“It has been a wonderful eight years.”
Northsiders reflect on the significance of Barack Obama’s presidency.  
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Letter from the Editor

Happy holidays and soon to be New Year! A new year brings a new beginning. This year, it also brings a significant end. A historic experience we have shared as a nation for the past eight years is coming to a close – Barack Obama will leave office on January 20.

Contemplating his impending departure has been an emotional experience for many on the Northside, and our North Now story this issue – “Saying Goodbye” (Page 7) – explores these reactions. Though it’s not a North Minneapolis-specific issue, we wanted to dedicate space on our pages to reflect on Obama’s impact, legacy, and likenesses here.

For this story, David Pierini, a new contributor to North News, has spent the past two months seeking out images of Obama throughout North Minneapolis. From these visual starting points, Pierini had conversations with the people responsible for hanging, making, and celebrating them. From photographs in private homes to original artwork in public places, Pierini depicts these enduring images of Obama alongside reflections on our latest president’s impact.

We recognize that there are many images and a multitude of thoughts that we were not able to capture in this piece. Help us continue and expand this conversation by submitting your own images of Obama and your thoughts on what he has meant to you over these past eight years. Republicans this includes you too. Email them to kenzieo@pillsburyunited.org or comment them on our Obama photo album on Facebook (www.facebook.com/mynorthnews).

Our North Now story is not our only coverage of a historic moment this issue. On Page 13, North High senior Taya Bumphurs interviewed five members of the North High Polars state championship football team. In their own words, these men reflect on the hard work and hope that took them all the way this season.

Here at North News we’re celebrating a small historic moment in our own experience as a Northside newspaper. This is the final issue of our first calendar year as a relaunched paper. We couldn’t do what we do without your story tips, advertising purchases, and donations. Our New Year’s resolution is to bring you even more of the content you’ve told us you love.

Thank you.

Kenzie O’Keefe
Editor/Publisher, North News
kenzieo@pillsburyunited.org

Letters to the editor

[EDITOR’S NOTE: The opinions below belong to the letter writers.]

RE: “Patrick Henry’s Problematic Legacy” (11/22 edition of North News)

When people hear the name Patrick Henry, some think of the founding father. Others think of our school – where a group of young scholars, educators, and family members work together to fulfill our educational agenda. Both viewpoints share a concept of leadership.

Our mission states we are a diverse community that values and supports the experiences of inquiry and learning through meaningful opportunities that bring intercultural understanding to our communities. At Patrick Henry, there are great opportunities for our students to organize, express themselves, and set intentional goals; all key components to being great leaders.

One of those great leaders we acknowledge is Semaj Rankin, an IB honor student here, who was featured in the 11/22 North News story “Patrick Henry’s problematic legacy.” Semaj made Principal Yusuf Abdullah aware of his intentions to advocate for a name change of our school. It was important for Principal Abdullah to validate his concerns and make sure he was aware of district policies. Principal Abdullah says “There is a process that needs to be followed in order to move forward with changing the name of our school and because we work as a community to create platforms for student engagement, leadership and success, we will not stand in the way of these leaders but the expectation is that proper channels be sought out.”

There are mixed emotions about the name change from students, educators and family members. We plan to give Patrick Henry High School stakeholders an opportunity to express their thoughts on this subject this spring on an upcoming TV show that is currently being created.

Quinton Bonds, PR Coordinator, Patrick Henry High School

Your latest issue makes a political statement in featuring a young man on the cover who “wants his school’s name changed.” The school is Patrick Henry High School, named for Patrick Henry, the first post-colonial governor of Virginia, and a slaveowner.

I disagree with the idea that the name of the high school needs to be changed because Patrick Henry owned slaves. If Henry were known primarily for that fact, I would tend to agree. However, he is known for being an orator who delivered the famous “give me liberty or give me death” speech.

Both George Washington and Thomas Jefferson owned slaves. Why do we not demonize them and urge that their names be removed from schools? Perhaps it is because they were instrumental in establishing our nation, a fact that overshadows that fact of slave owning. So it is also with Patrick Henry.

The larger question here is whether the society at large should heed the complaint whenever a black man or woman cries racism. I think not. We live in a pluralistic society where every person’s opinions and sensibilities should be respected. There should be no such thing as pulling racial rank.

Race-based slavery was abolished 150 years ago. There are other forms of economic exploitation that remain alive. Deal with them instead of beating a dead horse.

William McGaughey, North Minneapolis resident

North News welcomes letters to the editor as long as they are relevant to life in North Minneapolis and under 300 words. Unsigned letters will not be run. Send to kenzieo@pillsburyunited.org.
Development on Penn & Lowry
By Kenzie O’Keefe | Editor
The vacant .8 acre site located on the Northeast corner of Penn Ave. N and Lowry Ave. N may soon see development. Hennepin County and the City of Minneapolis have put out a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the site, asking that proposals be submitted by 4 p.m. on January 31, 2017. If all goes according to the current plan, construction could begin as early as 2018.

At the November 29 RFP meeting at Folwell Park, staff members from the County and City gave an overview of the site and their development objectives for the corner -- which they say were created with input from the surrounding neighborhoods. They would like to see mixed-use housing and commercial or multi-story commercial development on the site. Specific preferences include: 1) unrestricted or market rate units for housing developments (not just “affordable housing”). 2) “Innovative and sustainable design elements,” particularly those that help prevent crime. 3) “Pedestrian and transit-oriented” design elements. 4) Indoor and outdoor amenities like greenspaces and underground parking.

Alicia Holder, a 32 year old Jordan resident, was one of 10-15 people who attended the meeting. She says she “doesn’t mind” the goals for development “as long as they are transparent, public, and include community members in the discussion.” She says she hopes to see local small business “thrive inside of whatever is developed.” She added, “I would love to see accessible opportunities for neighborhood-driven co-working and co-op spaces.” She says it is essential for project leaders to, “take Northside residents seriously when it comes to their potential as precedence-setters.”

Questions can be directed to: Casey.Dzwiewczynski@minneapolismn.gov, (612) 673-5070.

Have an awesome idea? The Awesome Foundation might give you $1000.
By Passion Osborne | North High Junior
Have you ever had a really good idea that could make the Northside even better, but didn’t know where to get the money to make it a reality? Now there’s a way.

Every month a small group of Northside community members (pictured above) get together, contribute $50 apiece, and give the money (typically around $1000) away. The group is called the Awesome Foundation, and it was started by community members Ariah Fine and Bill Cottman earlier this year along with several friends and neighbors.

You don’t have to be popular or well-resourced in the community to join the group or receive one of their grants. “A lot of time when people need grants they don’t get them, because they’re not well known,” said Roxanne O’Brien, a member of the group. She says that the group gives all applicants a fair and equal opportunity to access dollars.

The process of deciding who gets the money each month is simple but intentional. Community members apply using an online application, and then the group gathers to review all the applications. Though there is no formal criteria for selecting a grantee, the group carefully considers the abilities and impacts that each one could make to the community. They collectively come to an agreement on who should get the money.

Amoke Kubat, a community artist and elder, was the first person to win. She used the money to expand a pinwheel project she already had underway. She decorates them with encouraging quotes and words and invites Northsiders to place them in meaningful locations. The pinwheels and their messages symbolically interact with the wind – “wind changes things,” Kubat said.

Another winner was Tabota Seyon. She received dollars at the beginning of November to purchase supplies for her “Recipes for Success” program – a healthy cooking education program that teaches life skills through healthier habits. “There are so many awesome ideas that go underutilized due to lack of support. This Grant [helps] people by supporting their dreams while making a better world. I love that!” she said.

Other recipients include artist Angela Davis, Selah Obinrin, and Green Garden Bakery. Apply for a grant at http://www.awesomefoundation.org/en/chapters/northminneapolis.

North Market building is bought
By Ashley Powell | North High Junior
North Minneapolis is getting a new grocery store on 44th Ave. N and Humboldt Ave. N called North Market. On November 15, Pillsbury United Communities (PUC), the project’s leader, officially bought the building for the store. PUC also owns North News.

Adair Mosley, PUC’s Chief Innovation Officer, is excited about the latest project milestone. He and PUC feel that it has been a rewarding project overall.

Mosley says that grocery store will be open in October 2017. “We just want it up and going,” he said. PUC has been working on this project for about two years and is excited to put money and jobs into North Minneapolis, he said.

North Market is a one of a kind grocery store. It will include all the regular aspects of a typical grocery store plus a community cooking space and a North Memorial clinic that will focus on chronic diseases.

PUC is doing this project because of the 67,000 residents of North Minneapolis who have access to less full-scale grocery options compared to other parts of the Twin Cities. Many North Minneapolis residents regularly travel by bus or car to do their shopping in Brooklyn Center or Robbinsdale. Residents are traveling outside of the community to buy their food, and PUC wants to create a grocery store in the community.

Prices at the new grocery store will be competitive. They won’t be as cheap as Walmart or Aldi, but they will be similar to a Cub Foods, said Mosley.

Residents seem to be looking forward to having the new market in their community. Learn more about North Market at www.mynorthmarket.org. Interact with the market at www.facebook.com/mynorthmarket.
Another year of holiday cheer on 44th Ave. N

By Kenzie O'Keefe | Editor

Jordan resident Pa Yang woke up to her dogs barking around 10 a.m. on December 4. Her fiancé made it downstairs just in time to see their neighbor, a teenager, running off their porch with a package that had been mailed to them.

They recognized the teenager as their neighbor’s daughter and opted to report the theft to her father instead of the police.

“Though Yang got her package back, she laments the effect that events like this have on her community. “In a time where we all should be watching out for each other, respecting each other, and building trust within our communities and neighborhoods to make it safer for families, we should not be worrying that our neighbors will be taking things from us,” she said.

One person who is watching out for his neighbors – and safeguarding their mail – is Kevin Aldwaik, the man behind a couple convenience stores on the Northside, most recently Webber Mart, which opened at 1701 44th Ave. N this fall.

Aldwaik did not want to see his customers’ holidays spoiled by stolen packages. So, he came up with a clever means of solving the problem – he accepts and signs for package deliveries at his shops from any carrier willing to drop them there. He keeps an eye on them until their owners arrive with a photo I.D.

In late November he put the word out on Facebook that he would begin doing this. On December 7, the first packages started arriving.

“Even though there is no extra charge. We’re here already. The door is open. The lights are on. If it helps [people] out, we might as well [do it],” he told North News that day.

For some older couples – who he quickly corrects himself to call his “friends” – he extends the holidays cheer even further. When he’s out running errands, and he knows they’ll be home, he drops their packages off at their houses.

Aldwaik’s hope is that leaving less packages unattended and vulnerable on doorsteps will push thieves out of the neighborhood. If they find few packages on doorsteps, “they’ll look somewhere else and leave us alone,” he said.

The Minneapolis Police Department (MPD) put out an advisory to help people avoid holiday package theft. They recommend shipping packages only to places where someone will be there to receive and sign for them. If people fall victim to this crime, they urge people to file a police report, which can help get their packages returned to them in the event that the thieves are caught later on.
University of MN Aims to Expand the K-12 to Higher Education Pipeline

CORE 2025, a University of MN program, is seeking to support students who want to go to college, beginning with current eighth graders from multicultural, first-generation, and under-resourced/under-served backgrounds in the Minneapolis/St. Paul 7 county metro area. We are looking for scholars who enjoy learning, show a high level of motivation, and who are working on their path to college. Rather than falling victim to their circumstances, Core 2025 hopes to provide youth with the skills they need to successfully graduate from high school, and ultimately college.

CORE 2025 is free, early outreach, cohort model program that recruits 8th grade students and supports them through their high school graduation.

“I believe that programs like the CORE 2025 program and other college readiness programs are critical in helping students maximize their potential, and making them aware of opportunities to advance.”

Shakeer Abdullah, Assistant Vice President, University of Minnesota

Through this program, students can access world-class training & support to help them be ready for college. This includes preparation for applying for college, maximizing academic success, understanding scholarships and financial aid. CORE 2025 scholars are expected to attend quarterly campus visits each year (i.e., January, April, July, October).

CORE 2025 considers all students interested in going to college, regardless of college preference. Apply online for your 8th grader now, at https://diversity.umn.edu/core2025, or call (612) 624-0594.
Straight from the students

Student journalists taking our North News class at North High School react to the issues that are most important to them. The opinions they express are their own and do not represent editorial stances being taken by North News.

Building relationships with students
By Navii Grimes | North High Junior

If a student goes to a place every day for four years, shouldn’t they have at least one teacher or staff they can connect with? Having positive relationships with teachers gives students a valuable resource for school and life advice. Some teachers are seen as more than just an educator; they are an extension to a student’s family.

For most students, having connections with teachers makes their behavior better and creates a better environment to learn around. Destiny Fennell, a junior at North High, says, “I have about three teachers I can connect with. Those classes are easier to learn in than others. I have a voice in these classes. It’s easier for me to ask questions when I’m struggling or just have something on my mind.” One of those teachers she has a connection with is Ms. Hiatt, an 11th grade English teacher. “Some students like myself aren’t use to having adults we can connect with outside of home, but Ms. Hiatt has that sort of friendly welcome vibe that a lot of students need. I wish all teachers were like this sometimes.”

How does a teacher connect with students that have such different backgrounds and experiences? Hiatt bonds with her students in a variety of ways and makes learning more accessible to them. Forming relationships with students is a big part of her teaching philosophy. Some students go as far as calling her “mom.”

“I feel like it is very rewarding. I feel like it is a respon-

SUSPENSIONS AREN’T A KEY TO SUCCESS
By Dalvin Crockett | North High Freshman

In the past two years, at least 3.45 million students were suspended at some point in the school year in the United States. U.S. children lost about 18 million days of instructions due to these so-called actions that caused it. How are students supposed to make up these missed days of instructions and credits?

Ansa Ayea, teaching artist from the Guthrie at North High, believes, “It’s an interruption in the flow of the class to have an individual suspended.” He hopes that suspension would be one of the last things for a student to have happen to them, and he hopes that teachers create individual relationships with students so they can redirect them instead. Most of the suspensions Ayea has seen were the result of violence. “I don’t think that suspending anybody necessarily fixes a problem. I think it just removes it. It’s a short-term solution,” he said.

Instead of a removal from school, Ayea thinks alternatives could be detention, work projects, and conflict resolution. “If every time they do something wrong, the solution is to punish them and...tell them to get away from us, why are we surprised they’re not interested in education?” He also believes there is a racial, class, and gender component of suspensions.

Brandon Brooks, College Access and Race Equity Consultant with Minnesota Education Equity Partnership (MNEEP), agrees. He says that students of color, Native American students, English Language Learners, LGBTQ students, and students with disabilities, especially males, are “disproportionately pushed out of the classroom.”

“Every student deserves to be treated with dignity and is entitled to a quality education, yet the way our schools discipline students pushes young people out of the classroom,” said Brooks.

Javon Smith, a freshman at North High, has been suspended for play fighting. He feels like suspensions hold him back in school. He feels he could have benefited from in school suspension (ISS) or detention because that would have allowed him to get his work done. Maybe there are other reactions schools could take instead of removing a student from school, such as talking to a counselor, peer mediation, and even meditation.

What do you think?
Saying Goodbye

After eight years, President Barack Obama’s second term will come to a close this month. Though our first African American president will soon leave the White House, his legacy and his image are sure to endure in hearts, homes, and history books for generations to come.

This issue, photographer David Pierini brings you a glimpse of Obama’s profound impact on the people of North Minneapolis.

Join us on a journey through private homes, a barbershop, a church, a cafe, the Urban League, and two schools. Submit your own at www.facebook.com/mynorthnews.

Photos and captions by David Pierini

Jewelean Jackson

Jackson, who lives on Emerson Ave. N, attended both inaugurations for President Obama, and wanted his photo on her wall of family photos. “Every day I can look at this and know from whence I came,” she said. “This is my life – my history, my works in progress, the future.”

On the cover

Regina Tarver, center, flanked by her sister, Charlene James and daughter, Quiaira Tarver, plan to carefully preserve their Obama t-shirts. “It has been a wonderful eight years,” Regina said. “There is such integrity and spiritual good in him.”
Evelyn Bledsoe sees the president and his words every time she ascends the steps in her home. An Obama “Destiny” poster hangs on her landing above a table holding pictures of children and grandchildren. “It’s encouragement,” she said. “My children and grandchildren come over every Sunday. I want them to see this and be proud of who they are, to dream and dream big. It gives us hope and shows the system does work.”

Sondra Samuels, CEO and president of the Northside Achievement Zone (NAZ), holds a picture of herself with President Obama during a visit the President made to North Minneapolis during his second term. Samuels was a delegate at the Democratic Convention in Denver in 2008. Samuels believes people were transformed by this latest election. She has seen that once the heavy feeling subsided, people have committed to activism and are beginning to seek ways to do more in their communities. “We wish we could be transformed by love, but often we are transformed by crisis,” she said. “We get an opportunity to say to ourselves, ‘Who are we as Americans? Not who are we as black people, or white people or poor people, but who are we as Americans? Thank goodness we have a chance to understand, and that’s how we unify our country. She added, “When Obama said ‘Yes we can’ and spoke of hope, that was for everybody, that was across racial lines.”

When fourth-graders at Lucy Craft Laney Community School sit at their desks, they are met near eye-level with a poster of President Obama.

Armani Wade’s painting of the Obamas as superheroes hangs at Breaking Bread Cafe on West Broadway.

Evelyn Bledsoe

SONDRA SAMUELS
Terry Tanna, a Jordan resident, wears his Obama, MLK, and Malcolm X sweatshirt. “They’re three great people that know how to help us stay strong,” he said. He described Obama as “presidential for everyone no matter what color he was.” By Rochelle Tanna | North High Freshman

Gerald Stewart, a pastor at United Christian Ministries, has a blanket that celebrates Obama as the 44th president and first African American to hold the office. Looking at it unfurled and at a distance, recently, he was struck by how the expression on Obama’s face seems to hold a vision that extends past his time in the White House. “Our president may be leaving office but the idea is for us to continue his work,” Stewart said. “He had a vision for change, and he didn’t get to implement everything he wanted. It’s up to us to carry on and honor his legacy.”

Artist Juan André Reed works on a painting of President Obama at his kitchen table. “We now have a generation that knows they can grow up to be president,” Reed said. “He set the groundwork.”
Barber Trevon Ellis trims his facial hair at Fade Factory while waiting for a customer in his chair. The Broadway Avenue barbershop hung a portrait of President Obama shortly after he won his second term. “Why do they keep George Washington’s picture up in the White House? Because he was the first,” said JayCee, another barber at the shop, using the question to explain the large Obama poster in the shop.

“I put that poster up eight years ago and I don’t plan on taking it down,” said Susan Martin, whose home on 26th Ave. N is one of two homes on the block with images of Obama in the window. “He’s going to be missed.”
Hockey and figure skating for boys and girls ages 6 - 14 are offered at North Commons Park and Northeast Arena during the months of November through February. All equipment is provided and the cost is minimal. Transportation is available for those who need it. Register and get more information at North Commons Park, 612-370-4921.

Monday - Mahjong game play, 1:00-3:30 pm at Serendipity Spot, 3300 Lyndale Ave N. Free and open to all levels, Mahjong uses tiles and is similar to rummy. Game hosts available to teach beginners.

Saturday - Family Storytime, Webber Park Library, 11am. For children of all ages and their parent or caregiver. Talk, sing, read, write and play together in a format appropriate for young children. Share books, stories, rhymes, music and movement.

Recognizing that organics recycling is the greatest opportunity to reduce our trash, the county board adopted changes to the Hennepin County Residential Recycling Funding Policy to allocate more money to cities for organics recycling programs. To support city recycling programs, Hennepin County distributes all of the funding that it receives from the state’s Select Committee on Recycling and the Environment (SCORE) fund to cities. The county distributed $3.5 million in 2016. Food is the most prevalent material in the trash by far. Steps you can take to reduce food waste include using up all of the food that you buy, practicing meal planning, understanding the date labels on food, and properly storing your food. As we enter the holiday season, residents can use holiday parties and dinners as an opportunity to learn about preventing the waste of food and other organics. Find resources at www.savethefood.com.

The City of Minneapolis is addressing discrimination in businesses through education, intensive investigation and enforcement. All people have the right to receive service, free from discrimination, from any business that obtains or solicits customers from the general public.

Minneapolis bans discrimination in public accommodations based on race, color, creed, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, marital status, and status regarding public assistance. Find out what Minneapolis is doing to investigate and stop discrimination at http://www.minneapolisman.gov/civil/rights.

Snow season is here and Minneapolis residents should go to www.minneapolis.gov/SNOW to find out whether a Snow Emergency has been declared. Or contact 612-348-SNOW for resources about snow emergencies in English, Spanish, Somali and Hmong.

Sidewalks are a critical part of Minneapolis’ transportation system, and they should be open for everyone. With snow in the forecast it’s important to be reminded of the rules.

Minneapolis ordinance requires property owners to clear sidewalks within 24 hours after a snowfall for houses and duplexes and four daytime hours for all other properties. Failure to shovel your walk could lead to a ticket plus the cost of crews shoveling it. Find more information at www.minneapolismn.gov/snow/shovel.

EVENTS + ENTERTAINMENT

1/7 – Serendipity Spot is looking for acoustic singer/songwriter and spoken word performers to anchor inaugural event. 3300 Lyndale Ave. N. Call 612-564-3478 or stop by for details.

1/14 - Police, Crime and Saving our Youth event with guest speakers Mista Maehm and Pierre Glass. Free entry, free food and free prizes, 11-3pm, North Commons Gym, 1801 James Ave. N.

1/22 – “All Are Welcome Book Club” free event to discuss Boarded Windows by Minnesota author, Dylan Hicks at 4:00pm. Serendipity Spot, 3300 Lyndale Ave N.

Bare Trees by Jack Mader runs December 1 - 30. Opening reception, December 9th, 5pm-9pm, gallery talk, December 13th, 7pm. Homewood Studios, 2400 Plymouth Ave. N

Tai Chi classes, every Saturday from 9am-10:30 am at Homewood Studios, 2400 Plymouth Ave N.

The Visitation Sisters are sponsoring a 4 part series focused on prayerful decision-making, discernment, starting January 23. This is a free class for women and men of all faith traditions interested in exploring their next steps. For more information, or to register, visit our website: http://www.visitonmonasteryminneapolis.org/visitation-companions/discernment-following-the-spirit/

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NORTHnotices

RESOURCES
Clothes Closet at St. Olaf Lutheran Church, 2901 Emerson Ave. N. Hours: Saturdays, 10am-12noon, Sundays, 11:30am - 1:30pm, and Wednesdays 12pm - 2pm. During the Wednesday hours, there are also free bread, fruits and vegetables for distribution. Donations of clean, reusable clothing welcome, Mon-Fri 9am-1pm. 612-529-7726

Do you live in Near North or Willard/Hay? Then your block could be eligible for a mini block club grant through the Northside Residents Redevelopment Council, NRRRC. Funds are available for a project or event you want to create. Call (612) 335-5924 or email contactus@nrrc.org.

Interested in upgrading your storefront? The West Broadway Business and Area Coalition has two matching grant programs that can provide up to $22,500 in matching grants per storefront. Any existing business (with property owner’s approval) and/or commercial building owner whose building is located on West Broadway between 26th Avenue to the west and the River to the east and the one block contiguous (East and West) to West Broadway are eligible to apply. More information: http://westbroadway.org/facade/ or email carla@westbroadway.org or call 612-353-5178.

The City of Minneapolis is offering free home visits from energy-saving experts to qualified households with an income less than $48,100 for one person, $54,950 for two people, $61,850 for three people, or up to $90,650 for eight people. If the Home Energy Squad recommends insulation or air sealing, income-qualified residents also have special access to zero percent financing to complete that work. Call 612-335-5874 or visit mnce.org/ges-rpls.

Hennepin County’s drop-off facilities in Brooklyn Park and Bloomington accept needles and sharps, at no charge to residential consumers. This program is available to residential customers only. Unused medicines contained in sharps, such as EpiPens, should not be brought to the county drop-off facilities. More information: call Hennepin County Environment and Energy department, 612-348-3777 or email environment@hennepin.us.

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homes were damaged as a result of the floods and have home repair expenses that they are not able to meet will find financial help and other services at the center. Residents may also apply for aid by calling 1-800-621-3362 or visiting www.DisasterAssistance.gov. The last day to apply for assistance is January 30, 2017.

BUSINESS & DEVELOPMENT

The City of Minneapolis is seeking redevelopment proposals for one, two or three parcels located near Van White Memorial Boulevard and 2nd Ave N in the Harrison neighborhood of North Minneapolis. The parcels range in size from 31,859 sq ft. and 61,350 sq ft. The development goals for the Minneapolis. The parcels range in size from 31,859

The City of Minneapolis is seeking proposals for the redevelopment of a vacant, 0.8 acre site located at the northeast corner of the intersection of Penn and Lowry Avenues North. Read more in the story on Page 2.

ACTION

Rediscover the joys of reading by volunteering with PPL’s afterschool youth programs. We strive to empower students from low-income communities to achieve success in school and in life through academic support and hands-on enrichment opportunities. Volunteer Tutor-Mentors work with youth on literacy skills, relationship-building, and enrichment activities. One-on-one support makes all the difference in helping students achieve their goals! Tutoring takes place on Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday from 5 – 7pm or 6 – 8pm at 4046 Lyndale Avenue N. For more information, contact Caitlin (caitlin.dougherty@ppl-inc.org or 612.455.5108).

Homework Help is held Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 3:30pm-7pm at North Regional Library during the Minneapolis Public School Year. Homework Help is for all students, K-12, at no cost and with no advance sign-up needed. Volunteers must be at least 16 years old, have some experience with school age children and be available 2 hours a week for one semester. Training is provided; a criminal background check is required. Applications may be submitted online at hclib.org or contact Barb McKenzie at 612-543-8579 or at bamckenzie@hclib.org.

The City of Minneapolis youth employment program STEP-UP has begun accepting applications for 2017 summer internship placements. Eligible Minneapolis youth ages 14-21 who are interested in participating in the 2017 STEP-UP class have until February 10, 2017, to complete an application online. Businesses, public agencies and nonprofits interested in employing interns in 2016 can find information on the City of Minneapolis STEP-UP website. To learn more about STEP-UP, or to access the online STEP-UP application, visit the City of Minneapolis website. You can also follow STEP-UP on Twitter @STEPUPMpls or like them on Facebook.

2/1 Shredded tire waste is now used as a play surface on 47 elementary playgrounds in the MPS school district, including many in North Minneapolis. Chemicals detected in shredded tire material include carcinogens, neurotoxins, respiratory/eye/skin irritants and reproductive and developmental toxins. Please Join the Linden Hills Neighborhood Council Environment Committee and Play It Safe Minneapolis for an Education and Action Session advocating for the district-wide removal and replacement of shredded waste tires and crumb rubber on playgrounds. This session will also discuss proper ways to limit exposure of children to the toxic material. 6:30pm, Linden Hills Recreation Center, 3100 West 43rd St, 55410.

WE WANT TO FEATURE YOUR NOTICE!

Email kenzieo@pillsburyunited.org

Does the paint in your windows look like this?

Prevent childhood lead poisoning by calling the Minneapolis Health Department.

612-673-2584
Ask for Fardowza Omar

HUD grant money is available to both owner occupied & rental units. Up to $10k per dwelling to repair identified lead hazards.

To book an ad or join our worship directory:

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Diversity thrives here!
North High wins first football championship

The North High School Polars football team – who had an undefeated season this year – made history on Saturday, November 26. They beat Rushford-Peterson High School 30-14 in the Class 1A Prep Bowl to take home the state championship title.

This is the first time that North has won the championship title, and it is the first time since 1977 that a Minneapolis Public School has won it.

This win was a big deal for the young men, coaches, and Northside community. A school that was once doubted and almost shut down in 2010 due to low enrollment, came back to win state in basketball, and now, football in 2016.

By Taya Bumphurs | North High Senior

**Zeek Rodgers (senior)**
Quarterback

“It’s amazing. It’s something nobody else has done, so it feels great. I expected the season to end like this because I had a vision in the beginning, and I knew this was gonna happen, and I wasn’t gonna let nothing else happen. It brought the North community together, and made more people want to come to North. I think they can win [again] next year because I have faith in my guys.”

**Isaac Johnson (senior)**
Wide Receiver

“You know, it feels good. I expected the season to end like this because you have to be confident if you want to make it to the championship. You gotta believe it. We made history, so you know they’re always going to bring us up with the future football teams. The Northside is proud of us. For sure [the team] can repeat it next year. They’re young. They have Nas, Tay, and Armon. OA is a good coach. I think they can do it.”

**Javonta Williams (senior)**
Safety

“It feels good. I feel like I was able to accomplish coming closer to my family and being closer to my guys on the football team. I felt like it made a positive impact on everybody in the community. I think North High can [win next year’s championship] if they just buckle down and work hard.”

**Jacques Lyles (senior)**
Corner

**Quentin Travis (senior)**
Outside Linebacker

“I started since freshman year, and as we got older, we got better and better. Finally winning senior year felt amazing. I think we accomplished a lot. At first everyone doubted us thinking we weren’t going to make it to the championship again. Now they’re thinking, ‘Dang. They proved us wrong.’ We haven’t brought a championship home yet, so it felt great for the class of 2017 to bring it to the Northside.

**Javonta Williams (senior)**
Safety

“I feel like it’s a blessing more because we expected it to happen last year, and it didn’t. So we came back this year and did it. Imma be honest, I didn’t expect the season to end like this because we lost a great player (Tyler Johnson), but I never doubted me or my teammates during the season. We went 1-0 every week, so that’s how we kept looking at it. I feel like this win will bring more students here next season because they’ll want to be on a championship team.”

By Taya Bumphurs | North High Senior

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Affordable, accessible, and safe might not be the first words that spring to mind when one thinks of giving birth outside of a hospital. But that’s exactly the birth experience Rebecca Polston creates inside Roots Midwifery and Community Birth Center, a peaceful space that looks more like a spa than a medical facility, at 1901 44th Ave. North.

Above, new parents Chris and Natasha rest in a Roots birthing suite. Photo by Danica Donnelly.
Polston, a community organizer turned Certified Professional Midwife (CPM), is the only African American midwife providing out-of-hospital services in Minnesota. This issue she spoke to North News about her devotion to culturally centered care, her allegiance to the Northside, and the ways she creates positive birth experiences for all people – even the ones who end up opting for an epidural.

By Kenzie O’Keefe

How did you choose the name Roots?
I wanted something that recognized cultural roots and the importance of being grounded in family and community, and something a little bit hippie – because we like doing things naturally around here.

How did Roots come to be?
The birth center opened in September of 2015. Before then I had kept it as a small home birth practice on the side where I just did cultural birth for primarily African American and First Nations families who wanted a home birth that was centered in cultural traditions. I had been practicing home birth for four years, and I love the care we give there, but it’s expensive and insurance doesn’t usually cover it. I wanted to provide that care to my community, and I wanted to be able to take insurance. Insurance covers birth centers very well. For medical assistance, there are no out of pocket costs. It’s just as safe, cheaper, and you get more care than you’d receive in a hospital.

Describe Roots’ attitude towards the birth experience.
Birth works most of the time. If you’re surrounded by people who believe in you and support you, you oftentimes don’t need pain medication. But we also say that we’re not dogmatic. If you want an epidural, we can just go get one. But it’s not just about the birth, it’s also about the care. We offer full service pregnancy care – prenatal, birth, and postpartum services. We do one-hour prenatals. We give people true choices around what kind of testing they want to do. They birth here and then they go home after, around four hours, but then we get old fashioned and do home visits. We have a 99% breastfeeding success rate. It’s not just about how well you’re supported during birth, but how well you’re supported in this whole time of welcoming this baby.

How do you refer to the people who give birth here? Patients? Mothers?
A client. Part of our intersectionality is that we have people self-identify and choose how to be referred. Not everyone is a mother. We’re comfortable serving the gender fluid community.

Who are your clients, demographically?
We’re about 50% medical assistance. 85% families of color. 50% of our mothers are African American. Roughly a third to half live in North or right nearby.

What would you say to someone who has never considered childbirth outside of a hospital and might not think Roots is for them?
We always start from the perspective of safety. The evidence is overwhelming that it is as safe, if not safer, to have an out of hospital birth with a trained provider. I look at the countries that have better outcomes than ours and they all have midwife-driven programs. Birth works best when interfered with the least. At the same time, part of our accreditation and licensing is that we are prepared for emergencies. Everyone who births here as to be low risk – between 37 and 42 weeks. Head down. One baby.

Why set the center up in North Minneapolis?
I very specifically wanted to set up a cultural practice in North Minneapolis where I could serve the folks who need really compassionate, culturally centered care the most. The underlying goal is to increase access to care and decrease pre-term birth and infant and maternal mortality in our community.

I understand that African American women in particular have much higher rates of maternal and infant mortality in the US. America doesn’t do very well in general with maternal and infant mortality. We usually hang out somewhere around 46th or 45th in the world. So we already do a bad job. It’s important to have [providers] who aren’t just culturally competent, but share your cultural experience. That improves health outcomes in many [medical] fields, especially midwifery care. Most women are more low risk than they think. Their risk actually comes from how they’re treated by providers. The stress of living in a society with systemic racism plays out in adverse health outcomes.

Your website makes it clear that Roots is an inclusive space. Why is that important to you?
Our primary focus is on providing cultural care. Anti-oppression is woven into every aspect of how we operate here. It’s really important to be out loud that everyone is valued. Everyone can have a positive birth and health experience. I’m passionate about that, and I will not be quiet about that.

Why is the care you provide especially important here in North Minneapolis?
There is woefully little care here. I wasn’t afraid of North Minneapolis. It’s great. My first kid was born here. This is such a vibrant, amazing community. The amount of businesses not investing here was apparent, and I felt like there was no ethical way for me to not invest here. [City Council President] Barb Johnson has been wonderful. She has been amazingly supportive.

North Minneapolis houses many nonprofits. Why start Roots as a for-profit business?
I love nonprofits, but Roots is purposely not a nonprofit. I wanted equity not charity – to prove to people that we can operate as a just and fair society in business and that it can work.

How do you do that?
I always look to Neighborhood’s Organizing for Change (NOC) and ask what they’re working on. They want us to publish our work schedules a month ahead of time. I should do that. They say that the minimum living wage is actually 15. No one at Roots makes less than that. I always try to take myself as a business and hold myself to a higher standard than I’m required to on those issues. I’m also really committed to training students of color and rural midwives because there are not many of either of those in Minnesota. We embrace intersectionality.

Who else in this community inspires you?
I love Ahavah BirthWorks – a doula agency housed in our building. The Northside Economic Opportunity Network (NEON) has been great. I took their entrepreneur 12-week course the year before I was going to do this. They leveraged so many technical resources for me. I got all my funding through Women Venture, the City of Minneapolis, and the Black Chamber of Commerce.

What has the response been from the community?
Amazing. We’ve had so many folks just walk in off the street. People are like “I just peed on a stick! What do you all do here?” It’s all been word of mouth. We haven’t done hardly any advertising.
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