Breathes” that I decided to take a chance and email the brothers at raptorrescue.org.

I was thrilled to receive a very positive reply from Nadeem. In fact, he said, we could visit them twice! The following week, after traveling for 24 hours, we touched down in Delhi at 3 a.m. Strolling out of the airport, the intense energy of the city surrounded us. It was the middle of the night, but it felt like day. The vast city was pulsing with color and sound. The only things that looked relaxed were the cows and monkey families grazing nonchalantly by the side of the road.

The next morning, as I sat by our hotel window recovering from jet lag, I noticed black shapes circling far above me in the hazy sky. These must be kites, I figured, and I was happy to see that you could spot them almost immediately.

They have fared better than Indian vultures, whose numbers have dropped by 90 to 98 percent. Many of the vultures died from kidney failure after eating carcasses contaminated with the non-

steroidal anti-inflammatory drug diclofenac. The drug was banned for livestock use in 2006, but the vultures are only trickling back.

After lunch and a few cups of strong chai, we were ready to make our long Uber journey across Delhi to visit Wildlife Rescue, the site of Nadeem and Saud’s bird hospital. We got more excited the closer we got.

From the film, we recognized the reservoir where they had to swim (along with Salik) to rescue a kite. Their unpaved dirt street looked oddly familiar too. When the car pulled up and Nadeem walked out, I was honestly a little starstruck, the way you get when you actually meet someone you’ve only seen on film. Saud and Salik were right behind him, and we all exchanged greetings.

It was nice to have a chance to chat and drink tea before we toured the bird hospital. The success of their endeavor was stunning. Without having any veterinary training, Nadeem and Saud started the recovery effort in 2003; Salik started volunteering in 2010 and became their first employee in 2017.

So far, they have rescued about 33,000 birds in total, mainly black kites, but also some owls, vultures, and even pigeons. Although there are five other “bird hospitals” in Delhi, most of them refuse to treat meat-eating birds, which are considered unclean. The birds are brought to Wildlife Rescue from these hospitals as well as numerous other sources in the city.

Why are the kites getting injured?

In India, as in about 12 other countries, paper “kite fighting” is very popular, especially at certain festival times. The string that is used is called Chinese manja; it is nylon cord coated with glue and powdered glass, which can instantly slice through their opponent’s paper kite string. Unfortunately, manja can also cause deep wing and chest wounds to airborne birds, primarily black kites. We were also told that about 20 human deaths are reported nationally per year, often among people on motorcycles who have severe neck lacerations. There is a movement afloat to outlaw using manja, but no national law has been passed yet.

We looked at a variety of birds that afternoon, some seriously injured and some in various stages of recovery. Saud has had no formal training, but his surgical skills have gotten more and more sophisticated, and he has pioneered some new techniques, which he has discussed at surgical

meetings.

When the birds are healed, they can simply fly away through the tops of their enclosures, and can also fly back for a visit whenever they want. All of them get fed every day. It is hoped that a healed kite can return to scavenger duties: It is estimated that the kite population removes five to six tons of Delhi garbage per day.

Since the release of the documentary, Wildlife Rescue got a boost by receiving donations totaling about \$50,000. The team is now able to treat more birds and can currently support five full time and two part time staff, including a veterinarian who comes in three to four times a week.

They try to keep their operating expenses low, but their expenses are still roughly \$35,000 per year, and they do not receive government support. To make a living, the brothers still make soap dispensers in a different part of the basement, and most of their rehab work is done in the evenings. Their immediate goal for the hospital is to get an X-ray machine, and to have a small lab for doing blood tests. Donations would be much appreciated and can be made through www.raptorrescue.usa.

As we wrapped up our visit and said our “Namastes” to our hosts, I pondered what truly inspired this group of remarkable human beings. As Nadeem put it in the film, “Delhi is a gaping wound. And we’re a tiny Band-Aid on it.” I also sensed that they felt a real respect for all forms of life and could only imagine the sense of joy they felt when they released these birds back to the sky.





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Meet Your Neighbor

Interview by David Piper

Ashley Johnson



Ashley Johnson at the Hemp House at 719 W 26th Street in the Wedge neighborhood. (Image: David Piper)

David Piper is a regular contributor to the Hill and Lake Press. He lives in Lowry Hill.

Tell us a little about the Hemp House, your job as a manager at the Hemp House, and any other employment related to marijuana.

The Hemp House is licensed to sell hemp derived products and has been around for four years. We do not sell smokable products or vaporizers, just edibles and beverages. There are three locations: Uptown (27th and Lyndale) where I work as shift lead, downtown Minneapolis (only for curbside and pickup), and in South Minneapolis close to the border with Richfield. I have worked at the Hemp House for the last year and a half and prior to that I worked for a medical marijuana dispensary. I made the transition to the Hemp House because I wanted to work at a dispensary that was more accessible. It is important to us at Hemp House to find products that meet the customer’s needs, such as issues with sleeping or pain or just wanting to relax. We strive to be approachable, and no question is too dumb.

What is the difference between hemp and cannabis?

Hemp and cannabis are cannabis plants, although hemp has much less THC than cannabis. THC (tetrahydrocannabinol) is the psychoactive compound in cannabis. Technically, we sell only Delta 9 THC.

Is it a misconception that a hemp buyer has to pay in cash?

Yes, that is a misconception. The Federal Farm bill of 2018 legalized hemp and consequently we accept all forms of payment, except checks. We do charge a cannabis tax added to each purchase, as required by Minnesota law.

Is hemp considered safe?

Yes. However, anyone interested in buying one of our products should check with a physician if they have any questions or concerns, particularly if they take prescription medication. I am not an expert on hemp, and the Hemp House is not a medical dispensary.

Is the Hemp House going to apply for a cannabis license?

Yes, we have applied for a cannabis license that would enable us to sell cannabis, including the flower product — “joints,” for example. However, at least for now, our plan, if approved by the Office of Cannabis Management (OCM) would be to sell cannabis products at our store (to be named “Stoke”) in Northeast Minneapolis. The Uptown Hemp House, at least for now, would continue to just sell hemp derived products. We hope to hear this summer about the status of our cannabis license.

Tell us about the clients at the Uptown Hemp House and have you had any issues with crime?

We have a wide range of clients here at Uptown. We check IDs as our clients have to be over 21. We see clients who are versed in cannabis — clients who use cannabis products in their day-to-day life. We see new clients as well, clients who have never tried cannabis. We see clients looking for specific effects from our products to help with sleep or pain management, although we advise them that we are not a medical dispensary. Fortunately, we have not had any issues with crime, at least in the last year and a half I have worked here.

Can Hemp House products be delivered, and is there a limit on how much a client can purchase for delivery?

Yes, we do local deliveries to clients 21 or older, either through our store or Door Dash. If a client is within a 15 mile radius of one of our shops, we can deliver to them the same day, ideally within a two hour time frame. We offer two day shipping if the client is not within a 15 mile radius from our store. There is no limit on the amount or type of product a client can purchase for delivery.

What is 4-20 all about and why is it called 4-20?

April 20 is a counterculture holiday when cannabis is celebrated. If you are a regular consumer of cannabis you are going to know about 4-20. According to legend kids in the 1970s would get together at 4:20 p.m. after school to smoke weed. We have a sale on April 20th and it is our busiest day, as is Black Friday. We will also celebrate the grand opening of our Hemp House location in Northeast Minneapolis, but it will only be renamed “Stoke” when and if our cannabis license is approved by OCM.

Thanks to Ashley Johnson for the interview and to Cody Dornbusch for answering additional questions.

Taller plants, skinnier leaves

Potential health benefits: reducing inflammation & anxiety

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HEMP

VS

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Psychoactive effects and can cause altered perception

High THC content (5-20%) and low CBD content

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KENWOOD NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION SAFETY WALK VOLUNTEERS

Photos by Courtney Cushing Kiernet



Aileen Johnson (at center), founder of Safety Walks city wide, with members of the KNO Safety Walk group.



Kenwood residents, Lori Mittag, lead of KNO Safety Walks (at left) and Elizabeth McKevitt Perez.

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Kenwood Neighborhood News

Earth Day Neighborhood Clean-Up
Saturday, April 19th
10:00 a.m. - Noon
Neighbors meet at the **Kenwood Rec Center**
(Trash bags & gloves provided)

Don't Miss KNO's Annual Meeting
Monday, May 5th
6:00 p.m.: Dinner - Taco Bar featuring Nico's Tacos
6:30 - 8:00 p.m.: Annual Meeting

- New Board Member Elections
- Updates from City Council Member Katie Cashman & MPRB Commissioner Elizabeth Shaffer
- Safety & Security at the 21st Street Station

Join the KNO board!
email kno55405@gmail.com to learn more

Stay informed about Kenwood events, public safety & road construction. Sign-up for the KNO monthly newsletter and public safety updates at kenwoodmpls.org

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,

Many years ago, after a chance encounter that changed my life, I came up with the phrase “God playing chess.”

People meet for a variety of reasons, usually circumstantial: coworkers, neighbors, classmates — situations we sign up for aware that unknowns will become knowns.

Sometimes, though, we meet someone in the oddest way at just the right time, and life is better, richer; the person lives on, weaved into one’s life forever. That is God playing chess.

It was January 1981, and I was in graduate school in St. Louis. That morning, I was in the cafeteria having coffee, preparing for my first class. A few months earlier I’d discovered H.L. Mencken (1880–1956), my all-time favorite writer.

Ready for class with time to spare, I pulled out my copy of “The Vintage Mencken” (my version of American Express’ slogan “Never Leave Home Without It”). If it’s possible to fall in love with a dead writer, I was head over heels.

At the next table sat an older gentleman smoking a cigar (remember the roaring, no-restrictions ‘80s?). Mencken was rarely photographed without a cigar and though this man looked like Albert Einstein, the cigar captivated me.

Unable to hold in my enthusiasm, I said, “Excuse me, but you remind me of H.L. Mencken.” Surprised, he asked, “You read Mencken?” “Yes; I love him!” Astonishingly, he replied, “I met him.”

“You did?” My questions flowed. He began to answer, then asked me to join him as he was hard of hearing and shouting wasn’t his style. I moved to his table, and he told me how, as a teenager,

he’d entered a nationwide writing contest sponsored by the Baltimore Sun, Mencken’s stalwart employer, and was one of 12 winners, each of whom was whisked off by train to Baltimore for an audience with the judges who included Mencken.

And thus, our friendship began. His name was Isaac Gurman. And that’s the last time you’ll read his first name. I was raised in a household where anyone older than 30 went by Mr., Mrs. or Miss (the term Ms., though coined in the 18th century, was not popularized until the late 1980s). As he was 50 years older than I, his first name — the only one I’ve ever used — was Mr.

Mr. Gurman was a law professor, but it was Mencken, and all things literary, that connected us. We began meeting in the cafeteria regularly, fueled by coffee, curiosity and conversation. I came to learn that he was a widower and had a son who lived in Florida. I was at that age when acquiring friendships is breezy; Mr. Gurman was at an age when new friendships are curated, meaningful connections. Nonetheless, we were made for each other. There was never a lull; our encounters ended only when one of us had to get to class.

When the semester ended in May, Mr. Gurman proposed we meet for lunch, and that summer every Wednesday at noon we met in the downtown department store Stix Baer & Fuller’s Missouri Room.

We always had the same individual garden salads and shared a club sandwich. Our drink was iced tea. But the real sustenance was conversation. A ritual was established at the end of our first lunch. Mr. Gurman handed me a book, a biography of Max Perkins, the renowned editor at Scribner’s who turned into gold works by F. Scott Fitzgerald, Hemingway, Thomas Wolfe, Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, and many more, adding that he hoped we would discuss it next Wednesday.

I began the book on the bus ride home and

hardly put it down until it was finished. So much to talk about! We did, and then another book, another lunch, another book, and so on until September when we were back at school. He smoked a cigar throughout our book discussions. I learned more that summer than in any class I’ve ever taken.

Though I offered, he never allowed me to pick up the tab: “A gentleman always pays.” I needed a generosity end run. His birthday was in August, and to celebrate we had dinner at Blueberry Hill on Delmar Boulevard. Over dessert I presented him with a silver cigar cutter. He cried.

In 1983 I finished my degree and moved to St. Paul where I’d gotten a job. We wrote letters often and then his stopped. I kept writing to him until I received a letter from his son telling me that Mr. Gurman had died, and thanking me for making his final years happy ones. I cried.

Mr. Gurman lives on in the part of my soul reserved for those special people who have made me smarter and wiser and kinder and a better person. God’s checkmate.

— Dorothy



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Hill & Lake Press

READING, ROLLER SKATES AND LLAMA-RAMA AT KENWOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

By Karin Olson



Heidi Johnson, principal at Kenwood Elementary School, fulfilling her part of the school's Read-A-thon challenge — kissing a llama while wearing roller skates. (Images: Karin Olson)

Karin Olson is Kenwood Community School Parent and lives in Kenwood.

Heidi Johnson, principal at Kenwood Elementary School, gave her students a challenge: read 3,000 minutes in school during the 10 days of Kenwood's Read-A-Thon, and I'll kiss a llama while wearing roller skates. Apparently,

this was motivating to kids at all grade levels. Classes exceeded Johnson's goal by reading 3,682 minutes in school, and an incredible 138,457 minutes individually outside of school. On March 14, Johnson made good on her promise. She strapped on her roller skates as four llamas joined the students at school for a joyful, hilarious and celebratory

assembly in the school gym. Amidst all the excitement, the kids stayed calm so as not to upset the llamas and cause them to spit! After the meeting, each class had a chance to visit with the llamas outdoors near the Kenwood Rec Center. Rumor has it that even local Animal Control partook in the joy, spotting the llamas as they drove by and stopping

to get photos with them. Each class received a class party reward, courtesy of Kenwood's PTA. Congratulations to Grand Prize winners Margot, Greta, Ash, Rishi, Lyra and Vivian, who led their classes in minutes read outside of school. Twenty-three additional Grand Prize winners from each class were selected by random drawing. Said Read-A-Thon organizer Michelle Kemp, a Kenwood resident and PTA volunteer, "Something that was really special about this event was how every grade level was so engaged and excited. To be honest — so were all the adults!" For Johnson, it was totally worth it. "The llamas were so sweet, gentle and tolerant. I'd kiss them again in a heartbeat if it meant our students showing the passion and commitment to reading that they demonstrated this year!" We wonder what challenge they'll think of next year....

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The third floor is still separately accessible for au pair/guest quarters. It's a great home, with so many creative living spaces to satisfy your needs. Continue its story with your family's memories as the next chapter... Call us for your private tour.



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