By LAURA WATERMAN WITTSTOCK AND ELAINE J. SALINAS

At 14, Trinidad Flores was diagnosed with dilated cardiomyopathy, a condition in which an enlarged heart struggles to pump blood. His mom, Little Earth’s Cassandra Holmes, watched him endure three surgeries and a failed heart transplant before he died in 2013 at age 16.

Now she’s leading a charge to decrease the pollution in South Minneapolis.

She doesn’t want to see any more neighborhood babies born in need of breathing tubes, or young people who’ve succumbed to asthma and diabetes.

During a community meeting about the Roof Depot site off Hiawatha and 28th St. on June 17, 2019 at the East Phillips Recreation and Cultural Center, Holmes walked through the crowd holding up maps that show how many kids in the neighborhood have been treated for lead poisoning, how many have visited the emergency room because of asthma attacks, and how many have dealt with arsenic poisoning.

For every 10,000 people, over 200 are hospitalized because of asthma, blood lead and arsenic in this area.

Of the 7,000 children who live in the city, about 40% live in poverty and 80% fall into various ethnic groups.

“This meeting is an active meeting,” she announced. Holmes asked community members to take out their phones, and engage in grassroots organizing by calling the mayor and their city council members one by one, and asking them to support the East Phillips Indoor Urban Farm.

“Dr. King’s life exemplified, we are a community called to cultivate the empathy that we share with those closest to our hearts. His teachings force me to imagine what I want for those closest to my heart. What is the life I imagine for them? It is clear to me Dr. King was fighting in order that others might have empathy for the plight of Black people in the United States. For me the impact of this push to change the world has driven me to want for our family and our community to experience the capacity of this empathy that allows us to be together. I want us to recognize we are created in the image of Creation. Our collective purpose is to see how our ability to create and produce connections beyond the pain is what gives us power. I have deep desire for people of African heritage to realize we have stories that connect us to the first time in Creation. These stories are what help us to see our capacity to demonstrate empathy. In practicing empathy, we reflect the divine presence in Kem (black man/black woman). I am consciously aware that we can see the struggles we have experienced, and we can see the impact these experiences have placed on our ability to be empathetic towards one another or towards ourselves. The idea of the Beloved Community commits us to collectively practice empathy and although it is painful to face the pains of the lives of those we care for, learning to see the value of empathy as we reconstruct the Beloved Community is what allows us to elevate past the pain. Dr. King saw a better future for all of humanity through the healing of his people’s relationship with themselves. As he taught us to demonstrate the invisible power of blackness, he invoked purpose. As we continue to recover, we must see that community – Beloved Community – is meant for us. Seeing that we are community attaches us to the creative purpose of the universe. It is a place that we must create for ourselves, rebuild our sense of a collective purpose and vision.

This cannot be done without us all being willing to search our hearts and share the truth that resides inside of our souls. The sharing gives us the power to see the value of empathy. Valuing empathy allows us to build in and with peace as the focus of our desire. Empathy is the bedrock of the Beloved Community.

The rebuilding of the Beloved Community is at the heart of our desire to right the wounds of racialized objectification.

Dr. King said, “He who works against community is working against the whole of creation.”
Transit

The capaciousity of the 6

By John Charles Wilson

In 1999, Jennifer Lopez released an album titled “On the 6.” Or course, she meant the New York subway line, not the Minneapolis bus line, but 1 digresses rather than being musical, the capaciousity of let ters on the southbound 6 are a pie in the nose.

There are two versions of the 6 northbound: 6 and 6U. 6 goes downtown and 6U goes through letters to the University of Minnesota. However, going south bound, we have eight letters to con tent with. My friends at https:// parking.kitaa.com and I agree. I propose a Great Simplification:

- 6A – To 36th and Hennepin. Only runs twice a day, and is intende d as a “helper” bus to relieve over crowding in the Uptown area at the height of rush hour. This bus can be kept as
- 6B – Southdale via Woodbyle. Hardly anyone gets on or off at Woodbyle branch except at rush hour. Move Woodbyle buses to France. Keep an express route with a different name, say 556, to serve Woodbyle at rush hour.
- 6C – Southdale via Xerxes. Keep this route but rename it 6X – X for Xerxes. I know Metro usu ally uses X to denote a bus headed to the garage, but this is a worth while exception.

Registration Required: Sign up in person at Franklin Library on the day of the lesson. Come participate in a 15-minute one-on-one or group lesson with local musicians, Dallas & Siama! Learn to sing or play guitar for the first time or learn tips to improve your skills in a welcoming environment. Use our guitar or bring your own.

Urban 4-H Club

Tuesday, 7-5 pm

We do everything from urban gardening to digital video/photo to theater. Partner: University of Minnesota.

Teen Tech Workshop

Wednesday, 5-6:30 pm

Get creative and make music, vid eos, animation and other projects using both high- and low-tech tools, everything from iPads and 3D printers to synthesizers and sewing machines. Led by the library’s Teen Tech Squad.

Adults

Open Crafting

Wednesday, July 3, 5-6 pm

Learn traditional rhythms and music production in a space sponsored by AC, Inc. dba The Alley Newspaper and may be published.

What’s Up at the Franklin Community Library

1314 E. Franklin Avenue | 612-463-9325 | franklin.library@hclib.org

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7/10: Creating a library account, using the library catalog.
7/17: Online library databases for learning, literacy and employment.

Master Gardener: Container Gardening

Thursday, July 11, 6-7:15 pm

Container gardening allows you to add color to your garden, deck or front yard. Learn new techniques and container gardening tips.

Work of Art: Grantwriting for Artists of Color and Native Artists Panel

Thursday, July 18, 5-13:00-6 pm

Networking event for artists of color and Native American artists. A panel of experts will take a look at the grantwriting process and discuss how POCl artists can successfully navigate the application process. Collaborator: Springboard for the Arts. Funded by Minnesota’s Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund.

Power in Participation: Voter Education Workshop

Thursday, July 30, 1-10 am


Canoe, fish for free

Drop in for free canoeing this summer Powderhorn Lake Tuesdays, 3-7 pm at Powderhorn Lake (near the boat house, 35th St.) - through Aug. 13. Everyone ages 2 and up is welcome. Canoes, life vests and paddles are provided. Just show up. No registration necessary.

10 ways to fish using equipment and guidance from our partner, L.L.Bean Outdoor Discovery Program. Thursday, July 2, July 9, July 30 and Aug. 13 from 4-7 pm at Powderhorn Lake.

Email your event submit tion to copdesk@alleynews.org.
Phillips resident Cassandra Holmes stated, “We want to live a long life, and we don’t want any more trucks in our community.”

Abah Mohamad (right) is baffled about why the city isn’t supporting the urban farm plan. “It has everything the community needs,” Mohamed pointed out, speaking on behalf of himself and three other women from her community. “It is exactly what will serve the neighborhood.”

“This meeting is an active meeting,” said Cassandra Holmes on June 17. She asked her neighbors to take out their phones, and engage in grassroots organizing by calling the mayor and their city council members one by one, asking them to support the East Phillips Indoor Urban Farm. And residents did just that.

Holmes asks: Will you make a phone call?

Abah Mohamad (right) is baffled about why the city isn’t supporting the urban farm plan. “It has everything the community needs,” Mohamed pointed out, speaking on behalf of herself and three other women from her community. “It is exactly what will serve the neighborhood.”

“Phillips residents who need treatment for asthma. Lawns were remediated for arsenic. The Clark/Berglin Environmental Justice Law requires that any project in this neighborhood be reviewed by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency to analyze the cumulative pollution effects — not only what will be caused by the new or expanded project. This includes city projects, such as the proposal to expand the city’s existing public works facility onto the adjacent 7.5-acre Roof Depot site. The city’s water maintenance facility, known as the East Water Yard, is currently located on 2.4 acres in Ward 3 at Hennepin Ave. E. and 5th Ave. N. It dates back 120 years and is the hub for maintaining the city’s 1,000 miles of water mains, 16,000 valves, and street hoses, and 8,000 hydrants. The Water Distribution’s 100 maintenance staff performs valve operations, greasing and packing of hydrants, street manhole repairs, main water repairs, and leak detection.

Replacing the maintenance yard is the last major unfinished piece of a 25-year-old master plan for updating city Department of Public Works facilities. The neighborhood organization, East Phillips Improvement Coalition (EPIC), was not notified of this plan until 2015 after it was engaged in negotiations to purchase the Roof Depot site. The city threatened eminent domain, and bought it instead of EPIC.

The city’s plans for the former Roof Depot site involve using the entire 16.4 acres to store manhole covers, sewer pipes, and sand-salt mix, and send out public work’s fleet of diesel trucks into other areas, concentrating the air pollution. EPIN has asked the city for a portion of the land over the past few years, drawing up plans for three acres, then two acres, and then one acre.

They said “No,” pointed out Holmes. And they haven’t once allowed the community group to present to the city council.

This is despite the city’s own core principal of community engagement, specifically stating the right of citizens who are affected to be involved.

“We have not had that right,” stated Phillips resident Brad Pass.

“We don’t want any more trucks” Those gathered on June 17 see the trouble residents have finding apartments and houses they can afford. They see the problem of not having access to fresh, green vegetables. They want their kids to have better. They want to be part of fixing things for their neighborhood and the world, and they have some bright ideas about using aquaponics and solar power in their corner of South Minneapolis. They’re inspired by the Midtown Greenway and want to fashion a neighborhood that places a high priority on biking and walking – two methods of travel that are accessible to the poor and the rich, build better health, and don’t spew pollution into the air. They have already received some grant money, and have worked to make this affordable and more green by pinpointing a large building that they can re-use.

In the past, neighborhood Organizers have staved off the Hennepin County Garbage Transfer Station at Cedar and 28th in the mid 1990s; kept out the Midtown Eco-burner (Cogenerating Plant) in 2007; and convinced Xcel Energy to buy high voltage power lines in 2009. They were also able to transform the land at Cedar and 24th into a busy cultural and recreation center, garnering grants and other support for the mass project. They’re committed to doing that here.

Holmes stated, “We want to live a long life, and we don’t want any more trucks in our community.”
Flagpole cost $271.55, is still up 90 years later

The 1920s was the age of flagpoles and speakeasies, of dance marathons and flagpole-sitting contests. The national mood was upbeat and there seemed to be enough money to do whatever needed to be done. While members of the recently formed Minneapolis Cemetery Protective Association (MCPA) would never have been mistaken for flappers or bootleggers, they had big plans and in 1928 they began their work in earnest. Their plans included a flagpole.

In May 1927 the Minneapolis City Council had voted to issue $50,000 in bonds to be sold to buy out the remaining interests of Layman family members (the third generation of Minneapolis Layman family members) and to make some much-needed improvements. The grounds were a mess. In some places wooden coffins had disappeared, creating large craters, and in other places dirt was mound ed around the emptied graves of the approximately 5,000 people whose remains were disinterred and relocated to other cemeteries.

The cemetery needed a fence and the MCPA wanted to erect monuments that celebrated the achievements of some of the city’s pioneers and soldiers.

In January 1928, the city council granted the MCPA’s Auxiliary (women) exclusive rights for selling flowers and plants in the cemetery. Their plans included a flagpole, but at the time the number of visitors to the cemetery on Memorial Day weekend numbered not in the dozens or even hundreds, but in the thousands.

On Feb. 10, 1928, the city council voted to rename the cemetery. Although the cemetery’s official name in its early days was Minneapolis Cemetery, it was (and still is) commonly referred to as Layman’s Cemetery after its original owners. The cemetery’s official name is Minneapolis Pioneers and Soldiers Memorial Cemetery.

In June 1928, the MCPA announced that they had set up a trust fund and had already raised $4,000 budget for operating and maintaining the cemetery. With an eye toward raising additional revenue, in July 1928 the MCPA asked the city council to amend an earlier ordinance and allow new burials in the cemetery. They argued that the cemetery was no longer (if, indeed, it had ever been) a threat to the city’s health and safety. Their request was not immediately accepted and was referred to the council’s Committee on Public Welfare where it seems to have disappeared.

On July 31, the city council voted to accept $180 from the Auxiliary for repairs to the caretaker’s cottage. What those repairs were is not clear.

Earlier, in May 1928, the Auxiliary had made an even bigger gift to the city. They donated $256.80 to raise a new 50-foot steel flagpole set on top of a limestone base. Andrew Skoberg and Sam Walsen, two stonemasons, constructed the flagpole’s base using three tons of stone and 15-cubic feet of mortar. They each spent 17 hours on the job and were paid $1.38 an hour for their labor. The MCPA bought them lunch on May 2 at a cost of 50 cents each.

The steel flag cost $135 and the plaque cost $70. The city supplied $14.75 worth of materials bringing the total cost to $271.55.

It was a good investment since more than 90 years later the flagpole is still the focal point of the cemetery.

The flagpole was the first of six monuments donated to the city by the MCPA in honor of the city’s soldiers and territorial pioneers. Those structures, along with the 1871 caretaker’s cottage, are considered part of the cemetery’s “built environment” and contributed to its being the first cemetery in Minnesota to be designated as an individual landmark in the National Register and later as a city of Minneapolis landmark.

The efforts of the MCPA also were an important factor in the designation: their work was considered to be among the city’s early preservation efforts. They worked tirelessly to preserve the cemetery.
What is a ‘beloved community’?

From page 1

The pain held in the heart of our people must no longer bind our beings to brutality of the past. In the cultivation and production of empathy we learn our humanities are intertwined. We have the difficult work of unravelling the levels of hidden pain in order to see how our truth telling and community healing can lift us beyond the suffering of being racially objectified.

As I have considered the radical goal of Dr. King’s vision for a Beloved Community it becomes conceivable with the shift of “Moving from Race to Culture.”

Moving from Race to Culture forces each of us to see how humanity is harmed by racialized objectification.

This shifting from race to culture requires we trace the journey of our peoplehood back to Creation, back to cosmos. To create the Beloved Community, we are required to begin to see how our action relates to an innate peace and harmony. It is in this learning to harmonize peace with ourselves we become capable of demonstrating empathy for others.

The primary obstacle is a lack of empathy for others. We are in need of giving and receiving the acknowledgement that naturally comes from empathy. Healing begins in being able to empathize with the forces, energies, lives, beings, creatures in nature. It begins when we are able to see the tree and feel the experience of the tree’s ability to survive a long harsh winter.

Founded in 1996, the mission of the Cultural Wellness Center is to unleash the power of citizens to heal themselves and build community. The Cultural Wellness Center is one of the primary community and cultural knowledge-production organizations in the Twin Cities region. They partner with organizations, institutions, and people within communities to develop models to solve problems and create lasting solutions.

The Cultural Wellness Center is located within the Midtown Global Market, 920 E. Lake St. Look on the back page of each Alley newspaper for more on its activities.

Editor’s note: This is reprinted from the MayDay 2019 tabloid courtesy of In The Heart of the Beast. This year marks the 400th anniversary of slave ships arriving to the new colonies that would become the United States. Earlier than that, Africans had been seized by slave traders and brought to North America, South America, and the Caribbean since about 1501.

MIDTOWN PHILLIPS FESTIVAL!

Sunday, July 21, 2019
11-5 pm

Visit us on Lake Street between 13th & 15th Avenue

For more information on the Midtown Festival: www.midtownphillips.org info@midtownphillips.org (763) 310-4760

Students from the Minnesota Transitions Charter School participate in the 2019 Memorial Day events at the Pioneers and Soldiers Memorial Cemetery.

PHOTO TIM MCCALL

Photo Tim McCAll

A little guy makes the best of a very soggy event on Memorial Day 2019 at the Pioneers and Soldiers Memorial Cemetery. It was 151st Memorial Day Observance at the cemetery.

PHOTO TIM MCCALL

FREE ENTERTAINMENT!

MUSIC SCHEDULE:
11-noon Brass Messengers
12-12:50 Wain McFarlane
1-1:50 Little Thunderbirds
2-2:50 Sarah Greer & Friends
3-3:50 Inli Samay
4-4:50 AJ & Rina

EXHIBITIONS:
New Americans Youth Soccer Club
Circle of Disciple Boxing
Meet Mad Dads!

Filmed by Somali TV and live broadcasts from Somali Radio.

FOOD VENDORS
LIVE MUSIC AND FREE ENTERTAINMENT
EVENyONE WELCOME
ACTIVITIES AND EXHIBITS
RESOURCE AND INFO BOOTHS

MIDTOWN PHILLIPS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION INC.

This Monthly Alley Newspaper Half Page was paid for by Midtown Phillips Neighborhood Association, Inc.
Commissioner Angela Conley wants constituents guiding decisions from the 24th floor

By TESHA M. CHRISTENSEN

Editor's note: This is the sec-ond in a two-part series reprinted courtesy of the Longfellow Noko-mis Messenger. The first part ran in the June 2019 edition of The Alley.

Addressing unsheltered homelessness is an issue Hennepin County District 4’s new County Commissioner Angela Conley is passionate about, and one that local residents focused on when she was door-knocking during her campaign.

Many years ago, Conley had to leave where she was living for safety reasons and was technically homeless. “That experience taught me ways in which we can do better,” said Conley, who later spent 20 years working in social work at both the county and state level. “I know housing and having a place to sleep at night are basic human rights.”

Conley believes that the an-swer to fixing this issue is funding, and hopes to see a number of dif-ferent agencies partnering together with direction from the state. This way, someone from Washington County can stay within their com-munity and not go to a shelter in Hennepin County because that’s the only one that has space.

“This is a lot bigger than just Hennepin County,” said Conley. Plus the answer requires more than providing a bed and a mat to those who are homeless. It will re-quire that – and on-ramps to sup-portive housing and permanent housing. “We have to meet people where they are at,” observed Con-ley.

Right now, Hennepin County operates as a referral-based sys-tem which means that someone might get referred to four or five other agencies to meet his or her varying needs. Conley said, “It’s often a full-time job for people to get chemical health services over here and mental health services over here, and then help with find-ing employment over in this direc-tion. All of that should be under one roof.”

She added, “We should be doing it with people who are in-volved in our shelter system because housing stability is when you have the support you need to maintain your own housing.”

That costs money, Conley rec-ognizes, so she’s looking at where money is being spent now, evaluat-ing if the outcomes are good, and questioning if that money should be spent elsewhere.

“We are moving in the right direction, but we’re still not where we should be,” stated Conley. “We’re still busting at the seams.” According to the Wilder Foundation, Minnesota is seeing the highest numbers of home-lessness in the 30 years they’ve been tracking it. She pointed out, “Homelessness has jumped 10% in the last three years.”

Conley is taking a close look at how the county invests in shel-ters and supportive housing, as well as real estate.

“We’ve got a market out here that not a lot of people can af-ford anymore. It’s harder to buy a home. Houses go up for sale and they’re snatched up right away. Rent keeps going up, but wages don’t,” she remarked. When peo-
people get out of jail, landlords won’t rent to them. And women and children fleeing domestic violence make up a large percentage of the homeless and have specific needs before they can get back on their feet.

There are also members of the community who don’t go to shelters, and some of those people came together last year at the Hiawatha Encampment, the largest encampment Minnesota had ever seen. As a Southside resident, Conley drove past the Hiawatha Encampment regularly. She recognizes there are many reasons why people opt to not use shelters, such as not being able to bring a loved one or beloved pet. Others don’t think the shelters are safe, and worry that they don’t have a place to lock up their belongings. Addiction is also an issue, and opiates is hitting the fourth district hard, Conley said.

She pointed out that encampments are full of many Native American and African Americans – the two groups experiencing the highest levels of homelessness. “You had a group of folks who found community amongst each other and who chose to live amongst each other,” Conley observed.

“There are also 200 to 300 people who sleep on the trains overnight. So this is an issue that not a lot of people have talked about.”

According to Conley, the county has divested from shelters and invested in affordable housing over the years. Her question there is: “Affordable to who?”

All of the affordable housing is calculated based on median income, and affordable workforce housing is at 60% of the median income. “We have people at 30% of the median income. Where can they go?” she asked.

Also lacking is shelter that is culturally specific, and meets people where they are at even if they aren’t ready for addiction treatment.

Conley co-chairs Heading Home Hennepin, which brings together the county, city of Minneapolis and others to look at ways people might be able to work together to provide resources to create the infrastructure needed to house more people.

“If we make these investments on the front end then the resources are already there, and we wouldn’t have to go into an encampment and provide services there because we were already on the front end working upstream to stop the build-up at the bottom,” said Conley. “There’s a lot of possibility in taking on this issue head on. It’s going to require the political will for people to say, ‘Yes, this is an issue.’”

Conley also pushed for unsheltered homelessness to be included in the county’s federal legislative platform this year for the first time.

From page 6

WHAT IS A COUNTY COMMISSIONER?

During her campaign, Conley started with that question because she loves talking about the county. “I have spent my career in public service, and I wanted everybody to know what commissioners do because it’s a level of government that is sort of invisible,” observed Conley. “A lot of people know who their state reps are, they know who their senator might be, they know the governor, they know their city council, but do you know who your commissioner is? Raise your hand. We’d be in a room of 25 people and one person might raise their hand.”

She pointed out, “The county is involved in pretty much everything you do,” and deals with more than just the big, contentious issues of light rail and stadiums.

When you take your garbage, it’s burned at the county energy recovery center downtown. “The road you drive on to get to work everyday may be a county road even in the city, and if you’re concerned about safety on it you’ll need to talk to the county. If you are on a fixed income and you need help paying for medical care or you’re experiencing food insecurity, you may apply at a county office.”

“This is your largest government entity aside from the state, and it’s operating a $2.4 billion budget. We’re the second largest county in the Midwest – only to Cook County near Chicago. We’re very, very big with a far reach in people’s everyday lives,” stated Conley.

Her office will be intentional about holding community office hours for citizens to share concerns and ideas. The first was held at Sabathani, and others will be held at various places throughout the large fourth district including Longfellow, by the airport, in Cedar-Riverside, Phillips and the Central neighborhood.

“We want folks to know that their commissioner is very interested in having community lead on key decisions,” said Conley.

In March, she was part of a meeting focused on the Cedar/Highway 77/Highway 62/Edgewater area, and was most interested in hearing what those in attendance had to say. “I think community should be leading on what they know is best for their neighborhood,” stated Conley, and her staff took a ton of notes at the meeting. She plans to hold a follow-up meeting to talk about how those ideas can be implemented.

“That’s the kind of leadership you can find out of the District 4 office,” stated Conley. “I don’t want to be in this space making up solutions based on what I think the community needs. I want people in the fourth district to be guiding decisions that happen up here on the 24th floor because these are decisions that ultimately affect your life.”

For a long time, Conley didn’t feel included in decision making and so she’s taking that experience and turning it around.

“This really truly is the district four people’s office,” said Conley. “I want people to know that they have access to their commissioner, and their concerns are my concerns.”

YOUR CONCERNS

From page 6

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MIDTOWN GLOBAL MARKET
Lake Street and 10th Ave S | Minneapolis

Enjoy a world tour of tastes, arts and crafts at our public market.

Experience a world tour of tastes, arts and crafts at our public market.
So what should we talk about?

By MARTI MALTHI

Early on in the timeline that Peace House Community is open, we host a “meditation” for our guests, volunteers, and community members. It isn’t a meditation in the traditional sense; we focus on one topic and discuss it as a group to help us understand each other and develop a great respect for the people and world around us. The discussions last 20 to 35 minutes, and it is one of the hallmarks of our community.

Sister Rose Tillemans founded PHC with the intention of giving a forum to marginalized women and men who were generally ignored by the larger society. She also wanted to promote relationships in a safe context, making individuals feel comfortable with exploring their own thoughts and feelings in a supportive setting.

Having been at PHC for a little over a year now, I’ve come to respect Sister Rose’s wisdom in weaving a delicate time of reflection and sharing into her vision. The discussions have opened my eyes (and I know from speaking with others that they have had the same experience) to people and situations that I would otherwise have completely overlooked.

Among the topics we’ve covered in the last 15 months have been:

- Tell us your name, why it was given to you and how you feel about it
- What is the happiest song you have ever heard
- What do people who have never been homeless need to know about being homeless
- How prepared are you to survive a natural disaster

Unfortunately, just reading these topics on the page doesn’t do them justice. As I typed them I realized how much they sound like the conversation starters you might find on tables at a corporate networking event. And yet, when you discuss topics like this day after day and become comfortable sharing yourself and accepting what others have to offer, the questions become something more than trite questions. When 20 or 30 people come to one of these questions together, the questions open doors to multiple ways of viewing and responding to each other’s life experiences.

The results are wonderful.

Of course, not every meditation works out as planned. On some days the group just doesn’t have a lot of energy. Occasionally the discussion goes off course, like when I asked what people should have buildings or lakes named after them, and we ended up discussing gun control legislation.

But even these discussions build bonds, as we learn what issues are important to each other and recognize that sometimes silence is more important than speaking.

Being an introvert with some autistic tendencies, I sometimes have difficulty starting conversations with people and getting to know them. I am thankful for people like Sister Rose and events like the meditation time that deliberately make human connections a priority.

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Of course, not every meditation works out as planned. On some days the group just doesn’t have a lot of energy. Occasionally the discussion goes off course, like when I asked what people should have buildings or lakes named after them, and we ended up discussing gun control legislation.

But even these discussions build bonds, as we learn what issues are important to each other and recognize that sometimes silence is more important than speaking.

Being an introvert with some autistic tendencies, I sometimes have difficulty starting conversations with people and getting to know them. I am thankful for people like Sister Rose and events like the meditation time that deliberately make human connections a priority.

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Hope you’re enjoying your summer here in Ventura Village. Get out and enjoy some of these neighborhood events and places that our association supports. If you need help with your yard or garden contact us at 612-874-9070. We have tools and supplies available. Our meeting schedule is below. Please note there will be no membership meeting in August.

Peavey Park Revitalization Recap: Two-phase, $2.7 million overhaul cited as part of an ongoing “transformation” of the Ventura Village and Phillips neighborhoods.

On Friday, May 31, 2019, officials from the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB), Hennepin County, US Bank and several neighborhood organizations held a ribbon-cutting event following a major overhaul of Peavey Park. The key goal of the project is to welcome more people to the park by accommodating additional activities. There were several speakers at the event, including a past and current member of our neighborhood board.

AK Hassan—former chair of Ventura Village—who now serves as MPRB’s Vice President and Commissioner of District 3, noted his own experience growing up with Peavey Park as his neighborhood park. “To be successful, these parks must reflect the diverse communities who use them. I am proud of the work MPRB is doing to be more responsive to the needs and desires of all communities.”

Cecil Smith—current board member of Ventura Village and chair of our Crime & Safety Committee—put the park improvements in the context of changes to the neighborhood. He noted that this area used to be filled with bars and open-air drug dealing and a gas station noteworthy as the address for the highest number of police calls for years. “Transformation has been happening in this community for decades. You look at where we are now: we are living that transformation.”

Ventura Village is proud to have contributed funds toward swings, sod, and the park pavilion (see photos below).

Source: Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board Website
I arrived in Minneapolis in 1973 and moved into the collective household right across the street from Little Earth of United Tribes just as it was being built. Out of that house, the MayDay Parade was born, and so the parade begins each year from the field alongside Little Earth of United Tribes.

In my first month in Minneapolis, I ventured to the Little Earth gym to hear you of the American Indian Movement speak of your work. Your voices shook me to my core. Your call for spiritual grounding and social justice and truth reached inside me and woke within me a need as social justice and truth reached the core. The movement spoke of your work. Your call for spiritual grounding and social justice and truth reached inside me and woke within me a need as social justice and truth reached the core.

The movement was founded to turn the attention of Indian people toward a renewal of spirituality which would impart the strength of resolve needed to reverse the ruinous policies of the United States, Canada, and other colonialist govern-ments of Central and South America. At the heart of AIM is deep spirituality and a belief in the connectedness of all Indian people.

During the past 30 years, The American Indian Movement has organized communities and cre-ated opportunities for people across the Americas and Canada. AIM is headquartered in Minneapolis with chapters in many other cities, rural areas and Indian Nations.

AIM has repeatedly brought successful suit against the federal government for the protection of the rights of Native Nations guar-anteed in treaties, sovereignty, the United States Constitution, and laws. The philosophy of self-deter-mination upon which the movement is built is deeply rooted in tradi-tional spirituality, culture, language and history. AIM develops partner-ships to address the common needs of the people. Its first mandate is to ensure the fulfillment of treaties made with the United States. This is the clear and unwavering vision of The American Indian Movement. It has not been an easy path. Spiritual leaders and elders fore-saw the testing of AIM’s strength and stamina. Doubters, infiltrators, those who wished they were in the leadership, and those who didn’t want to be but wanted to tear down and take away have had their turns. No one, inside or outside the movement, has so far been able to destroy the will and strength of AIM’s solidity. Men and women, adults and children are continu-ously urged to stay strong spiritu-ally, and to always remember that the movement is greater than the accomplishments or faults of its leaders.

Inherent in the spiritual heart of AIM is knowing that the work goes on because the need goes on. Indian people live on Mother Earth with the clear understanding that no one will assure the coming generations except ourselves. No one from the outside will do this for us. And no person among us can do it all for us, either. Self- determination must be the goal of all work. Solidarity must be the first and only defense of the members.

Editor’s note: This is reprinted from the MayDay 2019 tabloid courtesy of In The Heart of the Beast.
OPINION & COMMENTARY

Raise Your Voice

Mind-numbing Janjaweed
By PETER MOLNAAR

On the western fringe of Alley News territory, there exists yet another progressive church. Was it more than 10 years ago that Plymouth Congregational (1900 Nicollet Ave.) hosted a sizeable public meeting in response to the Darfur Genocide? Indeed, events in the western province of Sudan, Africa had provoked the presence of such notables as Tim Wise and Ward F. Kennedy.

The genocide was carried out by the Sudanese government’s “Arab” militias, known as the Janjaweed (translation: “devils on horseback”). The Janjaweed systematically destroyed Darfurians by looting and burning their villages, murdering, raping, and torturing…and then, polluting their water supply with decomposing bodies. Over 480,000 were killed, 2.8 million displaced.

Well, at the present time, what one chooses to write about these things? Well, the stench of burning Janjaweed has returned to now waft among the reeds of St. Paul (7th St. and Hiawatha). Labour Day overflows have seen fit to notch a fresh death toll with their refusal to reveal their “deposed” leaders and their refusal to allow elections in the near term. Oh, but the crocodiles smile.

Hey, you, Sudanese neighbors living close by and we are blessed with the knowl- edgeable concern expressed by your Ethiopian and Eritrean neighbors (ask my Ethiopian and Eritrean origin (ask my Hindu, Lubavitch, African immigrants from numer- al origin (ask my Ethiopian and Coptic religion (ask my Hindu, Lubavitch, F. Kennedy was to the Irish Catholic Railroad workers. My great uncle Stan was alleg- edly killed by the KKK in Lake Side Park, Fond du Lac, Wis. Because he was Irish Catholic. The Irish, as indentured serv- ants, were worked to death with greater frequency than slaves. England practiced a policy of total genocide in Ireland. “East of the Mississippi, under every railway tie is a dead Irishman,” said a Confederate soldier. The Irish were forced street gangs to sur- vive in America (Dead Rabbits, Hudson Dusters, the Westies and others. Whitie Bolger emerged out of the Irish gangs).

People have a right to their anger! But do they have the right to target individual representa- tives of the historically oppress- ing group? To what end is it “cre- ating false narratives.”

I had a black neighbor who lived across the street. She would sit in her 2nd floor apartment alone and call every African immigrant who passed words that make me shudder.

We must find ways to meet in common space. Not one single person since 2013 has ever engaged me in a respectful dia- logue over the issues that have engaged me in a respectful dia- logue over the issues that have engaged me in a respectful dia- logue over the issues that have engaged me in a respectful dia- logue over the issues that have engaged me in a respectful dia- logue over the issues that have engaged me in a respectful dia- logue over the issues that have engaged me in a respectful dia-

The Rand Report
Cano: Here are four things to do show we all matter
By RAND RETTERIATH

This issue I’ll focus on a comment made regarding my article, “What about how the white power base is always about my race or some other unrelated attribute, real or imagined, and as a result of that attribute, we move to offer it.”

Since Alondra Cano has come to office, I have been called an endless list of insults. It is the same tactic used by the Nationalists in Washington. Think about it. Facts are overlooked in favor of emo- tionally charged slanders and false narratives designed to cut people out of the conversation.

2020 is all about engagement, my responsibility, your responsi- bility, theirs and ours. It should be a message of inclusion. However, since 2013 the rant from Ward 9 leadership seems to be about mini- 

The assault on my ideas and argument will only result to invalidates, ridicules and depends on historical guilt to survive, that is good for me and yet, we still need to come together, live next door to each other and solve a common set of problems that are destroying our community!

Perhaps Cano could make a start by unblocking all the community members she has blocked on social media. (Which, by the way, is a court determined viola- tion of First Amendment Rights). Secondly, she might initiate pro- tocols to return every constituent inquiry. Thirdly, she might commit to attend and host community events where she actually listens to community experience and ideas. Fourth, she might institute community events to talk about the exercise of power and community building strategies, which is the intent the 2020 program.

Four simple actions that could turn the tide of division and deri- 

WANT TO HEAR YOUR OPINIONS ON WHAT’S HAPPENING IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD AND THE WORLD! Email copypdesk@alleynews.org

OF, BY AND FOR ITS READERS SINCE 1976
It’s July the BIG CHALLENGE

Continues!!! Community organizations and residents – Bring your co-workers and friends and join together to make healthy life choices, build morale and meet the CHALLENGE! WIN individual or organizational prizes and recognition for:

• BIGGEST LOSER!!! • MOST STEPS!!! • MOST FITNESS HOURS ..... and more!

GUIDE TO CALENDAR:

1. WALK ANYTIME MGM & GREENWAY – 10am to 6 pm. CHECK IN with staff of the Backyard Community Health Hub to help us keep track of your participation.

2. MONDAY Activity – held in the Midtown Global Market’s Conference Room on the lower level. 3. and the 3rd THURSDAY activities – located in the center area of the Midtown Global Market. 4. WEDNESDAY and SATURDAY activities – located inside of the Allina Conference Room. 5. Craniosacral on Wednesdays by appointment only-612-353-6211.

LINE DANCING with J. MOST, COMMAND STEPPERS MN

1st and 3rd Thursdays, 5:30 to 7:30 sponsored by the Backyard Community Health Hub (see Calendar below)

J. MOST had his single in 2007. People who enjoy the dancing or “Stepping”, said it was a great song for dancing to. J. MOST also loves teaching so in 2009, he began teaching Stepping and estimates that he has taught over 350 people. In fact J. MOST reports, many of the other Stepping and Line Dancing instructors in the Twin Cities can be linked back to learning these dances from him. Line Dancing is an urban, group dance routine learned and performed to a song. This form of dancing can involve a group of people from 2 to 1000! Both Stepping and Line Dancing instructors can talk to the whole body from that relationship.

Craniosacral Therapy

Caspian performing craniosacral per Backyard Community Health Hub participants direction.

Backyard Community Health Hub, 920 E. Lake St., Minneapolis MN 55407

Call Monday to Friday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. for more info and to find out how to get involved!

**Breathe 5-6pm**

**Yoga 6-7**

**Zumba 7-8**

**CRANIOSACRAL with Caspian Wednesday, by appointment by calling the Backyard Community Health Hub 612-353-6211 (see Calendar below)**

Craniosacral – is a light touch, inner re-sourcing body-listening, rooted in following the movement of the cranial head bone that pumps cerebral spinal fluid down to the sacrum. Since all of the nerves come out of the spine, you can connect with the whole body. You can talk to the whole body from that relationship.

Sessions are tailored to fit the person. Caspian offers sessions as part of the Backyard Community Health Hub’s varied activities to promote self-healing and community building. Participants sit in chairs and are fully clothed and help to co-create what the focus will be during this time together. Co-creation of the focus is based upon the participant knowing what they need and being able to ask for it. A “consent to practice” format is also used, meaning that the participant has an equal voice and may decide when to stop or end the session.

Participants may use craniosacral for pain, injury, heartbeat, over-thinking or general stress among other things. Craniosacral originated in chiropractic medicine and is about being in relationship to the bones, a type of practice that is evident in many cultures. Caspian believes it is part of our collective liberation and living in our connected selves. She says, “When we are feeling one’s life energy in our own bodies, it leads to our being able to feel and respect the life energy of others.” Her philosophy aligns well with the principles that are practiced daily at the Backyard Community Health Hub.