



PHOTO BY TESSA M. CHRISTENSEN

A record number of people attended the 45th annual MayDay parade and celebration on Sunday, May 5, enjoying beautiful weather while celebrating organizer Sandy Spieler's last year.

MayDay, HOTB: What will we build together?

By CORRIE ZOLL, HOTB EX. DIRECTOR

A lot has happened over the past six months. HOTB experienced many of the same challenges faced by other legacy arts organizations that have been lost in recent years. Though this period has been difficult, at every step we felt and appreciated the support from your calls, messages, donations and social media posts. You are the reason we continue to strive toward finding a future for this work.

As you may know, in January HOTB announced budget and

personnel cuts after \$130,000 in projected income did not come through. The layoffs are significant, more than half the staff have been laid off. Added together, the stories of those people and their time with HOTB take up a century. The loss is painful for these individuals, for the organization, and for the communities where we do our work. These cuts reduce HOTB's staff capacity by more than half in order to allow HOTB to finish its current fiscal year in August without running out of cash.

Though significantly diminished in capacity, HOTB remains committed to its vision of building creativity, empathy, and interconnection in its core neighborhoods. HOTB's tens of thousands of supporters want us to continue our work. We believe transformational change is possible that will lead to a more resilient future organization.

After layoffs are complete, the remaining staff will be at 4 FTE. This is not enough staff capacity to operate MayDay, the Avalon Theater and other HOTB programs

in the coming year. Any future for HOTB will include increasing staff capacity, and we are committed to a future in which staff and artists more closely reflect the communities where we do our work. HOTB's board of directors is active and committed to the next steps for the organization. The board recently added two members in preparation for the hard work ahead.

Among the announcements we made in January was that MayDay 2019 would be the last under Sandy's artistic direction, and the

last solely produced by HOTB. Both decisions were in deliberation a full year earlier and, though not triggered by HOTB's financial situation, were certainly impacted by it. HOTB received an outpouring of response to the January 9 announcements. Scores of people told us that HOTB and MayDay were the reason they lived in South Minneapolis, or the reason they returned to South Minneapolis after they had children, or the rea-

MAYDAY Continued on page 6

TO END ALL VIOLENCE



PHOTO BY CAMILLE GAGE

Signs supporting women and calling for an end of violence in all its forms were held by over 200 marchers during the first Indigenous Women's March held on May 11. >> [More on page 3.](#)

New public art at Bde Maka Ska

The city of Minneapolis and Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) announce the dedication of a new gathering space and public artwork at Bde Maka Ska on June 8, 2019 at 10:30 a.m. Festivities will include music, comments from descendants and artists, refreshments and activities for the whole family.

The artwork includes a website, decorative railing and pavement stamps by artists Mona Smith, Sandy Spieler and Angela Two Stars honoring Mahpiya Wicaṣta (Cloud Man) and Heyata Otunwe (Village to the side), the Dakota leader and community that inhabited this area in the 1830s.

The three artists collaborated on the entire design with Angela Two Stars conceiving the pavement stamps depicting plants and animals



PHOTO BY BRUCE SILCOX

significant to the Dakota, as well as selecting the Dakota words and phrases incorporated into the site. Sandy Spieler invented the overall railing design highlighting crops grown and harvested at the village; and Mona Smith oversaw production of the website featuring information about Mahpiya Wicaṣta, Heyata Otunwe, and interviews with descendants and artists.

The idea to recognize the 1830s Dakota village had been discussed

for many years, but wasn't formally adopted until the MPRB began the Bde Maka Ska/Harriet Master Planning process and responded to the strong desire by community members to reveal and interpret the natural and human history of the lakes, specifically around the Native American history of the area. Funding came from the regional park improvements and support from the city's Art in Public Places Program.



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don't say much, see what the little
independent ones say."*
– Wendell Phillips (1811-1884)

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"Let me make the newspaper and I care not who makes the religion and the laws." – Wendell Phillips

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June 15, 2019**

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What's Up at the Franklin Community Library

1314 E. Franklin Avenue | 612- 543-6925 | www.hclib.org
M, F, Sa: 9AM–5PM • T, W, Th: 9AM–8PM • Su: 12-5PM

By ERIN THOMASSON

All Ages

Learn Together: Connect & Play Tuesdays, 6-6:30PM

Connect with your child during this drop-in program exploring early literacy activities. Join your neighbors each week for a different theme including music, art, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math), reading and creative play.

Franklin on the Green

Tuesdays, June 11, 18 & 25,
3-4:30PM

Play games outside this summer! We will have badminton, soccer, frisbee and other games set up to play, weather permitting.

Science Wednesdays

Wednesdays, June 12, 19 & 26,
3-4:30PM

Join us for a STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art, mathematics) activity each week!

Puzzlemania!

Thursdays, 3-5 PM

Enjoy a variety of educational and fun puzzles and games!

Game On!

Thursdays, 5-7PM

Join us for all types of gaming! Enjoy card games, board games, Xbox, VR and more. Play an old favorite or learn a new one.

Family Storytime

Fridays, 10:30-11AM

For children of all ages and their caregivers. Talk, sing, read, write and play together in a format appropriate for young children. Share books, stories, rhymes, music and movement.

Brodini Comedy Magic

Saturday, June 15, 3-3:45PM

Magician Graylyn Morris will raise spirits and test kids' powers of concentration as he manipulates ropes, scarves, balls and other magician's props in a perplexing "now you see it, now you don't" performance! Sponsor: MELSA (Metropolitan Library Service Agency).

Read Together

Tuesdays, June 18 & 25, 1-2 PM

Practice reading and enjoying books one-on-one or in a small group.

Snake, Rattle and Roll

Wednesday, June 26, 3:30-4:45PM

Learn about salamanders, turtles and snakes, and meet several of the species that call Minnesota and Wisconsin home. Sponsor: MELSA (Metropolitan Library Service Agency). Collaborator: Snake Discovery.

Teen Programs

Urban 4-H Club

Tuesdays, 5-7PM

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

PinBox Arcade

Wednesday, June 12, 5-7PM

Come play original pinball machines made out of cardboard! Play against a friend or beat your own personal best. Collaborator: PinBox 3000.

Teen Tech Workshop

Wednesdays, 5-6:30PM

Get creative and make music, videos, animation and other proj-

ects 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.

Adult Programs

Open Crafting

Monday, June 3, 1-3PM

Looking for a space to sew, knit or work on other crafts? Bring your current project and materials and join us! Sewing machines, knitting needles and other equipment will be available for your use.

Master Gardener: Your First Vegetable Garden

Thursday, June 6, 6-7:15PM

Learn the basic information you need to become a more successful vegetable gardener. Topics include selecting cool and warm weather vegetables, minimizing insect damage and soil diseases without using chemicals, basic tools needed and more. Collaborator: Hennepin County Master Gardeners, University of Minnesota Extension.

Franklin Technology Hour

Thursdays, 12-1pm

Do you want to explore new technology, practice using a computer program, or learn more about the library's electronic resources? Then come to Franklin Technology Hour! Bring your questions or come and explore a spotlighted resource.

Cards and Board Games

Saturday, June 8, 2:30-4:30PM

Come play a variety of games with new or old friends. Games are provided, or bring a favorite from home.

Fasal furan oo ku Saabsan Barashada Teknoolojiga Maktabadda/Library Technology Open Lab

Wednesdays, June 12, 19 & 26, 10:30-12 Kaalay oo baro Teknoolojiga maktabadda. Shaqaalaha waxey ku bilaabi doonaan Open lab-ka 20-daqiiqo oo horudhac ku saabsan teknoolojiga maktabadda. Mowduucyada laga hadli doono waxaa ka mid ah: sidaad u isticmaali laheyd kombiyuutarada maktabada, Internet-ka iyo Email-lada, astur-naanta, printer-rada iyo Scanner, iyo sidaad buugaagta uga raadsan laheyd bogga maktabada iyo kheyraadka laga helaba. Markuu mowduuca horidhaciisa lasiiyo, ka qeyb galayaasha waxey waqti u heli doonaan iney sii dabaqaan waxey bardeen iyadoo shaqaalaha diyaar u ahaan doonaan iney uga jawaabaan su'aalhooda mid-midna u caawiyaan. Come and explore library technology. Staff will start each Open Lab with a 20-minute orientation to library technology. Following the orientation, participants will have time to explore on their own, while staff will be available for questions and one-on-one support. Schedule of topics: • June 12: Signing onto library computers and accessing the internet. • June 19: Using the library website and best practices for privacy. • June 26: Using email. • July 3: Scanning and printing. • July 10: Creating a library account, using the library catalog. • July 17: Online library databases for learning, literacy and employment.

Franklin Learning Center:

612-543-6934 flc@hclib.org

The Franklin Learning Center offers free, one-to-one tutoring for adults who are learning English and math, preparing for the GED and citizenship exams, and gaining life skills. We are always looking for community volunteers! No experience necessary; we provide training and materials. Contact us at 952-847-2934 or flc@hclib.org.

Transit

Transit accessibility: a personal perspective

By JOHN CHARLES WILSON

There really isn't any transit news to speak of in the Phillips neighbourhood this month, so I am going to write on a more personal, but transit-related, topic.

If Sheldon Cooper from Big Bang Theory rode the bus, he could be me. Since the age of 17, I have been considered by society to be mentally ill. Since my fanaticism about public transit is a part of my mental state, for years I lived in the irony of having a disability that, rather than impairing my ability to use transit on an equal basis with the general public, gave me an advantage over the average user because I know all the arcane details about

how the system worked.

Unfortunately, for the last few years, I have had back pain which has limited my ability to stand or walk for long periods of time without sitting down. My tolerable standing/walking time has gradually shrunk to where travel by bus is now a serious pain (pun intended).

Whereas I used to think in terms of efficiency for the average customer, I now see the wisdom of transit taking into account its less-mobile users. Moving bus routes farther apart and bus stops farther apart along those routes may be technically more efficient, but it leaves out many would-be riders.

I am probably eligible for Metro

Mobility at this point, but even though it takes you door-to-door, it has the disadvantages of requiring advance reservations and being so expensive for Metro Transit to provide that it is cutting into their ability to provide regular fixed-route bus services.

The idea of maintaining routes with frequent stops overlaid by Bus Rapid Transit for those able to walk a few blocks is probably the best solution to making everybody happy: a close ride for those who need it, and a fast ride for those for whom speed would be more useful. I definitely am now among those who actually ride buses like the 16 and the 84, when in the past I would



have used the Green Line or the A Line instead.

I now seethe every time I see a bus stop without a bench, or a big box store or a mall where the bus stop is far from the entrance. This is a literal cruelty to a certain percentage of the public.

Puppet Lab 2020

MayDay may be over, but the puppet magic doesn't have to be: apply to be a 2020 Puppet Lab artist. Puppet Lab is the emerging artist incubator program. Facilitated by Alison Heimstead, this program is entering its 9th year of radical, genre-expanding, boundary-pushing work. Deadline of submission June 15, 2019, 5 p.m. Puppet Lab creates space

for emerging puppet and mask theater artists to advance their artistic development – to test and create new works within a supportive and challenging workshop environment.

App helps residents with low vision

Minneapolis is now using an app that helps people who are blind or have low vision get

around Nicollet Mall, City Hall, Target Center and the Minneapolis Convention Center. The Aira app connects users with agents who are trained professional guides. They access the user's smartphone camera (or Aira glasses) for a live video feed combined with GPS and maps so they can describe these public spaces and help users maneuver through them. Read more at aira.io/guests.

Nordic food

From cultural culinary traditions to the contemporary "New Nordic" food movement, celebrate and explore northern foodways with American Swedish Institute (2600 Park Ave.) through workshops. "Our instructors know a thing or two about Nordic food, and we're excited for them to share their insights in a variety of workshops," said organizers.



PHOTO BY CAMILLE GAGE
Marchers on Franklin Ave. May 11.



PHOTO BY MONICA NILSSON
March organizer Jase Rose (left), with the Eagle Staff created for the march, with Mo Mike of Indigenous Women's Resource Center.



PHOTO BY MONICA NILSSON
March organizer Stephanie Stewart.



PHOTO BY MONICA NILSSON
Kalpulli KetzalCoatlucue dancers at the first Indigenous Women's March held on May 11. Over 200 people participated in support of ending violence.

Native community gathers for first Indigenous Women's March on May 11

By CAMILLE GAGE

2018 was a challenging year for the Native community, but also a time when Indigenous people and their allies came together to form new alliances, friendships and future plans.

The Franklin Hiawatha encampment and Minneapolis Navigation Center were major catalysts for these new relationships. They brought people together to care for our unsheltered relatives and imagine a future where everyone had access to a safe place to sleep, health care, mental health care, and chemical dependency treatment.

Many of the people who spent time at the camp, either as volunteers or as employees of groups like Metropolitan Urban Indian Directors, American Indian Community Development Corporation, WiiDooKoDaaDiiWag/They Help Each Other, Simpson Housing,

or Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Center, were women. And sometimes these women, and their Two Spirit colleagues, faced harassment, intimidation, and threats of violence.

Working together under such difficult conditions it was natural that these women and Two Spirits began to forge friendships. They came together to support each other – and after months of harassment and threats – to say in a united voice, “No more!”

Soon meetings were being held to discuss ways to proactively take on the issue of harassment of women and Two Spirit people. The conversations widened and began to include intimidation and violence aimed at ALL people; it didn't make sense to advocate for just one or two groups of people when so many suffer from violence, both directly, as victims and survivors, and indirectly, in the myriad ways

violence hurts our loved ones and traumatizes our community.

Thus the Indigenous Women's March was born. Organized by an ad hoc group of women and Two Spirits who had experienced intimidation and harassment, the march was held on Saturday, May 11, 2019 with participants marching from the Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Center to Little Earth of United Tribes. There it joined the annual Little Earth Mother's Day Pow Wow.

Over 200 people participated to support the march's stated mission of ending violence in all its forms.

As a Native-led march, the organizers acknowledge the disparate impact of violence on the Indigenous community – both in the thousands of missing and murdered Native women in the United States and Canada, and in the high rates of domestic violence, rape and assault.

The Indigenous Women's March

differentiated itself from the annual Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women's March by casting a wider net: both Native and non-Native women were welcome and acknowledged. And the Indigenous Women's Marchers made the strong statement that it does not have to be a serious crime like murder for the community to pay attention; intimidation, harassment, and threats of violence are real and cause real harm to individuals and our community.

In the words of Angelique Morgan-Voss: “When I saw Jase (a Two Spirit march organizer) holding the eagle staff I cried tears of happiness. I will remember this march for the rest of my life. The love and positivity was overwhelmingly beautiful. To see so many women who knew what I was going through come together in solidarity lifted my spirit high. I want my daughters to know that violence

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Navigation Center: Collaboration, safe housing, new beginnings

This article is reprinted courtesy of the blog at www.simpson-housing.org.

The Navigation Center is a Native-led, collaborative community response. Red Lake Nation, Metropolitan Urban Indian Directors, Hennepin County, the State of Minnesota, shelter providers in the Minneapolis shelter collaborative, including Simpson Housing Services, and several other organizations united to provide outreach to the primarily Native American community living at the Franklin-Hiawatha encampment and develop plans for the Navigation Center.

Sam Strong, Director of the Red Lake Planning and Economic Development Department commends the approach of this planning group and their success in creating effective and compassionate change for people experiencing homelessness: "It's about partnership — building trust to start making a dent in homelessness, finding best practices to get people off the street."

Designed as a low-barrier and service-rich temporary shelter for adults, the Navigation Center provides a safe and dignified transitional housing option for more than 120 community members who previously lived outdoors at the encampment, respectfully known as the Wall of Forgotten Natives.

The Navigation Center was constructed over an eight-week period. Guests were welcomed into the

Navigation Center during the latter half of December 2018.

"The mobilization involved all the pieces that had to be put into place. All the zoning, planning, and permits. The health inspections. The fire inspections. The city approved \$1.5 million for the project. The wheels were just greased by the will to get something done quickly as a community collaborative," said Simpson Housing Services Executive Director Steve Horsfield.

"The Native community made this big change happen. All the people who had been at the Wall — they had been homeless for a very long time, scattered all the way around town. They decided to come together and take a stand. That is how the Wall of Forgotten Natives was created, by people saying that we are going to come together and show how real homelessness is. It made a big difference. They are why the Navigation Center was built. It was built specifically for them. This was a historical thing that they did," observed Marian Wright, Navigation Center Shelter Manager, Simpson Housing Services.

WHAT THE CENTER MEANS TO COMMUNITY

Wilder Research's 2015 Homelessness Study highlights the disproportionate impact of homelessness in the lives of Native people: 1% percent of adults in the overall Minnesota population identify as American Indian, but 8%



PHOTO COURTESY OF SIMPSON HOUSE

The wall outside the Navigation Center was adorned with artwork this spring.

of homeless adults in Minnesota identify as American Indian. This racial disparity in housing stability stems from a history of discrimination and trauma for the American Indian population that extends to present day.

Horsfield views the Navigation Center as an opportunity for the broader community to come together to provide shelter and support in a culturally competent manner.

He said, "My hope was that we might see two outcomes as a result of this significant representation of people who were sleeping outside at the encampment. First, I hoped that we might see increased attention brought to the issue of homelessness — and unsheltered homelessness in particular. And that we might see something happen around Native-specific services.

This is an opportunity for all of us to do some better work alongside our Native brothers and sisters than we have done in years past.

He added, "We have a talented staff that is committed to building relationships with guests, helping them overcome barriers, and providing connections to housing and services."

SIMPSON AS PROVIDER

Early in the planning process, Simpson Housing Services was selected by the collaborative planning team to provide shelter operational support for the Navigation Center. Given Simpson's 37 years of experience providing housing, support, and advocacy to people experiencing homelessness, the agency was recognized as a leader in the field, strongly suited to serve in this role.

"We are blessed to have Marian Wright as the Navigation Center shelter manager given her 10 years of experience with Simpson and as a Leech Lake tribal member," said Horsfield.

DEDICATED STAFF AND VOLUNTEER TEAM

Central to the successful operation of the Navigation Center has been the selection of its staff. To date, 31 Simpson staff members, including three case managers, provide support at the temporary shelter. Many Navigation Center staff members have connections to Native American community members and previously provided outreach at the encampment.

Simpson trains and coordinates volunteers who serve the evening meal at the Navigation Center each day. Breakfast and lunch are self-serve. To date, 100 volunteers are part of a dozen groups serving meals.

"Everyone has a right to have a safe place to sleep regardless of who they are, where they come from, and what they're struggling with. I'm happy that we're able to provide that," said Wright.

WHAT HAPPENS AT THE NAVIGATION CENTER?

The Navigation Center guests reside in heated, indoor structures with cots and partitioned areas arranged by guests for sleeping and daily living. Just a few steps away, two large trailers house a dining

Center Continued on page 5



The EPIC Report — June, 2019

www.eastphillips-epic.com

Why Celebrate?

Did you know that the East Phillips Park Cultural & Community Center is the only Minneapolis Park Building that was funded and designed almost entirely through the efforts of the neighborhood organization and the people of the community?

At the June, 2005 EPIC meeting, Linda Leonard, after searching unsuccessfully for facilities for youth programs, suggested that we imagine all we could do if we had a Community Center in "Cockroach Park" (former slang for East Phillips Park). After laughing at the notion that the Park Board, the City or anyone else would build anything for the 7,000+ youth in this challenged neighborhood, the meeting attendees started a list of possible uses. Interest grew, then excitement and finally a commitment to work to get a Community Center in East Phillips Park.

The first dollars are the hardest to come by in big dreams like this. The community voted to use East Phillips NRP money that was saved by thwarting an attempted take-over of EPIC by the troubled Board President at the time. His followers pulled EPIC's 501(c)3 and resigned, leaving the few remaining Board members with a demoralizing mess. The thought of a new Community Center helped pull them together. They reconstituted the EPIC board and pressed on. With neighborhood support, the saved \$180,000 and thousands of volunteer hours of lobbying, letter writing and battling some of the powers of that day, they leveraged a total of \$5.5 million, laying the financial groundwork for what is now one of the busiest and best parks in the system.

It is filled with people enjoying soccer, baseball and basketball, pottery, dance, Zumba, the computer labs and many more activities and programs. It is a total hub of activity. Should we celebrate and honor all who helped and still do? Of Course — it's a No Brainer! **Come join us to remember and celebrate this community triumph, this beautiful spring and this indomitable neighborhood!**

East Phillips SummerFest



It's time to
CELEBRATE

in
East Phillips Park
Sunday, June 23rd



1:00 PM to 5:00 PM

Minneapolis Park and Recreation
in Partnership with

The East Phillips Improvement Coalition (EPIC) and
Neighborhood artists, vendors & friends invite you and your family to a PARTY in the PARK

For Your Calendar: *

*To get involved in EPIC and East Phillips,
Join us on the 2nd Thursday of the month at 6:30PM*

EPIC's East Phillips Community Gardeners meet Saturday June 8th & July 13th at 9:00 AM in the Garden at 2428 17th Ave. S.

EPIC Board of Directors meets: Saturday, June 1st & July 6th At 10:00 AM at 2433 Bloomington Ave

EPIC General Membership meets: Thursday, June 13th & July 11th At 6:30 PM At the Community Center

The East Phillips Park Cultural & Community Center is located at 2307 17th Ave. S., Mpls. 55404

**Don't forget SummerFest starting at 1:00 PM Sunday, June 23rd —
See you THERE! 2307 17th Ave. S.**

Prepared for and paid by EPIC

hall for meals and office space for guest meetings with shelter staff and community resources. Buildings with heated bathrooms and showers are conveniently located on the premises. Three meals as well as snacks are provided for guests each day. Bedding and hygiene supplies are also available.

The Navigation Center’s low-barrier approach incorporates guidelines that create a safe, welcoming, and respectful living environment for guests. The temporary shelter is open 24 hours per day, seven days per week. Individuals living at the Navigation Center are allowed to leave and reenter the premises according to their own schedules instead of predetermined times.

“Since the beginning, safety has been the focus of the Navigation Center. We have been successful in getting people into a safer environment. We talk to people about taking care of themselves in safer ways. Our best strategy to build safety is through our staff. And our relationships with the police and fire departments continue to be absolutely vital to ensure the safety of our guests,” said Horsfield. Building working relationships between staff and guests is an important part of what happens day-to-day at the Navigation Center.

“It’s really important just to be present and available. It’s important to be welcoming — to say hello and greet guests by name. To always put guests’ needs first. We provide support when it’s needed and let people know that they are safe where they are. And we let them

know we want them to be here rather than outside,” said Wright. As the staff becomes familiar with an individual’s needs and goals, they can offer connections to community resources, helping each person create his or her own path of increased stability.

“Whatever we can do to help people become more stable than they were before they got here will be worth it. Whether it is getting them connected back to their doctor, getting them back on their medication, or getting their ID, birth certificate, or social security card. Having a Rule 25 [chemical use assessment] done, getting into treatment, applying for an apartment. Getting an eviction off their record. We want to help people get as stable as they can be,” stated Wright.

HOUSING FIRST AND HARM REDUCTION

The Navigation Center — and all of Simpson Housing Services’ shelter and housing programs — operate from a dual philosophy of Housing First and Harm Reduction.

The Housing First model is based on the concept that people first need a stable place to live before addressing other issues such as substance use, mental health concerns, employment or other barriers.

Navigation Center staff utilize a harm reduction approach in their working relationships with guests, introducing helpful steps aimed at reducing risks of an individual’s behavior.

Harm reduction is often applied to people who actively use drugs.



PHOTO COURTESY OF SIMPSON HOUSE

Simpson Housing Service focuses on housing first and harm reduction.

Guests who use drugs or alcohol are welcome and have access to different kinds of supports designed to help them stabilize and reduce harm associated with substance use.

This harm reduction approach creates a caring and accepting environment where people are more likely to seek safe shelter and take steps to reduce harm, according to Marian Wright: “As we provide this support, we are letting them know they are important. You deserve this help. You are human. We say, ‘I know you are struggling, but you can stay here. What can we do to help you get a little bit more stable?’ Whether that means to help them use less, encourage them to use safer supplies, get connected with a Native navigator or talking circle, or get them connected to a mental or chemical health support group. Whatever it takes to keep people safe and get them a little more stable than when they came in.”

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Guests may voluntarily connect

with on-site community resources focused on stable housing, health care, mental and chemical health, and other needs. The Navigation Center is inclusive of traditional Native practices, and on-site Native navigators work closely with guests to discuss needs, offer clinical support, engage in prayer and ceremonial work, and access other culturally competent resources. Community resources are added at the Navigation Center based on guests’ needs and interests.

The Navigation Center is a collaborative effort to provide safe, temporary shelter for community members. By offering support and connections to community resources, it is hoped that each guest will experience enhanced stability and well-being, now and beyond the Navigation Center.

The Navigation Center remained open for guests through May 2019. In June, Red Lake Nation plans to break ground for permanent housing on the site.

First East-African Chair of the MPHA

Sharmarke Issa is the first immigrant and first East African to serve as Chair of the MPHA Board of Commissioners in the city’s history. He is also the first Somali immigrant in the country to lead a public housing agency’s governing board.

Mayor Jacob Frey said, “Sharmarke’s life experience and background in urban planning are especially important to MPHA’s mission. At a time when the federal government continues to shortchange housing funding, he will be a skilled steward of our public housing infrastructure who understands and centers the needs of residents.”

“I believe that everyone has a fundamental human right to housing, which ensures access to a safe, secure, habitable, and affordable home,” said Issa. “I’m truly humbled by the Mayor’s appointment and look forward to working with my colleagues on the MPHA board to guarantee that all of our residents can exercise this right to live in security, peace, and dignity.”

Issa grew up in Minneapolis Public Housing after coming to the United States as a refugee at age 11. Approximately one-third of Minneapolis Public Housing residents are members of the East-African community. Issa received both his bachelor’s degree and a master’s in urban planning from Minnesota State University in Mankato.



BOARD MEETING
Held every second Tuesday

Tuesday, June 11, 6:30-8pm
@ Stewart Park (Arts & Crafts Room)
2700 12th Ave. S., Minneapolis

See our website for details: www.midtownphillips.org

COMMUNITY MEETING
Held every fourth Tuesday

Tuesday, June 25, 6:30-8pm
@ Cepro Site

Entrance to the Greenway between 10th & 11th Ave

BBQ AT THE PARK!

Feel free to bring a small dish to share
Vegetarian & meat options will be available

Receive a discount card for the Urban Ventures Farm Stand
and hear from their organizer - Mark-Peter Lundquist

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and discuss options for its future use
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- District 5 Representative, must live or work between 28th-Lake St & Chicago to 12th Avenue (Two-year term, 2019-2021)

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MayDay 1974-2019

TREE OF LIFE REFLECTIONS

By CAROL AND DAN NEUMAN, CARETAKERS OF THE TREE OF LIFE

Performing the Tree of Life (ToL) at the Mayday Ceremony is an honor and a responsibility.

It's thrilling and scary.

While all around thousands of people are cheering and exulting, and the adrenaline is coursing through your veins, you must have intense focus on the job at hand.

The Tree has a lot of weight way up in the air and the gusty winds (and it seems there is always a gusty wind) billowing the arms like giant sails. As the Tree circles, the force of the wind shifts from one side to the other in an instant, requiring quick, decisive action by the people on the guy ropes, and no interference by any of the celebrants on the ceremony ground. No one on the crew relaxes until the circle and blessing are completed, the streamers come out and we join in singing, "You Are My Sunshine."

The ToL crew duties include ongoing repairs, maintenance, and storage of most of the parts. We gather each spring before the workshops to reverently make the Tree ready for the ceremony, painting new leaves, repainting the birds, and assembling its many parts.

There is constant adjustment as age takes its toll on the Tree.

"Participating in the Tree of Life crew is a lot of fun. Learning about the ingenuity that Dan, Larry, and crew have applied to the building of it over the years is really interesting and reminds me of what the power of setting your mind on something can accomplish. It all started as a simple idea that grew into an amazing tradition. Through much trial and error, the crew has created a pretty solid system of managing the giant puppet that is the Tree of Life. Coordinated team work is imperative to making the Tree of Life successful, which is ultimately very fitting with the overall communal message of the MayDay Festival," said Ilya, second year crew member.

What brings the crew members to this work, and keeps many of them there for decades, are the same feelings and experiences that make MayDay a cherished event for everyone else, too.

"In my work life I was surrounded by strangers - fulfilling a role and purpose that were not authentic or very energizing. During Mayday and especially with the TOL crew, I feel a welcome part of a large,

expanding community. Each year I identify and keep a new contact, a new resource, a new friend to add to my life. Even when it is raining, MayDay is like the sun shining on your face with thousands of happy friends," stated Vicki, many decades crew member.

"I had been a jubilant spectator of the MayDay Parade and Ceremony since its inception when I was 25. MayDay was transformed for me in 2001 when Vicki recruited me for the ToL crew, along with my daughter, Hannah. When she left for college, my husband Dennis took her place and he continues in his stalwart role, older but just as devoted as we all are. To this day, it is my annual spring ritual to which my yearly calendar indelibly adheres. Passing it on, my six-year-old granddaughter Aria, bemoaned to me last week... "Bubbe.. MAYDAY can't end!! I've gone every year of my life!" said Lisa, longtime crew member.

Many people have been members of the ToL crew over these 40 years. Some for a year, some since the beginning. All are greatly appreciated.

There are three families with two and three generations on the



PHOTO BY SUSAN GUST

The 2019 Tree of Life team stands under the ToL on the stage of HOBT. What keeps crew members there for decades are the same feelings and experiences that make MayDay a cherished event.

Tree. The children of the children who have grown up working on the ToL are stepping in to keep the family tradition.

"To have our family's values reinforced by the many other souls we share this tradition which is remarkable. Our children, now grown, through the years have brought with them dear friends, fiancés, and significant others. Our son is coming from Alaska, for the weekend, just because it's MayDay and it's a family holiday. Our daughter, unable to come due to school demands, has traveled far in past years because it is an impor-

tant part of her and she is feeling a bit left out this year," said Nancy, many decades crew member.

We'd like to remember Bob Caldwell and Sue Hale, stalwarts of the Tree of Life Crew who have passed on. Rest in Peace.

Note of Information for those who have not seen this event: The Tree of Life is shrouded as it rides on a carriage along the MayDay Parade route from 25th to 35th and Bloomington Av. So., into Powderhorn Park, across Powderhorn Lake, and rising on the western shore, TRIUMPHANTLY!

MayDay, HOTB: What will we build together?

From page 1

son they became working artists. People told us over and over again that HOBT's work is intricately tied up in the very identity of these neighborhoods, and they don't want to lose what has been built here. Excerpts of those stories are included here.

Now in May, four months since those announcements were made, HOBT is still in the process of figuring out what future is possible for the work and for the organization. In that time, we have identified three core goals that are essential to any future for HOBT:

1. Developing a decentralized model for producing MayDay. The event had grown too large to be held by a single organization. HOBT will seek producing partners and shared ownership.

2. Developing an equity framework. HOBT must better understand the priorities of stakeholder communities and draw on these communities for artists, staff members and board members who will make the organization more genuinely diverse, inclusive and equitable.

3. Developing a business model that balances the needs of communities, the needs of artists and employees, and the needs of the organization. HOBT's work must be relevant and accessible to core communities. Artists and employees must be adequately compensated and supported. The organizational infrastructure and finances must be strengthened by the work.

This moment in time provides unique opportunities. In Sandy's transition away from artistic leadership of MayDay, in the loss of staff capacity through layoffs, and in the wake-up call that the entire arts non-profit field needs new business mod-



PHOTO BY TESSA M. CHRISTENSEN

Hundreds of local residents participated in the 45th annual MayDay parade and celebration on Sunday, May 5, 2019.

els, this is the time to marshal community support to work for change.

HOBT will not do this work alone. Stakeholder communities will be essential along with peers, champions, elders, board, and staff. Consulting group Imagine Deliver, along with Juxtaposition Arts and Amplify DMC, are working with HOBT to design and facilitate a community engagement process. Over the summer, when HOBT programming is typically at its lightest, board and staff will set the highest priority on this transformational work. While HOBT will hold up all existing commitments, this will also mean saying no to some new projects in order to make time to keep our transformation front and center. We know that the work ahead looms large. And we know that if we have any chance of moving forward as a more resilient organization, then this is the work we have to do, and this is where we will invest our resources and energy.

If we succeed, the possibilities

are boundless. Imagine a MayDay that is built not only at HOBT with HOBT artists but at sites across our neighborhoods by artists of many communities. Imagine an Avalon Theater with its doors open every day and its marquee lit up every night as a cultural center serving the incredible diversity of South Minneapolis. Imagine developing a successful model that shows other nonprofits how to change patterns of diversity equity and inclusion. Imagine a HOBT better able to support the wealth of artists in these neighborhoods to share the stories of the people of these neighborhoods with the world.

We have every reason to think MayDay will continue. It is in the muscle memory of South Minneapolis on the first Sunday in May to find the picnic blankets and the lawn chairs and the sun-screen and the sun hats (or maybe the raincoats) and head over to the parade route. How often have you seen the clouds part and the sun emerge as the Sun Puppet makes its



PHOTO BY TESSA M. CHRISTENSEN

As the crowd cheers, workers break apart the wall they have just built in the middle of Bloomington Ave.

way across the lake to wake up the Tree of Life and welcome spring? Ask any long-time observer from the hundreds of blankets on the ceremony hill. It happens more often than could possibly be a coincidence.

This year's BELOVED COMMUNITY MayDay theme asks attendees how we will carry forward the legacy that MayDay has nurtured for 45 years. That question is held in the potential of a seedling tree. With one tree for the first year of HOBT's MayDay, two trees for the second, three trees for the third, etc., 1035 tree seedlings will be distributed with the intention that they take root in our neighborhoods as an investment in our future. MayDay 2019 will thank Sandy Spieler for all she has given us over 45 years leading this event and will say yes to carrying her work forward.

The impacts of the work are clear. HOBT's work has become part of the visual and cultural identities of a whole set of South

Minneapolis neighborhoods. Hundreds of artists have taken what they learned at HOBT and carried it with them across the neighborhood, across town, across the state, and even across the world. That is just a small fraction of the thousands of artists have been trained in puppetry and mask performance, pageantry, arts education and more. Tens of thousands of youth have learned how to tell their own stories through educational residencies. Hundreds of thousands of people have participated in MayDay. It seems no exaggeration to say that a million or more people have been touched by HOBT's work over 45 years. HOBT has the support to continue impacting communities and the proposed work plan sets the organization on a more resilient

We need your voice, your input, and your support. Learn more at hobt.org/imagine

CHANGING ‘BUSINESS AS USUAL’



Hennepin County’s first African American commissioner Angela Conley is a lifelong Southside resident with innovative ideas on how to bring more diverse voices into government.

By **TESHA M. CHRISTENSEN**
Editor’s note: This is the first in a two-part series that originally appeared in the Longfellow-Nokomis Messenger.

Angela Conley has yearned to be a Hennepin County Commissioner for 20 years so that she had the power to make changes to the system she worked within.

On Jan. 7, 2019, that dream came true.

The lifelong Southside resident was sworn in as a county commissioner for District 4, and became the county’s first Black commissioner in 166 years.

“Being in this level of leadership now has really opened my eyes to seeing how the system is set up in a way that perpetuates disparities, that limits people’s abilities to really live their best lives,” said Conley.

She’s working to shift the narrative and move into a holistic approach for county business. Conley now chairs the health and human services committee, drawing from her years of experience working in that field.

“I feel this obligation to change systems to work better for people,” remarked Conley.

That could be anything from real estate services to tax forfeiture to housing and homelessness.

In addition to being the first African American commissioner, Conley is the first Black female commissioner and is one of two new diverse voices on the previously all-white Hennepin County board. Joining her this year is another woman of color, Irene Fernando, a Filipino-American in District 2. With their election, five of the seven-member board are women.

RACE EQUITY WORK

Bringing more diverse voices into the county is a priority for Conley, who campaigned with a goal of creating a Race Equity Advisory Council.

“Before I was elected, the county would come up with ideas on their own on how to reduce disparities. Well, unless you have people of color and those directly affected by those disparities guiding the discussion you’re not going to get anywhere. You’re not going to make any progress,” said Conley.

She envisions that a council would have a place at the table to inform the board on how disparities can be reduced on issues such as lowering the number of people of color being arrested to the overwhelming number of people of color who are part of the child protection system.

Inspired by how she saw the Hennepin County Community Advisory Council on Adult Mental Health operate while she served on it, Conley believes that the needle can be moved on an issue when you have many people with a range of lived experiences giving input on a topic about missing pieces and gaps.

Thus far, Conley has met with the county’s new Disparity Reduction Director to learn what’s being done there, and what form the Race Equity Advisory Council could take.

“Disparity reduction has to start internally first,” she observed. She’s glad to see that the new composition of the county board finally reflects the composition of the communities being served and direct-line county staff. Part of what drove her to run for office is that those at the top didn’t look like her.

“I think we sent a very strong

message to the status quo Nov. 6 that folks want to see diversity in leadership,” said Conley. “County leadership can function differently now. We’ve got new voices with various backgrounds and experiences.”

She believes that having that those voices on the board can inform how policy changes going forward.

“It’s changed the conversation,” Conley said. “It’s changed the narrative. It’s changed ‘business as usual.’”

GOING DIRECTLY TO SOURCE

For Conley, the first quarter of her first term in office has been spent meeting people, being out in community, touring homeless shelters and the jail, and talking to people directly impacted by issues she’s concerned about. “That’s how you’ll see my leadership continue,” she promised, “going directly to the source.”

“We’re pushing back against outdated ideas and really trying to get innovative in how we approach issues.”

Bail reform is one place where Conley thinks changes could be made for lower-level, low-risk offenses. “What would it look like to have a system that didn’t hold you if you couldn’t afford to get out?” asked Conley.

She intends to be mindful of what the ripple effects are of decisions the county makes, and recognizes that a 1% increase in property taxes might push a resident out of a home.

EQUITY THROUGH TRANSIT

As someone who didn’t have a car until she was 23, Conley is a fan of transit, and heard from constituents on both sides of light rail during her campaign. She’s advo-

cating for the Rapid Bus Transit D Line along the Route 5 corridor in the fourth district on Chicago and Emerson/Fremont avenues.

She pointed out that the D Line is a modern mode of bus transport that uses technology to keep lights green so the buses can move people from place to place quicker.

“That will bring transit equity to an area that typically doesn’t have it,” stated Conley. “The 5 is the highest ridership route in the state. It’s always crowded. There are safety concerns. And it runs through four of the seven commissioner districts. It runs through two of the poorest neighborhoods in Minneapolis, too. Bringing Bus Rapid Transit or the D Line would bring access to 200,000 jobs.”

Read part two in the July edition of The Alley.

Southside resident Angela Conley campaigned as a Black woman, and even her logo identified her as someone who would bring a diverse voice to the Hennepin County Board.

She continues to focus on diversity and racial equity in a variety of ways -- not the least which is staffing her office with other African American women.

Cacje Henderson - Policy Director

Cacje Henderson was born and raised in South Minneapolis, and is the oldest of seven children. She completed her undergraduate studies at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities and is an alumni of the Women’s Campaign School at Yale University. She began her political career in the grassroots movement as an economic justice organizer and has gone on to work for a variety of elected officials including U.S. Senator Amy Klobuchar (DFL-MN), Gubernatorial Candidate Erin Murphy (DFL-MN) and most recently as the Senior Policy Aide to Minneapolis City Councilmember Jeremiah Ellison (DFL-MN). She has a commitment to building power in low-income communities and communities of color through local policy, and is looking forward continuing this work as Policy Director.

Cheniqua Johnson - District Outreach and Scheduler

Cheniqua Johnson was born and raised in Worthington, Minn. She is a first-generation, TRIO college graduate. She received a bachelor’s degree in family social science from the University of Minnesota - Twin Cities College of Education and Human Development. She comes to the 4th District of Hennepin County from the Office of Congressman Keith Ellison, where she served as his Legislative Correspondent. In addition, she has spent the last five years in public service having previously served for the Office of Senator Al Franken (DFL-MN), Governor Mark Dayton (DFL-MN), Senator Richard Durbin (D-IL), University of Minnesota’s Roy Wilkins Center for Human Relations and Social Justice, and the City of Saint Paul. Now, she is ready to amplify voices and serve the most diverse district in the county as the District Outreach Coordinator & Scheduler.

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CLOSING THE CIRCLE: *MniSotaMakoce (Land where the water reflects the sky) – Dakota Land*

Doctrine of Discovery Task Force proposes symbolic compensation for land loss

By MICHAEL MILLER

The Doctrine of Discovery Task Force is the result of a number of factors – including conversations with Native leaders and a number of people with an intense interest in justice for the Native people of Minnesota.

In addition, some members have involvements with Native organizations going back 45 years, and one taught Native American Studies at South High School.

All of this led to the decision to form a task force that would focus on educating the public on the history and current effects of the Doctrine of Discovery and on advocacy for measures that might make a difference in the lives of Native people. This has resulted in the Closing the Circle proposal and the effort to get it enacted into state law.

The purpose of the proposal is to provide a measure of compensation for the land that was taken from the

Dakota, Ojibwe and other Native groups in Minnesota. It is referred to as symbolic as there is nothing that could fully compensate for what was lost.

Under everything is the land. The land on which we live, walk, breathe, and worship is land that belonged to the Native people who had been here for millennia prior to the arriving of European colonizers and settlers.

All the wealth that has been accumulated over time has been generated on and by the land. That same land was taken/stolen from its original owners with little or no compensation.

Native people remain under the shadow of policies such as the Doctrine of Discovery, promulgated in the 15th century by the Vatican, which justified the taking of land and the genocide of Native people. This has contributed to the “historic trauma” that haunts Native peoples to this day.

The goal of the proposal is to provide symbolic compensation for the land that was lost. The Task Force would like to support accompaniment by actions as well as words.

It is proposed that every time a piece of land is sold in Minnesota a fee be attached to the sale, the proceeds of which would go to the support of Native programs.

In 2018, the total value of all real estate transactions in Minnesota was \$75.8 billion. Even a modest fee from each sale would generate significant funds. It is also proposed that the funds raised by this fee be administered by a representative group of reservation and urban Native leaders of Minnesota.

The proposal has been developed and presented to state legislators.

Members of the Task Force also testified at a “People’s Hearing” on reparations hosted by Rep. Karen Clark held in early January 2019. The proposal has been drafted into a bill with the intent to have it introduced in the 2020 session of

the State Legislature.

Task Force members have also been working with staff of the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council to introduce the proposal to the tribal leaders of Minnesota. To date, contact has also been made, and commitments of support obtained, from a variety of church bodies. Finally, a number of Native leaders and individuals are working or have committed to work with the Task Force on the legislation.

Efforts between now the 2020 legislative session will focus on generating support from Native and non-Native organizations and individuals.

Task Force members include: Mike Miller, Chair, Ron Duty, Randy Nelson, David Berg, Carol Berg, Chuck Jordan, Dennis Ormseth, John Buzza, Cori Gershon. Staff: Pr. Ingrid Rasmussen

For additional information, contact: Michael Miller, Mmiller421@aol.com, Chairperson, Doctrine of Discovery Task Force, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, 2730 East 31st St., Minneapolis, MN 55406

Semilla summer arts explosion

The Semilla Center for Healing and the Arts at St. Paul’s Lutheran (2742 15th Ave S.) believes that transforming the neighborhood visually can transform the community’s power and spirit. Summer at Semilla is full of activities, around the theme “This Sacred Land,” including:

- Day camp for children, ages 3-11: June 10-14, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Visual arts, puppetry, writing, gardening, games, and a field trip.

- Young Leaders for youth ages 11-15: earn money while learning to be a leader.

- Building the Garden of Peace: mosaics and found art for our Peace Garden on 28th Street. Free mosaic workshops. E-mail semillacetner@gmail.com for information.

- Summer Solstice: Indigo Caroling and lantern event, June 21 at dusk.

- Block Party: July 20, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

- Poetry workshops for youth and adults, youth photography project, lantern making, music and who knows what else?



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Timely take on immigration

By HOWARD MCQUITTER II
oldschoolmovies.wordpress.com
howardmcquitter68@gmail.com

“The Deposit” (2019)
* * * * 1 / 2
Askja Films

Here again, I’m reporting from the 38th Minneapolis-St. Paul International Film Festival with another gem of a film only this time it’s from Iceland. What’s exciting, too, is the director is on site to take Q&A, and her



name Asthildur jartansdottir.

Gisella (Elma Lisa Gunnarsdottir) is in a real economic straits after losing her journalism job and her investments with her former boyfriend failed to pay off. And to be expected she begins to panic as bills start to pile up with the possibility she may lose the nice house she acquired from her grandparents. Then Gisella goes to the computer looking for immigrants to rent her two empty rooms. She finds three illegal immigrants living under a slumlord in a seedy part of town and convinces them to move into her house. Two women Maria Raffaella Brizuela Siguroardottir, Abeba (Enid Mbabazi) and little daughter Luna (Clire Harpa Kristinsdottir) take up the empty rooms. At first, almost everything goes smoothly before a rift becomes evident when the two

immigrant women take issue with Gisella over house rules such as having men sleeping over and the like. Gisella begins to ask Abeba about Luna’s school -- when and where she goes causing Abeba to be possessive of her daughter.

“The Deposit” is a most timely film at a time when the immigration problems – both legal and illegal – have dragged in Democrats and Republicans into the fray in the U.S. And in Europe there is similar debates and fallouts, Iceland notwithstanding. In Iceland, for example, a homogeneous that country prides itself on tolerance is seriously tested as new faces in the country are brown and black, largely from different religions, eat different foods, dance and sing to “exotic” music, and so forth.

Gisella is tested, too, taking in illegal immigrants; and with careful steps, the illegal immigrants must be aware of authorities who might detect and deport them. Right-wing politicians, as well as segments of the population often with racist intent, cause much stress for immi-



grants seeking asylum in Europe or United States from violent gangs, domestic abuse, terrorism from government forces and the like.

Cast: Elma Lisa Gunnarsdottir (Gisella), Enid Mbabazi (Abeba), Raffaella Brizuela Siguroardottir (Maria), Claire Harpa Kristinsdottir (Luna), Sveinn Olafur Gunnarsson (Andres), Solveig Guomundsdottir (Lovisa). Director: Asthildur Kjartansdottir.

Language: Icelandic. Running time: 90 minutes.

Steps towards peace

Power in connecting

By MARTI MALTBI

Peace House Community values the “Community” part of our name. PHC’s founder, Sister Rose Tilleman, focused on people rather than things, and as such she wanted to bring together a community rather than open a drop-in center. Since PHC was founded, its members, volunteers and board have found many ways of keeping the focus on interpersonal relationships.

We were reminded of the value of those relationships recently when we received a letter from Riyadh, a community member who is currently in one of the



state correctional facilities. After updating us on his life, he wrote:

“Peace House has always had a special place in my heart. I been in and out since the late 90s, and Peace House never changed or turned its back on me, period. When I do get out on parole I plan to stop by and drink a cup of coffee, eat a donut and see how long before somebody recognizes me! Ha, ha. Well, hope everyone’s day is blessed, and if you think of an old friend or family member you ain’t spoke with in a few, go ahead and check on them and say hi on the phone, social media or best yet, in person. Take care.”

To put Riyadh’s letter in perspective, he has been incarcerated for the last six years and has over nine years left in his sentence. Despite that, many of the commu-

nity members who were present when we read his letter remembered him and immediately began passing around a greeting card to let him know he was still part of the community. Even those who had never met Riyadh (including me) signed the card, because we know that being part of a community involves more than just where you are physically. It means sharing and identity. It means having a base that keeps you stable. It means that you are known and loved.

In a world of electronic social media, mass marketing, mega-churches and mega-cities, it is easy to feel depersonalized and anonymous. It can take a deliberate effort to maintain real personal connections. Riyadh’s letter was a wonderful reminder of the power of such connection, and why they are worth fighting for.

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VENTURA VILLAGE NEIGHBORHOOD

J U N E ' 1 9 N E W S

MAY AND JUNE ARE BUSY MONTHS. HERE'S WHAT'S HAPPENED AND WHAT'S COMING UP ON THE SCHEDULE:

On May 13, about twenty volunteers helped the 24th St. Coalition plant medicinal and native perennials around the Pow Wow Grounds Coffee Shop.

On May 18, our neighbors got together and added color to Franklin Ave by planting the flower pots from 16th Ave to Portland. To the right is a poem that Verla Cuff, an 80+ year-old resident wrote last year about the flowers.

The Peavey Park renovation is nearing completion and had its grand opening on May 31.

Beginning Thursday, June 6, Ventura Village's only farmer's market opens at the Pow Wow Grounds Coffee Shop at 15th and E. Franklin. Open every Thursday from 11-3.

Northern Spark, an annual night-time arts and cultural event will be held June 14 and 15 at the American Indian Cultural Corridor on Franklin Ave. Look to the right for more information.

Aloha! I'm Melissa Anderson (Mel), the new 24th Street Urban Farms Coordinator. I'm a long-time resident within the community and am very excited to begin my new role! Please contact me for volunteer gardening opportunities. We can always use your help! Mel24thstreetfarm@gmail.com.

Rain showers
Bring flowers
People dress up sidewalks so nice.
Under the sky
People pass by
From Heaven to earth brings out spice in our life



It went
Heaven sent
Sent by clouds from cloud Heaven.
Sent by clouds from cloud Heaven.
Snapping pictures
With great textures

-Verla Cuff



The [Northern Spark](#) festival will take place along Franklin Avenue on Friday, June 14th and Saturday, June 15th from 9 pm to 2 am each night.

Northern Spark is a free, late-night art festival produced by Northern lights.mn that celebrates our vibrant cultural communities in the Twin Cities. Please join us!

Visit [northern spark.org](#) for information on artists, other festival locations, or to volunteer. Please contact [info@northern.lights.mn](#) with questions

MEET KALI! THE NEW CPS FOR YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

Greetings Neighbors! My name is Kali Pliego, and I will be serving Ventura Village, Phillips (West, Midtown, and East) and Little Earth as your Crime Prevention Specialist. This role, if you're not familiar, is within the Minneapolis Police Department. As your Crime Prevention Specialist, I will join you in community meetings, help connect you with resources to keep your property and neighborhood safe, and problem solve with you regarding patterns of crime in the community. I look forward to seeing you out and about and getting to know you as I find my way in this new role.

I live with my husband, Felix, and almost 3-year-old son, Mateo, in the Central neighborhood. As a mother, I care deeply about my family's safety and my community's ability to flourish and shine. As a longtime resident of South Minneapolis, I am invested in extending my dream for my own little family to all of us who live, work, worship, dine, shop, and own businesses here.

I come to MPD from Park Nicollet Health System, where I worked for the past 12 years in the Interpreter Services department. At Park Nicollet, I did everything from interpreting (Spanish), to scheduling interpreters, to approving invoices. During the same timeframe, I served as the Executive Director of a little non-profit in Guatemala which I founded, called Sé Luz. In 2012, I graduated from Bethel Seminary with a Master's Degree in Community Organizing.

My job, as your Crime Prevention Specialist, will be like sticking the highlights of my resume in a blender and flipping the switch. We have a lot of work to do, folks. Let's get started, together!

Here's how to contact me:
email: kali.pliego@minneapolismn.gov
phone: 612-673-3482



Planting flowers at Pow Wow Grounds Cafe on Monday, May 13



Earlier this month at the Waite House seed/plant giveaway

UPCOMING VENTURA VILLAGE MEETINGS:

- Wednesday, June 12th: Board of Directors Meeting: 6 pm
- Tuesday, June 25th: Community Engagement Committee 6pm
- Thursday, June 27th: Housing & Land Committee: 5:30 pm
- Wednesday, June 12th: General Membership Meeting: 7 pm
- Tuesday, June 25th: Wellness, Gardening & Greening: 7 pm
- Thursday, June 27th: Crime & Safety Committee: 6:30 pm

ALL RESIDENTS ARE WELCOME TO PARTICIPATE: VISITORS WELCOME TO ATTEND!

Ventura Village is located upstairs in the Phillips Community Center at 2323-11th Avenue South • Minneapolis • 612-874-9070

Commentary

Why aren't city officials listening to residents?

By JANET SKIDMORE

I try to be a good citizen. I volunteer as a block club leader and as a neighborhood safety patrol member. I am a long time reserve teacher in the Minneapolis Public Schools. I have been rehabbing a beautiful 100 year old home in south Minneapolis not to flip it, but to live in it myself and restore its beauty for the sake of preservation. I provide really affordable housing for 3 women in my own home.

I have a block club with an email list of over 40 people, plus I am active on Nextdoor, where I hear the opinions of many of my neighbors in the Central neighborhood of Minneapolis.

I attend community meetings when I can, even the ones that are in the middle of the day, which precludes me taking a substitute teaching job that day, resulting in a day's loss of income.

I would think that the city of Minneapolis would appreciate a resident like me and want to keep me living here.

I can show you numerous emails representing years of attempts to address on behalf of myself and my neighbors situations that have occurred in our community with no input or recourse on our part. These situations include:

*Increasingly expensive hous-

ing options being built in south Minneapolis, even though there is lots of talk about the importance of affordable housing from my government. I can't afford these apartments and condos. My solution for housing has been to buy a house on foreclosure, make it habitable, and then offer inexpensive rooms for rent to women, which helps them and also helps me have an affordable place to live myself. I believe it is called NOAH housing.

*Rising property taxes, coupled with incredible inequity in the Minneapolis Public Schools, which are funded by those property taxes. I am a regular substitute teacher in the MPS, so I get to see great education happening in wealthy neighborhoods, and horrendous lack of opportunity for students in poor neighborhoods.

*Important decisions blithely being made, driven by ideology rather than practicality, such as the Minneapolis 2040 plan, which none of my neighbors that I know of in Central or Powderhorn support. These decisions will radically affect the day to day life of the residents, yet have had no meaningful input from those same residents. Minneapolis 2040 spells for me turning my neighborhood into a place where I, as a soon to be senior citizen, will no longer be

able to live.

*Lack of access to the 5 disability parking spaces at the Hiawatha light rail and sudden closing of the park and ride there, with the giant parking lot standing empty for the last two years. As parking downtown has become too expensive for me, I have relied on this lot for years for my trips downtown, which I do at least twice per week. Having recently had knee surgery, I also now have a disability tag for my car, but nowhere to use it at the Hiawatha rail stop. In addition, access to that station from the south side for the many residents who walk there has become increasingly inhospitable, especially in winter with all the snow and ice. Even during the April winter parking restrictions, that lot stood empty, with a neighborhood resident plowing a single path through the lot so that the many people who use that stop could walk in from the south.

*The plague of panhandling in my neighborhood, which I have tried for years to get my city council representative, Alondra Cano, and our mayor to address, to no avail. The panhandling results in drug crime and trespassing in our very back yards, and has been the cause of 4 neighbors in my block club getting fed up and moving out of the city. This included a young couple who might have raised their children in Minneapolis, but have now opted for the suburbs. And, I have been noticing: NO panhandlers on the median strip all

the way up and down Lyndale Avenue. Why, then, do we have so many along 2nd Avenue....what is the secret? Why such a difference? I can't believe they just prefer our poor neighborhood.....what, or who, keeps them from panhandling on Lyndale??? It is a mystery to me. Perhaps you have some ideas?

*The installation of bike lanes on what were once primary through streets for autos to get through south Minneapolis. These could easily be located a block over, so that the auto traffic would not be so hugely disrupted. But Ms. Cano and others do not respond to reasonable requests from the public.

*The East Phillips Urban Farm proposal, an incredibly well planned proposal with input from many different and important neighborhood organizations and residents, simply ignored by the Minneapolis City Council and the Mayor, in favor of increased pollution and industrialization in that parcel of land.

Whichever situation I have tried to address over the last 5 years with my own council person or the mayor, the response I have received has been one of the following:

- No response.
- A response from a staffer who says he or she will look into it. 2 months later when I make another request for help in the situation, the staffer will ask to be reminded of what my original question was.
- A response from the representative giving information that I

and my community already know, but no information about how that decision was made or by who, and who we should contact or how we might address and try to alter the situation.

- Asking me if I have tried contacting X other government official, or directing me to contact that person (This is not my job to do. What am I paying government employees for, anyway, with my taxes?)

This all amounts to taxation without representation. I have absolutely no one to represent or advocate for me or my neighbors in all of the city or county government.

This letter is one more attempt to have input into matters which affect my daily life and the lives of my neighbors. I will be interested in what response I receive from you, and I will be sharing that response with as many of my neighbors as possible.

Janet Skidmore is a Block Leader for Lake St. and 3rd Ave. S. She sent out to mayor Frey, all of the city council representatives, including her own, Alondra Cano, and all of the new Metropolitan council representatives, including her own, Robert Lilligren, on May 14, and to new county commissioner Angela Conley. As of press time, she had only heard back from one city council person, Lisa Goodman, who is not her own representative. She feels that her own two representatives, at least, should have responded by now.



STEVE SANDBERG

Despite fasting for Ramadan, no food or water from sun up to sun down, local men participate in the annual Ramadan Football Tournament at East Phillips Park on May 14, 2019.



PETER MOLENAAR

Marchers participate in the May 1st Coalition for Immigrant Workers' Rights labor rally in Minneapolis.

Summer Kids' Club

When? June 10 - July 26, Mon - Fri, 11am - 1pm

Who? Kids entering K-8th grades

Why? To learn about Jesus through His Word - the Bible, make friends and have fun. Lunch and transportation included for most of Phillips and North Powderhorn Park neighborhoods.

Call for more details and to register: 612-870-9617

Free!

Club De Verano: Es ese tiempo del año otra vez! Lunes, 10 de Junio - Viernes, 26 de Julio. Llame para detalles y para registrar: 612-870-9617

They're healthy. You're happy. And it's free.

FreeChildCheckups.com

Child and Teen Checkups

The Hennepin County Child and Teen Checkups (C&TC) program is free for children, teens, and young adults 20 and younger who are on Medical Assistance, including young parents.

OPINION & COMMENTARY

The Rand Report

2020 plan: 'Do what I say not what I do' applies to city

By RAND RETTERATH

According to an Information Brief from Research Department of the Minnesota House of Representatives



"One way for a city to provide an increased level of service or infrastructure to its commercial or industrial areas is to create 'special service districts.' Special service districts (SSDs) are established at the request of the persons who will pay for the increased level of service. Since the early 1980s, individual cities have been authorized to set up these districts. Since 1996, cities have had general law authority to create SSDs. "A special service district is "a defined area within the city where special services are rendered and the costs of the special services are paid from revenues collected from service charges imposed within that area." An SSD may be established anywhere in a city but only business property (i.e., commercial, industrial, utility, or land zoned for commercial or industrial use) will be subject to the service charge. SSDs are commonly used in areas with a concentration of retail stores."

It is not a bad idea, it provides services that are not ordinarily provided throughout the city from general funds or services provided

at an increased level than otherwise provided.

Generally, to establish a Special Service district, owners of 25% or more of the property within the area complete a petition and file it with the city. This includes 25% of the tax capacity or entities subject to the additional tax.

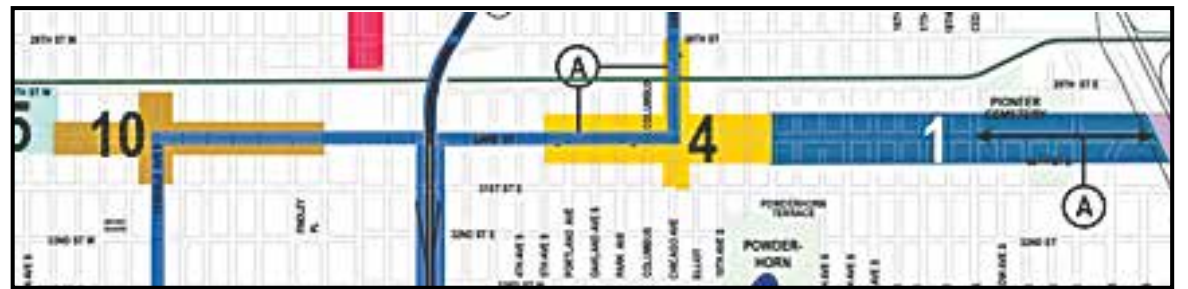
The filing would include delineation of the area as well as services to be provided. The city notifies all affected business and commercial entities of the filing, a hearing is scheduled and objections noted.

The proposal can effectively be defeated if 35% or more of the land area that would be subject to the additional fees file objections.

Assuming it passes this muster, fees are then assessed through service charges and are completely separate from tax assessments.

On paper, this idea has merit when re-invigorating retail commercial areas such as Lake Street in Minneapolis, preventing a reincarnation of Woodward Ave from Detroit (a comparison I have made all too frequently). They allow the districts to tailor services to special needs, create a direct measurable link of costs to benefits, and provide more immediate response to constituent needs.

However, there are some drawbacks that are CLEARLY VISIBLE on Lake Street. Among them, Special Service Districts (SSD) can create inefficiency.



They can also hinder regional planning and finally they decrease accountability.

The following is a cutaway version of the SSD's within our reader area.

Imagine my surprise (and I hope yours) when I discovered that there was no SSD between 5th Avenue and Blaisdell Avenue along Lake Street.

Continuing my surprise, I immediately associated the desperately different appearance of Lake Street within that area from all others and to specific individuals.

In this area I routinely see overflowing trash cans, the cans are sitting exactly on the curbs, 5th Ave in both directions is festooned with trash, needles and condoms. There is a mysterious pole, stuck in concrete that has been there for years often obstructing traffic. On 5th Avenue and Clinton Avenue, you can routinely purchase sex and drugs. Some argue that this is ground zero for the trades.

One block club leader is inundated with panhandlers, frequently abrasive and offensive in their approach.

Trash litters the gutters and new construction such as the Fifth Ave parking ramp remains unfinished while existing property remains

unrepaired.

The difference extends even to the discontinuation of the Lake Street Roadway Redevelopment efforts. Street lights go unrepaired. Tree wells are grossly unplanted and the former iron works surrounding them are embarrassing, in gross disrepair and very possibly dangerous. With many of these tree wells, exposed wiring sticks up from the ground from a time when not only did the trees exist, but were festively lit akin to the areas further west.

What can we conclude about this anomaly on Lake Street? The difference is PROFOUND and is isolated to just this area.

One property owner dominates this area to such a degree as to impede any process to develop an SSD in this area. In addition to this, there was an effort to create a single contiguous SSD from Minnehaha to the freeway. This is entirely a reasonable effort that is grounded in sound business acumen. It is blocked completely by this same property owner.

And there is one strategic relationship between one council person and this same property owner. This relationship extends to voter intimidation, financial support, previous federal bribery convictions and much more.

The result is the creation of this

supremely blighted area, the creation of maladaptive street activities and a community in pain. It is so obvious.

Here, though, is what bothers me the most. This complete and depraved disregard of civic responsibility creates an environment where the new residents to Minneapolis from a cornucopia of ethnic and racial environments are unfairly preyed upon economically through substandard business environments. It also creates an environment where no single woman is safe from harassment during some parts of the day. Pay attention to the number of women running the gauntlet in the morning. They are frequently with children and often with bags. Statistically, they can't all be late for work.

We need to hold people who are supposed to represent US and the community accountable for such disgusting behavior. This, simply put and in the eyes of this author, is simply another form of racism...economic racism! And I for one am disgusted by it. Please take a moment to e-mail the entire council since our's favors her career over our welfare and demand that the same standards that exist on the rest of Lake St, be applied to this single odd section.

Raise Your Voice

Days of May

By PETER MOLENAAR

The word from Senator Jeff Hayden's Capital Update, May issue:

"Senate Republicans are staunch in their position that programs providing giveaways for corporations and the wealthy... should be continued. But every dollar spent on the wealthy... is a dollar taken from students, healthcare programs, and crumbling highways."

Speaking of May, May 1 was a workers' holiday for almost everyone on the planet but us. However, some local events did honor the spirit. Prominently, there was the May 1st Coalition for Immigrant Workers' Rights, which mobilized forces to our state's capital, and there was the UNITE HERE union labor rally in Minneapolis.

In the build-up period, the May 1st Coalition threw down a splendid fundraising banquet at the Walker United Methodist Church. When asked to speak, I made the following points: 1.) Every school child should come to appreciate the cultural contributions of the new immigrants; 2.) The expand-

ing U.S.A. wealth gap is unsustainable; 3.) A "democracy" which has sold its soul, is not true to its word.

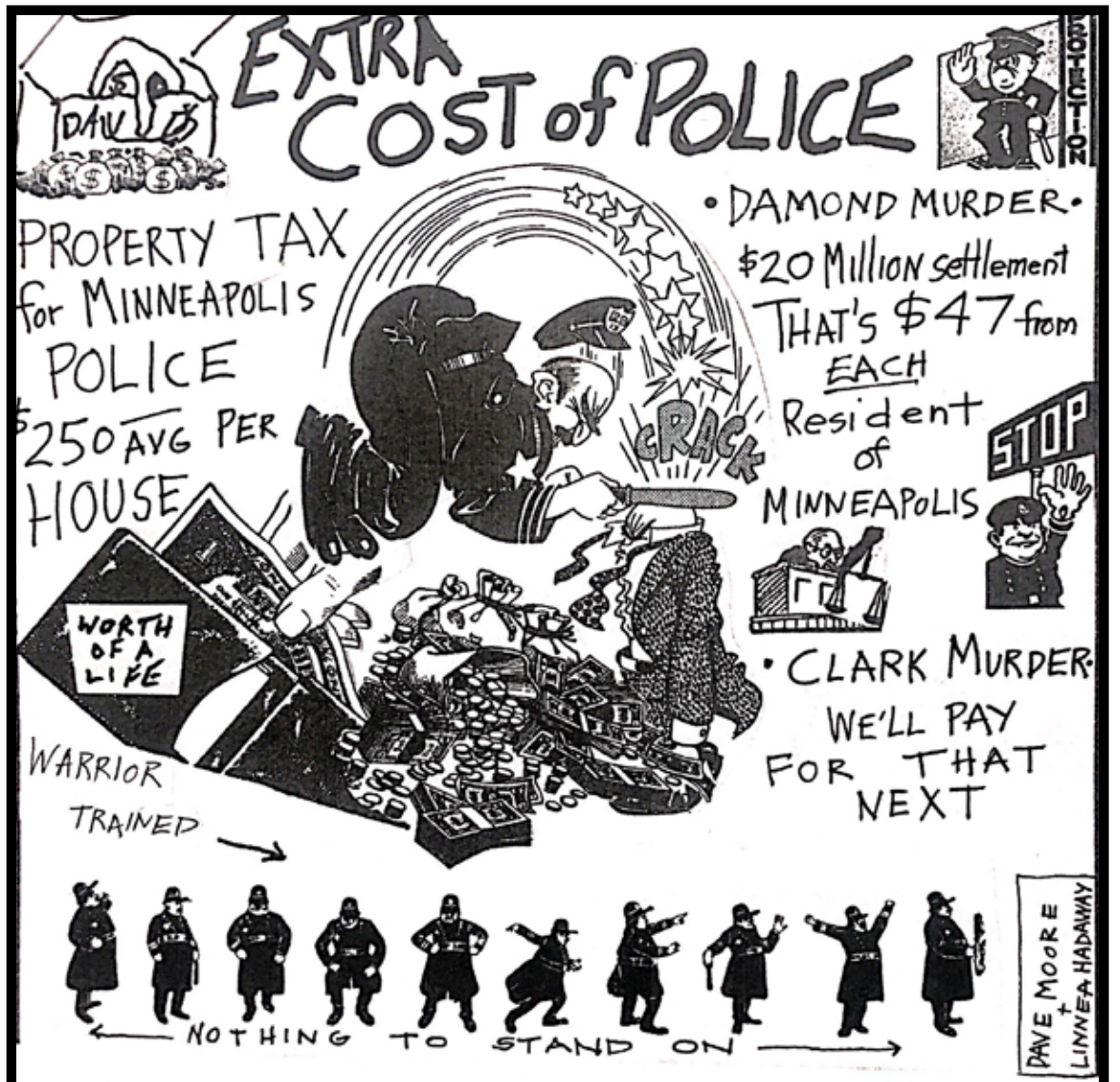
While the Coalition was delivering its call for the right to legally drive to work, UNITE HERE Local 17 was shepherding its forces between our downtown skyscrapers. The mostly immigrant hotel and restaurant workers are demanding a better contract under the slogan: ONE JOB SHOULD BE ENOUGH!

May 5 (Cinco de Mayo) 2019....

From the beginning of time (for many among us) the other May Day event has been the annual Heart of the Beast Parade and Festival. Despite my iron foundry worn-down ankles, I was determined, this year, to march with Ilhan Omar's contingent. Indeed, a member of Veterans for Peace walked along flank, as well. But not to worry, from this community it was from start to finish, nothing but a warm standing ovation for us all.

Yes, we are the United Front (progressive working class) within the Popular Front of resistance to D. Trump and his white nationalists. Despite differences within our own ranks ("social democrats," "radicals," etc.), when the climate/economic/political meltdown arrives, we must be prepared to overrule this bloody capitalist system.

Until then, let's do our best to love our neighbors.



WE WANT TO HEAR YOUR OPINIONS ON WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD AND THE WORLD!

Email copydesk@alleynews.org

BACKYARD COMMUNITY HEALTH HUB

Inspiring people to live 3 dimensional in the world around them



YOGA with Mikky Mon and Wed *6 to 7 pm Sat *2 to 3 pm

“In this FREE, gentle yoga class, I help participants focus on breathing and body movement. This is NOT a “workout” session. Instead, it is a relaxed, welcoming environment where participants will have a mental practice to stay in the present moment and alleviate stress. We take it really slow and it is an excellent class for beginners. Body wisdom is innate in each of us.

One of my personal missions is to make yoga more accessible to

people who have not done yoga or don’t know if they might enjoy it. We are bringing yoga into the lively atmosphere at the Midtown Global Market so more people can hopefully participate. The class happens in the quiet, private and closed door setting of the Allina and MGM conference rooms.

Healthy community looks like people who are connected and engage with each other. As responsible community members, we each have to slow down a bit, ground oneself and be a group of building blocks of individuals who have taken time to care for themselves and then extend themselves in a caring, loving, and supportive way into the community.”

GUIDED WALKING with Rehti Tues. and Thur. 10 to 10:45 am *Other days upon request

“Motion is movement and movement is so many things. Right now, I am approaching motion with the Backyard Community Health Hub as walking, walking the Greenway, walking around the Midtown Global Market, etc. I see it evolving into

It’s June – 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!



other types of motion as the participants and I develop a relationship, as people get more involved. As we all get connected, we will grow the concept of motion.

Circulation is improved with motion, circulation in the body and circulating in community. Good circulation is needed in the body, and good circulation helps us to get around and to move. The light of spring draws us outdoors, getting out and trying new things, seeing new places, being in motion with others. It is all circulation. It is all motion and that is what my class will look like. Having it in a familiar place like the MGM makes it

even more possible to have this motion just be part of one’s day, to be in a market place where other people are and other activities are occurring. Motion is how the body talks for everybody and also every body!”



MEDITATION and SOUND THERAPY with LaDonna and Rochelle/Sound Angel Mon & Wed *5 to 6 pm Saturday *4 to 6 pm

“Together, we guide the practice of Meditation and Sound Therapy as a part of the whole body experience.

We use singing bowls, guided imagery, flutes, voice, breath, and silence. Breath is the vocal point. Breath is so natural and so much a part of how the body operates that we take it for granted. Being conscious of our breath actually helps us to be more grounded, to more fully take the journey within the body.

People are walking around holding their breath, hoping things will be okay. Becoming conscious of our breath takes us back to what really matters, our inner selves. We have everything we need. Breath clears away the debris. Breath is instructional, it tells us what to do. Being aware of our breath allows us to be in the present moment.

When we start taking breath and owning it, we are able to encourage others to take their breath and to do their work. We can breathe in our truth and make no apologies for who we are. We are receptive to receiving the goodness that is present-love, happiness and joy. People in community are happy and give love, kindness, gentleness, gratitude and empathy. It has a ripple effect.”

HELP WANTED!



Need 10 community VOLUNTEERS who want to learn and grow organic vegetables, fruits, and herbs on a one acre farm close to the city. Need to commit to one, half-day a week for 8 weeks. In exchange for your labor, you will learn to grow, market, and value-added strategies to prolong food through packaging and preparation. Receive a Certificate of Completion.

Call or email the Backyard Community Health Hub (see below).

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. 1st 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.

JUNE 2019

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Engage, Connect, and Participate... Our work unleashes the power of citizens to heal themselves and build community -----Join us at the Midtown Global Market					1 *Yoga 2-3 * Zumba 3-4 *Breathe & Sound Therapy 4-6pm
3 *Walk anytime! *Breathe 5-6pm *Yoga 6-7 * Zumba 7-8	4 *Walk anytime!	5 *Walk anytime! *Breathe 5-6pm *Yoga 6-7 * Zumba 7-8	Dinner Dialogue on Diabetes 6 5:30-7:30 - Walk & Step - Massage & Craniosacral	7 *Walk anytime!	8 *Yoga 2-3 * Zumba 3-4 *Breathe & Sound Therapy 4-6pm
10 *Walk anytime! *Breathe 5-6pm *Yoga 6-7 * Zumba 7-8	11 *Walk anytime! * Stepping into Wellness - with J Most 5:30-7:30	12 *Walk anytime! *Breathe 5-6pm *Yoga 6-7 * Zumba 7-8	13 *Walk anytime!	14 *Walk anytime!	15 *Yoga 2-3 * Zumba 3-4 *Breathe & Sound Therapy 4-6pm
17 *Walk anytime! *Breathe 5-6pm *Yoga 6-7 * Zumba 7-8	18 *Walk anytime!	19 *Walk anytime! *Breathe 5-6pm *Yoga 6-7 * Zumba 7-8	Dinner Dialogue Cardiovascular Health (2DC) 20 5:30-7:30 - Walk & Step - Massage & Craniosacral	21 *Walk anytime!	22 *Yoga 2-3 * Zumba 3-4 *Breathe & Sound Therapy 4-6pm
24 *Walk anytime! *Breathe 5-6pm *Yoga 6-7 * Zumba 7-8	25 *Walk anytime! * Stepping into Wellness - with J Most 5:30-7:30	26 *Walk anytime! *Breathe 5-6pm *Yoga 6-7 * Zumba 7-8	27 *Walk anytime!	28 *Walk anytime!	29 *Yoga 2-3 * Zumba 3-4 *Breathe & Sound Therapy 4-6pm



BACKYARD COMMUNITY HEALTH HUB
Midtown Global Market, 920 E. Lake St., Minneapolis MN 55407
BackyardHealthHub@culturalwellnesscenter.org
612-353-6211 | www.culturalwellnesscenter.org
Call Monday to Friday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. for more info and to find out how to get involved!



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