Neighborhood Clean-ups
Off to a Satisfying Start

By Sue Filbin, Communications Committee,
and David Fronsoe, Regina Co-representative

On a clear, breezy Saturday in late July,
27 neighbors put on safety vests and work
shoes to pick up trash and litter from
boulevards and street gutters in Regina
neighborhood. A couple of satisfying
hours later, everyone gathered for a bar-
beque at Evangelist Crusaders Church on
4th Avenue and 43rd Street.

This neighborhood clean-up is the first
of three that will take place this summer.
Similar activities are planned for Field and
Northrop neighborhoods. In addition to

Close to Home Wins National Award

By Sue Filbin, Communications Committee

We members of the communications
commitee think of ourselves as being
fairly good at reporting on neighborhood
news, but this story took place right under
our collective noses without our knowing
anything about it!

Program director Stearline Rucker entered
our newsletter in a national competition
for neighborhood newsletters and Close
to Home was awarded first place! The
newsletter competition is sponsored by
NUSA—Neighborhoods, USA. The

Continued on page 2

Great Fun at the
Annual Neighborhood
Celebration
Thank you to everyone who contributed!

Board of directors
Neighborhood representatives
Volunteers
Program director, Stearline Rucker
Heather Susag & McRae Park staff
Businesses that donated prizes
Musicians and dancers
Food vendors
Informational table hosts
Surveys of fun: ponies, bounce
house, face painting, & more.
And to you, for attending!
See a related article on page 8.

“Urban chickens,” loaned by the Schommer
family, were popular at the annual celebration.

Night on 48th
Our festive annual fundraiser.
Saturday, November 3, 7-10 p.m.
Café Levain—in back of Turtle Bread Co.
48th and Chicago
Tickets $15 in advance; $20 at the door.
Pasta, pizza, and salad. Wine and beer
cash bar. Silent auction and wine raffle.
Information & tickets: frnng.org

Neighbors from Regina neighborhood gathered for a clean-up project followed by a barbeque.
Satisfying Start for Neighborhood Clean-up Events, continued from page 1

doing something positive for the appearance of our neighborhoods, neighbors have an opportunity to get acquainted and work together on a “gloves-on project.”

The creative force behind these clean-ups is Marty Koessel, chair of the community & safety committee, and members of his committee. They are collaborating with neighborhood representatives to organize a clean-up for each neighborhood—David Franse and Alberta Knight, Regina; Mark Perrier, Field; and Kate Nyquist, Northrop.

For more information about the clean-up activity for your neighborhood, contact your neighborhood representative:

Field: Mark Perrier fieldrep@frnng.org
Northrop: Kate Nyquist northroprep@frnng.org

Look for information about future clean-up events on our website: http://frnng.org or our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/FRNNG/

Close to Home Wins National Award, continued from page 1

tagline of this organization that was founded in 1975 and is based in Ft. Lauderdale, FL, is “Building Stronger Communities.” On May 26, at the conference that was held this year in Birmingham, AL, Field Regina Northrop Neighborhood Group president, Willie Bridges, accepted the award on behalf of our neighborhood.

Awards for first, second, and third-place newsletters are determined for each of four categories: neighborhood printed (our category), neighborhood electronic, government entity, and non-profit organization. A panel of judges evaluated each entry using a list of criteria that includes content, layout, and overall appearance. The award states, “This award acknowledges excellence in neighborhood newsletters—a vital communication tool that can often determine a neighborhood’s success.”

All of us who work on producing Close to Home six times a year are pleased to contribute to our newsletter. Communications committee members include Chris Schommer, chair, and Carrie Shidla, Adam Webster, Christian Fritzberg, and Sue Filbin. The template for the layout was designed by Jennifer Nagorski.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed an article, photo, or suggestion for the past four years, especially to outgoing neighborhood president Willie Bridges, program director Stearline Rucker, community and safety committee chair Marty Koessel, education committee chair Terry Mazig, greening committee co-chairs Lauren Anderson, Lindsey Feiner, and Tim Price, housing & community development committee chair Nate Lansing, and parks chair Maria Gilleece. We thank regular contributors Karen Notsch, Jason Lardy, council members from the 8th and 11th wards, our parks commissioner, and many others—to too many to list here. We thank our loyal advertisers, our printer partner—Greenhaven Printing—and everyone who reads this newsletter. It truly “takes a village” to build a strong community—and its newsletter.

Visit the NUSA website: www.nusa.org/about-nusa/what-is-nusa/
Hello Neighbors,

My name is Chris Schommer and this is the first time I am writing to you as the president of the Field Regina Northrop Neighborhood Group. I have spent the past four years managing, writing articles for, and editing this newsletter as Communications Chair, and two years before that as the Field neighborhood representative. FRN has done a lot in these past six years, and I hope that as president I can continue to grow this organization in a way that allows our community to better respond to challenges as they arise and to grab opportunities that are available.

I also want to have fun. It is great to live in a neighborhood with such interesting people! When our community comes together for events like Night on 48th Street, our annual neighborhood celebration, or the Southside Sprint bike race, we get to make new connections, and those connections make our community thrive.

I would like to thank Willie Bridges for all his work during these past four years as president, and for the advice he has given me. Willie is committed to representing all members of our community, and I want to continue his work to make sure that every voice is heard. Willie will remain on the board as the South Northrop representative, and I am looking forward to his support of our community that way. I also want to thank all board members past and present for their hard work.

This is a volunteer organization, and I have seen people give all they have, often without the expectation of recognition or thanks. Events like the recent recognition of the 45th Anniversary of the Hale-Field School Desegregation that seem to arise out of nowhere, start and finish with dedicated volunteers who have an idea, and work to make it happen. I could say the same about the colorful utility box wraps, plantings near the 35W sound wall, the 46th Street reconfiguration, neighborhood cleanups, meet-ups, and countless more projects, including this newsletter.

Our neighborhood has many overlapping identities and we live as part of our history. As time makes changes to our neighborhood, I want to share that history as we consider the future. I am looking forward to meeting more of my neighbors and hearing their stories on this new adventure.

See you around the neighborhood,
Chris Schommer
Meet Your Neighborhood Representative

By Christian Fritzberg – Communications Committee

We will be featuring profiles on our Field Regina Northrop neighborhood representatives in the next few issues of Close to Home. Please get to know your neighborhood rep and let them know what’s important to you. Let your voice be heard! This month’s featured rep is Mark Perrier from Field.

Mark Perrier is a friendly face you’ve probably seen at one of our many neighborhood events, working on one of his vintage cars, or enjoying a cup of coffee and chat at Sovereign Grounds. He’s been around our neighborhood for much of his life, residing for the past nine years at 48th and Park Avenue with his wife, Lila.

Mark grew up in the Windom neighborhood and is a 1971 Washburn High School graduate. He is an Army veteran and worked for the U.S. Postal Service for some 40 years until his recent retirement.

Some interesting facts about Mark: he lived in Prior Lake and worked part-time as a cook at Mystic Lake Casino for many years. Also, the “Art Car” that you have seen children painting at the annual neighborhood celebration belongs to Mark. It’s a 1937 Chrysler, to be exact. Mark enjoys his role as the Field neighborhood rep. His unwavering curiosity is how he ended up in this role as he started attending neighborhood board meetings and wanted to get more involved.

As Field’s rep, Mark makes it a point to visit each National Night Out event that he finds in Field and introduces himself to neighbors to learn more about their vision for our neighborhood. Mark’s goals include greater community engagement, a greater awareness on what the FRNNG board does, and also more awareness on what’s going on in the City of Minneapolis as a whole.

The next time you see Mark, please say hello. Also, please attend one of our upcoming monthly board meetings (the next being September 19 at the Lake Nokomis Presbyterian Church) and learn about how you, too, can get more involved in our community and make a difference, just like Mark.
Block Club Leaders “Cover” Our Neighborhood

By Karen Notsch, Crime Prevention Specialist (CPS), 3rd Precinct, Minneapolis Police Department

If you think you’ve read an article—or two!—about the topic of block club leaders, you have. And if you’re wondering why you are reading one more, my response is simple: Because not every block is covered by a block club leader.

If you think of your neighborhood as a patchwork quilt, the blocks that don’t have a block club leader are like the areas of a quilt that are not covered by a piece of fabric. Imagine the sleep you would lose by being cold under that inadequate quilt!

Block club leaders are the connected pieces of fabric in a quilt. They “cover” their block by communicating with their neighbors, and by being connected to their neighbors, other block club leaders, and to the Minneapolis Police Department (MPD). Blocks that are not covered by a block club leader are vulnerable to “the elements.” Not the elements of cold weather, but the elements of criminal activity.

When an incident occurs that’s related to crime and safety, clear communication is essential. The MPD collaborates with the block club leader on the affected block, and with nearby block club leaders, to distribute accurate information, document patterns of illegal activity, and guide residents to prevent similar events.

To take my quilt analogy one step further (and by the way, I’ve never worked on a quilt), a quilt is often assembled at a frame around which many people sit, stitching by hand the pieces of the quilt to its backing. Everything comes together during that activity around the frame. By acting together, we can perform a similar activity in your neighborhood.

Contact me. We won’t be leaning over a quilt frame, but we can talk about what a block club leader does, what to expect, how to make connections, and how to get started.

Winter is coming. Now is the time to make sure your block is covered—by a block club leader. I invite you to contact me with questions about becoming a block club leader.

Karen.Notsch@minneapolismn.gov
612-673-2856

More information
Please contact me with questions about being a block club leader.

Karen.Notsch@minneapolismn.gov
612-673-2856
By Sue Filbin, Communications Committee

Local media reported last May that Catholic Charities of St. Paul and Minneapolis was revisiting its organizational strategy to build on its programming strengths — including some of the work being done at St. Joseph’s Home for Children (St. Joe’s), which it operates. Located in the center of Northrop neighborhood, St. Joe’s serves children who are abused and neglected, children who need help managing severe mental health issues, and children who simply have no other place to go.

During the course of its two-year strategic planning process, Catholic Charities assessed how it could better help children and families in need in our community, as well as how it could engage the community in its work—with the end goal of building a high-quality program.

The agency also looked at successful approaches to help children who have been affected by trauma. Recent studies indicate that the brains of children who experienced trauma through violence, poverty, and other conditions in their home and neighborhood develop differently from the brains of other children. In fact, many of the children who come to St. Joe’s exhibit symptoms of PTSD (Post-traumatic stress disorder) that significantly influence their behavior.

Jon Stumbras, LICSW, the Senior Program Director at St. Joe’s, has worked at St. Joe’s for more than a decade, and has dedicated his 30-plus-year career as a social worker to mental-health issues, working in home therapy, school-based counseling, psychiatric hospitals, outpatient therapy, day treatment, and residential treatment. Stumbras explained that, bolstered by trauma-based research, he and his team at St. Joe’s sought information about successful models—both around the country and around the world—for working with children impacted by trauma. They learned about Harvard University research that puts forth three criteria on how children can best master life skills, including:

- Focusing on both the child’s and the adult’s capacities to develop responsive relationships
- Strengthening core life skills
- Reducing sources of stress in children’s lives

Consideration of this information led to the decision to close—after more than 50 years—the residential mental health treatment program at St. Joe’s. The complexity of the children’s needs has increased over time, and staff felt that more intensive medical-based psychiatric care is needed. In addition, approximately one-third of the children being treated in the residential treatment program were from greater Minnesota. The distance between St. Joe’s and the children’s families conflicted with the recognized benefit of keeping a child connected with their family, and in some instances providing services to the family, too.

Continued on next page
Southside Sprint Roars Through Neighborhood

By Jason Lardy

A huge field of bicycle racers again turned Chicago Avenue into a drag strip for the eighth-consecutive year on July 22 as the Southside Sprint crowned State Champions. Over 200 elite racers rolled to the line on the warm July Sunday, joining a new record group of kids “Fun Racers.” Hundreds of spectators lined the streets and filled the front yards of neighborhood homes, cheering the riders to top speed.

The Southside Sprint once again stood as the MN State Championship, with south Minneapolis once more hosting riders from all over the upper Midwest and showcased the best in Minnesota bike racing. The best part of the day, though, is the Family Dental Clinic Dash—our kids fun race. We watched 150+ little speedsters show how strong the future of bike racing is in Minnesota.

The Southside Sprint showcased top Midwest talent, including locally based elite amateurs, World Masters and US National Champions. Junior racer, Peter Moore of St. Paul, competed in the men’s elite race—one of his last races prior to leaving for the World Junior Track Cycling Championships in Switzerland as part of Team USA. St. Paul’s Melissa Dahlmann made a strong last-minute dash to the line to retain her State Championship in the elite women’s race, the Pedego Power Play. Up-and-coming racer, Peter Olejniczak, won the elite men’s race with a final-lap breakaway to claim his first State Championship.

Editor’s note: Jason Lardy lives in Northrop and is co-founder of the Southside Sprint Bike Race. www.bigwatersclassic.com

St. Joe’s Updates to Better Serve Children, continued from page 6

Stumbras explained that “the residential program closure is bittersweet,” but reaffirmed Catholic Charities’ dedication to working with children who are referred through Hennepin County’s child protection and children’s welfare programs. Stumbras has expressed St. Joe’s intent “to do an even better job for the kids” in this program that has served children and their families as “ground zero” in times of family crises for more than 40 years.

In addition to evaluating the services they provide, Stumbras anticipates that new physical facilities—at St. Joe’s or elsewhere—likely will be necessary to meet the needs of a different generation of children and families. This will take time and will have the input of many in the community.

Catholic Charities has had programs located on the St. Joe’s site since 1885. After treating more than 1,200 children annually for a number of years, St. Joe’s intends to continue to be part of the solution for children and families who have experienced trauma. St. Joe’s will continue fulfilling the long-time mission of Catholic Charities, which is to help those most in need in our community—for a long time to come.

Support

St. Joe’s receives funding from public sources as well as from private donations from individuals, families, and supportive organizations. Information about in-kind donations is at this web link: www.cctwincities.org/donate/wish-list-for-people-in-need/ To make a financial contribution, please visit www.cctwincities.org/donate/
By Sue Filbin, Communications Committee

When you go to an annual neighborhood celebration, you expect to hear music, eat good fun, and have fun, but do you even imagine you’ll build a birdhouse and take it home with you? That’s exactly what happened at McRae Park on June 30. Neighbors ducked under the canopy and learned from the staff of Elpis Enterprises to build a birdhouse from recycled cedar wood.

The word “Elpis” is Greek for hope. Elpis Enterprises is a service enterprise that provides real-work experiences from which youth between the ages of 16 and 23, who are at-risk for homelessness, learn the skills of woodworking and screen printing. The Elpis interns also learn to communicate with staff, each other, and the community through interactive, participatory community events such as their activity in our neighborhood.

The Elpis interns were invited to participate in our annual neighborhood celebration, but Elpis is well known at McRae Park for their monthly Monday workshops. The Elpis van pulls into the parking lot, bins of equipment are wheeled into the craft room, and a workshop is set up. From 3 to 4 o’clock, children and adults are welcome to stop in to build a bird feeder or birdhouse, guided by the Elpis staff. Every “carpenter” may take home their project or leave it with Elpis to be sold to benefit their program.

These community events are scheduled through Elpis’ partnership with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board. Elpis develops prototypes and projects for parks programs such as the Neighborhood Naturalist Program or Rec-Plus activities (an after-school program for children ages 5-12). For spring, participants often construct fruit or jelly bird feeders. During the summer, Elpis guides people to build seed feeders for birds. In the fall, suet feeders are constructed in anticipation of winter’s cold weather. Nesting boxes occupy participants’ skills and time during the winter.

Who benefits?
The programs are a win/win for neighborhood kids. They learn about the environment from the naturalists and how to use a hammer from Elpis. Some kids are using a hammer for the first time; others are reminded of special times using tools or making something with a parent or grandparent.

The programs are also a win/win experience for the Elpis interns. They learn to interact with people, play a leadership role in guiding people through the construction or screen-printing process, and to market and sell the products. The money earned from events supports the three-month training period for the interns.

Learn more about Elpis Enterprises at www.elpisenterprises.org

Learn more about activities at McRae Park:
https://www.minneapolisparks.org/parks_destinations/recreation_centers/mcrae_recreation_center/
mcrae@minneapolisparks.org
Phone: 612-370-4909
Unique retail space features local artists and makers

By Carrie Shidla, Communications Committee

Residents frequenting the flourishing business district at the 46th and Bloomington Avenue intersection will notice a new storefront quietly popped up recently. Darling Amalgamated Retail Emporium (or, D.A.R.E., for short), a clever consortium of three local micro-businesses, opened its doors on July 6.

The store is a fun and funky mix of goods and services with a little something for everyone, with a focus on local goods and earth-friendly practices. Liz Plambeck, owner/designer of Universal Pants, creates one-of-a-kind bias-cut clothing using both vintage and new fabric for her pants, skirts, dresses, tunics, jumpers, and overalls. Adam and Marcy Darling run the Eclectory, a retail store that boasts a small art gallery; handmade, local gifts; home goods; personal products; and vintage goods. Marcy Darling is the beauty operator behind the Beauty Operator salon, a one-chair salon in the back of the Emporium. Marcy shares her chair with a longtime friend, and fellow stylist, Erin Perry.

“D.A.R.E. started out as a place where we, as local artists and makers, could share space, rent, and company,” said Liz Plambeck. “We are committed to carrying and promoting local artists and makers who complement each other and the work that we, ourselves, produce, as well as having a consistent brick-and-mortar space where our customers can always find our products!”

The south Minneapolis location just made sense for the business owners. “We were looking for a location that was close to our homes,” said Marcy Darling. “Liz has a new puppy, and we have three school-age daughters, and we all wanted to be in close proximity to our families to easily blend this new venture with our current lifestyles.”

A grand opening event is planned for Saturday, September 8, from 2-6 p.m. Along with a storefront filled with unique and locally designed clothing, art, gifts, home goods, and vintage goods, patrons will get to meet some of their featured resident artists, enjoy locally made snacks, tarot readings, a portrait illustrator, and more.

4549 Bloomington Avenue, 55407
www.darlingamalgamated.com/
or find them on Facebook.
4 Questions—with Julia Hatlestad, Co-Owner

Groovy’s Minneapolis—Vintage + Contemporary

By Adam Webster, Communications Committee

Groovy’s is definitely something in between. A good label might be “Curated Second-Hand Store.” We have vintage, but we also sell contemporary items. You could find something from 100 years ago sitting next to something from last year. I’m an ’80s-’90s kid who’s always loved the worn and well-loved. My husband is a Gen-X punk rocker who loves to hunt. My dad is a Boomer who grew up in ’60s San Francisco. Our different upbringings are complementary and make for an eclectic, handpicked inventory!

2. I’ve got to ask about the name Groovy’s, right? What’s the story?
Long story … actually my dad’s idea. He has a store much like Groovy’s, which opened 20 years ago (Timeframes in Anoka). Ultimately my husband and I became financial partners with him at Timeframes. We found ourselves saying, “We need to open a shop in Minneapolis!” My dad told us he had always wanted to open a record store called Groovy’s (grooves in records, get it?). Minneapolis already has plenty of record stores, so we decided to stay with the “little-bit-of-everything” business model my dad has used all these years. But the name Groovy’s? It stuck!

3. What made you select the Cedar Avenue location for the shop?
My husband and I live in the East Phillips neighborhood, but we often find ourselves in this neck of the woods for one reason or another. When my husband, father, and I finally decided to really go for it and open a store in Minneapolis, I searched for months. I would drive for hours scouting out storefronts, even driving to Richfield. Everything I looked into was either too expensive or not quite right for our needs. I was driving down Cedar one day and spotted the “For Rent” sign at 4206 Cedar. I have always been intrigued by this beautiful, enigmatic brick building. When I came to check out the inside, it was L-O-V-E at first sight! We’re so happy everything worked out the way it has. Both the building and the neighborhood have been great.

4. Who’s the perfect customer for Groovy’s? Any tips for finding hidden vintage gems?
We like to consider ourselves a store for everyone. When my dad opened his first store in 1997, I helped come up with the phrase, “A little bit of everything, something for everyone!” that we used in marketing. That idea stuck, and that’s how we want Groovy’s to be now. We hope to appeal to the vintage and antique crowd, but there’s no reason to be exclusive about it. Pretty much everyone who comes in can find something they like. Our “regulars” seem to come from every walk of life and age group. We’re proud of that! Oh, and if you’re looking for hidden vintage gems, be persistent! My husband and I always have our eyes open for more groovy stuff because you never know where you’ll find it!

Business Corner

El Burrito Mercado
4820 Chicago Avenue
Mexican restaurant opening soon in the former Pepitos space.

Minnehaha Animal Hospital
4809 Chicago Avenue
Welcome Dr. Erin Dush. Special veterinary interests: feline medicine and soft-tissue surgery.

Parkway Theater
4814 Chicago Avenue
Premier event Thursday, September 13: the movie “Jaws,” with classic movies every Thursday after that launch. Live performances most Friday and Saturday nights starting September 14.

4206 Cedar Avenue South, 55407
facebook.com/Groovys-Minneapolis-513250949066587

Julia, with her husband, Marcio, in front of Groovy’s—their “curated second-hand store,” located at 4206 Cedar Avenue.
Spotlight on Seniors—
SAGES at Saint Joan of Arc

By Christian Fritzberg, Communications Committee

SAGES at St. Joan of Arc Church is a popular speaker series focusing on important issues that affect seniors and their families. The mission of SAGES is to share wisdom across generations; older generations sharing their valuable insight with younger generations. The discussion series runs from September–May of each year, with scheduled times alternating between afternoon and evenings so seniors and other adults who may still be working will have the ability to attend. These discussions take place in Hospitality Hall within St. Joan’s and are open to all interested in attending.

The fall SAGES series will feature topics ranging from Medicare to senior driving. The Life Transition Series is offered in the spring and focuses on subjects that are sometimes more difficult to discuss such as estate planning, healthcare directives, palliative care, and hospice and funeral planning. SAGES co-chairs Marie Thielan and Mark Scannell credit the popularity of the series to the quality speakers selected and by the group’s audience selecting the topics they would like featured.

In addition to the topic series, SAGES also offers Second Monday Dialogs. As the name suggests, these discussions occur on the second Monday of every month, consistently from 1:30-3:30 p.m. Their intent is to be a lighter, more casual discussion time that’s held over coffee, providing an opportunity for seniors to build community and get to know each other better.

For more information on the upcoming SAGES programming, visit St. Joan’s SAGES website at www.stjoanofarc.org/adult/sages or phone Cynthia Bailey Manns, the Adult Learning Director at St. Joan’s at (612) 823-8205, Ext. 226.

St. Mary’s Cemetery
A neighborhood cemetery

4403 Chicago Avenue
(651) 488-8866
catholic-cemeteries.org

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