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happy new year, Northside. It’s good to be back in your hands after a few more weeks than usual because of the holidays. A lot has happened since our Dec. 20 edition dropped. The Drake Fire. Monique Bough’s unjust and terrifying murder. The declaration of Tyler Johnson Day. Lots of Upper Harbor Terminal planning—a learning table, CPC and CAC meetings, and an open meeting law controversy. A few snowstorms. The beginning of President Trump’s impeachment trial. Kobe and Henry. Second semester began Jan. 21, and we have more than 20 new students in our journalism programs at both Henry and North High Schools. Check out the photo of our new North High students to the right. If you know any of our newest reporters-in-training, tell them your story ideas and encourage them to take advantage of the huge audience their writing is about to have. Just a few weeks into 2020, I’ve hit my official four-year anniversary of leading this publication. Coincidentally I’m working on perhaps my most ambitious story of those four years at this very moment. More on that next month.

On an even more personal note, I’m heading into this year newly married. I took a couple weeks off in late December and married my now wife, Abbie, at my parents’ home in St. Paul. Thanks to all who have reached out by phone and Facebook or stopped me on the streets over these past few weeks to say congratulations. Your expressions of support make me feel so seen—a special feeling for a humble community reporter whose job is more to observe than to share. I’m thankful every day for the intimacy of being in community as one of your journalists.

Until next time.

Kenzie O’Keefe
Editor/Publisher, North News
kenzieo@ pillsburyunited.org
651-245-2647

Letter to the Editor

I’ve personally had the opportunity to witness the enthusiasm and excitement for the opportunities that exist with the redevelopment of Upper Harbor Terminal. There’s never been a project quite like this in this history of Minneapolis, and there’s a lot to work through. Fortunately, there have been hundreds of community members who have had thousands of conversations and spent countless hours working to make sure that the progress at Upper Harbor Terminal carefully and thoughtfully reflects the direct input of Northside residents. We’re the ones who live here and we’re the ones who should benefit from what happens along the Mississippi River in our community. Throughout the conversation about Upper Harbor Terminal’s future, community has been centered in this process.

Upper Harbor Terminal is a unique site with the ability to be an incredible community asset. As friends of mine have said, it is way past time to have this type of major investment in North Minneapolis. This is a people-centered project that connects us with job opportunities and provides new access to the Mississippi River, with new parkland and green space. It is also creating a new community fund that will generate ongoing, sustainable funding for the Northside from events at the outdoor music venue. People have more power than they realize, and we’re using that power to make Upper Harbor Terminal a great project for North Minneapolis. Community engagement is ongoing, and I hope everyone with an interest in the Northside’s future will join in to help make the Upper Harbor Terminal project a resounding success.

James Trice
Founder/CEO, Public Policy Project
North Minneapolis at a glance

Early vote center is now open
Presidential primary voters who would like to cast their ballots early can now do so at Minneapolis’ Early Vote Center (980 E. Hennepin Ave.). It will be open until the day before voting day, Tuesday, March 3. Voting hours are 8am-4:30pm, Monday-Friday. It is closed on Presidents’ Day, Feb. 17. The center is also open the last two Saturdays before the primary. Early voting is also available at the Hennepin County Government Center downtown (300 S. Sixth St) and by mail. For more information, visit vote.minneapolismn.gov/voters/absentee.

Annual Community Connections Conference to take place Feb. 1
This year’s Community Connections Conference—a free, public event that brings together residents of Minneapolis, community groups, neighborhoods and decision-makers to connect, learn and address community issues—will take place Feb. 1 at the Minneapolis Convention Center. The conference will feature free food, performances, more than 30 breakout sessions on subjects including human trafficking prevention, neighborhoods, addiction treatment resources, rights when interacting with police, legal and accounting help, the power of story, and a Spanish-language police, legal and accounting help, the power of story, and a Spanish-language.

Topless bar on Washington closes after almost 40 years
The last bar serving adult entertainment outside of downtown—BJ’s Liquor Lounge—closed on Dec. 23. According to the City Pages, longtime owner Jerry Bjurstrom died in 2018, leaving the business to his son Brian Bjurstrom. Soon after, a city council committee voted to prohibit adult entertainment at BJ’s beginning in 2020. The city prohibited adult entertainment outside of a specific downtown area in the mid-80s. BJ’s was already operating and was exempt from the ordinance. Brian told City Pages he wasn’t interested in continuing to operate the bar without the adult entertainment.

Pillsbury United granted $250K to aid Drake fire relief
Pillsbury United Communities, a nonprofit headquartered in North Minneapolis (which also owns this newspaper), has partnered with the Minneapolis Foundation to distribute $250K in donations from the public to former Drake Hotel residents. A Christmas day fire led to the sudden displacement of more than 200 people who were living in the hotel; donations through a fund set up by the Minneapolis Foundation poured in from the public. PUC CEO Adair Mosley says the dollars will be distributed to residents, many of whom have struggled to find stable housing, in efforts to secure short and long-term housing. The organization is not taking an administrative cut. PUC’s former CEO Chanda Smith Baker is now Vice President of Community Impact at the organization, and this is not the first time PUC has partnered with the Minneapolis Foundation to respond to city emergencies. “With a history of partnering with the Foundation and supporting the city and its residents through devastating events, such as the 35W bridge collapse and the 2011 North Minneapolis tornado, PUC is a multi-service agency equipped to meet people where they are and get access to solutions needed for recovery,” said Jo-Anne Stately, director of impact strategy for economic vitality at the Minneapolis Foundation, in a press release emailed to North News on Jan. 8.

Cunningham delivers "State of the 4th" address
Ward 4 Council Member Phillipe Cunningham gave his second-annual “State of the 4th” address on Tuesday, Jan. 21 at Patrick Henry High School. For more than an hour, Cunningham walked the crowd of attendees through his Ward 4 action plan, a roadmap he says “leads us to two destinations: building community wealth and cultivating intergenerational cycles of peace and prosperity.” The plan prioritizes neighborhood safety, stable attainable housing, a strong local economy, accountability and transparency, youth opportunities, environmental justice, and building a positive community identity. Cunningham is halfway through his first four-year term in office.

Hopewell Music Cooperative raises $50K to stay open
In just six days, Hopewell Music Cooperative North was able to raise the $50K it says it needed immediately to remain operational. “Hopewell serves a critical need in our community and touches hundreds of families that otherwise wouldn’t have access to music education,” wrote donor Dan Hylton on Hopewell’s fundraising page. According to the page, Hopewell “underwent leadership change in May of 2019.” At that time, “several unsustainable and negligent management practices came to light that we’ve been working hard to rectify. With the time and resources, it took to analyze our financial history under previous leadership and to gain an accurate understanding of our finances, it was only in the last week that we truly realized the severity of our situation. We are now challenged to quickly raise $50,000, or Hopewell Music will be closed,” said the page. Support is still welcome at hopewellmusic.networkforgood.com.
Students fundraise for performance in Scotland

A performing arts group at North High hopes to bring their talents to Scotland in August to perform at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. Legacy Arts Group, led by North High dance and choreography teacher Tamiko French, must raise $150K over the next eight months to make the trip happen.

Despite the big goal and tight timeline, French says that with “hard work and dedication” she believes “we can make it.”

One of the students who hope to go on the trip is junior Moziah Thomas. “I just enjoy showing my art to the people,” he said. “When I do go to Scotland people will know what I’m capable of.”

In the months ahead, French says she’s “excited” about “digging into the development of our artists. That is where we uncover the fears and anxieties of our performers and coach them to overcome through practice. This is such a precious and delicate process. I love it because they develop a deeper commitment and excitement for the next phase of performance.”

Support the group by following them on Facebook and Instagram (@legacyartsgroup) and donating to the cause at legacyartsgroup.com. The group will also perform at the Guthrie in early April. Keep an eye out for ticket sales. By Kyla Moore Intern Reporter

“Tyler Johnson Day” declared in Minneapolis

Decorated athlete Tyler Johnson was given a day named in his honor by Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey on Jan. 4. Johnson, a Polar alum who just finished his final season as a standout wide receiver for the University of Minnesota, was joined by his family and former high school coaches as he received a framed proclamation from Frey at North High. “Every time I come over North, to the high school, it’s always love,” he told reporters at a press conference. Johnson is expected to be a first round NFL draft pick this year. By David Snoddy Jr, Howard Hadley Jr. Intern Reporters
made illegal, the effects were already in motion causing extreme harm to communities like North Minneapolis.

We Northsiders still see the long-term effects of these harmful practices in our community today. Although we cannot change the past, it is imperative for us to reflect on it to build the future that best serves the diverse needs of our community. There has been incredible work and research done around the impacts of these harmful policies and how they show up today. The website www.mappingprejudice.org which is a compilation of research and analysis data from the University of Minnesota showing the impacts of racial covenants and redlining on Minneapolis, focusing on the period of time from 1910-1940 demonstrating the intentional shift of black residents from areas of the city, making them entirely white, and the sharp increase of black residents in what is now the Northside. The website is a living resource, with hundreds of volunteers looking over historical documents to better map the impact of racial covenants and redlining on the city.

Armed with new knowledge, we can all be part of the movement to build a better tomorrow. This month, I ask that you take 30 minutes to learn more about housing inequities in Minneapolis, and specifically the impact they continue to have on predominantly black communities like ours. Share anything new you have learned—with me, your community, your family. Some places to get started are:

- www.mappingprejudice.org
- www.datasmart.ash.harvard.edu/

Happy New Year, Northside, I hope everyone is off to a great start. I'm sorry to begin by offering a bit of sad news, but Ron Edwards, longtime activist, and former president of the Urban League, passed away recently at the age of 81. I did not have the time to get to know Mr. Edwards as well as many of you, but he always offered his wisdom to me whenever we crossed paths. His contributions to the community are well-known and documented by the people who knew him best, and I am confident that he will be appropriately remembered. He will be sorely missed; my condolences to Mr. Edwards’ friends and family.

I’m still hard at work advocating for tenants and housing stability. I’m excited to let you know about a new resource that has opened up in Ward 5—the Tenant Resource Center, located on the first floor of the Twin Cities Urban League at 2100 Plymouth Ave N. The Tenant Resource Center supports Hennepin County residents who are at risk of eviction or homelessness through a collaborative partnership between community, nonprofits, government, and higher education. The goal of the center is to help people maintain stability in their housing situation and avoid the “service run around” that sometimes comes with the need to access multiple community resources to ensure stability in housing.

Resources will include:
- Eviction and homelessness prevention
- Emergency assistance
- Mediation
- Workforce
- Legal assistance

The Tenant Resource Center also hosts several events for you to learn more and get extra help, on topics like eviction expungements and security deposits. The center will be open Monday and Wednesday from 9-3 p.m. and Tuesday and Thursday from 3-7 p.m. for the months of January and February 2020. Check out www.trc2020.com or call 612-302-3180 for more information.

Lastly, as chair of the Elections Committee, I'm excited to announce that early voting is now underway in Minneapolis for the Presidential Primary! Voters in the city are among the first in the nation to cast ballots in this race, and they can do that at the Early Vote Center at 980 E. Hennepin Ave., from now through the day before the March 3 primary. Go to vote.minneapolismn.gov for more information.

Please sign up for our newsletter to get more regular updates from the Ward 5 office at minneapolismn.gov/ward5. And keep an eye out for more of these columns in North News.

Thank you, and as always, I look forward to seeing you out in the community! Call my office at 612-673-2205 or email me at ward5@minneapolismn.gov.

As always, I am honored to fight alongside you, and for you!
City 'Drive Thru' ordinance may keep W Broadway Burger King building closed

By Abdi Mohamed Staff Reporter

Sitting shuttered for months, the former Burger King at 818 W Broadway Ave in North Minneapolis will likely remain closed for the foreseeable future due to a new city ordinance prohibiting drive-through facilities. The Drive-Through Facilities Amendment was adopted by the Minneapolis City Council on Aug. 8, 2019 and following a mayoral signature, went into effect on Aug. 17. It banned new businesses from operating with a drive-through. According to the City website for the ordinance, the aim is to “achieve consistency with policies found in the Minneapolis 2040 comprehensive plan,” and to limit emissions and air pollution resulting from idling vehicles.

Some Northside business leaders say the law will have unintended consequences—particularly in situations like the one facing the W Broadway Burger King. A dormant building can negatively impact the businesses around it.

Mohamed Hus owns and operates the Chicago JJ Fish and Chicken restaurant across the street from the former Burger King. He is frustrated by the amount of activity that takes place around the building. "It impacts the whole area to be honest," Hus said. "It brings a lot of people who hang out in the back over there and nobody can see what they’re doing. It brings a lot of bad people to the area and that will run the good people out of the area."

Dave Colling, the executive director of the West Broadway Business and Area Coalition, says he has had conversations with numerous business owners and community members who are concerned with the existence of the boarded up business on Broadway. “We’ve heard from several business owners that say they’d love to see something in that space,” said Colling. “Anytime we have a business that’s shuttered like that and left empty, it really hurts other businesses around it.”

A representative from the City, Casper Hill, shared that the Minneapolis 2040 plan “underwent a great deal of public engagement prior to its final adoption, and the prohibition on new drive-through facilities was clearly spelled out in that comprehensive plan.” However, some business owners are still left questioning the purpose of the ordinance.

President of JADT Development Group Tim Baylor expressed his disagreement with the ordinance. Baylor owns the McDonald’s located on W Broadway Ave and has developed several properties on the Northside. “I do not agree with the ordinance. I have not seen any rational or decision logic to warrant such a decision,” Baylor said.

Currently operating businesses with drive-through facilities are exempt from the ban, however new properties with drive-thru’s are prohibited from being built. If a business were to remain closed for over a year, that business would no longer be able to operate with a drive-through.

Commercial land trust initiative aims to combat the threat of gentrification

By Abdi Mohamed Staff Reporter

North Minneapolis residents have felt the daunting pressure of displacement as the area has been the center of development projects in recent years. With the North Loop’s expansion and the Upper Harbor Terminal development underway, many on the Northside have grown fatigued in their efforts to stave off gentrification. They watch their homes and businesses become increasingly unaffordable through the development of their neighborhoods and are pushed out in the process. Few have been able to stop this exodus of poor and working-class people from their communities as they become too expensive to live in. Here in North Minneapolis, Domonique Jones believes she has a solution.

As the program director of the commercial land trust initiative (CLTI), Jones seeks to find models of community ownership that stem the tide of gentrification in communities like the Northside. The CLTI is a new endeavor launched by the City of Lakes Community Land Trust, an organization that specializes in affordable home ownership and now looks to enter into the commercial real estate world.

"Small business owners and entrepreneurs are a part of the fabric of our neighborhoods and communities."

Domonique Jones, CLTI

"Small business owners and entrepreneurs are a part of the fabric of our neighborhoods and communities." The mission of the CLTI is "to (re)develop and preserve long-term affordable through community driven ownership," which they do with two key approaches. One is the rental model where a business owner leases a commercial property for a subsidized amount from private funds, tax breaks, and grants. The other model is the ownership model which gives a business owner the opportunity to purchase a building but lease the land to the CLT making the purchase amount lower for the business owner and allowing CLT to preserve long term affordability.

In an event on Thursday Jan. 16, members

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New podcast explores the unsolved disappearance of three young brothers in 1951

By Abdi Mohamed Staff Reporter

In 1951, three brothers disappeared from their North Minneapolis neighborhood. 70 years later, there’s still no trace of them.
The story of the Klein brothers, Daniel (4), David (6) and Kenneth (8), haunts their remaining family members and those who have come close to the case to this day.

In Twin Cities PBS’ (TPT) debut podcast Long Lost, journalist and host Jack El-Hai takes a deep dive into the story of the brothers’ disappearance, looking back on key moments in the original investigation. The podcast comes on the heels of El-Hai’s book about the situation, The Lost Brothers. On Nov. 10, 1951 after having left their home to go to Farview park, the three Klein brothers vanished. A many-decades-long pursuit for answers ensued for their parents, Betty and Kenneth Klein, and their remaining brothers.
The podcast chronicles the early Minneapolis Police Department investigation (their case is still open) and the more recent work of Wright County Sheriff’s Deputies Jessica Miller and Lance Salls, who began reevaluating key points in the investigation that may have been overlooked.

Katie O’Rourke is a producer at TPT and served as the lead for this podcast. In their research of the case, O’Rourke says that the crew came up against several obstacles, namely time. “First and foremost, the age of the case. There are very few people that have any memory of the event,” she said.

When visiting the neighborhood where the Klein brothers were raised in North Minneapolis, O’Rourke says she met some people who were unfamiliar with the case. With the growing interest in the podcast O’Rourke hopes that a renewed interest in this case will bring new answers to the few remaining members of the Klein family.

Some of the living brothers are featured in the series include Gordon Klein, the oldest out of all the boys and Donny Klein who was born after their disappearance.

The original investigation was closed after five days after the disappearance of the boys. The department became convinced that the boys drowned in the Mississippi river as a railroad worker recovered a hat near the banks that may have belonged to one of the boys. O’Rourke believes that this was the best explanation the police could fathom at the time because nothing more sinister would be believable. “I think the obsession with the river and assuming they went in the river kind of seems like the least of all evils,” she said. “Any other option seemed too horrible in a way.”

The podcast scours through a collection of evidence and pieces together several interviews with key people involved in the case and poses questions that may shed light on what happened to the three Klein brothers that fateful day. El-Hai and the TPT producers worked to collect enough evidence as to question the official narrative taken by the original investigators assigned to the case.

When asked to comment on this story, a spokesperson for MPD stated that the case remains open with a cold case detective assigned. Due to this status, the department was unable to comment about the case.

In the meantime, O’Rourke aims to find more as the team at TPT continues to dig into the disappearance. “Who knows what will surface. We’re going to keep pushing and hope to come back with an update this year,” O’Rourke said.
State corrections commissioner visits community at Shiloh Temple

As part of a community engagement tour, Department of Corrections Commissioner Paul Schnell spoke to Northsiders about his vision for the role they play in the rehabilitation process.

By Abdi Mohamed Staff Reporter

In the time since his release from prison, Kevin Reese has been passionate about becoming a solution for his community. Undeterred by the fourteen years he spent behind bars, Reese, who now works for Voices for Racial Justice, hopes to continue engaging in Minnesota’s prison reform conversation.

Reese and other prison reform activists aim to change narratives about imprisonment and the people serving time. “I wasn’t born a criminal. I was born poor and because I was poor, I had to figure out some creative ways to eat,” Reese said. “Where I was from some of the creative ways to eat, the powers that be got to call those things crime.”

Reese shared his story at an event called Shifting the Culture Around Imprisonment held at the Shiloh Temple in North Minneapolis on Jan 9. Dozens of community members, activists and local officials came together to discuss the challenges of incarceration in the state and their possible solutions.

The event was cohosted by Peace of Hope Inc. Founder and CEO Sharon Brooks Green, a local activist and author of On the Other Side of the Wall: How to survive your loved one’s incarceration. Free now, Green’s son once served time in prison, and she hopes to address the troubles that people may face when navigating the system. “I’d like our state to put a bigger spotlight on the plight of families of the imprisoned. We bear a burden when our loved ones are incarcerated,” Green said.

Peace of Hope CEO Sharon Brooks Green, left, connects with Commissioner Paul Schnell at the end of a community conversation about prison reform. Photo by Abdi Mohamed

Reese and Green sat on a panel with Minnesota Department of Corrections Commissioner Paul Schnell and discussed ways the state could better serve inmates and those in the community who are there to pick up the pieces upon their release. New to his role, Commissioner Schnell has organized several community engagement events to understand what questions and concerns Minnesotans have with the way the DOC is run. Attendees shared concerns about the costs of goods in jail along with strict visitation rules that may revoke a loved one’s ability to visit.

The dialogue at Shiloh takes place in the midst of a national shift in conversation about prison reform. Congress and the White House have moved to pass measures that reduce the sentences for nonviolent crimes. The commissioner pointed to both fiscal and social justice agendas leading these changes. “Whatever path you take, it gets us to the fact that we can’t keep doing this anymore,” Schnell said.

Deputy Commissioner Michelle Smith was in attendance and spoke to the role that the support system in a community might play in rehabilitating an inmate outside of the prison system. This support system would come in the form of the person’s immediate family, but branch out into areas of treatment, housing and economic support. The insecurity of resources serves as a central cause for some former inmates to return to prison according to Smith. “We can some way get to a point where we can reduce the population and shift that funding to the community,” she said.

Well known for his pushes for criminal justice reform, State Representative (59B) Raymond Dehn spoke about his legislative goals. Dehn pointed to the idea that having former inmates living constructive and productive lives rather than continuously or indefinitely locking them up leads to a safer public. Dehn also identified the cost of incarceration as a possible common ground for both sides of the House and Senate to make a change around imprisonment in Minnesota. Each inmate costs the state approximately $40,000 a year according to Commissioner Schnell.

Having been granted a pardon for a burglary conviction in 1982, Dehn stressed the need of increasing the number of pardons in the state. “The number of people receiving pardons through the official process has been reduced over the past few decades. Hopefully we can change that,” he said.

Reese walked away from the event optimistic about the potential for change. He saw everyone in attendance as being accountable for their words and committed to delivering on their promises. “We didn’t leave here with anything definite. The only thing we left here tonight with was a conversation,” he said. “From this conversation, everybody will be held accountable for what their role will be to make a difference.”
Folwell neighborhood looks to own commercial space in pursuit of community control

By Abdi Mohamed Staff Reporter

Folwell residents are exploring different models of community ownership as they look to purchase a stake in a commercial space in their neighborhood. The space at 3701 Fremont Ave N has stood dormant for decades and is now the center of conversation as residents look to preserve spaces that protect their sense of community.

Originally built as a grocery store in the 1920s, this space is now the focus of business talks for Folwell residents who look to it as a location for community building and economic development.

Members of the Folwell Neighborhood Association (FNA) have been in talks about purchasing the space since last November. Although they didn’t intend to buy the space for themselves, FNA would like to find some way to hold the property in order to have it be available for the community. “FNA is not looking to own this building,” said Danielle Tietjen, communications and outreach associate at FNA. “FNA has been sitting in as a bridge builder to hold this place while the community organizes itself so a cooperative entity that may be a part of Folwell residents to own this building.”

The space is set to be purchased by Thomas Hertzog, a North Minneapolis resident and business owner. He has been in talks with members of the Folwell community to discuss ways in which he might be open to sharing ownership of the space. In a series of meetings with the board of FNA and the larger community, Hertzog expressed his desire to lease the space to black-owned businesses in order to help foster businesses on the Northside.

“When I heard the Folwell community had been interested in this building for some time, it felt like the stars aligned,” Hertzog said. Hertzog had returned to talks with FNA when initial renters dropped out. He currently has one potential renter interested.

When it comes to how the space can be used, Hertzog says he is all ears. “My neighbors and especially those who have been here a long time have the best idea of what the neighborhood needs.”

With an 1800 square feet at $1800 a month, the association would be unable to support those costs alone. In their conversations with Hertzog, the FNA has signed a letter of intent to rent the space for the next year and develop a business plan to renovate the building. In their surveying of the community, residents shared an “overwhelming” desire to see a café or some sort of food business in the space according to Tietjen. They’ve been in talks with the Northside Economic Opportunity Network to help them envision the possibilities for their space.

Hertzog and FNA differ on their approaches when it comes to how ownership of the building is structured. While Hertzog hopes to find black business owners and Northside residents to use the space, he’d like to lease it in a traditional landlord and tenant agreement. Residents of Folwell would like to go further. FNA has advocated that their organization work to lease the building and accruing credit for a future buyout. Hertzog and FNA are currently in discussion to find an agreement that would suit both their goals for the space.

Mysnikol Miller serves as the project manager at FNA and has been involved in the key talks with Hertzog and the board over this space. “They feel isolated cause there’s not much in Folwell,” Miller said of community members invested in the commercial space. Miller says ownership would give residents a sense of belonging to their community. “It’s important that we have that sense of ownership of the spaces that we’re in because it creates a different relationship with the geographical space when we feel like it belongs to us.”

FNA board member Pierre “Unspeakable” Jenkins shared his thoughts on why ownership was a key factor to moving forward with the property. “Ownership promotes a sense of lineage and promotes a sense of direction,” Jenkins said. “It provides an opportunity and a space to inspire creativity and inspire more ownership, especially when you have people in a space that look like you.”

FNA would continue to operate out of Folwell Park but would help maintain the space for community use. They aim to raise $10K at their “Leap of Faith” fundraiser on Feb. 29 to secure the building for the next year. The FNA is continuing their conversations with Hertzog while researching community ownership and coop models in existence around the Twin Cities that they might be able to emulate for the space. In the meantime, FNA will continue to speak with their residents about their desires for the space and build bridges with community members to make those aspirations happen.

Learn more at folwell.org/3701-fremont.
Learn more about the current phase of the project and opportunities to give your feedback.

upperharbormpls.com
“I hope you got wool socks for Christmas,” Mick Kukielka tells them as the boys and girls waddle outside to the rink for Wednesday night practice in January.

It is an idyllic scene celebrated by the “State of Hockey,” played out on frozen lakes and outdoor park rinks from Thief River Falls to Winona to the Northside. Hockey is hardwired into Minnesota’s DNA.

Every town has its fabled figures and some of North Minneapolis’ most important ones are the people who have been working for the last 35 years to keep youth hockey alive.

These are coaches who teach kids to skate, drivers who pick up kids, a dad who sharpens skates, and people who donate equipment. It also includes two men, one a physician the other a pastor, who rounded up a small group of kids in 1985 to enroll them in hockey.
STARTING FROM SCRATCH

Chris Williams and Dale Hulme attended the same church and were taking skating lessons together when, one day, Williams asked Hulme, “What’s going on? Where did all the hockey go?”

Williams had grown up on the rink at Harrison Park, a rare figure skater who also played hockey. When he returned from medical school, the rinks for the most part were empty. Hulme, an Iowa native, was Minneapolis Public Schools teacher who had just become a Lutheran pastor. At seminary, Hulme created his own curriculum to work with youth. He and his wife, Sue Quist, founded a youth ministry called New Directions, designed to help children in North Minneapolis “overcome obstacles to their development presented by the inner city environment.”

These were programs to get kids doing outdoor activities like camping and skiing. Williams asked Hulme if New Directions could add hockey to its mission.

“I had never seen any hockey teams in the parks,” said Hulme, the pastor at St. Olaf Lutheran Church. “There was a program in St. Paul for inner-city hockey, but nothing was being done here. Hockey was near the end of the line and North Minneapolis seemed to lack a hockey culture.”

Hulme says there were a swirl of obstacles to hockey thriving on the Northside.

North High School had already dropped varsity hockey; its last season was in 1979. North students could play for Henry – which had a storied program that included several college stars, an Olympic silver medalist and one who ascended to the NHL – folded its program in 1998 as the city high schools consolidated players into two teams of East and West. Minneapolis now has one team with kids from the city’s seven public high schools.

The game was increasingly moving to indoor rinks and getting more and more expensive. North Minneapolis has a disproportionate amount of poverty and more kids were turning to less expensive sports.

Hockey is also a very white sport with few players of color. The lack of representation, along with stories of racial harassment suffered by the few who moved up the ranks, were unappealing to black kids, Hulme said.

“Some of the kids who get to the higher levels are often the only black player on the team and have to put up with harassment,” Williams said. “I played through that. I wasn’t going to let it stop me, but a lot of kids aren’t going to have that confidence.”

Williams helps coach the North Commons seven, eight and nine-year olds, which includes his son, Marko. He had also coached Hulme’s kids when they were in the program.

Hulme doesn’t get much time to appreciate the fruits of his labor by being the administrator of the North Commons’ program.

He is busy securing funds from state and local sponsors that greatly reduce the cost barriers of hockey. Families with kids who qualify for free lunch pay $25 for the season. They get skates, a stick, padding and a uniform. Funds from sponsors also help pay for ice time at indoor arenas and cover transportation costs to pick up kids for games and practices.

When Hulme is not recruiting kids, he is in a room at the North Commons park building called “the cage.” New players visit the cage to get outfitted with all the equipment they will need. If a stick is too long for a kid, Hulme pulls a saw out of his briefcase and cuts it down on the spot.

“He is a great sower of seeds and North Minneapolis is his garden.”

Booker Hodges

FROM A SEED, A SPROUT AND A BLOOM

Devin Lay is big, quick and wears the game face of a fierce lion. He plays on the North Commons 15-under team,
where he splits time as a goalie and hard-driving forward.

He was at Jenny Lind Elementary School when the Herb Brooks Foundation, named for the St. Paul native who led the 1980 U.S. Olympic hockey team to a gold medal, were offering free skating lessons.

Devin was among the kids to go and soon after, he approached his mother, Corrine Martin, with a brochure for the New Directions program at North Commons.

“He wanted to play right away,” Martin said. “I told him if he can find a team where we don’t have to buy anything, he could play. I’m a single parent. Hockey sticks cost $300.”

Devin is in his third year of hockey and loves it. He is well-aware of the lack of black players in the NHL and this gives him some pause about continuing to play. He can only think of three and proudly names the one black goaltender, the Vegas Golden Knights’ Malcolm Subban.

Next school year, he will be a freshman at North High School and when asked whether he plans to play for the consolidated Minneapolis high school team, Devin doesn’t say no, but he says he is a football player.

“Football is his passion,” his mother says. “We’ve talked to the football coach and he encourages the kids to play other sports. Devin is playing basketball this winter, too. He has a choice to make what sport he wants to play in the winter.

“We let him try everything and then let him choose. My brother and I would like to see him stick with hockey. There aren’t a lot of African-American kids and maybe he could be an example and get other kids involved.”

Continued on Page 14

"I told him if he can find a team where we don't have to buy anything, he could play. I'm a single parent. Hockey sticks cost $300." Corrine Martin
PIONEERING PLAYER, AND A NEW GENERATION

Lacing up the skates and gliding across the rink at Farview Park was all Betsy Freelove wanted to do with her winters as a kid. When Hulme was looking for kids for his fledgling program in 1985, he signed up a group of Farview hockey players, all ages 11 or 12. “She was the best one,” Hulme said.

Freelove developed her skills in the New Directions program at a time organized girls youth hockey was in its infancy in Minnesota. She remembers she and her teammates played with mismatched gloves and broken sticks, skating in whatever gear Hulme and Williams could find.

It didn’t matter. She loved hockey and got to hone her skills in real games.

She wanted to play in high school, but there were only boys teams at the time and the coach at Edison High School would not let her try out.

She transferred to North High School, which had dropped hockey but was trying to revive its program in the late 1980s with a team that played a junior varsity schedule. They needed players and the coach welcomed Freelove.

Hulme says a girl on a boys high team was unheard of and once again, he says, she was the best player on this team. Freelove, who is now Besty Stock, says, “Dale would say that…I held my own.”

Betsy still lives in North Minneapolis with her husband, Kevin, who sharpens the many dozens of hockey skates for the North Commons hockey program.

They have two children playing. Lizzie plays on the 15-under team for North Commons.

Their son, Jack, plays for the Minneapolis high school varsity team. He is the only player on the roster from the Northside.

Betsy Stock (far left and above) played on the boys junior varsity team at North High in the late 1980s. Her daughter, Lizzie, plays for the 15-under team at North Commons. Her son, Jack, is the only Northsider on the Minneapolis high school hockey team.

Have you heard about the 48.8-acre development on the Mississippi River that is up for redevelopment?

Learn more at an upcoming Learning Table, which offers the “learning water”; a place to ask critical questions and develop the “learning glue”; a place to develop relationships, create partnerships, and make commitments to explore ideas for incorporation in the UHT development. Each Learning Table theme is directly related to development topics.

- Learn together
- Create shared approach
- Coordinate efforts

Sponsored by:

McKNIGHT FOUNDATION

February 19, 2020
4pm-8pm
"Community Benefits"
Glover Sudduth Center
2100 Plymouth Ave. N

Contact: Devonn@pillsburyunited.org or 612.377.7000
For more information or to RSVP:
- Find us on Facebook at PPPJECC
- On Eventbrite: Upper Harbor Terminal - Community Engagement Learning Table

West Broadway Planning, Zoning and Development Meeting

WBC is inviting Northside Business Owners, Organizations and Community to our upcoming Planning, Zoning & Development Meeting.

Learn about the upcoming North Commons Sports Facility and Queen Ave Bike Project.
Ask questions and offer feedback.

Light Refreshments Provided

Date:
Wednesday, February 26th, 2020
5:30pm- 7:00pm

Location:
ECMN Gathering Space
1101 West Broadway Ave N

WBC | West Broadway Business and Area Coalition
of the Northside community gathered at the Urban Research Outreach-Engagement Center (URO) on Plymouth Ave. N to learn more about the CLTI and hear from its director and board members. Mayor Jacob Frey attended the event and shared remarks in support of the initiative. “When you have ownership it’s not just important that you got it over your home where you live. It’s also important that you own the business that will generate those assets in perpetuity,” Frey said. Without ownership the Mayor continued, business owners would be “subject to the whim of the market” and could be negatively impacted and eventually displaced by rising rent, values and issues with their landlords.

One person familiar with the volatile experiences of being a business owner in a rented space is Jones herself. Jones grew up across the street from the Estes funeral home in North Minneapolis. Her first job was as a peer educator at the Urban League. Eventually she found her way to owning her own business inside the Mall of America.

Due to high rental feels and a lease agreement that was terminated by the landlord she was booted out of her store. Jones shared her personal experience with the events attendees as to demonstrate some of the issues business owners face when they don’t own their properties. “Small business owners and entrepreneurs are a part of the fabric of our neighborhoods and communities. They contribute to the social, cultural and economic vibrancy of our city and deserve to thrive in the place we call home,” Jones said.

In her presentation Jones referenced the current statistics on business ownership for minorities. According to the City of Minneapolis, 22% of businesses are owned by people of color. Jones also labeled gentrification as a threat to future business owners of color but pointed to commercial land trusts as one solution to keep these businesses in their communities.

The theme that continued through the event was partnerships. Jones pointed to her board members who are made up of ten individuals whose professional experiences range from academia, to government, to entrepreneurship. She believes the mix will allow the CLTI to achieve its full potential. “I would love to see the Northside be 51% community controlled,” said Danielle Mkali, the director of community wealth building at Nexus community partners. Mkali serves as an advisor for the CLTI. Mkali says although this might be idealistic, the community has suffered from too many predatory developers who have gained control of these resources.

Jones highlighted the work the CLTI was doing with the City of Minneapolis through the Community Planning and Economic Development (CPED) office in helping secure locations for this initiative. Jones and her team will work with CPED to purchase a tax forfeited commercial building that they’ve located in South Minneapolis. North Minneapolis continues to be their primary focus for this initiative and they are currently searching for available real estate in the area. The aim for CLTI is to purchase two properties by the end of the year.

Though Jones and her team on the CLTI are open minded as to the different models they can take to preserve business ownership for marginalized communities, they are clear that there are certain types of businesses—like liquor stores and check cashing places—that they will not support. “We want to bring wealth in the community we don’t want predatory business owners that come and try to take the wealth out and at the same time destroy the health of our community members,” Jones said.
Spoken by students

Our North High students finished their first semester journalism class on Jan. 16. These are their final stories.

Fighting shouldn't be a solution

By Ary Taylor North High

Drama that turns into physical fighting is frequent at North High and in the larger community.

"It actually starts from the streets and goes to the school or it can start in the school and go to the street," said Freshawn Collins, a North High senior.

It comes from arguments, misunderstandings, and disagreements. Sometimes it can start from social media. Sometimes it starts from school. Sometimes drama is brought from other schools. Fighting can play out anywhere: the halls, the lunch room, or after school—everywhere from people’s houses to in the streets.

"I think people fight with a lot of anger; it comes with revenge and violence. It comes with bullying and it also comes with a lot of attention," said Collins.

Sometimes fighting gets more violent than it needs to be. Sometimes it can start off as a fight and end in gun violence. One simple fight can all be taken the wrong way and result in something that it didn't need to happen, like a death, severe injuries, jail, and getting kicked out of school.

"Back then everybody just used their hands. It was just about fighting. But now it's all about guns. It’s all about people shooting. They don't know how to fight no more. So they just pick up a gun quickly," said Collins.

Homicides hurt more than those who die

By Laquita Jamison Travis North High

Since Nathan Hampton was shot and killed during a kickball game at North Commons in 2018, Beulah Verdell, who was very close to him, says she has suffered.

"In a lot of ways my heart is stopped," she said. "He had so much on this Earth he was looking forward to."

Verdell is not the only one struggling to live after the death of a loved one. There are a lot of homicides in the community. This year alone, Monique Baugh, 28, was kidnapped and killed on New Year's Eve. Jabir Ahmed Ali was found stabbed to death on Broadway and Fremont on New Years Day.

Many people, like Verdell, don’t get justice when their loved ones are killed. No one has been arrested or charged with Hampton’s murder. It keeps their loved ones stuck. It affects their moving on. Sometimes the loved ones of the dead fall apart.

Hampton was my brother. We want justice but nobody will speak up. I never thought of losing my brother while he was young. He wasn’t supposed to leave that soon. He was my leader. He wanted to do what was right, and I looked up to him.

All these homicides make the Northside look bad. A lot of the violence is gang related, and it’s causing more homicides and violence. If you search North Minneapolis online, crime stories appear. Then people don’t want to move here or come down here.

Some people are not the same after they lose some of their loved ones. Some people have watched homicides and are traumatized and it has affected them and still is. It’s hard for people to heal from homicides.

"I just keep praying. One day I just have this dream that I’m going to fall out on the floor and faint because all the sudden there [Hampton] is. I’ll be able to tell him, ‘I knew it wasn’t you,’” said Verdell.
Students who work learn to manage their time

By Taiyana Richmond  North High

Many teenagers are not only students or athletes—they are also employees. Students at North High are working part-time jobs late into the night and on weekends. They are also managing school and sometimes sports along with other hobbies.

Lots of students work either because they need to, have to, or because they enjoy making their own money and having their own income. A downfall of working while also being a student according to researcher and professor Caitrin Blake is “students who work more than 15 to 20 hours a week see a decrease in academic performance.”

North High junior Frank Blount works 18 hours a week at North Commons and is on the A honor roll in school. He regularly stays after school and studies, and sometimes he can do his school work at his work. He says his older brother taught him how to balance his time and that working and going to school at the same time are setting him up well for his future. “It prepares me for college so I can know how to manage my time,” he said.

Despite his hard work, he says he was failing a class during first quarter of this year; by the end he passed with a B. “I really stayed after school and made sure I had everything,” he said.

“You got to fail to succeed. You got to learn how to fail in the class to learn how to succeed in the class,” he said.

North High sophomore Andrianna Bynum says that working and playing basketball is helping her learn how to manage her time. When her basketball season started, she had to change her work schedule at Old Navy. Now she just works the weekends. “It’s hard to manage my time,” she said.

Students who work have to get their school work done before they leave school. Everyone has different strategies but its all about balance. Having your own money can be helpful and convenient. Some are taking a load off their parents.

US causes drama with Iran

By RayRay Melton  North High

Right now there is tension between Iran and the United State because President Donald Trump directed the bombing (and killing) of one of Iran’s top generals Qasem Soleimani. Bounties have been put on Trump’s head by Iranians, and they bombed US bases in Iraq. Iran is also trying to sue the president for the killing.

Tension has since died down, and Iran said that they aren’t going to harm any US citizens, but some people are worried that we might enter another world war. Many don’t believe Trump is capable of handling this situation.

Students at North high are worried about that. Sophomore Martez Johnson is most worried about China helping out Iran and them stopping to make clothes and electronics for us. He is also worried about his safety, and Iran dropping bombs on us like we did to them. “If I was in charge of the U.S. I would send Iran some money so we could clear up the drama,” said Johnson.

Kenneth Chatman-Pratt most worried about going to a nuclear war. He believes that would be the end of us. Kenneth said “If I was in charge of the US, I would make a peace treaty with Iran.”

Soccer returns to North High

By David Snoddy Jr.  Intern Reporter

A boys soccer team is being created at North High School to recruit more students to the school by offering a new sport many are interested in playing. The school hasn’t had a soccer team in over a decade.

Right now, some students—particularly Hispanic and Somali students—don’t come to North because there isn’t a soccer team here.

“We want to get more students involved in after school activities and give people the opportunity to...play sports they love,” said Peter Branstad, who teaches senior economics and government at the high school and will be one of the team’s coaches. Right now, Branstad coaches baseball and football at North High.

He plans to start the new soccer program for boys in Fall 2020. There are no plans for a girls team at this time.

“We’re going to play on that brand new nice North field that we got,” he said, referring to the new turf football field off W Broadway Ave. near the school. Minneapolis Public Schools finished renovating it in 2019.

“We’re going to be rocking these new nice jerseys,” said Branstad.

Junior JT Sampson plans to play on the new team. He’s also the kicker for the football team and plans to do both this fall. “I been playing soccer since third grade and middle school until now actually. I like to run and get up and down the field you know and getting together with my teammates and having fun,” said Sampson.

In order to be successful, Branstad says he needs at least 15 players for a roster. “…We are hoping [for] more of like twenty or thirty to get us a chance to get more people involved,” he said.

“We don’t have a lot of players right now, so we need players in order to play,” said Sampson.

If you are interested in playing or learning more, Mr. Branstad or Mr. Groettum can be found in the first classrooms in the English and Social Studies wings at North High School.
Everyone is watching "You"

By Destiny Hooks  North High

People spend an average of five hours watching TV every day, according to The New York Times in 2016. Some popular shows that people like to watch today are Euphoria, When They See Us, You, and 13 Reasons Why. People are watching these shows on streaming sites like Netflix or on cable TV. A lot of people usually find out about these shows on social media or hear people talking about them or maybe just even reading the description of the show or movie online.

Senior Toyana Anderson likes to watch You and Rick and Morty right now. “I be chilling on the couch with my snacks watching it on Netflix,” she said.

Senior Jermaine Harden is busy with sports but still finds time to watch the TV he loves. “A show that I’m watching right now, but it’s a movie though, but it’s called Money Heist,” he said.

It seems like everybody is watching You right now. You is a TV show on Netflix about this bookstore manager named Joe who meets an aspiring writer. Then, his behavior starts to become more obsessive.

“People watch it for the excitement...it’s really suspenseful,” said senior Nicole Johnson.

Senior Jasiona White recently binged watched You. “It’s so long though it’s like 50 minutes and it’s like 11 episodes,” she said. White says she also likes to watch shows or movies with black lead actors.

North High seniors find something to watch on Netflix in their free time. Some of their favorite movies and shows are on the platform. Photo by Destiny Hooks

New year, new goals

By Nicole Brown  North High

2019 has ended and we are stepping into a fresh new year and decade. For some of us it’s a new start for new beginnings. We have a lot of different types of people every new year like new year new me, new year same me, or a person who thinks of it has another day. Who are you?

I interviewed several students and teachers and they all had a lot to say about the year such as their new year resolutions. The most common one seems to be improving oneself and being happy. The next common one was working out or being healthy.

“I’m going to try to get to the gym six to seven times a week because it’s really important for me to stay in shape for school and firefighting” said Mr. Skoglund, tenth grade social studies teacher and track coach at North High.

“I’m going to try and eat healthy” said Lamar, the head dean at North High.

As 2019 ends and we say hello to 2020, we will all be working on something to improve ourselves, whether that’s in school or related to our personal happiness. May we leave the negativity and toxicity in 2019 and say hello to happiness and positivity. Your resolution may not be succeeded this month next month or even this year but making yourself better than yesterday is the best you can do.

North High Polar power players

Intem reporters Howard Hadley Jr. and David Snoddy Jr. have spent all season following the Polar boy’s basketball team. Hadley has the inside scoop on how some of the top players function on the court.

Willie Wilson #24, Shooting Guard

Wilson’s season has been on and off, from high point games to getting ejected for hanging onto the rim for a second too long. Wilson is good scorer from anywhere which leads to being fouled a lot, but free throws come with fouls, so either way he gets his bucket. Wilson has great court IQ and is the heart of the team. When his teammates are down, he brings them up with his high level of encouragement. When they slow down he can pick it up.

Clifford Brown Jr. #13, Shooting Guard

Brown is a go getter on the court. He is easily fired up and is ready to score at all times. Brown keeps the team upbeat before and after games with dance circles and jokes. Even with all of the joking around, he can also bring the team to a serious point, so they can come out with that fire to win.

Davon Townley Jr. #35, Center

Townley is a great team player and is a star on the court. He can be the star of attention with all the publicity at times but doesn’t let the fame get to his head. Townley is a big guy, so the majority of teams don’t like going in the paint with him. He is one of the more dominant high school players and only get better with time.

Quientrail Jamison-Travis #50, Power Forward

This is Jamison-Travis’ first season playing for the Polars. He is a football player who walked onto the team this year, but by his performance on the court you would think he was a natural born hooper. He is a power forward on the team for obvious reasons. With him being one of the strongest in class he can be very dominant against every team.

Mario Sanders #1, Point Guard

Sanders is the point guard that likes to attack the basket. Sanders knows his way around the floor and can score on pretty much anybody. He is great at being able to just score whenever. Good or bad Sanders will find his way to that basket.

Meiko Anderson #2, Point Guard

Anderson is a key shot hitter on the team. He is a good scorer from everywhere. So it is entertaining to see him get in. He fits well with the team one upon many reasons is the chemistry they have. Anderson is already hard enough to guard but when they start passing and scoring he becomes a show stopper.
NOTICES

DEAN’S LIST
Bob Jones University
Michael Martinson
Gustavus Adolphus College
Olivia Kunshier
Ellsworth Community College
Adrien Clark
North Dakota State University
Haytham Aziz
Maxwell Baker
Camille Becker
Maxwell Borman
Dylan Burns
Emma DuPont
Emma Fagerlee
Alison Fleming
Kristie Garcia
Luke Gerdes
Jack Harich
Sawyer Heller
Miguel Jara Llapa
Rozlynn Lund
Ethan Norris-Weber
Rebecca Skow
Grace Thill
Amelia Walker
Hamline University
Angelina Yang
Daveed Her
Hamilton College
Lucy Kiernat
The College of Scholastica
Danielle Schmidt
University of San Francisco
Ajaize Davis
University of Minnesota Duluth
Cheng Lee
David Mendoza-Cruz
Ebelin Morales
University of Wisconsin Eau Claire
Christopher Ehler
University of Wisconsin La Crosse
La Taya Taylor
University of Wisconsin Madison
Hannah Callahan
Mira Grinsfelder
Alexander Johnson-Fry
Josie Madden
University of Wisconsin River Falls
Lauren DeRosier
University of Wisconsin Stout
Megan Conover
Yue Yang

GRADUATION
Saint Mary’s University of Minnesota
Cameron Taylor

RESOURCES
Share your priorities before the 2020 legislative session. Constituents of Rep. Fue Lee (59A) can share their thoughts ahead of the legislative session beginning on Feb 11 by filling out a form on surveymonkey.com/2020mn59a. Any questions for Rep. Lee can be sent to him at rep.fue.lee@house.mn or 651-296-4262.

AARP Foundation Tax-Aide offers free tax preparation to anyone of any age at Pillsbury United Communities Oak Park Community Center, 1701 Oak Park Ave, beginning on 2/3 and continues on Mondays and Tuesday through 4/14, 10am-1pm. Call 612-377-7000 for an appointment. Walk ins are accepted if counselors are available. Oak Park Center is closed 2/17 for Presidents day. Due to the temporary closing of North Hennepin County Library, tax preparation is available at these new locations: Fellowship Missionary Baptist Church, 3355 N 4th Street, Wednesday from 9am-1pm beginning 2/5 and continuing through 4/15. Sumner Library, 611 Van White Blvd, Saturdays from 9am -1pm beginning 2/1 and continues through 4/11. First come, first served.

The City of Minneapolis is giving away 200 radon test kits starting now to increase awareness of the cancer risks of radon and to encourage people to test their homes. Radon is an odorless, colorless, tasteless gas that occurs naturally in Minnesota soil and can enter homes primarily through cracks and openings in basement or foundation floors and walls. For more information on radon testing and mitigation visit health.state.mn.us/radon or call the Minnesota Department of Health Indoor Air Unit at 651-201-4601 or 1-800-798-9050.

WSB Engineering is looking to hire women and people of color. The firm has created a program called Opportunity+ which will run January through April. Training will occur at the CareerForce office in North Minneapolis from 5:30-8:30pm on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursday evenings. WSB is committed to hiring four participants that complete the program and plans to partner with other organizations to find positions for the other participants. Learn more at wsbeng.com/opportunity.

The City of Minneapolis is soliciting pre-applications for the 2019 Metropolitan Council Livable Communities Demonstration Account (LCDA) Development and Livable Communities Demonstration Account TOD (LCDA-TOD) Development. The initiative aims to efficiently link housing, jobs, services and transit in an effort to create inspiring and lasting livable communities. All pre-applications must be submitted using the online pre-application no later than 4pm on Thursday March 12 and the application’s fee must be received by the application deadline.

EVENTS & ENTERTAINMENT
2/3 – Two Bettrys Green Cleaning Service is hosting a career fair from 10am-2pm at 800 W Broadway Ave. The positions are part-time with flexible weekday hours, no nights or weekends unless requested. Those interested must have their own vehicle, proof of insurance and a valid driver’s license.

2/4 – KMOJ and Twin Cities PBS are leading a housing forum at the Cora McConvey Health and Wellness Center. The event will be attended by MPHA executive director Tracey Scott, Council member Jeremiah Ellison and hosted by KMOJ’s Freddie Bell. The event will go on through the evening from 5:30-8pm with dinner served at 5:30pm and the panel starting at 6:30pm. 1015 N 4th Ave in Minneapolis.

2/6 – First Thursday Films at North Community High will be showcasing the film “Harriet” as part of their Black Cinema: Under the Skin program. North High will host First Thursdays in 2019-2020 while the Capri theater is closed for expansion and renovation. The screening begins at 7pm and costs $5 at the door. Enter door 18. North High is located at 1500 James Ave N in Minneapolis. After the showcase, there will be a conversation with John Wright, a professor of African American and African Studies and English at the University of Minnesota.

2/7 – NorthPoint Health and Wellness Center is hosting “Give Kids a Smile” a free dental care event that provides dental care for children ages 3 to 17. The event will be held on Friday Feb 7 from 8am-3:30pm and Saturday Feb 8 from 8am-12pm. Children participating must be accompanied by a parent. Call 612-543-2500 to make an appointment ahead of the event. NorthPoint is located on 1313 Penn Ave. N in Minneapolis.

2/13 – Black History Event at Webber Library. African American engineer and inventor Clarence L. Elder will be celebrated by the Teen Tech squad at Webber Library as they celebrate his accomplishments in the tech based world. In 1976 Elder received a patent for one of the first smart room technologies ever. Teen Tech squad will be facilitating a workshop for participants. 5-6:30pm.

2/16 – St. Olaf Lutheran Church will be hosting a food waste event beginning at noon. Learn about food waste’s contribution to global warming, how to recycle organs and listen to music during a recycling presentation by Audua Pugh of offthebluecouch.org. 2900 Emerson Ave. N in Minneapolis.

2/22 – The North Community YMCA will be hosting a children’s business fair on Saturday Feb. 22 between 1-4pm. The event is listed to contain a bounce house, face painting, a live DJ, and a cash prize. Vendors will be present as well as refreshments. 1711 W Broadway Ave.

1/30-3/7 – Juxtaposition Arts is excited to host Houston-based Photographer Jamie Robertson’s first solo exhibit in Minneapolis. Making Reference and Forms is a part of a new body of work by the artist that explores the history of colonial photography in the Americas. The gallery is open Monday through Thursday 10am-4pm and is located on 2007 Emerson Ave N in Minneapolis. Guests should RSVP on Facebook through bit.ly3anxgj.

2/15-2/28 – The Black History Month Emporium is an old school presentation which
features art, books and films exhibited as a gallery. On 2400 Plymouth Ave N in North Minneapolis. The open house for the studio is on Saturday Feb 15 from 1-4pm followed by a Family Art Studio day on Feb 22 from 1-4pm. Hours will be Tuesdays and Thursdays from 5-9pm and Wednesdays and Fridays from 1-6pm. Visit homewoodstudios.com for more information.

Tuesdays – Webber Park Library will be providing free homework help for students between 4:30-7:30pm.

Wednesdays – Kid’s Bookclub, 2:30-4pm. Webber Park Library. No pre-reading required. A book will be shared with a discussion and activity to follow. Sponsored by Friends of the Webber Park Library. No registration required. Designed for youth in grades 1-6.

Thursdays – After School Kids Jam, 4:45-5:15pm. John Coach Chaz Sandifer and other kids/teens to do dance aerobics, cardio kickboxing and fun movement games. This program is sponsored by the North Market Grocery Store.

Fridays – Family Storytime, 10-10:30am. Webber Park Library. 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.

Saturdays – Explore Nature! 10:30am-12:30pm. Webber Park Library. Enjoy nature themed activities, meet a live critter and learn about the Mississippi watershed and our regional ecosystem. This program is collaborated with the North Mississippi River Regional Park and the Mississippi Watershed Management Organization.

Saturdays – Youth Yoga. Webber Park Library will be providing youth yoga classes on Saturdays between 12-12:45pm. Join certified yoga instructor Robeka Ndosi for a series of classes designed to promote healing, calming and self regulation for youth. Materials provided.

Saturdays – The Minnesota African American Heritage Museum and Gallery at 1256 Penn Ave North, 4th Floor, has a free Children’s Reading Circle from 10-11:30am every Saturday morning. Children can earn a free book. Storytellers weave and read books to all children that come. Volunteer storytellers are welcome. Contact them to volunteer at info@maahmg.org.

The Capri Theater is temporarily closed for a major expansion. The old theater seats are being removed, and every nook and cranny of the building is being emptied in anticipation of a June construction start on the theater’s renovation and expansion. While the theater is closed, Capri programming will continue at alternate Northside locations. See website for details.

HOUSING

The Minneapolis City Council has approved an ordinance strengthening protections for renters in Minneapolis. The ordinance will cap security deposits at a maximum of one month’s rent and gives property owners two options for screening potential renters: use inclusive screening criteria outlined in the ordinance or conduct an individualized assessment. The inclusive screening criteria will limit consideration of criminal background and rental history, including eviction history; and will prohibit the use of a credit score. The ordinance goes into effect on 6/1/2020 but property owners with 15 dwelling units or fewer have an effective date of 12/1/2020.

On 12/3 the Economic Development and Regulatory Services Committee of the Minneapolis City Council approved the Tenant Relocation Fees Ordinance. Ordinance author Council Member Phillippe Cunningham began work on this ordinance a year ago, with the mission to address the gap in a safety net for renters whose landlords are held accountable for negligent and harmful practices and have their rental licenses revoked, denied, or canceled. This work is part of several actions the Minneapolis City Council has begun taking to address the unique needs of the City’s growing population of renters.

Minneapolis homes for sale will now get an efficiency score as part of Truth in sale of Housing initiative. Prospective homebuyers will now be made more aware of the home’s energy score and disclosed in an energy disclosure report. The City of Minneapolis passed this requirement as part of the City’s Climate Action Plan. Homeowners and real estate agents can contact an energy advisor for free at 651-328-6225 or email at energyadvisor@mncee.org.

Minnesota Attorney General, Keith Ellison filed a suit against North Minneapolis Landlord, Steve Meldahl after he kept security deposits from tenants and retaliated against them for seeking health and safety inspections. Meldahl was the landlord of 25 properties in North Minneapolis where he sometimes required security deposits as high a $2,000 or more. Those who may have been victimized by Meldahl or his company S.J.M. Properties Inc. are encouraged to come forward and to file complaints with the Minnesota AG’s office by calling 651-296-3353 or emailing attorney.general@ag.state.mn.us.

Hennepin County funding assistance for lead paint: homeowners and landlords may be eligible for a free home test and as much as $8,000 in lead reduction costs, such as new windows. Contact: healthyhomes@hennepin.us or 612-543-4182.

The City of Minneapolis offers free energy efficiency home visits and 0% financing on recommended energy-saving upgrades while funding lasts to qualified households with a family income less than $94,300. Homeowners and renters can call 651-328-6220 or visit mncee.org/hes-mpls to schedule a visit.

A new rule has passed that allows the City to charge property owners for cleaning, repairing or replacing City pipes clogged with grease. The grease rule sets up a framework to mitigate risks and decrease the costs to rate payers. Problem spots in one-tenth of the sewer system have cost the City close to $1 million since 2012 to keep pipes flowing. The clogs divert money and time from other critical sewer system needs as crews are inspecting pipes and cleaning out grease every two weeks. The costs of these services in a small number of locations are borne by sanitary sewer rate payers across Minneapolis. Learn more at: www.minneapolismn.gov/publicworks/sewers/fats-oils-grease.

The City Council approved a Renter-First Housing Policy, a framework that affirms the City’s commitment to advancing renter protections and developing new tools to support affordability and stability in rental housing. The implementation of the Renter-First Housing Policy will include both early intervention and safety-net strategies. Highlights include strengthening enforcement measures to ensure repair issues are addressed quickly while minimizing negative impacts on the renter; targeting inspections efforts toward properties in disrepair or with a high volume of renter complaints; and creating financial opportunities for property owners to maintain housing conditions and affordable housing without increasing rents. Learn more at: lims.mpls.gov/download/file/2132/Renter%20First%20Policy%2003.01.19.pdf

Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity has developed a new program to help first-time homebuyers who have faced barriers to buying a home through traditional mortgage lenders. Under the program, homebuyers can buy on the open market using Habitat’s affordable, fixed-rate mortgage. They can work with the realtor of their choice, complete Habitat’s homeownership education and buy a home in their preferred neighborhood or city. The new program reaches a broader income range, including those who may think their income is too high to qualify. Households earning $40,000-$80,000 have successfully bought a home in Habitat’s redesigned homeownership program. The program revolves around an “unbeatable mortgage,” a 30-year fixed-rate with monthly payments set to no more than 30% of income. Down payment assistance may be available. Interested residents can find more information on the mortgage program at BuyWithHabitat.org or by calling 612-540-5660.

The City of Minneapolis can help renters who want smoke-free housing, and it can help property owners make their buildings smoke-free. For smoke-free rental housing help, renters and property owners and managers can call 311 or visit www.minneapolismn.gov/smoke-free.

BE AWARE

Early Vote Center is now open for presidential primary. Minneapolis voters are among the first in the nation to cast their ballots in the 2020 presidential race. The Early Vote Center is located on 980 E. Hennepin Ave in Minneapolis. Voters can now cast their ballots before the March 3 primary. The Early Voter Center hours are 8am-4:30pm Monday through Friday but closed on Presidents Day on Feb 17. The center is open the last two Saturdays before the primary. Voters can also cast an early vote at the Hennepin County Government Center on 300 S. Sixth St. For more information on early voting options visit vote.minneapolismn.gov/voters/absentee.

The City Council has approved an ordinance that prohibits “conversion therapy” in Minneapolis. The practice of conversion therapy refers to the treatment of LGBTQ individuals as having a mental disorder that can be cured or corrected. Medical, mental health and child welfare experts have denounced the practice as ineffective, unreliable and unsafe. The City will enforce the ban through potential administrative citations and civil fines. Bans on conversion therapy exist in 18 states and about 53 cities.

Closed captions now available for City of Minneapolis TV broadcasts. The automated captioning system from Link Electronics is a closed caption system from the City. The service
The ordinance takes responsibilities under the City's wage theft and employees about their rights and on frequently asked questions (FAQs) and City of Minneapolis has drafted documents File/2018-00134.

The constructed is slated for 2020 addition to the visitor center and re-envisioning family-friendly, accessible bathroom, building an recreational fire, call 311 or email Minneapolis fires or to register a complaint about a recreational fire outside 311 hours, call 911. The Fire and Police departments are authorized to extinguish a fire immediately if it is hazardous.

Minneapolis Solid Waste and Recycling is changing how it collects batteries from homes. No batteries may go with recycling. Alkaline batteries such as AA or AAA may be disposed of in Solid Waste and Recycling black garbage bags. Rechargeable batteries, lithium batteries and items containing batteries such as cell phones and electronic cigarettes are prohibited from all City of Minneapolis garbage and recycling carts. Hennepin County will accept batteries at its permanent drop off locations in 1400 W 96th Street Bloomington, MN and 8100 Jefferson Highway, Brooklyn Park, MN.

Retail establishments are now required to charge a fee of at least 5 cents for carryout bags due to an ordinance passed by the City Council of Minneapolis. The requirement will go into effect Jan. 1 and the retail establishments will keep the fees that they charge. The aim of this ordinance is to encourage shoppers to bring their own bags, reduce litter, and keep plastic bags from clogging the gears in recycling facilities which workers spend four to six hours a day removing. For more information on the ordinance visit lims.minneapolismn.gov/File/2018-00134.

City of Minneapolis has drafted documents on frequently asked questions (FAQs) and rules to help provide guidance to employers and employees about their rights and responsibilities under the City’s wage theft prevention ordinance. The ordinance takes effect on Jan. 1, 2020 and adopted parts of the state’s new wage theft law. Employers must adhere to a regularly scheduled payday, provide pre-hire notices of certain employment terms and conditions, and provide statements at the end of each pay period. To learn more visit the City’s website, email wagetheft@minneapolis.gov or call 311.

The City Council has approved the City’s vision, mission and values as part of the Strategic and Racial Equity Action planning process—a framework that will set the direction for the future of the City and ensure the implementation of racial equity goals. The Strategic and Racial Equity Action Plan is a four-year plan that will embed racial equity principles into all aspects of the City’s work, aligning work from City leadership to departments and defining goals at all planning levels that can be objectively measured and inform resource decisions. The goals were also informed by community engagement from the Minneapolis 2040 Comprehensive Plan. Minneapolis 2040’s first goal is to eliminate disparities and a targeted number of policy areas from the plan have been identified as policy priorities for the Strategic and Racial Equity Action Plan.

The City of Minneapolis has banned a hazardous chemical, Perchlorethylene known as “perc,” that is used in the dry-cleaning industry. Perchlorethylene is the main chemical solvent used in dry cleaning and may cause cancer as well as damage to internal organs. The City of Minneapolis worked in tandem with several organizations that include the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, the Minnesota Department of Health, and the Minnesota Cleaners Association to convert all known dry cleaners away from perc.

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board would like to hear from area residents as they embark on improving the facilities at Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden and Bird Sanctuary. The constructed is slated for 2020 and 2021 and will include an all-gendered, family-friendly, accessible bathroom, building an addition to the visitor center and re-envisioning the front entrance. To participate in this project, visit surveymonkey.com/EloiseButler and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board website.

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) is excited to announce “Parks for All,” a new comprehensive planning process that will set its priorities and policy direction for the next decade. Parks for All will engage Minneapolis residents and park users, along with MPRB staff and commissioners, over the next two years to shape the future direction of Minneapolis’ park and recreation system. The last MPRB Comprehensive Plan was approved in 2007 and set a vision through 2020. Visit minneapolisparks.org/parksforall.

Carbon monoxide (CO) exposure incidents increase during the winter months and CO is often called the silent killer. It is a colorless, odorless, tasteless gas that when inhaled, enters the blood stream preventing proper absorption of oxygen, leading to illness and even death. Treatment for CO exposure is fresh air or oxygen. Severe exposure requires medical attention. Do not return to your home or building until the source of the problem is discovered and corrected. For more information about natural gas safety, visit CenterPointEnergy.com/BeSafe or call 612-372-4727 or 1-800-245-2377.

People must be at least 21 to buy tobacco products in Minneapolis as of Oct. 1, 2018. Minneapolis raised the age from 18 to help protect younger generations from lifelong nicotine addiction, tobacco-related illnesses, and the tobacco-related health disparities between white populations and people of color. Research shows raising the age to buy tobacco will keep an estimated 30,000 young people from starting to smoke over a 15-year period in Minnesota.

The City’s Municipal Minimum Wage Ordinance took effect Jan. 1, 2018. There will be a tiered phase-in period for small and large businesses. Large businesses that employ more than 100 workers will be required to pay employees a minimum of $10 an hour beginning Jan. 1, 2018. Small businesses with 100 or fewer employees will be required to pay workers at least $10.25 beginning July 1, 2018. Large businesses have until July 1, 2022. to reach a minimum wage of $15 an hour and small businesses have until July 1, 2024 to reach $15 an hour.

Through its 311 service, the City of Minneapolis has opened a new hotline for reporting hate crimes. Which are harassing behaviors motivated by prejudice. The hotline number is 311 for anyone calling from within the city of 612-673-3000 statewide. The 311 hotline will be answered 7am-7pm weekdays and 8am - 4:30pm weekends. Those with a report to make can also call the Department of Justice at 612-664-5600. As always, in the case of immediate physical violence, property damage, or threats, people should call 911.

Following Minneapolis fire laws will help keep our neighborhoods safe and livable; outdoor fires are permitted 9am-10pm, fires must be less than three feet in diameter and two feet high, and a fire must be completely out before being abandoned. Illegal open burning or recreational fires could result in fines that start at $200. For more information on recreational fires or to register a complaint about a recreational fire, call 311 or email Minneapolis 311@minneapolismn.gov, or to register a complaint about a recreational fire outside 311 hours, call 911. The Fire and Police departments are authorized to extinguish a fire immediately if it is hazardous.

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) has banned all tobacco products on Minneapolis park properties and owned and/or operated facilities.

NOTICES

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Please inquire for pricing if you’d like a different size than the ones listed.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

2/20 – The Northside Economic Opportunity Network and the West Broadway Business and Area Coalition continue their Northside Business Luncheon series in February with the focus on Demystifying Business Accounting. The event will take place at the Gathering Space on 1101 W Broadway Ave in Minneapolis next to Sammy’s Avenue Eatery from 11:30am-1pm. For those interested in sponsoring the lunches provided please contact felicia@westbroadway.org.

Do Hive, a coworking and educational space for black women, launched in late August 2019 as an extension of the Black Women’s Wealth Alliance. BWWA’s founder, Kenya McKnight, operates Do Hive and aims to make it a location for black women entrepreneurs, students and employees to work towards their economic goals. Learn more about Do Hive at www.dohive-us.com.

The City of Lakes Community Land Trust has launched an initiative to build community ownership over commercial spaces. The Commercial Land Trust Initiative (CLTI) aims to (re)develop and preserve long-term affordable commercial spaces through community driven ownership of land. The approach will take on two forms. One in which a rental model is available for business owners to lease a subsidized owned by the land trust or the ownership model where a business owner business the location but leases the land. The initiative is led by CLTI program director Domonique Jones, a Northside native. The CLTI is looking for community members to join their board and for more resources to purchase two commercial properties by the years end. All questions can be forwarded on to its program director at 612-594-7146 or at domonique@clti.org.

The Minneapolis Business Portal is a new online platform designed to connect entrepreneurs and small business owners to the information and resources needed to plan, launch and grow a business. The online portal, available at business.minneapolismn.gov, features roadmaps, checklists, tools and resources to help both new and existing businesses.
When you grow up with a 10-piece soul band practicing in the basement, you don’t get out of that house without having music be part of your destiny.

A path was set at the feet of saxophonist Geoffrey Lamar Wilson, whose skills as a boy allowed him to answer the occasional call to sit in with his father’s band.

Wilson, who grew up in North Minneapolis and Golden Valley, is a seasoned musician and composer. The road traveled has been full of life lessons, musical reinvention and serendipity. After earning a degree in jazz saxophone, Wilson moved to New York City, where he formed a band with classmates and his now wife, Hannah Jensen.

The band had a five-year run and, near the end, Wilson took jobs scoring online commercials, teaching himself how to write quick clips of music.

A fateful wedding gig for friends a couple of years earlier led to him composing and recording music for podcasts. His first was for the hit show Terrible, Thanks for Asking with Nora McInerny. He has since written the music for 74 Seconds, the MPR podcast about the shooting of Philando Castile as well as the series Flyover with Kerri Miller.

In 2016, Wilson and Jensen moved to North Minneapolis, where he is the director of catering sales for Breaking Bread and they had their son Ezra James. Wilson describes his musical career has “not exactly having both feet in,” preferring to remain grounded over the grind of chasing musical dreams.

We caught up with Wilson over coffee and later at a gig at the Sonic Salon in South Minneapolis.

Story and photos by David Pierini Staff Reporter
This interview has been lightly edited for brevity and clarity.

While you were growing up, was becoming a musician something on the horizon for you? Did you see it coming? Always. My dad is a drummer so I grew up with him performing regularly around the Twin Cities. He was in a blues band when I was young and when I was junior high age, he ran a 10-piece soul band called Box of Soul and they rehearsed in our basement. I was learning saxophone... and occasionally they would invite me to jump in for a couple of songs during gigs. I grew up with soul music, funk music, R and B, blues... Music was always my big extra curricular.

How would you rank those years in terms of your growth as a musician? Pretty high up there. That was a big musical influence for sure as far as being a saxophone player at the time. I was also in jam bands where there was room for a saxophone.

After you graduated from Bard College in 2006, did you go right to New York City to embark on a performance career? I stayed up there for two years I was playing in a band, working in a restaurant and working at a school for kids with developmental disabilities as a teacher’s assistant. I ended up applying to grad school and NYU to study for a masters in music therapy. I was in school for another two years. I got to the point where I had to do an unpaid internship while trying to figure out how to survive in New York City. I didn’t know if I wanted to do music to earn a living exclusively and that is what you kind of have to do as a music therapist, moving between hospitals and private services, trying to hustle to make a living. I have always had an aversion to my creative energy having to be used to feed myself and survive, so I went to school part-time and then took time off. I never went back. That was 2010. It’s really interesting work and something I haven’t ruled out finishing.

What did you do musically after leaving NYU? That was the other catalyst for stopping school. I was getting inspired by contemporary singer-songwriters. That unleashed this whole new passion in me. I stopped playing saxophone and dove into playing guitar, enough to sing and write songs. So I started a band with two friends from Bard, an upright bass player and drummer, and my now wife Hannah. The band was called Jus Post Bellum. We did that for the next five years.

How would you categorize the music of Jus Post Bellum? The music seems to have elements of jazz and folk music. We ended up playing on the folk-Americana circuit because that was what was happening at the time in New York. Zach and Daniel, the drummer and bass player studied jazz with me and my approach was pretty loose so there was an improvisatory feel. The concept for the band... was this idea of post bellum America, diving into the racial dynamics of that time and writing songs with fictional narratives around those happenings. Some call it historical fiction. I would take different stories and personal things that inspired me and feed them into songwriting. It was emotionally cathartic to put that out there. I think it resonated with people because it felt real. It gave me a chance to deal with race personally, deal with race in a historical and contemporary context. I like to write music with a dark contexts that is still approachable for people.

Like his parents, including his mother Hannah Jensen, left, Ezra James was born to a musical mother and father.

What was life in the band like? In New York, it’s hard if you want a certain quality of life. Gigs in New York don’t pay enough so you have to tour, put out records and all that. We did to a degree, but not on a cycle that you would need to support yourself. We recorded a couple of albums, and toured a handful of times. It was always cool finding where the music resonated with people, particularly in the southern part of the county. It was fun. We didn’t lose money but we didn’t really make money. You really have to be invested in playing many nights a week and traveling the majority of the year. You can only play so many shows in your town, so you have to be on the road a lot to do that. I like it in short bursts but I’m a homebody, a real nester.

Was there a moment where you and Hannah paused and asked yourselves, “What do we do now?” I grappled with that a lot. The band was my baby and Hannah maintained a solid career path while I was working on music and trying to figure out if that was what I was going to do. We had a lot of those conversations leading right up to when we moved back to Minneapolis.

What made you decide to move? I had lived in New York since 2002. I loved living in Brooklyn but you do see the divide when you move into that phase of your life where, “I want to buy a house and have a kid...” You see that perpetual hustle and wheel you’re going to be on just to stay in New York. More and more we were craving a different scene. We didn’t have to live in New York to do what we’re doing.

How did things end with the band? With New York? The band had tapered off. Hannah and I started doing more duo shows. It was also really nice and liberating because it was just the two of us. It was sort of an off ramp from what we’ve been doing.

Did you have a plan in mind for music when you moved back to Minnesota? I didn’t really know. During the last few years in New York, I started doing the podcast thing and scoring side projects, performing solo and feeling that was viable to do and fulfill me.

How did you get into scoring podcasts? That was totally random. The first podcast was Terrible, Thanks for Asking. Nora McInerny was a family friend of Hannah’s. Her husband Aaron, who became the subject of her first podcast, died of brain cancer. They were fans of ours. We sang at their wedding and then, a couple of years later, we sang at his funeral. He liked our music so that became part of their story. She started this podcast and asked if I would be interested in writing the theme music. It turned out to be a popular show and that looped me into producers and NPR and subsequent podcasts that have come along since then.

What is the process of scoring a podcast? I ask about the tone of the story and what emotion they want from the music. There’s a short intro to the show. The voice will come in and out and music will play underneath it. It’s interesting, you have to have something that sets the tone quickly, builds to an emotional dynamic and can be cut really succinctly so that it doesn’t feel real jarring or be distracting to the voice. [But] you also want it to be memorable.

Did the music for the podcast “74 Seconds” allow you to draw on the material you did with the band? I was still writing about racism and tragedy but it was present day. It was easy to channel that sadness. That happened two months after we moved back here. It was really strange waking up in a new city, thinking we left New York where Eric Garner happened and now we’re here and Philando Castilo is this other national story.

What are you doing now that brings you personal satisfaction? I am working on new saxophone music for the first time in a while. Recently, I have had the desire to create a different emotional experience that is not reliant on words or
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