NEW! LOCAL MAGAZINE!

Telling your story is resistance and hope

‘Rising Up’

Overlooked creativity prompts collection of ‘Keepers’

BY PATRICK CABELLO HANSEL

“Creativity is allowing yourself to make mistakes. Art is knowing which ones to keep.” Scott Adams

The greatest mistakes often lead to the greatest accomplishments. For too long, those outside the Phillips community have overlooked the incredible creativity of our vibrant and diverse community. The schools, the businesses, the arts organizations, and above all, the people. This is compounded by much of the media’s attention on what is wrong with Phillips; the ashes, rather than what arises from them. The literary magazine in this issue, “The Phoenix of Phillips” makes the case for the rising.

Though the depiction of the Phoenix varies from place to place, there are some commonalities across time and language. The Phoenix is a brightly colored bird that lives for a long time—often a thousand years—then, in a high tree makes a nest lined with ashes. As the 19th century Irish poet George Darley put it:

When she must die in my nest, and I shall multiply my days like the phoenix.

(NRSV) Chol also means sand, which is how most English translations render the passage. Perhaps some Christians have trouble with a mythical image shared with other religions. Or perhaps the feminine nature of the Phoenix troubles some.

In Hebrew, the word chel means sand. In Job 29:18, Job says, “Then I thought, ‘I shall die in my nest, and I shall multiply my days like the phoenix.’”

We all look for new life, especially in the midst of struggle and loss. Telling one’s story is a powerful act of resistance to a narrative that says we really can’t make a difference, and it is a powerful act of hope that claims that every one’s voice, from the smallest to the biggest has value.

The Phoenix of Phillips is dedicated to those who give their lives—in service, in struggle, in song—for our beloved neighborhood. We hope that you enjoy the writing and photography in The Phoenix of Phillips, and that you consider contributing to its future—by submitting work to be considered for publication, by supporting us financially, and by telling your friends! In the words of Pablo Picasso: “Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once he grows up.”
EPIC NEWS

EPIC is taking the lead in "Bringing the Digital Divide" to the forefront, focusing on Free Financial Literacy classes and its Free Computer Literacy classes. Many people in our neighborhood and other inner city areas are locked out of many opportunities such as job searching, resume building, banking and responsible Credit Card use by diminishing their access to the vast array of the computer and the internet. EPIC’s classes are geared to everyone, starting from the very beginners to advanced users, young and old.

We are fortunate to utilize the newly updated Computer Lab at the East Phillips Park Cultural & Community Center and are partnering with the City of Minneapolis Dept. of Technology, Osiris Organization, the Community Technology Empowerment Project, ACME, Wells Fargo and the Minneapolis Park & Rec Board. The best part of this is the classes are FREE! Midway through the first series of Financial Literacy classes, the students asked for another night of classes to cover additional questions. It was, of course, provided and the final class ended with applause for the volunteer Wells Fargo instructors. Our first class in the Computer Literacy series met Thursday, January 15th at 6:30 PM. Subsequent meetings are every Second Thursday.

Agenda items will include Neighborhood Crime Initiatives, Industrial Pollution in the Neighborhood and updates on continuing neighborhood projects.

EPIC’s East Phillips Park Programming Partnership Meets Tuesday, February 24th at 11:30 AM. Lunch is served. Subsequent meetings are the Last Tuesday of each month (except December).

Agenda Items will include updates on The East Phillips Free Financial Literacy Class, the Free Computer Literacy Class, the East Phillips Summer Fest and Programming Partner News.

All meetings are at the East Phillips Park Cultural & Community Center Located at 2307 17th Ave. S. The Center is wheelchair accessible.

East Phillips: North: 24th St. East - East Phillips Park East: Hiawatha Ave. West: 65 West: Bloomington Ave South: Lake St. All East Phillips residents, business owners, property owners and employees of neighborhood businesses are welcome and encouraged to participate in the activities and decision-making by attending EPIC meetings.

GREENBRIER’S

Scandinavian Gifts & Food • 89 Years on East Lake Street
1601 East Lake Street, Minneapolis, MN 55407
612-729-9333 • M-F 9:00-5:30 • SAT 9:00-5:00
www.ingebrsens.com
“The fall of dropping water wears away the Stone.”
– Lucretius c. 99 BC – c. 55 BC)*

Stone wears slowly. Adapting regulations shouldn’t be as slow!

Finally, Veterans Affairs has proposed amending their regulations governing who may order markers for military veterans. Since 2011 Friends of the Cemetery has managed to replace or get new markers for eight veterans. Two of them were for veterans of the War of 1812, five were for Civil War veterans and one was for a veteran of the Spanish-American War. That doesn’t sound like much but given how restrictive the rules are it’s nothing short of miraculous.

Military veterans are entitled to have their graves marked by a government-issued marker. The markers are provided at no cost although the government is not responsible for setting the markers on graves. The markers are available in a variety of styles but we have chosen upright, marble markers, the style that was introduced during the Civil War. Current regulations require that the request for a new or replacement marker come from the veteran’s next of kin or a representative of a next of kin. Since some of our veterans died 150 or so years ago, that’s not always an easy thing to do. In some cases, families made the request and we helped with the paperwork. In others, Tim McCall, one of our volunteers, has tracked down veterans’ descendants and gotten their permission. As it turns out that, as time-consuming as that is, it is relatively easy compared to some of the other regulations.

Last year we submitted eight applications. Seven of them were returned as incomplete. The reasons varied but most of them were rejected for small, and in some cases, impossible-to-fulfill reasons. The most baffling reason why an application was sent back is that we didn’t include a photo of an illegible marker so that the VA could make sure that the wording on the new marker would be the same as it was on the old. (If we had been able to make out the wording, we wouldn’t have been asking for a new marker in the first place.) Despite having an e-mail from a staff member saying that we did not have to submit military discharge papers for any veteran who has a marker that is broken or illegible, and therefore eligible to be replaced, we were told to provide them anyway. We’ve been asked to provide proof that the veterans who are buried in Pioneers and Soldiers Cemetery are really buried there, and weren’t too surprised to find out that the fact that we have original burial permits for most of them was not sufficient proof. On us and on it goes.

Apparently we were not alone. On October 1 2014, the VA proposed to revise some of its regulations including those that specify who is authorized to order a marker for a veteran and acknowledged that “The VA denied the requests for headstones or markers which has frustrated the efforts of individuals to ensure the unmarked graves of veterans, particularly those from historic eras, are appropriately marked.” During the three-months that the public was allowed to comment over 400 individuals and representatives of various groups supported the change. Senator Al Franken was among those who commented in support of the change.

Once the changes go into effect we will be able to file applications for any of the veterans buried in Pioneers and Soldiers Cemetery. Other hurdles (burial permits, discharge papers, etc.) are likely to continue for a while. But look for a lot of new markers in the next few years.

* Titus Lucretius Carus c. 99 BC – c. 55 BC) was a Roman poet and philosopher.
Jan 20th Neighborhood Priority Plan’s Meeting is sparcely attended

Ventura Village’s residents and stakeholders attended a special January 20th Neighborhood Priority Plan community meeting to help neighborhood leaders determine what time and investments should be made for the 2015 NCR Budget year.

Participants chose to sit at one of two tables to help focus on issues of greatest importance to them. Each person was given a sheet in which the Top Ten Priorities for 2015 could be listed. Once those were completed, a spokesperson for each table stood up and read the table’s priority list. Then sheets were turned in and was completed for the evening.

Participants listed their priorities

Most of the priorities presented by participants are ones that can be essentially addressed by the current funding of NCR if the Ventura Village Board of Directors agrees to champion the projects. This year none of the NCR funds can be used for festivals, events, food and drink, but must by used to underwrite promotion of the neighborhood.

Table 1’s list included the following issues:
1) Create on-site exercise space for residents of Hiawatha Towers;
2) Train residents in CPR and provide Diabetes & Blood Pressure class
3) Help residents with civic and health awareness
4) Help elderly residents obtain air conditioners in public housing units
5) Help residents with more family and picnic events and activities
6) Help develop a greater level of youth sports activities

Table 2’s requests included:
1) Develop classes on language, citizenship, cooking, sewing, & religion
2) Put more motion lights in dark areas of the neighborhood
3) Create a Senior Center in Ventura Village; create jobs for elders
4) Create a business incubator
5) Help fund the PCC Swimming Pool & develop more outdoor spaces

Ventura Village’s Priority Plan Process addresses Bigger issues!

The Board of Directors of Ventura Village are now seeking more input from stakeholders and residents to determine what time and investments should be made for the 2015 NCR Budget year.

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Tell Us YOUR Priorities!

HERE’S MY TOP THREE CHOICES FOR VENTURA VILLAGE IN 2015!

1. Learn Everyday Basic Somali Language
2. Learn Everyday Basic Spanish Language
3. Join our Class to Learn about Islam Religion

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Hennepin County plans to purchase and lead redevelopment of the 6.5 acre property at 2225 East Lake Street, currently owned by Minneapolis Public Schools. The first phase of construction, slated to begin in 2015, would build a Hennepin County Family Service Center and County offices, new retail, new housing, and new streets and parking. Two or three additional phases of construction would build a public plaza for the Midtown Farmers Market and other public uses, and additional housing and parking.

You are invited to a community meeting on February 5 at 6:00pm at 2225 East Lake Street. An open house with opportunities to view architectural images will run until 6:30, followed by a formal presentation and Q and A. Learn about the plans and opportunities to participate in approval decisions by the City of Minneapolis. This is the February meeting of Corcoran Neighborhood Organization’s Land Use & Housing committee. During and leading up to the meeting, CNO is asking community members for input on the project.

Comment now via online comment collection or at the Feb 5th meeting. This input will be compiled and shared with the CNO Board as it considers what position to take on the project. The input will also be shared with the Minneapolis Planning Commission as it considers granting approvals for the project.

Childcare, translation for Spanish speakers, and light refreshments will be provided at the meeting.

Questions? Contact Eric at eric@corcoranneighborhood.org or 612-724-7457.

Comment & Community Meeting on plan to develop 2225 East Lake Street
Southwest corner of Hiawatha and Lake Intersection: Community Education Building and Midtown Farmer’s Market Site

New rendering of Hennepin County’s proposed L&H Station development

Phoenix
from page 1
are projects of the Semilla Arts Program of St. Paul’s Lutheran Church. In the past nine years, Semilla has taught over 1900 people mosaics, murals, photography, writing, drama and many other art forms.
Special thanks to Sunny Sevigny for her wonderful work on the layout of the magazine! And many thanks to The Alley Newspaper for their collaboration! We hope that this is the first of many issues—look in The Alley Newspaper for info on submitting to future issues.
Quote from one of the authors or youth photographers:
This activity was made possible in part by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the Metropolitan Regional Arts Council, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.

Three Student Editors of Phoenix of Phillips Taiza Caballo Hansel, Marcela Perez, and Belem Gomez Vega watch the crowd and identify other writers as Marion Gomez, one of the Youth Poetry Judges, reads contact results and winners. Meanwhile Daniela, Marcela’s niece, foresees the day she can write, draw, or photograph for publication in “Phoenix of Phillips.”

Phoenix of Phillips” Creator and Editor, Patrick Cabello Hansel introduces, local poet, Sean Golden before he did a reading at the Grand Debut revelation of “Phoenix of Phillips” at Midtown Global Market Thursday, January 29th.

VENTURA VILLAGE’S GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING - WED. FEB 10TH

Parks Committee Meetings: Call for next meeting time.
1st Tuesdays: Wellness, Greening & Gardening @ 6:30 PM
1st Tuesdays: Community Engagement Committee @ 5:00 PM

VENTURA VILLAGE MONTHLY MEETINGS:

This Monthly Alley Newspaper Page was designed and paid for by Ventura Village.

Pictured above are the two tables of participants who attended the Jan 20th Neighborhood Priority Plan meeting held at the Phillips Community Center.

Snail mail to Ventura Village, P.O. Box 580757, 612.874.9070; leave message and we’ll Ventura Village General Membership

There will be sign-up sheets at the next scheduled January 20th Neighborhood Priority Plan meeting held at the Phillips Community Center.

Suggest a Class You would like to take

Join our Cooking Group to teach or learn Everyday Basic Somali Language

Tell Us YOUR Priorities!

Here’s my top three choices for

Listen to the Phillips Community Center. And many thanks to The Alley Newspaper for their collaboration! We hope that this is the first of many issues—look in The Alley Newspaper for info on submitting to future issues.

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COMMUNITY MEETINGS

It is time to gather to envision the theme for MayDay! All are welcome to two community meetings to brainstorm the theme for the 41st MayDay Festival:

The FIRST meeting, on February 10th from 7-9:30pm, is an open “brainstorm” time inviting attendees to speak of the concerns and the joys of this current time, with ideas of how we as a community and as individuals participate in these issues.

For the SECOND meeting, on March 17 from 7-9:30pm, the MayDay staff presents an outline and image progressions garnered from the staff’s work of wrestling ideas from the first community meeting into an umbrella theme for this year’s MayDay. Meeting participants then give feedback—asking questions, offering ideas, and helping network possibilities for furthering the theme.

ALL ARE WELCOME! Both meetings are held at In the Heart of the Beast Theatre’s home base, the Avalon Theatre: 1500 E Lake St, Mpls, Mn 55407

Phone: 612-721-2535 info@hobt.org

2015 MAYDAY SCHEDULE of Public meetings and Workshops:

Community meetings:

Tuesday February 10, 7:00—9:30pm MayDay Community Meeting

Tuesday, March 17, 7-9:30 pm, MayDay Community Meeting

For the entire month of April, Community workshops to build Mayday are held at In the Heart of the Beast Theatre’s home space at 1500 E Lake St, Mpls Mn 55407

Beginning April 4, Workshops are held every:

Tuesdays from 7-9pm
Thursdays from 7-9 pm
Saturdays from 9-11am and 1-3pm

All workshops are open to the public. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Workshops are funded by free will donations.

The 41st MAYDAY is SUNDAY MAY 3rd, 2015
**Against Hate Speech**

My father’s recent “cardiac event” made me think of the two of us revisiting family history. Ancestors had been burned at the stake or otherwise repeatedly dunked under water until dead…and the bullies of childhood left marks as well. Nonetheless, in his medical practice, father treated religious people with devotion.

Why then did that man on TV say: “No woman should ever consider dating an atheist, given that such a man must lack a moral compass.” Forgive me, please. None of us is at war with God.

Father believes consciousness is a product of the evolution of matter. Sentient life forms are recognized, while human consciousness is acknowledged as most precious. Secular humanism is then understood as the right of the oppressed to sedes their right to speak irrespective of principle or sexual orientation.”

**Frank Reflections**

**When is satire racist?**

BY FRANK ERICKSON

If neo-Nazis in Paris were publishing racist caricatures of Muslims and then were murdered for doing so, it would millions of French citizens hit the streets to show solidarity with the dead skinheads? I doubt it.

This is all about who is doing the racism. We know this because if neo-Nazis were doing exactly the same thing, they would not have the majority of the West supporting them.

It’s easy for the West to defend this type of racism when it is coming from white intellectuals who are not being racist at all; they are being “satirical”, with nothing but their innocent little pens and paper. How easy and safe for the West to cloak this with intellectual babbles about “safety” and freedom of speech, instead of calling it what it is. Do neo-Nazis belong to a “satirical” organization?

The violence starts with the drawing of a racist caricature. If I go out on the street and start calling Black people the n-word and get myself killed, am I a freedom of speech hero…I would be if I directed my attack upon the West’s enemy.

Local editorial cartoonist Steve Sack, of the Star Tribune, draws brutal racist caricatures of people of Arab descent. How does he think liberal Muslims and Arabs feel when they see his portrayal of them? His latest attack is in the Sunday January 11th Star Tribune.

**Affordable Solar Will Soon Allow Twin Cities Residents to Save Money with Clean Power**

**By Cooperative Energy Futures**

The cost of solar panels has dropped 90% since 1977 (from $76.67/kW to $0.74/kW in 2013). In Minnesota, the long-term electricity cost from solar has decreased below the rising cost of utility bills. Now, local residents are making solar accessible for everyone through a member-owned cooperative, Cooperative Energy Futures (CEF).

Homeowners can join the co-op and apply for the Made in Minnesota solar incentive to lease solar panels with no money down through the Gopher Solar program. The lease saves money beginning the first month. After 15 years, residents have full ownership of their array, which is warranted for another 10 years of free power. As Holly & Dan Minneapolis participants in the 2014 leasing program, said “CEF and its partners have made it possible for us to produce renewable energy! We are so grateful for this opportunity and can attest to how understandable and easy the process was.” There are also loan options if residents prefer to own the system upfront. Because applications for the Minnesota solar incentive are due Feb. 20, 2015, interested residents should contact bruce@cooperativeenergyfutures.com or (612) 568-2334 before January 15th 2015. But what about renters or families without good solar access?

CEF is also helping Twin Cities community gardens, solar gardens, large solar arrays that give renters and residents whose homes won’t work for solar the opportunity to subscribe. Just like buying a farm share, subscribing to community solar secures utility bills for 25 years of power. While most Minnesota homes spend $900/year on electricity bills, community solar can provide 25 years of power for only around 12 years worth of cost. As a cooperative, CEF gives community solar subscribers ownership and control over a community energy business. Interested residents can learn more at http://cooperativeenergyfutures.com/communitysolar/.
Growing the Backyard CHAT Returns to its Roots

With renewed enthusiasm, and building on the successes of previous years, Growing the Backyard CHAT (Community Health Action Team) members are focusing energy on truly GROWING the backyards of residents in the “Backyard” neighborhoods! Growing the Backyard CHAT is part of the Backyard Initiative facilitated by the Cultural Wellness Center, and sponsored by Allina Health. This year, Growing the Backyard CHAT existing members-Collie Graddick, Candis McKeel, and Tim Page-the Project Manager, welcome new active members: Cherry Flowers, Bunmi Odumuye, Abdullah Mohamud, and Dallas Johnson. The team is also looking for more neighbors who have knowledge to share.

Do you have a urban farming related skill to share with your neighbors? Volunteer to be a resident facilitator! Young adults involved in the TEENs CHAT will also facilitate SkillShare opportunities for interested residents including members of other CHATs. Participants will share knowledge and skills related to urban farming in order to empower neighbors to pursue related interests. We also plan to tap into the knowledge of Hennepin County Master Gardeners at events as much as possible. Over the past 5 years, Growing the Backyard CHAT members have helped provide locally grown produce to area food pantries, provided free cooking classes to community members, sold produce at market stands at Midtown Global Market and the Wellness Center market, and worked on the Minneapolis HomeGrown Corner store initiative to improve healthy food offerings at these stores. The CHAT plans to build on this activity by forging connections that will make each of these projects self-reliant.

The Wellness Center mini-farmers market, located at 2025 Portland Ave will offer a variety of locally grown and crafted items. Visit the market on Tuesdays, 12-2pm, June 16 - October 15 and enjoy educational activities at the adjacent demonstration garden from 10-12. The CHAT goal is for fresh produce sold at markets in the backyard to be sourced from growers in the backyard with back up sourced from other local suppliers.

Are YOU a grower who is thinking about selling excess produce? Working with the TEENs CHAT, the Growing the Backyard CHAT plans to implement a public calendar of events and compile a list of neighborhood based resources related to urban farming. All gardening resources that are compiled for the Backyard area will be published in a future issue of the Alley Newspaper.

Do you know of urban farming related resources? Do YOU want to grow YOUR backyard? Do YOU…live in a “Backyard” neighborhood? (East Phillips, Midtown Phillips, Ventura Village, Phillips West, Corcoran, Central, Powderhorn Park—see map in right hand corner of this page) Are you interested in urban farming? Contact: Tim Page Tpage4@gmail.com

BYI Definition of Health

• Health is a state of physical, mental, social, and spiritual well-being. It is not only the absence of infirmity and disease.
• Health is a state of balance, harmony, and connectedness within and between many systems – the body, the family, the community, the environment, and culture. It cannot be seen only in an individual context.
• Health is an active state of being; people must be active participants to be healthy. It cannot be achieved by being passive.

The Backyard Initiative (BYI) is a partnership between the Community, Allina Health Systems and the Cultural Wellness Center. The goal of this partnership is to improve the health of the 45,000 residents living in the “backyard” comprised by the neighborhoods of Powderhorn Park, East Phillips, Midtown Phillips, West Phillips, Ventura Village, Central, and Corcoran. There are eleven Community Health Action Teams (CHATs) focused on improving the health through a variety of cultural and community-connecting activities.

For info on the BYI, please call the Cultural Wellness Center, 612-721-5745.

Growing the Backyard adjacent to the Cultural Wellness Center

Container Garden at 2020 Oakland Avenue

BYI AREA

Back Yard Initiative Back Page

The BYI Back Page is produced each month as a collaborative venture between the BYI Communications CHAT & Alley Communications, Inc., publisher of The Alley Newspaper. The Communications CHAT works with BYI CHAT (Community Health Action Teams) each month as a “resource CHAT” – helping to get the news and activities of the BYI out to the broader community.

Are you interested in learning more about the Backyard Initiative? Want to get involved or connect with CHAT members? Want to learn about local urban farming and food systems? Want to discover the potential for innovative projects and initiatives in your backyard? Stay connected and informed by joining the BYI Back Page email list. You’ll get the latest news, project updates, and ways to get involved.

Get Involved!
Do you have a garden related skill you would like to share with your neighbors? Want to host a SkillShare in your yard? Want to learn something new? Topics may include (depending on interest):
• basics of urban farming
• aquaponics
• garden planning
• seed starting
• starting a garden
• garden maintenance
• growing food for personal use
• using sustainable growing methods
• harvesting
• markets and marketing
• food preparation
• food preservation
• seed saving
• food justice
• composting
• soil building
• season extension
• hoop houses
• developing value added products from the produce that is grown.

Have another topic in mind? Let us know. Contact Tim Page tpage4@gmail.com for more information and to get involved.

Tim Page, Urban Farmer and owner of Holistic Health Farms, makes his home in the Backyard neighborhood. He brings lots of experience in both urban farming and leading projects like “Growing the Backyard”. He has worked on the Emergef Streetwerks HomeGrown Garden Club, Frogtown Farm, We Win Institute Garden, Young End Urban Farm, Community Food Justice Council. He has served on the board of Environmental Justice Advocates of Minnesota (EJAM) and the African American Aids Task Force, and he founded two 4H clubs. He has also been instrumental in starting a number of farmers markets in both Minneapolis and St Paul. The Growing the Backyard CHAT will benefit from Tim’s expertise in all areas of urban farming including, product development, markets, community outreach and education.

Immediately adjacent to the Cultural Wellness Center, Tim has transformed the backyard at 2020 Oakland into a Training Center and demonstration garden space. The emphasis at this site has been on growing in containers to demonstrate potential garden mobility. The site also features a high tunnel for season extension, a composting project, and worm composting, with plans to add an aquaponics system.

Tim and his partner Cherry Flowers operate two Twin Cities based consulting businesses called Holistic Health Farms and Page & Flowers. www.briotblackhealthfarms.com www.pageandflowers.com

Growing the Backyard at 2020 Oakland Avenue

Growing the Backyard CHAT Returns to its Roots