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Published for the East Isles, Lowry Hill, Kenwood & Cedar-Isles-Dean Neighborhoods

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A LANDMARK HOME'S FALL: THE SAGA OF 2737 EAST LAKE OF THE ISLES PARKWAY

By Sean Murphy



The 2737 East Lake of the Isles Parkway property was once considered one of the most beautiful on Lake of the Isles Parkway but has faced a downfall over the past decade. (Photo Craig Wilson)

Sean Murphy lives in East Isles.

Enter Terry Persaud

In July 2023, Hennepin County seized the property at 2737 East Lake of the Isles Parkway due to the owner's failure to pay \$60,000 in property taxes and vacancy fines.

Constructed in 1905, this landmark home occupies a commanding position at the intersection of 28th Street and Lake of the Isles Parkway. Set on a large airy lot and sheltered by mature trees, it offers sweeping sunset views over the lake.

But this once storybook-perfect house has been a topic of neighborhood conversation for over a decade, with neighbors and passersby alike wondering, “Why is this beautiful home falling apart?”

Mahendra “Terry” Persaud acquired the property in October 2012 for \$825,000. No mortgage was recorded in public records, which suggests it was bought with cash. Online data show that Persaud, a Minneapolis native, owns a property management business (via multiple LLC holding companies) with several multi-unit apartment holdings in South Minneapolis and the Twin Cities suburbs, totaling a hundred rental units or more. He also owns the Sunset Beach Tropical Grill in Fort Myers, Florida.

Both his property management business and his restaurant have been subjects of complaints, negative media coverage and prolonged legal battles.

Since its purchase by Persaud, the Lake of the Isles property has remained unoccupied. Over the past twelve years, this once elegant and well-maintained home has deteriorated, failing multiple inspections and accruing significant overdue taxes (check Google Maps Street View images from 2007 to 2022 for a visual history of its decline).

In August 2017, the City of Minneapolis added the property to its Vacant and Abandoned Building Registry (VABR), triggering an annual \$7,000 fine.

Over the years, the property has amassed a series of nuisance complaints, ranging from exterior issues to unmanaged snow and ice on sidewalks, and incidents of trespassing, break-ins, fire and

vandalism. The neighborhood consensus is that this prolonged neglect has had a detrimental impact on the local environment and quality of life.

In addition to the nuisance issues reported to the city, Persaud’s unpaid county property taxes accumulated.

One morning in July 2023, Hennepin County workers seized the property for failure to pay taxes. They changed its locks and stickered the property with messages indicating the house was now owned by Hennepin County.

The East Isles neighborhood initially saw this as a positive turn of events, as the house had become not only an eyesore but also a safety hazard and a magnet for

Continued on page 5

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Founded in 1976, Hill & Lake Press reports community news and events, educating and informing our neighborhood community members about issues of the day. Views expressed are not necessarily those of Hill & Lake Press.

HILL & LAKE PRESS

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Our goal is to offer readers diverse perspectives on newsworthy events or issues of broad public concern to the Hill & Lake community. Our copy limit is 300 words and we reserve the right to edit for clarity and length.

Gratitude for the Flag Editorial

I am grateful for the thoughtful and supportive editorial you wrote for the Hill & Lake Press regarding the State Emblems Redesign Commission last month.

Your words acknowledge the significance of our efforts and contribute to fostering a positive community spirit.

I appreciate the time and effort you dedicated to capturing the essence of the flag redesign process and highlighting the positive aspects of the new design. Your role as editor at the Hill & Lake Press is invaluable, and I am honored to have your support.

Again, thank you for your dedication and for sharing your insights with the community.

*Luis Fitch
Chair, State Emblems Redesign Commission*

Wonderful Piece on Seven Pools!

Josie Owens, thank you for taking time to research and write such a thoughtful article on Thomas Lowry Park last month.

At our January board meeting of Friends of Thomas Lowry Park, there was unanimous enthusiasm for your writing skills and thorough reporting.

What a treasure to have the story of this beautiful park to hand down. The activism of early Lowry Hill neighbors towards this park has continued to this day as evidenced in the recent support of the restoration of the Seven Pools and Thomas Lowry Park.

THANK YOU! I am so looking forward to part two in the February issue.

*Suzanne Payne
President, Friends of Thomas Lowry Park*

Historical Omission

As Dawn Erlandson was surprised at Katie Cashman's failure to mention Hamas, I was surprised at the following statement in her letter to the editor in the Hill & Lake Press January issue: "...this is the ancestral home of the Jews and the unceded land of the Jewish people."

It is true that Judaism preceded Islam as a religion in the area. I agree that divestment from the state of Israel is a rather simplistic view and demonstrates a lack of understanding of geopolitical dynamics in the region.

However, Dawn's statement about unceded land does not mention anything about the inhabitants and culture of people that were there

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

before the arrival of the Jewish people.

There is archaeological evidence that people with advanced technology and a formidable military lived in the cities of Ashdod, Ashkelon, Ekron, Gath and Gaza. There is also biblical reference to people living inside the Walls of Jericho when that city was besieged.

So yes, in this age of easy access to fake news it's important to include all the facts.

*Lona Healam
East Isles*

New Community Mental Health Clinic

I am a mental health practitioner who recently opened up Essential Care Centers, a community mental health clinic in Uptown.

I have been getting copies of your paper and enjoy reading the pages about happenings in the neighborhood, as well as issues and events that impact us. Thank you for your service!

*Sam Kpahn
East Bde Maka Ska*

Save The Mall Park — Let's Improve It, Not Dismantle It

The Mall Park, Uptown's linear park that connects Hennepin Avenue South to the lakes and parkways, is slated for redevelopment under a plan that will essentially divide it into three separate parks. (Search [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com) using key words "Mall Park East Isles" to view the presentation.)

This plan has major problems:

1) Two sections of paved road will be removed, severing the loop that defines the park. This cuts off access to Lake of the Isles Parkway and will force motorists to exit onto Lagoon Avenue at dangerous intersections. The confusing traffic pattern will reduce access to the park and harm pedestrian safety. Furthermore, vital parking spaces will be lost, negatively impacting visitors and residents who live near it.

2) Nearly half a million dollars will be spent creating a "woonerf" which is not appropriate for a green space like The Mall Park. The woonerf is a curb-less paving project that will replace perfectly good existing roadway that does not need repair or replacement and will result in the loss of most of the parking near the library. This half a million dollars could be used to improve the park in much better ways.

3) The Mall Park should remain an inviting continuous green space that connects Uptown to the beautiful lakes, as it was originally designed to do, not the proposed confusing and disjointed series of park segments.

Before it is too late, please join in asking the Park Board to reconsider their planned traffic pattern modifications, the elimination of much-needed parking, and the creation of an unnecessary woonerf.

Using a web browser, please visit Change.org and sign the petition

"Save the Mall Park - let's improve it, not dismantle it" at: <https://chng.it/8vgjZZRcTg>

Please also contact your Park Board representatives: District 4 Commissioner Elizabeth Shaffer: 612-230-6443, ext. 4 eshaffer@minneapolisparcs.org and Senior Planner Colleen O'Dell: 612-230-6469 codell@minneapolisparcs.org

*Mark Sloo
East Isles*

Apartment Dwellers Against Mall Park Madness

I am one of hundreds of East Isles neighborhood residents who live in the many apartment buildings directly south of The Mall Park. We have many concerns about the Park Board's ill-conceived and unneeded redevelopment of The Mall Park.

However, the Park Board has ignored our voices throughout this process. Dozens of my neighbors attended the community meetings held by the board in 2018 and 2019 to express our concerns. But these meetings resulted in no meaningful engagement by the Park Board.

More recently, this November the Park Board sent residents a deceptive mailer that concealed the true nature and extent of The Mall Park Plan, making it sound like all that was happening was a temporary disruption of The Mall Park roads caused by the coming sewer replacement project.

In January, the Park Board published a website that they claimed was inviting public participation in the planning process. But in reality, the opportunity to provide comment on the site was so limited that it was useless.

It appears that Park Board has been trying to provide cover, to give the appearance of public participation, to give the appearance of accountability and transparency. But the truth is, the Board has maintained tight control of the process and has in fact avoided meaningful engagement with residents' concerns.

Residents deserve to have a voice in city projects in our neighborhood that affect us. We deserve answers from the Park Board.

*Aaron Jorgensen-Briggs
East Isles*

Volunteer to Feed the Those in Need

I am the Volunteer Manager for Agate Housing and Services. We are a nonprofit serving unstably housed people, with a mission to end homelessness and relieve hunger. Agate provides shelter, housing, meals and a free weekly food shelf called Shelf of Hope.

Shelf of Hope is a volunteer run food shelf, which is open to anyone (no requirements) on Wednesdays, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Last December we served over 500 households and gave out over 20,000 pounds of meats, fruits, vegetables, grains and household/hygiene supplies.

We are looking for additional volunteers to help us serve this increasing demand on Mondays (stocking) and Wednesdays (serving). We are also seeking those who

can speak and translate Spanish fluently.

By becoming a Food Shelf Generalist, they would join hands with a team of people who believe that all human beings deserve food and their basic needs met. They would work directly with the people they are helping, face-to-face, building a caring and connective community.

We're looking for people to help serve their community on Mondays (prep) and Wednesdays (open hours) at the Shelf of Hope! 714 Park Ave, Minneapolis, MN, 55404.

If you are interested, contact the me at 612-327-6389 or Noah.Chan@AgateMN.org. Please let me know if you have any questions or comments.

Noah Chan
Whittier



A Barred Owl tucking in for a sunrise nap on a crispy morning in early January near Cedar Lake. (Photo Browdie Daul)

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Show local businesses like Uptown Balloon your love by supporting them this Valentines Day. (Photo Craig Wilson)

Met Council: Accountability Is the Issue

By Mary Pattock



The Southwest Light Rail Transit project has been plagued with cost overruns and mismanagement, calling to question the future of the Metropolitan Council, the governing body responsible for the project. (Photo Craig Wilson)

Mary Pattock is a long-time contributor to the Hill & Lake Press and was an early and constant whistleblower on matters related to SWLRT (and beyond). She lives in Cedar-Isles-Dean.

There were moments in the last four months when I doubted whether the Metropolitan Government Task Force, where I am a “public member,” would come to any meaningful conclusions.

But today I’m optimistic, because at our January 17 meeting we voted unanimously on a diagnosis of what ails the Met Council. We adopted a problem statement that states that the fundamental problem with the Met Council is accountability.

The language below is what we adopted. I proposed it, with the support of our own Rep. Frank Hornstein, who chairs the task force. It will appear in our February 1 report to the legislature.

Problem statement: Accountability is the basic issue.

1) Finding — We have determined that there is widespread confusion and widespread

disagreement about who is and who should be accountable for Met Council vision, planning, execution (construction and operation), and performance evaluation.

2) Recommendation — The basic issue the legislature should address in any reform or governance changes to the Met Council is how the council should be accountable to the public and to state and local governments. We recommend that the legislature make clear assignment of these areas of accountability.

Government Listened

It seems like a no-brainer that before considering any reorganization models (for example, elected or appointed members, council of governments, staggered terms, separate transit agency) we had to diagnose the problem.

But a couple of task force members maintained there is no problem — only some administrative or communication issues and some rare hiccups (such as Southwest Light Rail). They said no change is needed.

But their position became untenable in the wake of four listening sessions across the

metro area: in Lake Elmo, Saint Paul, Minneapolis and Shakopee. The task force heard more than eight hours of testimony, not only from ordinary citizens but also from city, county and township officials, representatives of non-profits, and even some clergy members. They came from center city, suburban and exurban areas.

The vast majority said the same thing: The Met Council doesn’t listen, isn’t accountable to anyone, and will have it their way by hook or by crook. I heard the word “bully” more than once.

Even the “nothing wrong” task force members had to concede that their opinion is not widely shared in the community.

That made it possible for the task force to agree that any Met Council reform must start with accountability.

Among other things, that means solutions that tinker at the edges, such as staggered terms, will not do the job alone. Staggered terms are desirable to promote policy continuity and institutional memory but have little or no effect on the council’s accountability to the public or to local officials.

The listening sessions are an example of government not simply going through the motions of hearing the public, but actually heeding what they say. If that had happened with Southwest Light Rail, Hennepin County could be using over a billion wasted dollars to eradicate homelessness instead of correcting mistakes predicted by area residents.

Those who testified made a difference because they weren’t addressing a panel of tin ears. Thanks are due to area residents who presented reasoned, persuasive comments at the Minneapolis session: Jeanette Colby, Marion Collins, David Lilly, Kathy Low, Glenn Johnson, Jim and Nancy Nikora, Vanne Owens Hayes, Russ Palma and Rosanne Halloran, and anyone else I might have missed.

What’s Next

As of this writing, the task force has heard reports from previous studies about the Met Council, met with officials from Portland and Denver about their metro governance models, examined previous reform proposals, heard from the public, and identified the problem the legislature asked us to address. Now we are moving into problem-solving mode.

Three local residents — Senator Scott Dibble, U of M Professor Myron Orfield and I — have submitted reform proposals. It turns out we all wound up proposing the replacement of the current Met Council with two chambers, one of which would be a council of local elected government officials and the other directly elected. Our proposals differ, however, in mission, powers, funding and membership.

You can find them and the other proposals, all handouts from task force meetings, written testimony from the public, and streaming video of every regular meeting and the listening sessions at: <https://www.lcc.mn.gov/mgtf/members.html>.

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A LANDMARK HOME'S FALL, Front page



The deteriorating condition of 2737 East Lake of the Isles Parkway property are visible from the sidewalk. (Photos Craig Wilson)

vandalism. They hoped it would be auctioned to a new owner who would restore its former place in the neighborhood.

However, their hopes were dashed a few weeks later when Persaud petitioned Hennepin County to repurchase the property. The community, including adjacent homeowners and residents of East Isles and East Isles Residents Association, united in opposing his petition. Dozens wrote letters and appealed to the County Auditor to find a new owner committed to improving the property.

Several neighbors testified at a hearing, which Persaud did not attend, urging the court to either auction the property to a new owner or impose stringent conditions on Persaud for its restoration. The City of Minneapolis also provided testimony, outlining a history of nuisance complaints associated with the property.

A month later, Derrick Hodge, Senior Administrative Manager for Hennepin County, ruled that Persaud could repay \$63,000 in overdue taxes and reclaim the property without restriction. This decision, despite the noted strong community opposition, was based on a 1938 Minnesota Supreme Court case emphasizing the protection of property ownership against tax forfeiture, even in cases of owner negligence.

Coincidentally, the Persaud decision came a few months after a U.S. Supreme Court ruling against Hennepin County in another prop-

erty seizure case (*Tyler v. Hennepin County*). All nine justices, in a rare unanimous decision, criticized the county's overreach. It is easy to speculate that such a high profile and national scolding of this same Hennepin County department played into the auditor's decision in the Persaud case.

As of now, Persaud owns the property. According to statements in the county's posted directive, Persaud testified that he plans "to renew construction permits, rehabilitate the property within 6-9 months, and use it as a summer residence."

Many people are hopeful he follows through on these plans, but many remain skeptical, especially considering the home's purported structural issues. It has incompatible dual limestone and concrete foundations. The necessary repairs might be prohibitively expensive, potentially necessitating a complete tear down and rebuild.

Since Persaud reacquired the property on October 2, 2023, there has been little evidence of the promised improvements. Some initial yard and interior clean-up occurred, but the property continues to deteriorate, with broken windows, dozens of trash bags left to animals and unshoveled sidewalks.

Some wonder what Persaud's rationale may be.

It can seem financially wasteful to pay these taxes each year and not live in the home.

However, for those with sufficient cash flow, it can be a lucrative strategy.

In real estate circles it's known as "demolition by neglect," whereby a home is allowed to degrade, keeping its property taxes manageable low while the land value appreciates. After many years, the dilapidated building can be demolished, and the land sold for a significant profit over the original purchase price and minimized annual property taxes.

That may be this property's future.

While a multi-million dollar abandoned property is unusual, the issue of vacant and abandoned properties is a widespread concern in Minneapolis, especially for buildings that could be used for affordable housing.

In 2023, the City Council considered an ordinance to increase the VABR fine from \$7,000 to up to \$24,000 per year. The intent behind the proposed increase was to make demolition by neglect more costly for the owners to facilitate the sale of such properties and their return to housing stock sooner. However, the ordinance was not put to a vote.

The saga ends for now. Persaud's hold on the property is free and clear unless tax delinquency becomes an issue again.

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LOWRY HILL NEWS – February 2024



FEBRUARY WALKING CLUB

Saturday, February 24, from 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
 Meet at Sebastian Joe's – FREE coffee provided

Join us for a friendly walk around the neighborhood! This is a great way to stay active and get outside, meet neighbors, pick up litter, and build community. This walk will meet at Sebastian Joe's and there will be free coffee on LHNA. If it's too cold to walk, come for coffee anyway!



MARCH LHNA BOARD MEETING

Tuesday, March 5, from 7 p.m. - 9 p.m.
 Kenwood Community Center

All residents are welcome. If you have questions or would like to be on the agenda, please email us at lhna@lowryhillneighborhood.org.



STAY IN THE KNOW FOR SNOW

Information about snow emergencies and sidewalk snow clearing can be found at minneapolismn.gov/getting-around/snow/. Be sure you understand snow emergency parking rules and sign up for alerts so you don't miss anything. Help keep our neighborhood safe and accessible by following sidewalk snow clearing rules. Property owners are required to clear sidewalks of snow and ice. Single-family homes and duplexes must clear sidewalks within 24 hours after it stops snowing. All other properties must clear sidewalks within 4 daytime hours after it stops snowing.

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Everyone's Entitled to my Opinion: It's Crunch Time, Folks

By Susan Lenfestey



Empty sidewalks, empty bike lanes, empty bike racks, empty streets, empty storefronts — can Hennepin Avenue between Lake Street and 31st Street be fixed with the upcoming Hennepin Avenue redo? (Photo Craig Wilson)

Susan Lenfestey is a regular columnist and founder and current board member of the Hill & Lake Press. She lives in Lowry Hill.

I seem unable to get off of Hennepin Avenue — writing about it, that is. And because we are all going to have to get off of Hennepin in the next two years, literally, this seemed like a good time to learn more about what's in store.

As most readers know, despite best efforts to convince some in the city to reconsider aspects of the hotly contested plan, it is going ahead. We will have bike lanes and bus lanes and fewer car lanes and more left-turn lanes.

At one time, over 90% of on-street parking was to be removed for 24/7 bus lanes, but thanks to a veto by Mayor Frey, upheld by Council Member Lisa Goodman and the moderates on the City Council at that time, curbside parking will be permitted in the bus lanes in off-peak hours.

Phase 1 has started, and it will run from Lake Street to 26th Street. Phase 2 will start in 2025 and run from 26th Street to Douglas Avenue.

If you've been on Hennepin between Lagoon and 26th lately, you've likely seen the first signs of construction. Xcel is installing energy duct banks — the housing that encloses electrical cables and other wiring — along the east side of the corridor, and one lane has already been closed to accommodate that work.

To follow the schedule and know what to expect, go to the project web page, <https://www.minneapolis.gov/government/projects/hennepin-ave-s/>

Once there you can download various PDFs about the project and sign up to receive updates and notification of monthly stakeholder meetings via email.

While public input during the planning phase of this project was minimal, leaving many merchants and residents feeling unheard, the engineering phase is an open book.

Project manager Don Elwood, Director of Transportation, Engineering and Design for the Public Works, says he is aware of how important it is for residents and businesses to know what to expect.

He and Adam Hayow, Senior Professional Engineer for Public

Works, will provide information and encourage feedback and questions as the process unfolds. Remember, they didn't design this boondoggle, it's their job to make it happen.

Elwood is no stranger to Hennepin Avenue, having overseen every block of its reconstruction from the Mississippi River to 36th Street.

But even he couldn't tell me if there is any truth to the rumor that the city will use this opportunity to correct the mistakes made in the 2018 makeover of Hennepin, south of Lake Street, a project so disastrous to the commercial fabric of Uptown that even Becca Hughes, the city planner responsible for that project, acknowledged in an April 2021 article in the Star Tribune, "That design has not worked well."

Hughes, who no longer works for the city, went on to say that public works planned to restore some on-street parking between Lake and 31st Street "this spring."

That was three years ago.

It's time to give the merchants of Uptown a lifeline. They deserve enormous credit — and our support — for keeping their doors

open despite challenging times and the city's gaffe.

If you support returning commonsense curbside parking on Hennepin, from Lake Street south to 36th Street, make your voice heard.

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Neighborhood Trivia Night

Story and photos by Tim Sheridan

The first Neighborhood Trivia Night at Taberna was a huge success with teams from Cedar-Isles-Dean, West Maka Ska and other nearby neighborhoods. While the trivia game was fun, the best part was neighbors connecting with neighbors. Thank you to Taberna for hosting and to Cedar-Isles-Dean and West Maka Ska putting this great event together!



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Tuesday, December 12 | 11 a.m.

History of Medicine by Historian JB Andersen



Wednesday, January 24 | 1 p.m.

The Scam Landscape: Staying Safe
by Scott Nelson of AARP



Saturday, February 10 | 10:30 a.m.

Spirituality and Evolving Role of Church
by Mark Scannell



Saturday, March 16 | 10:30 a.m.

Selling Your Lakes-area Homes
by Ted Field of Edina Realty and Estate Law
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Local Agencies Harness Technology to Promote Healthy and Resilient Urban Forests

By Brian Lammers



Some of the largest trees on Hennepin Avenue will be cut down with redevelopment plans along the corridor. Pictured here is 2415 Hennepin Ave. S., which will be demolished to make way for a 32 studio apartments above two floors of office space with six parking places and 32 long term bicycle spaces. (Photo Craig Wilson)

Brian Lammers is an East Isles resident and Minneapolis parks, trails and lakes enthusiast.

**“He who plants a tree,
plants a hope.”**
— Lucy Larcom

Minneapolisans are rightly proud of our parks and lakes and the trees and wildlife living in protected urban natural areas. In its 2023 study, The Trust for Public Land ranked Minneapolis third among park systems in the 100 most populated areas in the U.S. The City of Lakes’ businesses and institutions — even the name of this newspaper — identify with the natural beauty of our city.

Trees provide shade and habitat diversity, improve air quality and contribute aesthetically to our neighborhoods. The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) counts 200,000 boulevard trees and 400,000 park trees on public lands. Thousands of additional trees shade backyards, businesses and other private property.

Trees At Risk

Increasingly, these trees compete — sometimes unsuccessfully — with residential, commercial and industrial development and suffer from stressors such as inva-

sive species, contaminants from air and water pollution and extreme weather exacerbated by climate change. Trees are often removed to construct public works projects.

Due in part to their unique setting at the convergence of the Anoka Sand Plain, Big Woods and St. Paul Baldwin Plains ecological systems, the Twin Cities host one of two urban Long Term Ecological Program (LTER) research sites studying urban ecology across multiple disciplines. MSP-LTER is funded by the National Science Foundation and includes the University of Minnesota, the University of St. Thomas, the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service and a number of community organizations among participants. Resilience of urban forests is a focus of their research, with the objectives of maintaining diverse and mature tree canopies and promoting equal distribution of trees throughout the Twin Cities.

MSP-LTER’s research utilizes innovative technology to evaluate forest health, both above and below ground. MSP-LTER’s researchers employ remote sensing tools like satellite imagery to characterize forest health and diversity. The resultant data can inform how local agencies and com-

munities manage their urban trees.

Local Expertise

Sally Donovan is an East Isles resident, Ph.D. candidate at the University of Minnesota, and researcher at MSP-LTER. At a neighborhood coffee shop, she recently noted the following: “We use multispectral aerial imagery to analyze tree count and cover, trunk thickness and species richness at the canopy level and litter depth and composition at ground level. Using this remote sensing technology, we can make determinations of forest species diversity and individual tree health.

“Every square foot of urban natural areas competes with other uses. Using advanced technology can potentially allocate scarce resources more effectively to benefit our urban forests. For example, our data on the location and composition of leaf litter could inform where and when city street sweeping could be optimized to reduce nutrient loading in our lakes.”

Tree Keepers

MSP-LTER researchers are generating and analyzing increasing volumes of urban forestry data. A challenge remains in organizing and sharing data in ways that are accessible and useful to the various stakeholders promoting healthy urban forests.

Local government agencies are also exploring how technology can support forest management. MPRB Forestry uses a tree inventory management software called Tree Keeper and uploads the location of all the city’s newly planted trees to brewingabetterforest.com, sponsored by Modist Brewing Company.

“At Brewing a Better Forest, each neighborhood can determine the geographic location of new trees and organize supplemental watering,” notes MPRB District 4 Commissioner Elizabeth Shaffer, a Lowry Hill resident. “I get excited about combining data and technology to crowd-source resident support for their neighborhoods ... watering new or stressed trees, storm drain-cleaning, trash pick-up and other activities.”

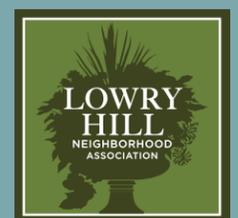
MSP-LTER’s research and MPRB’s community outreach marry advanced technology, rich tree and forest data and IT platforms to engage communities and inform policy and forest management practices. These models of collaboration are helping improve the diversity and resiliency of urban trees to withstand stress from climate change and other environmental factors, and strengthen the competitive standing of our urban forests relative to other uses.



Hill & Lake Press

The Hill & Lake Press is a non-profit newspaper funded and supported by its advertisers and neighborhood associations:

- East Isles Neighborhood Association (EINA)
- Cedar-Isles-Dean Neighborhood Association (CIDNA)
- Kenwood Neighborhood Organization (KNO)
- Lowry Hill Neighborhood Association (LHNA)



Local Neighborhood Organizations Host Large Public Safety Meeting

By Marty Carlson



Top, left to right: Mayor Jacob Frey speaking at the information meeting, Assistant Chief Katie Blackwell; 5th Precinct Inspector Christie Nelson. Bottom, left to right: Ward 7 Council Member Katie Cashman, Mayor Jacob Frey. (Photo Tim Sheridan)

Marty Carlson is a regular columnist and lives in Kenwood.

The neighborhood organizations of Kenwood, Lowry Hill, East Isles and Cedar-Isles-Dean jointly cohosted a public safety informational meeting at the Kenwood Community Center on Friday, January 26. Guest speakers included Mayor Jacob Frey, Park Police Chief Jason Ohotto, Minneapolis Assistant Police Chief Katie Blackwell, Fifth Precinct Inspector Christie Nelson, Council Member Katie Cashman and community safety walking group organizer Aileen Johnson. Despite being a Friday evening, it was a standing room-only crowd, estimated at roughly 200 people. The audience was attentive, energized and engaged.

Speaking first, Mayor Frey touted recent reductions of 20-25% in several violent crime categories, along with an overall decrease across most categories. He acknowledged, however, that a “massive” spike in crime during 2021 and 2022 meant that even with these decreases, the city is still far removed from the pre-pandemic standards set in 2018 and 2019.

While the number of Minneapolis police officers remains at a troublingly low level, the mayor expressed confidence in his current public safety leadership team, including community safety commissioner Toddrick Bannette and Police Chief Brian O’Hara. As for replenishing the ranks of officers, Frey said the effort would require a multi-pronged approach, including active recruitment of promising

candidates, approval of a new union contract, mounting a publicity campaign and taking steps to retain existing officers.

Newly elected council member Katie Cashman spoke next, stating that public safety was her top priority. Cashman said she had done two nighttime “ride alongs” with local police officers and touted the new MPD consent decree as an important reform tool. She stated that a new union contract is the best way to get more police officers in the city, and also reported that while downtown appears to have made significant progress in improving public safety, Uptown needs substantial improvement.

As a general matter, the audience signaled broad and enthusiastic support for the guest speakers. The only two deviations from this were related to comments by Cashman. In the first instance, Cashman — on her own initiative — raised the council’s recently-passed Gaza ceasefire resolution, which she voted for. When she prefaced her comments by stating that some constituents had suggested the conflict was not the council’s business, the crowd erupted into loud and sustained applause, repeating that applause a second time after Cashman restarted her comments.

In the second instance, Cashman received several pointed audience questions about police funding, including whether she supported defunding the police, and whether she would vote for recruitment and retention bonuses if given the opportunity. Cashman said she did not support de-

funding the police, but hesitated on the question of bonuses, eventually stating that she would support them if “the data supports it.” Asked to cite an example, she spoke of one initiative that would make payments to officers after a delay of several years, but cited no examples in which she would support immediate bonus payments. That resulted in some audible dissension. At the end of the gathering, she acknowledged that more money was needed for officers, but also took pains to note she was not part of the city’s negotiating team for the police union contract.

Assistant Police Chief Katie Blackwell spoke next, outlining the multi-year process for becoming a Minneapolis police officer, emphasizing the great need for additional officers, and the importance of creating recruitment and retention incentives.

Fifth Precinct Inspector Christie Nelson followed. In a detailed and data-driven presentation, she noted double-digit decreases in violent crime categories for the beginning of this year versus last year. Property crimes remain a problem, and Inspector Nelson again emphasized the importance of taking commonsense steps like not leaving unoccupied vehicles running, and not leaving valuables in plain view.

On a completely upbeat note, Inspector Nelson reported that a precinct officer recently spotted and apprehended a suspected copper thief; a subsequent search of his vehicle found a vast quantity of spooled copper wiring, which should give some satisfaction to residents of areas that have suddenly gone dark due to the theft of streetlight wires.

Next up, Park Police Chief Jason Ohotto reported that violent crime in parks remains low but flat, while property crimes decreased by 25%. He also stressed the importance of removing valuables from parked vehicles, including credit cards(!). In a hat-tip to final

speaker Aileen Johnson, Chief Ohotto cited Loring Park as an example of how collaboration between community organizations and law enforcement can be transformative. Highlighting a Loring Park safety walking group started by Ms. Johnson, Chief Ohotto said that while Loring Park had long been one of the most violence-prone parks in the city, it was now “not even close” to being in the top tier.

Safety walking group founder Aileen Johnson was the night’s final speaker, and reported there are now eleven such groups operating in the city, including Lowry Hill and East Isles. A new Kenwood group will hold its inaugural walk on February 8, at 5:30 p.m., meeting at the Kenwood School playground (not the train park). Along with creating a culture of safety consciousness and neighborhood involvement, Ms. Johnson said that an important collateral benefit are the friendships these outings foster.

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**Hill &
Lake
Press**

**SINCE 1976
BRINGING YOU
THE NEWS
'WHERE THE
BIGGIES
LEAVE OFF...'**

HILL & LAKE PRESS PRESENTS THE LISA GOODMAN EDITION: THANK YOU FOR YOUR 26 YEARS OF PUBLIC SERVICE!

“The Notable Quotable Lisa Goodman”

By Susan Lenfestey



Hill & Lake Press' Susan Lenfestey and Lisa on Mackinac Island. (Photo Anonymous)

Susan Lenfestey lives in Lowry Hill and is a regular contributor to the Hill & Lake Press. She co-founded the paper in 1976 and serves on its board of directors.

Lisa Goodman's retirement from the City Council garnered lots of ink in the biggies, and with good reason. Lisa represented Ward 7 for 25 years, longer than some of her constituents have been alive.

The Strib, MPR and MinnPost documented her many achievements, from food trucks, sidewalk cafes and dog parks to her work on historic preservation, affordable housing and the Climate Equity Plan. She has much to be proud of.

The Hill & Lake Press, which has covered her career from swearing-in to signing-off, decided to talk with Lisa about her reflections on being in office and leaving office, and to let her tell it (mostly) in her own words.

The Backstory

Lisa's background of working on Paul Wellstone's senate campaign and later as executive director of the Minnesota organization then called NARAL, the pro-choice lobbying group, made her appear too radical for some in the ward. Although as she points out, she had the support of many pro-choice Republican women who had worked with her on reproductive rights — something unimaginable in today's Republican party.

But she did not have the support of her DFL predecessor, Pat Scott, who endorsed her opponent,

Robert Landis, running at the time as a Republican. As is often the case with Lisa's opponents, he later became a friend.

She attended a meeting of local pols to discuss who should run in the Ward 7 and discovered that she was one of few people in the room (and one of two women) who hadn't already run — and lost. "I was an accidental candidate!" After defeating a few challengers, she was elected to the City Council in 1997 at the age of 31.

"In that way I'm really not very different from the younger people of today, so I understand them, and I don't begrudge them for some of the things they do."

Representing a Complex Ward

Ward 7 has been redistricted three times during her tenure, but it has always remained a diverse blend of neighborhoods from downtown residents and businesses to Loring Park, Elliot Park and Stevens Square, to the neighborhoods around the lakes — including those served by the Hill & Lake Press. "It's overwhelming the way it's districted!

"You just do your best to represent the interests of all your constituents.... The city is about basic services, so everything else is an extra. You try to make sure the street is plowed, the garbage is picked up, that it's safe and that we have fast responses to emergencies.

"People would call me, upset, they often began, 'I pay taxes!' or 'I voted for you!' and I'd say, 'That's great, now how can I help

you?' I liked to make people believe that government will listen to them and get things done."

Accomplishments

"There are many! But my passion has always been helping low-income people with housing. It took me five years to convince Project for Pride in Living to partner with Youth Link to build housing to go along with the services that Youth Link was already providing to kids, many of them homeless. It's now called Downtown View and it's one of the most successful housing partnerships in the city."

Uptown

"I have a lot of regrets about not getting more involved in what was going on in Uptown. I was actively involved and very vocal in fighting the street redesign, but regret how Uptown has changed economically, and I regret that I didn't get myself more involved as I did with all things downtown. I paid no attention to the canary in the coal mine because it wasn't in my ward, and I didn't have any say in it. (Three corners at Hennepin-Lake are in the Ward 10, the northwest corner is in Ward 7.)

"One of the problems in that part of Uptown is the ongoing change in leadership in the 10th Ward. There have been six council members representing Ward 10 in the seven terms I served. That's a whipsaw for business owners, property owners and the city.

"The city does itself no service by considering Uptown and other allegedly more affluent areas to be 'fine.' I really think Uptown is in a situation where it is not okay, and it is a challenged part of town. I'm a big fan of market value but I think the government should get involved where the market has failed. In Uptown, for a variety of reasons, the market has failed. That does require additional intervention."

Public Safety

"The number one job of local government always has been and always should be ensuring the safety of the public. Period. Hard stop. You will never have successful economic development, or redevelopment, without public safety. That is the job of local government. Police, fire, public works.

"As we have moved farther left, we have gotten into all sorts of other issues. It's convenient to say, 'our policing system is broken,' which it is, but that's true of many places in the country. We have to stop making excuses for our broken policing system and work with other cities who are having success in how to fix that.... Clearly, we have a problem with the way we do public safety, and it's generally

tied up with the unbelievable number of guns in our country, which has made us an embarrassment around the world.

"Everybody wants to work on all these other issues, which is great. But we really don't have the luxury of doing that until the city is safe.... Public safety, public works, and good schools. And parks. Those are the main things we should be focused on."

Policing

"For starters we have to pay police officers who are legitimately addressing constitutional policing, meaning doing it right, a lot more money. Minneapolis ranks 18th statewide in starting pay for officers and 21st for veteran officers. We in the community need to invest in the people — including teachers — who do these very important jobs.

"We need to hire more women and more people of color who have experience that gives them a better perspective about what it means to protect and serve. But they are not going to be attracted to our department if they are not paid well."

"We have 130 police officers who are eligible to retire in the next two years! This is an existential crisis. And that's why this strategy of 'we're going to have all these things other than policing' is not a long-term solution."

Leaving Office

"The level of vitriol spewed against elected officials on social media has made it very difficult to handle the stress. We have moved into a government of intimidation, being shouted down at meetings, approached in public and at home. But I'm not walking out sad. Mostly it's my age and my lack of willingness to be harassed and intimidated every day. Local government is wonderful because you're close to people, but that takes an emotional toll. Maybe it is a job for the young!"

"Overall, I am very hopeful about the city because I believe that cities are resilient. While working on the Climate Equity Plan, it became clear to me that we are moving to the model of people doubling down on cities. Climate change is real and ultimately flight to the suburbs is not sustainable.

"So, this is a cyclical situation with crime, with development, lack of investment in cities. But I am very positive about the city. Cities bounce back.

"To bring it full circle, I was that 30-year-old person who tried to shake up the status quo, and so I don't resent the younger members of the council. I just wish they were more respectful — but maybe I wasn't that respectful at that time either!"



Lisa getting sworn into office in 2018. (Photo City of Minneapolis)

“
 What do you say in a couple of sentences about this dynamic woman? Lisa has been an incredible steward of our city. This has been shown to us over and over in her love for Minneapolis. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.
 ”
 – Meg Tuhill,
 former Ward 10 Council Member

“ No single conversation with Lisa stands out more than when I served as communications committee chair of the Strong Schools Strong City Referendum and called for her public support. I got just a few words out before there was a billowing of concerns, doubts, frustrations and let’s just say fury from my phone, reflecting Lisa’s well-informed point of view. Having known Lisa for so long, I just shut my mouth and listened. Point by point we discussed, agreed that her commitment was a part of the solution. She was instrumental in carrying the message to the public that resulted in a 73% passage of doubling the tax levy. It came as no surprise that Lisa came through. Beneath her explosive expression of passionate concern for this critical public issue, Lisa proved to be a wonderfully sound and steady ally.”
 – Steve Kotvis

“
Lisa, always the willing matchmaker, introduced me to my husband. At the time, she told me, ‘I expect that I’ll be invited to your wedding.’ She was!
 ”
 – Tom Hoch



Lisa pictured with her policy aides over the years — from left, Patrick Sadler, Doug Kress and Douglas Gardner. (Photo Anonymous)

“ Twenty years ago, I was Lisa’s intern while a grad student at the U. I learned many things from Lisa but the most important was that the best politicians actively listen to their constituents and represent them, not their own personal agenda. I think that’s a key reason why Lisa was such an effective council member.”
 – Craig Wilson, Editor

“ Lisa is a passionate and dedicated person for her constituents, friends and family. She is one who listens and cares deeply about her work. She took the time to learn, do her homework and understand the issues presented and was prepared. Look around Minneapolis and you will see her work across the City. When Lisa talks, people listen — a true leader. It was an honor to be part of her tenure, knowing we made a difference.”
 – Doug Kress, Ward 7 Policy Aide



Lisa with Hill & Lake Press Editors Jean Deatrick and Craig Wilson. (Photo Craig Wilson)

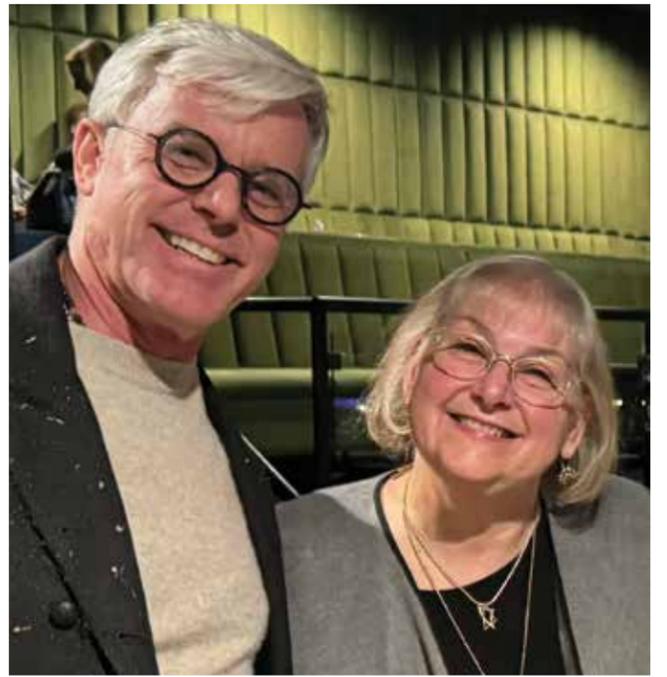


Lisa and her beloved dog, Sadie. (Photo Anonymous)

“ My cat Fatima is a gentle and friendly sort: when company arrives, she comes to greet them and will sit primly on a chair across the room. But she’s not a sit-on-your-lap-friendly’ with anyone but me. And yet, she was on Lisa’s lap in less than ten minutes. The sole exception in her nine years of life — and the lap of an avowed dog person no less! Lisa has that way.”
 – Thomas Regnier



The Ward 7 office in 2018: Policy Aide Patrick Sadler, Office Associate Ruth Hamann and Lisa. (Photo Anonymous)



Hill & Lake Board President Mike Erlandson and Lisa in 2023. (Photo Mike Erlandson)



Lisa Goodman is a gem! She is a public servant in the best sense of that phrase — she communicates with constituents, she listens to them, she made it her goal to provide the best constituent services in the city. When I became Park Board Commissioner, I tried to model Lisa’s public service behavior because I always considered her to be the ‘gold standard’ — and I still do! Those of us who were represented by her, and those of us who worked with her, know that Minneapolis was lucky to have Lisa. And I consider her to be not only a colleague but also a dear friend.

– Anita Tabb, former District 4 Park Board Commissioner

“
Lunching with Lisa at Milda’s Cafe was always a deep dive into history making and future dreaming — with a dash of here’s what’s next. Pure vitamins for the soul and a great big ‘to do’ list was the logical outcome.
– Mark Ritchie
”



Lisa giving lap time to one of her favorite constituents, Leo, in 2016. (Photo Craig Wilson)

“
Years ago, I came across a brief news item about an effort Lisa Goodman was spearheading to build a dog park on a vacant lot across from my home. My dog and I — we walked. So, I called Lisa. ‘Why do we need a dog park?’ I asked, to which she replied, ‘Are you crazy?!’ Now this is something that you do not want to say to a constituent. And yet, I thought, this is a woman after my own heart. A meeting with Lisa and a group of neighbors followed. We talked. She listened. We got the dog park, but in a nearby park. My dog visited daily. Sometimes Lisa and Sadie, her exuberant moppet of a dog, showed up. Lisa and I talked, and the dogs romped. I can’t remember if I ever told her how right she was, that dogs do, indeed, need a place to run. I do recall that she was too kind to remind me of my resistance. So, thank you Lisa, for your vision, not just on behalf of dogs, but on behalf of all your constituents, crazy and otherwise.
”

– Miriam Karmel



Office Associate Zach Shultz and Lisa in 2020. (Photo Craig Wilson)

“
There used to be a traffic circle at Fremont and 22nd Street but it was removed due to many complaints. At that point, there were no stop signs on 22nd Street between Irving and Hennepin. Geoffrey and I recall the constant car crashes at the corner of Emerson and 22nd Street. After watching numerous dogs get maimed or killed, and kids (almost) killed and car crashes galore, we emailed Lisa. She arranged a traffic study regarding the corner and fulfilled our wishes to put in a four way stop sign. Of course, folks still don’t do the full ‘pass the driver’s test’ stop, but they do slow down and look both ways. Most likely that’s saved a few animals and humans (and car dents). Thanks Lisa!
”

– Geoffrey & Randi Kvam Hellman

“
Ed Pluimer and I put together a neighborhood group to support a candidate to run after Pat Scott retired. At that time, I think Lisa was running third among the candidates who were vying for the DFL endorsement. We decided to back her. What attracted us about her was that she was smart, had the best interests of the neighborhood and city in mind and it was clear that she would be independent in her thinking. Over the 25 years she was in office, I think she was true to all those qualities!
”

– Lew Remele



RESOLUTION
 CITY OF MINNEAPOLIS - A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
 By: Payne, Wonsley, Rainville, Vetaw, Ellison, Osman,
 Goodman, Jenkins, Chavez, Chughtai, Koski, Chowdhury, and Palmisano

Honoring Council Member Lisa Goodman for Her Years of Service to The City of Minneapolis

Whereas: Lisa was first elected in 1997 and reelected six additional times giving her a historic twenty-six years serving as the City Council Member for Ward 7 and the distinction of being the longest serving council member of all time for the City of Minneapolis. She has worked with 4 mayors and 49 different council members; and

Whereas: Lisa set a high standard for constituent services, expecting all calls and emails to be answered in a timely fashion, answering the majority of her own email from constituents; and

Whereas: Lisa has helped grow the residential population of downtown Minneapolis which has more than doubled since she took office; and

Whereas: Lisa took a strong stance against debt by changing the City's practice for Tax Increment Financing (TIF) to only be used where there is market failure or for affordable housing. She also led the effort to sell City-owned parking ramps for development which also helped eliminate city debt; and

Whereas: Lisa helped reorganize the Minneapolis Community Development Agency (MCDA) into the Community Planning and Economic Development (CPED) division bringing these elements together for a more streamlined and efficient department for the City of Minneapolis; and

Whereas: Lisa was instrumental in initiating the first green infrastructure for the City of Minneapolis authoring ordinances to allow for the installation of solar arrays and green roofs. She led the effort for green roofs on the Downtown Library, City Hall, and the Target Center; and

Whereas: Lisa was a key player in the restoration of the downtown theaters and the creation of the Hennepin Theater Trust. She organized a deal that left the City with no risk while creating a thriving district to bring people into downtown from across the region helping enhance the City's dining and bar scene and increasing the city's tax revenue; and

Whereas: Lisa worked with community partners to move the Shubert Theater onto Hennepin Avenue where The Cowles Center was established as a dance and performing arts hub; and

Whereas: Lisa collaborated with the Downtown Council to establish the Downtown Improvement District (DID) which provides ambassadors for visitors and residents that offer general assistance, additional cleaning and greening, and increased public safety throughout downtown; and

Whereas: Lisa was a key player in the renovation and revitalization of Nicollet Mall and Peavey Plaza, a historic landmark next to Orchestra Hall. The updated plaza is now more user friendly, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible, and much more environmentally sound; and

Whereas: Lisa was heavily involved in the expansion and updating of the Minneapolis Convention Center which boasts international sustainability standards providing a destination for conventions to be held that brings activity throughout the City and vitality to the local economy; and

Whereas: Lisa served on the implementation committees for the new City of Minneapolis Public Service Building, Target Center renovation, and the Downtown Central Library; and

Whereas: Lisa was active in upgrading and renovating the Loring Greenway which connects downtown Minneapolis to Loring Park. She also helped establish the Loring Greenway Association which is a group of local volunteers that manage and maintain the plantings along this pedestrian mall; and

Whereas: Lisa helped organize what is now the North Loop Neighborhood Association that created an identity for the growing area of the warehouse district which is now a thriving neighborhood sought after for living, shopping, and entertainment; and

Whereas: Lisa was instrumental in the relocation of the Guthrie Theater and the MacPhail Center to the Mississippi Riverfront which was the impetus for the development of the Mill District; and

Whereas: Lisa negotiated with Allina to sell their vacant hospital and parking lot by Loring Park. The historic building was rehabilitated and a new apartment building was built which helped increase the tax base and allowed Allina to begin construction on their new heart hospital; and

Whereas: Lisa saw the need for a grocery store in downtown Minneapolis, so she recruited Lunds & Byerlys to open a downtown location; they have now been joined by Whole Foods and Trader Joe's; and

Whereas: Lisa established the Minneapolis Affordable Housing Trust Fund which has grown throughout the years providing thousands of units of affordable housing and leveraging millions of dollars from private capital and other government agencies; and

Whereas: Lisa helped create the Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing Preservation Fund which helps housing providers and emerging real estate developers acquire unsubsidized housing to preserve affordability and prevent displacement. Lisa was also instrumental in creating the 4d Program which provides a property tax incentive for rental property owners that agree to keep their rental units affordable at 60% of the area median income (AMI); and

Whereas: Lisa co-authored the Section 8, anti-discrimination ordinance along with the ordinance that reestablished the ability to have Single Room Occupancy (SRO) units in the City of Minneapolis; and

Whereas: Lisa challenged Youthlink leadership to create affordable housing instead of providing mats on the floor for homeless youth. She connected them with the appropriate partners and helped shepherd the Downtown View Project to completion; and

Whereas: Lisa was approached by community members that wanted to create a tiny village for people experiencing homelessness. She believed in their vision and connected the appropriate people and advocated for money from several private and government agencies to create Avivo Village; and

Whereas: Lisa, having a desire for downtown Minneapolis to have dog parks, established a non-profit that built three dog parks. She subsequently led the lobbying efforts that allowed dogs on sidewalk cafés and in brew pubs. She changed the policy to allow Animal Care and Control to adopt out bully breeds and initiated the removal of adoption fees for City residents; and

Whereas: Lisa has received numerous awards for her leadership and dedication to historic preservation. She has personally helped save dozens of historic properties. In addition to her work on the downtown theaters, she worked on the Armory, the Handicraft Guild, the Dayton's Project and Oaklands on 9th along with the creation of the Ninth Street South Historic District and the Harmon Place Historic District; and

Whereas: Lisa led the effort with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board to develop the twenty-year parks funding plan for neighborhood parks; and

Whereas: After 26 years of service to the City of Minneapolis, Lisa's accomplishments are too numerous to list here and the positive impact she has had on our City will continue well into the future;

—NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED—

The Mayor and City Council do hereby present this Honorary Resolution in recognition of their sincere gratitude and appreciation for the many contributions made by Council Member Goodman to the Seventh Ward and to the City of Minneapolis, together with their best wishes for her future endeavors.

Passed this the Seventh Day of December 2023



Lisa embraces a constituent. (Photo Anonymous)

Thomas Lowry Park: Save The Seven Pools — Part Two: 1984-2024

By Josie Owens



Artisan workers from Florida recreated the pools with a variety of skilled trades. The work was largely done by hand. (Photo Mark Tierney)

Josie Owens is a regular columnist focusing on art and history. She lives in Lowry Hill.

In 2019, signs started appearing in yards throughout the Lowry Hill, Kenwood and East Isles neighborhoods — Save the Seven Pools.

Two years and a pandemic later, the neighborhoods celebrated the completion of the Seven Pools restoration on September 25 and 26, 2021. What seems a straightforward and streamlined project was full of headaches, problems and obstacles. However, once again, Thomas Lowry Park was saved thanks to the hard work of a dedicated group of volunteers as well as some good luck.

A Passive Park

In 1984, the small public park at the intersections of Mount Curve, Colfax Avenue and Douglas Avenue was renamed Thomas Lowry Park, honoring the Lowry Hill resident who gave generously to the Minneapolis park system.

Although small, the park was highly trafficked. Its beautiful design by Phelps Wyman with the seven pools flowing down from the pergola was a popular site for leisure and celebrations.

Jeremy Nichols fondly reminisced, “When Evelyn and I decided on an outdoor wedding, the seven pools were a unique and lovely setting. Our wedding was on June 23, 1979. It rained all day. The sun came out a couple of minutes before 6 p.m., shining brightly on our wedding. There was a dozen or so people there for about a half hour. None had seen anything like this little park. We return to the pools every June 23 at 6 p.m. to commemorate our marriage.”

Many people recall splashing

and swimming in the fountains on a hot day, especially before air conditioning was common. And, of course, there is the confession of sneaking some beers up to the park as teens on a summer night. When a place has this special history and has been part of the community for years, it is a shock when things are abruptly upended. Such a change loomed in 2018 as the park was in a dire state.

The pools had mechanical components that required attention and repairs over the years. In the fall, the water had to be turned off and, in the spring, turned back on. This meant finding “the guy” as there seemed to be one guy at the park board who knew how to work the aging machinery.

The Facelift

In 1994 the park received a much-needed grant of \$300,000 as part of the Neighborhood Revitalization Program, commonly referred to as NRP, to add additional brick paths, iron benches, fresh landscaping, an irrigation system and more lighting. Local landscape architect and neighbor Damon Farber led the design solutions that refreshed the park.

But by 2003 a budget crisis caused the park board to shut down the water in the seven pools. The neighbors rallied again and raised \$8,500 to keep the water on for the season. In 2004 the installation of a re-circulating pump saved millions of gallons of water per season. Each year saw a few more repairs.

At this point, dedicated volunteers were ready to create an auxiliary charitable organization to focus on the ongoing needs of the park. In 2008 The Friends of Thomas Lowry Park was incorporated as a 501(c)(3) Minnesota nonprofit under the leadership of

Barry Lazarus, Barbara Fogel and Sara Peterman.

Craig Wilson, who was serving on the Lowry Hill Neighborhood Association at the time, was able to partner with the Friends board to secure additional funding for irrigation, additional plantings and an urn that was later dedicated to Barbara Fogel for her decades of service to Thomas Lowry Park in 2015.

Over the years, the Friends board settled into a routine of maintenance — planting seasonal plantings and the occasional trees with all too frequent irrigation repairs — led by Suzanne Payne and a cast of volunteers, but every spring there was a perennial battle to get the fountain flowing.

The Tipping Point

When the Roman philosopher Seneca said, “luck is what happens when preparation meets opportunity,” he could have been thinking of the restoration of Thomas Lowry Park, as a perfect storm of preparation, luck and opportunity transpired.

In June 2018 the water had still not been turned on in Thomas Lowry Park, and it appeared that the pump system could no longer be repaired. Fortunately, Elizabeth Shaffer and Craig Wilson both became board members of Friends of Thomas Lowry Park that summer and provided important knowledge, resources and vision.

At that time, Craig had recently been recruited by Sarah Janeczek to rejoin the neighborhood board. Sarah, a well-known political pundit, loved her Lowry Hill neighborhood and believed that money should be used for the public good and that Craig could be a great partner in this endeavor. Craig and Sarah were co-chairs of

its Neighborhood Revitalization Committee, but sadly, Sarah died soon thereafter.

Craig was alerted by city staff and local representatives that the neighborhood organization had a large amount of unspent funds that needed to be used or lost. This serendipitous discovery provided an opportunity to fix the fountain for another 100 years.

When Craig approached the Friends board with the idea either to fix permanently or replace the fountain, the idea was initially met with skepticism — apart from Elizabeth Shaffer, who was open to, and advocated for, the possibility.

As a consultant to the park board, Craig knew to approach Michael Schroeder, the assistant superintendent of planning. Michael agreed that a study should be done to determine the best course of action, and Lowry Hill agreed to fund this first step.

Simultaneously, the park board entered into a planning process for 43 neighborhood parks in southwest Minneapolis bordered by 394 in the north, 35W in the east, 62 in the south and France Avenue in the west. Craig was appointed by area neighborhoods to represent them on the Park Board’s Community Advisory Committee, commonly referred to as a CAC. This role enabled Craig to advocate for Thomas Lowry Park.

When the CAC members visited different parks, Craig made sure that they toured Thomas Lowry Park so he could share the history and emphasize its distinctiveness as a passive park — without a recreation center, playground or sports facilities like many other neighborhood parks. The CAC readily grasped that it was worthwhile to preserve a neighborhood park that is focused on quiet activities and serves as a community gathering spot.

The Sandstorm

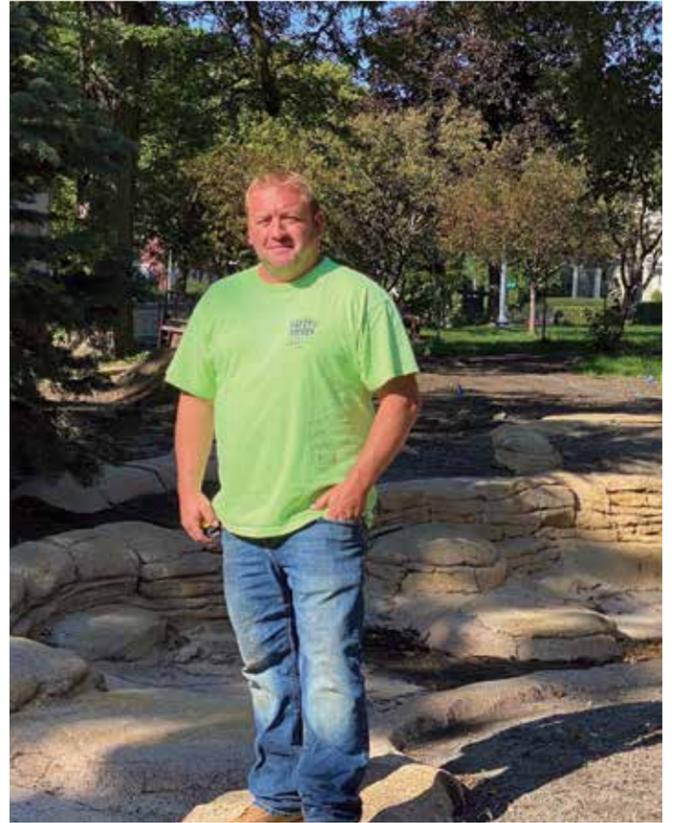
In October 2018, the park board consultants shared their plan for fixing the problems at Thomas Lowry Park. The consultants suggested a practical solution for removing the liability of the fountain and providing low-cost recreation. They did not focus on the history and importance of the original design when they proposed that the wading pools be filled in with sand and large boulders added for a “nature play” feature. It seemed that the treasured 100-year-old design of tranquil waterfalls would end.

As in 1922 when a hotel threatened this piece of land, the community was spurred to action. “Consultants to the park board did us a huge favor by presenting conceptual plans to fill in the fountain with sand. It mobilized community action and kicked our efforts into full throttle. It was perfect timing with its audacity. Even my fellow committee mem-

Continued on page 16



Paver options considered by Friends of Thomas Lowry Park. (Photo Craig Wilson)



John Brown, Project Lead from Global Specialties. (Photo Elizabeth Shaffer)

bers from throughout the southwest were dumbfounded by its insensitivity to local desires and historic context,” explained Craig. He convinced the committee to reject the sandbox concept and support the historic Seven Pools fountain and traditional layout and passivity of the park.

By this time, Elizabeth Shaffer had become the president of Friends of Thomas Lowry Park, and the board — Barry Lazarus, Kathy Gaskins, Suzanne Payne, Paul Pender, Craig Wilson, Jeanne Scheiderer, David Piper, Tom Trondson, Mark Tierney, Shirley Cardozo, Kathleen Bottini and Kobi Conaway — were fully committed to the vision to save the pools.

The group offered the park board another possibility — what if three sources of funds were combined to reach the required amount? The Lowry Hill money, the park board’s money and a third source raised by the Friends board could get it done.

The park board accepted this proposal to preserve the passive historic park. There was no time to lose. Craig executed on the study, mobilizing Lowry Hill’s

funding and aligning political support; Elizabeth Shaffer jumped into fundraising and building a campaign.

On November 16, 2018, Aune Fernandez Landscape Architects presented its report including three possible design options. FTLP liked the option that kept with the original park design. But it was also the costliest option. FTLP now had their financial goal and set out to reach it.

Neighborhood Solidarity

In order for the Lowry Hill Neighborhood Association to allocate the \$300,000 of NRP money, a neighborhood-wide meeting was required to vote and approve. On February 5, 2019, Lowry Hill neighborhood residents filled Kenwood Community Center to hear, discuss and vote on the motion that “...a major plan modification in Neighborhood Revitalization Program monies reallocating up to \$300K for use to replace the Seven Pools Fountain at Thomas Lowry Park.”

Craig employed the practical and emotional points into his speech. “For so many of our Lowry Hill residents in this area, they

don’t have yards and Thomas Lowry Park is their only green space oasis. I think the soul of the park, and frankly our neighborhood, is the Seven Pools fountain. A future without it is simply sad.”

The neighborhood agreed and passed the motion nearly unanimously. With the initial funding secured, The Friends board embarked on an ambitious and highly successful campaign to raise funds while navigating the park board’s approval process, which was led by Elizabeth Shaffer.

All was going according to plan. And then, the pandemic brought the city to a halt.

The Luck of the Pandemic

To hear of something going faster or without delay in 2020, the year of the pandemic, is highly unusual. However, that is just what happened with the restoration project of Thomas Lowry Park.

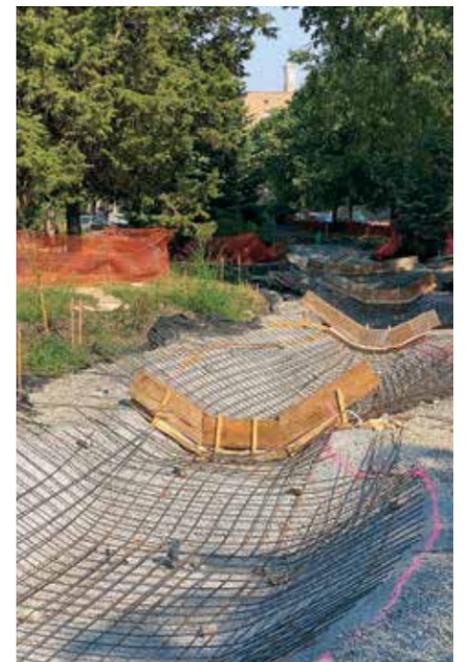
Fundraising received help as people who were working at home and unable to go to gyms were walking the neighborhoods, appreciating nature, and seeing the Save the Seven Pool signs. Donations started to come in.

Elizabeth Shaffer’s passion for the project and organization were critical during the pandemic. She kept everyone positive and motivated. All board members worked very hard to secure the necessary contributions and make wise decisions that impacted the project — an amazing combination of expertise, passion and camaraderie.

There was speculation that Elizabeth had a second home in the park as she seemed constantly to be there sharing the story and soliciting donations when she wasn’t at some other neighborhood event doing the same. Her energy was contagious, eventually leading her to seek office and represent the area as the District 4 Park Board Commissioner.

What motivated her? Commissioner Shaffer clarified, “for me, leadership is simply service to the people and needs that are around me. The Seven Pools are a half block from my home and were a community need that many of us wanted to give back to.”

By the end of the campaign, Friends of Thomas Lowry Park received donations from over 350 donors from 13 different states. Jean Stern Newman mailed her



Left to right: Outcropping of old wall was left as a sample for the artisans to match the original design of the pools; This demo wall was used to communicate what the surface of the pools would look like; A grid of rebar supports the pool beds. (Photos Elizabeth Shaffer)



Left to right: The Thomas Lowry Park plaque is located in the garden north of the arbor; The Seven Pools plaque is located in the garden south of the arbor; Century Club Donors, those who gave \$10,000 or more, are acknowledged on a plaque near the lower pool. (Photo Craig Wilson)

donation from Virginia and included a photo of her brother, mother and herself at Thomas Lowry Park in 1948.

Many people found creative ways to raise money. Twelve-year-old neighbor Hallie chose Friends of Thomas Lowry Park and Seven Pools as the donor organization for her bat mitzvah.

Patricia Kasimor, one of the many donors from The Kenwood, was the oldest contributor at age 95.

Suzanne Payne, current Friends board president and the park's long-term volunteer maintenance chief remarked, "it is hard to put into words the love I have for this park and the gratitude I have for all who accomplished its preservation. It really was a special time in history — this park's dire future, the world pandemic, a strong board of leadership at Friends of Thomas Lowry Park and the Park Board. Not sure this could have been executed so well at any other time."

The Big Dig

As other constructions projects ground to a halt, popular contractors and builders were now available. The required three bids for replacing the fountain were easily obtained. The unanimous choice for the project was Global Specialty Contractors. On October 22, 2020, FTLP delivered an initial payment to the park board for \$62,500.

In April 2021, the community gathered with a large sign that said "100 More Years" as the fencing went up and the demolition began. Suzanne Payne recalls that it was so dramatic with all the jackhammering and digging it up and "hard to imagine that it would be put back together again." However, infrared studies removed any surprises about what lay underneath. The incredible crew easily adapted their experience building amusement parks and zoos.

By August, the Seven Pools were taking shape. The community had the fun of watching Glendon Spencer and his artisans from Florida, with John Brown and his Global Specialty Contractors team, spread and sculpt one pool a day.

The ground is molded and prepared with gravel, a fine film of shot-crete is sprayed over the gravel to help hold it in place, the rebar is added, the main spraying of the concrete forms the bowls of

the pools, which includes drainage pipes for each pool that will be opened and emptied from pool to pool and back to the storm sewer at the close of the season.

Funding also supported the much-needed replacement of pavers to improve safety, which was managed under the watchful eye of FTLP board member Mark Tierney after inconsistencies in quality assurance arose.

In just six months, the restoration project was completed with an official celebration on September 25 and 26, 2021, led by Friends board member Kobi Conaway, a professional event planner.

On October 8, 2021, Jeanne Scheiderer and Paul Pender, the remarkable financial team behind the project, presented the final check to Jon Duesman of the park board.

An Odd Event

After the pools were completed, the landscape needed some attention. There was debate about whether a tree or a bench would best commemorate Sarah Janecek and her love of the park.

A delivery of plants arrived, and in the group was a tree that no one had ordered. When fall came, the hearty tree's leaves were a fiery red and people knew that this was Sarah holding court over her beloved neighborhood, so it was donated in her honor.

The Final Touch

Interestingly, the part of the project that seemed to take the longest were the historic plaques.

Craig felt that the Century Club donor plaque lacked context, so he suggested additional plaques that would better explain the unique features and history of the park. The board concurred and Craig was able to secure funding from the neighborhood organization to support the project.

However, finding the perfect concise wording for such a massive community project and what has been explained in this lengthy article was a challenge.

Eventually the wording was approved by the park board's historian and two historic plaques were finally installed in the spring of 2023.

A Lasting Legacy

There are few places in our highly technological world that feel timeless. Thomas Lowry Park is one.

The activities today are the

same ones that have always been enjoyed in the park. If you see a toddler splashing in the pools, kids playing tag, a couple holding hands on the bench, a volunteer planting tulip bulbs, or some teens sneaking alcohol on a summer evening, it is a shadow of those who did that same activity last year, last decade, last century.

With this restoration, donations and selfless volunteer hours,

Thomas Lowry Park has the proven method to secure its ageless existence for the future residents of and visitors to our idyllic Lowry Hill.

Please join the FTLP volunteers on the second Saturday of each month from April to October! For more information on volunteering or donating to the park, please visit thomaslowrypark.org.



Signs thanking donors and festive fall mums frame the view of the revitalized Seven Pools at the park's opening event. (Photo Craig Wilson)



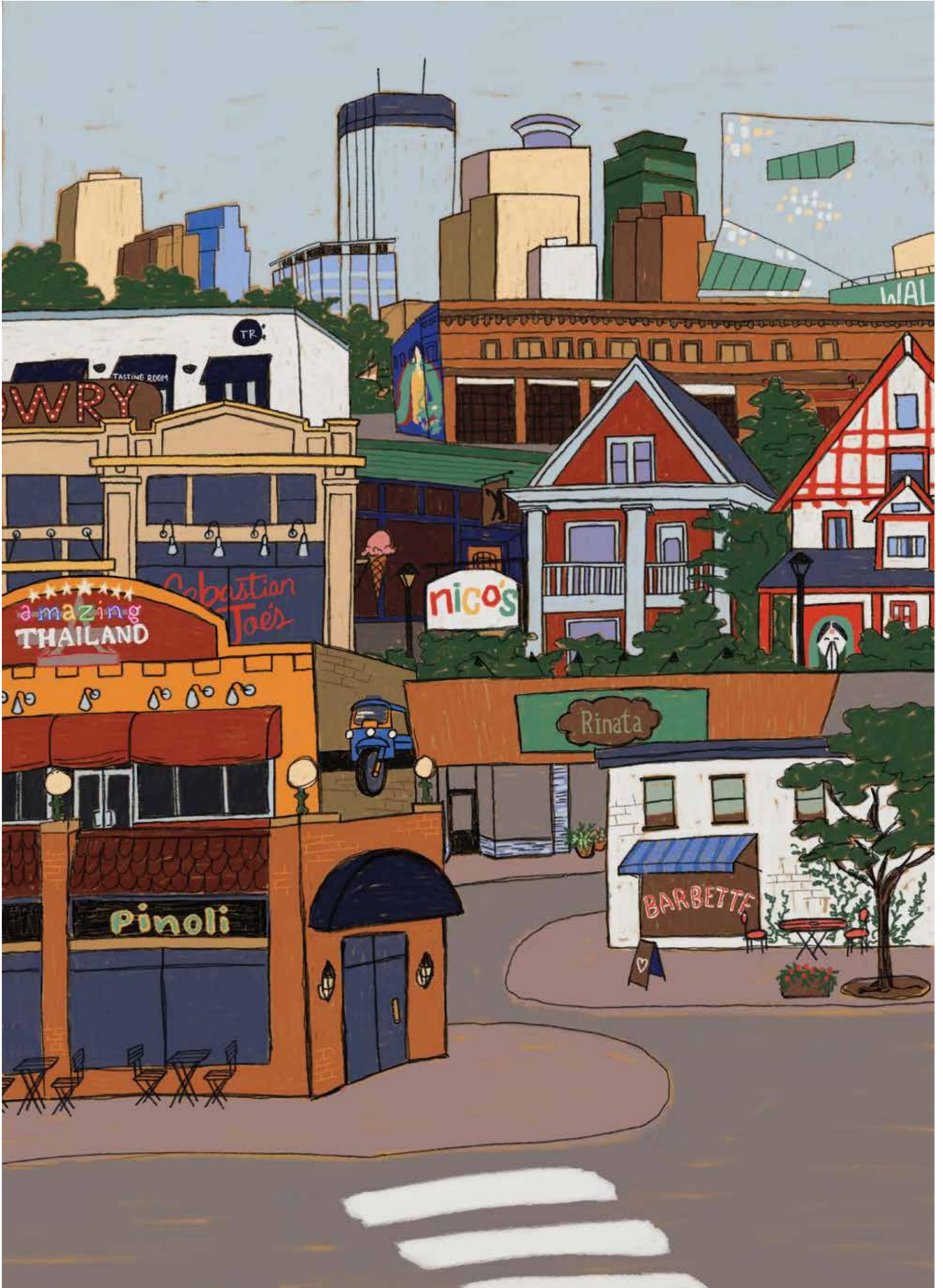
Hallie, who lives with her mother in an area apartment, viewed the park as her backyard green space. She supported the effort by donating proceeds from her bat mitzvah to the Save the Seven Pools effort. (Photo Suzanne Payne)



Photo display of the construction process at the park opening event. (Photo Craig Wilson)

Keeping it Local on Valentine's Day

By Alida Mitau



Celebrate Valentine's Day in Hill & Lake-landia! (Illustration Tierney Anderson)

Alida Mitau grew up in Lowry Hill and returned after living in Chicago for several years. She attended college in Amherst, Mass. where she was the Arts & Living editor of The Amherst Student. She now has a career in marketing and communications.

In the depths of winter, some may think of Valentine's Day as a 24-hour flicker of light in the darkness — a day to celebrate love in its many forms, and something to look forward to that isn't spring. Others may think of it as a made-up holiday popularized by the greeting-card industry to increase revenues. I am relatively neutral on the topic.

In my adult years, for whatever reason, I've historically been on bad terms with whoever I'm dating when Valentine's Day comes around. As such, I have yet to participate in the whole Valentine's Day shebang, which I imagine as dinner out somewhere with a special menu and some exchange of chocolates, flowers and maybe even a cringey teddy bear.

Perhaps the most memorable Valentine's Day I've had was in high school, when my boyfriend at the time had forgotten about the holiday until I gave him a card. In an attempt to scrounge up something special for me, he ordered a heart-shaped Papa John's pizza — a valiant effort. Sadly, the pizza didn't wind up coming heart-shaped (it probably got lost in the onslaught of orders that day), but I'll never forget the way he eagerly opened the box while exclaiming "surprise!" only to be met with a very regular pizza. This display left me in tears from laughing, and we still managed to have a lovely evening.

Despite the pressure many feel on Valentine's Day, it doesn't have to be a whole shebang, and there are plenty of ways to celebrate it. Whether you're a hopeless romantic who can't help but love the theatrics of the day, you're diametrically opposed to Valentine's Day as a concept, or you consider February 14th "Singles Awareness Day" instead, one way to observe the holiday is by supporting local neighborhood businesses. Here are a few ideas worth your consideration:

Barbette
(1600 W. Lake St.)

This charming restaurant has a romantic atmosphere all year round, with its welcoming and eclectic décor, not to mention the fabulous French food that tastes as if it arrived on your plate straight

from Paris, the city of love. Barbette has yet to release its Valentine's Day menu, but there will be one, and reservations are open now with a \$15 deposit that will be applied to your final bill. Notably, they offer many gluten-free and vegetarian options, and they have strong partnerships with a number of local farmers.

Pinoli
(1601 W. Lake St.)

This relatively new Italian restaurant located just across the street from Barbette offers an array of Italian dishes, pizzas and desserts. If you go to their website, you may be prompted to "Celebrate love with Pasta at Pinoli," which includes a link to make a reservation for Valentine's Day. Pinoli already has a date night deal every Wednesday: a four-course dinner for two for just \$52. Valentine's Day falls on a Wednesday this year, so this might be the perfect place to celebrate with a friend or romantic partner. They also have gluten-free and vegetarian options, not to mention the largest selection of Amaro in town.

Lake & Irving
(1513 W. Lake St.)

For something a little more casual, but just as delicious, this gastropub serves American classics and other bites that are "approachable but interesting," in a comfortable and relaxing atmosphere, with exceptional hospitality. Whether you're going with a special someone or a group of friends, my guess is you'll leave happy and satisfied.

Kim's
(1432 W. 31st St.)

The buzz around this new restaurant by James Beard award-winning local chef, Ann Kim, is warranted. The food is "a unique blend of bold Korean flavors with nods to the Midwest," served in a stylish backdrop, with vegetarian and gluten-free options. Kim's doesn't usually take reservations, but they just released their special five-course Valentine's Day prix-fixe dinner for \$75 per person, which is reservation-only. The special menu features scallops with gochujang, kimchi, cucumber and fresh herbs; black truffle with mornay, rice cakes and gam-tae seaweed; and grilled kalbi with mixed grain rice, banchan, kimchi, ssamjang and lettuces. A great option for those of us who might be feeling a bit "bougie."

The Tasting Room
(1434 W. 31st St.)

This intimate local wine bar, located just down the street from Kim's, would be an

ideal place to spend Valentine's Day with a couple of friends or a romantic partner. The vibe is inherently romantic, with a selection of wines and French-inspired tapas, not to mention exceptional hospitality. Nico, the owner, was born in Burgundy and raised in Champagne and Provence, and he was seemingly destined to thrive in the world of wine and food. With The Tasting Room, he strives to "create an experience, a connection with everyone who walks in our doors and chooses to spend a moment with us."

The Kenwood
(2115 W. 21st St.)

Many a reader's favorite neighborhood restaurant — the Kenwood, cozily situated on West 21st Street and Penn Avenue South, is offering a special Valentine's Day tasting menu for \$120, featuring oysters, beef tartare, scallops and beef short rib. For those of us willing to spend a little extra for their valentine, I'm sure the food will not disappoint. They also recently began serving special cocktails in addition to wine and beer.

Rinata
(2451 Hennepin Ave. S.)

This Italian restaurant nestled on Hennepin Avenue & 25th Street is one of my personal favorites. It's great for a date night, a night out with friends or a family meal. The intimate atmosphere feels as though it could be a hole-in-the-wall, classic Italian restaurant in New York City, and the food is just as good. The menu features seasonal specials made with local ingredients, as well as classic Italian cuisine, including handmade pasta, freshly baked focaccia and a careful selection of wines.

More options on Hennepin Avenue and beyond:

Nico's Taco and Tequila Bar
(2516 Hennepin Ave. S.)

Nico's is always a hit. One can only hope that they deck the space out with Valentine's Day decorations akin to their impressively festive Christmas ones. An exceptionally fun place to enjoy good Mexican food with a date or friends.

Namaste Café
(2512 Hennepin Avenue S.)

A "values-oriented restaurant that operates on the strength of its commitment to sustainable practices, superior quality, fostering community, hospitality, and bringing a flavor of the world to your doorsteps," this would be a great local spot to support on Valentine's Day. In an

intimate and relaxing setting, you might enjoy sipping on the best Chai in town, a specialty cocktail, or noshing on some delicious curry, among many other options.

Amazing Thailand
(3024 Hennepin Avenue S.)

With potential plans to offer a special drink and some Valentine's Day décor, this would be a fantastic option for Thai food lovers.

Kiku Bistro
(2819 Hennepin Ave. S.)

Kiku Bistro is a locally-owned Asian restaurant featuring innovative sushi rolls and traditional stir-fries, teriyakis, and tempuras. They feature fare for the experienced sushi aficionado, as well as the guest seeking to explore new cuisine. Located in the heart of Uptown, they have a great happy hour.

Red Cow
(2626 Hennepin Avenue S.)

Special enough for a date night, yet comfortable enough for a fun night out with friends and family, Red Cow offers reliably scrumptious burgers in a casual atmosphere.

Wakame
(3070 Excelsior Blvd.)

With daily happy hour deals and probably my favorite sushi in town, Valentine's Day at Wakame would not disappoint — plus they are open for lunch and dinner.

The Lowry
(2112 Hennepin Ave. S.)

The Lowry offers it all — from "Burgers, Whiskey, Oysters, (to) Eggs." And with ample parking and reliably good food, what a perfect spot for a laid back Valentine's Day brunch or dinner.

Sebastian Joe's
(1007 W. Franklin Ave.)

What better way to celebrate Valentine's Day than with ice cream? In my opinion, Sebastian Joe's has the best ice cream in town, period. Last year, they offered a limited Valentine's Day flavor and a special cake. Let's hope they do the same this time around. A perfect option for a quick date, or if you're just grabbing something sweet to enjoy at home by yourself.



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The Spirit of Community Shines at the Luminary Loppet

Article by Susan Lenfestey — Photos by Rich Harrison



Susan Lenfestey is a regular columnist and founder and current board member of the Hill & Lake Press. She lives in Lowry Hill.

The Luminary Loppet, this year on February 3, has become one of the highlights of our legendary long winters, now less long and sadly snow-free.

For one magical night thousands of people bundle up in multiple layers of clothing and ski — or waddle — out onto Lake of the Isles to experience the wonder of fire and ice.

A ski trail lit by 1,400 ice luminaries loops the lake like a string of pearls on dark ice. Luminary Lane is made up of 800

teardrop ice lanterns suspended overhead and swaying in the wind. The Enchanted Forest is a small point of land illuminated by tiny votives hung in the branches over an array of ice sculptures, frozen into mushrooms or other fantastical forms, all lit by candles from within.

There are larger showstoppers like Iceropolis, Ice Henge and the Ice Pyramid, not to mention fire dancers, ice bands and bonfires. And, at the south end of the lake, a beer garden with live music, if you're of age and inclination.

All of this depends on an army of volunteers. The Luminary Loppet is the brainchild of several Hill & Lake neighbors

who over the years have developed Rube Goldberg contraptions to fill those 1,400 luminary buckets and 800 teardrop balloons efficiently, and figured out the science of freezing water so that all the forms remain hollow in the inside for candles. We'll

profile those generous geniuses in a future issue of the Hill & Lake Press.

These are photos of the hardy volunteers who turn out weeks in advance to help make it all happen. From those who build and fill the large forms, to the bucket and balloon brigades who assemble at dark and make short work of their icy task, it's community at its best. The camaraderie and

creativity of the whole operation warms the heart, even as the fingertips freeze.

To experience the Luminary Loppet please register at www.loppet.org. Please note that a ten-day stretch of sub-zero temps has resulted in lake ice that is thick and safe, but the thaw that followed may result in a few changes to some icy elements planned around the lake. But nothing can change the spirit or the beauty of this magical night under a dark city sky.





Hill & Lake Press

It's "I Love to Read Month" at Kenwood School!

By Michelle Kemp



The Kenwood School Book Fair is located in the school's Media Center. (Photo Anonymous)

Michelle Kemp is a Kenwood School parent and co-president of the PTA. She lives in Kenwood.

Throughout February, Kenwood Woodchucks will celebrate "I Love to Read Month" with Spirit Days, a Read-A-Thon fundraiser and a Book Fair. Members of the community are invited to support the kids and their school by sponsoring students in your neighborhood for the Read-A-Thon and donating new or used foreign language books to be used in Kenwood classrooms.

Read-A-Thon gets kids reading!

Kenwood School's annual Read-A-Thon runs February 14-28 with the goal of getting kids excited about reading. Students record the minutes they read (or

someone reads to them) and receive fun prizes for doing so. All participants are rewarded and have the goal of reading at least 20 minutes a day (300 minutes total). Top prizes go to the kids who read the most minutes, raise the most money, and one lucky random drawing winner. 100% of proceeds go to the Kenwood PTA to fund art residencies, inclusive school community gatherings, field trips and more.

Neighbors can support Kenwood's largest fundraiser event of the year by sponsoring the hard-working students in your neighborhood with a pledge per minute or a flat donation. Students will collect your pledge dollars from February 28 through March 1. Pledges of \$20 or more may be made on the Kenwood

PTA website at <https://kenwoodpta.square.site/> or with the QR code below (use your smartphone camera to scan — please note that if you use this option, it is important to list the student you're sponsoring in the "order note" prior to checking out).

Book Fair Open to Students, Parents, and Caregivers February 14-15

In partnership with Scholastic, Kenwood School is once again hosting a Book Fair during the week of February 12. Students will have the opportunity to shop with their class during the school day. Parents and caregivers can shop on Wednesday, Feb. 14 from 4-6pm and Thursday, Feb. 15 from 9:15 a.m. - 6:30 p.m. in Kenwood's Media Center. A portion of the proceeds from the book fair will go toward enhancements to the Media Center like additional books, software subscriptions, electronics, and most recently, vlogging equipment which will allow students to create a news program to be shared within the school.

Non-English Language Books Needed!

Like all schools in the area, Kenwood has welcomed a significant number of students with a first language other than English, most notably Spanish, but also

Ukrainian, Dari and Pashto. The school is seeking donations from the community of gently used books in Spanish, both fiction and non-fiction, that would be suitable for elementary school students. Examples include: "Diary of a Wimpy Kid," "Harry Potter," "DK Eyewitness Books," "Dogman," "The Baby-sitter's Club," beautifully illustrated picture books, and engaging books about dinosaurs, space, planets, animals and natural resources. Donations can be delivered to the main office and will be used to expand classroom library book selections. Thank you for supporting our students during "I Love to Read" month!





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- *Beach and neighborhood clean-ups
- *Gardening at Park Siding Park
- *Serving on our Board and committees

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Monthly Board meetings:
Wednesdays, March 13 or April 10 at 6:00pm

May Day Basket Making:
Tuesday, April 30 time TBD

Annual Board Meeting and Elections:
Wednesday, May 8 at 6pm

All events take place at Jones-Harrison Senior Living

Are you interested in learning more about CIDNA or signing up to volunteer? Come to one of our monthly board meetings or check out our website:

<https://cidna.org>

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Dear Neighbor

A monthly column by Dorothy Richmond

Dorothy Richmond is founder of the Dear Neighbor column and a longtime resident of Cedar-Isles-Dean.

Dear Neighbor,

It's February and Valentine's Day is anon, the day dedicated to love. Since Hallmark, Fannie Farmer and your favorite florist have it covered in deeds, and poets and playwrights provide eloquently in words, I'll step aside. Instead, let's talk about like.

I don't like "like."

Not in all ways, certainly. As a verb, it's fine: I like chicken. I don't like George Santos. And it's OK as a simile's comparative: George is sly like a weasel, and people say he looks like Rep. Harriet Hageman (R-WY). These are fine, actually purposeful, uses of like. It's the gratuitous "like" that has spread like a virus that makes me crazy.

When I was growing up "y'know ..." was the bane of my parents' generation. My mother called me out for my overuse of the term, which annoyed me then and for which I'm grateful now.

"Like" is a different breed of cat. While "y'know" usually precedes a complete sentence, "like" is often used, like, anywhere. While it has no designated part of speech, "like" gets thrown around in sentences everywhere, as if it were every part of speech (and then some). By gum, it's linguistic anarchy, I tell you!

If you like don't know what I like mean, like listen to Kim Kardashian like speak. A while back, Kim was in some bizarre form of law school (never completed), and I often imagined judges' wading through Kim's

Valley Girl Speak and throwing her out for contempt, if not of court, then of language.

"Like" is a filler word. Filler words are languages' spam and equally annoying, virtually demanding that the listener press "delete" with each issuance. They indicate a lack of confidence and respect for articulate speech.

This is a PSA for all budding and blooming like-aholics. No doubt your parents and teachers have wished you'd stop. But, as all adolescents (and I) know we don't bow to our elders' admonitions, rather to our own whims and wants. This might help you curb the appeal of "like."

I've been on hiring committees. I recall one in particular several years ago. The candidates already had been whittled down to two, both stellar on paper, and I expected the decision to be difficult. Until the interviews.

Candidate #1 answered every question eloquently and asked pertinent questions. (Lookin' good, number one.) Candidate #2 answered every question and asked pertinent questions, but each utterance was littered with "like." As in like nearly every like other word. I thought I'd lose my mind working with and listening to this barrage of unnecessary wordage every day, especially as our field was language instruction. My colleagues were not so kind in their assessments (I cannot quote theirs in this publication).

The decision was swift and unanimous: Candidate #1 got the job.

One of my college professors told the class, "Language is the vehicle of thought: Sloppy speech indicates a sloppy mind." In

other words, speak intentionally and say what you want with confidence borne of careful thought and reasoning.

Along with a solid work ethic and strong moral compass, nothing reveals who you really are and what you're all about than how you speak and express yourself. Not your clothes, your car, your watch, your house, your lineage. In the end, these things all are fluff.

So, get out there, work hard, be honorable and, to paraphrase Nancy Reagan's slogan for the War on Drugs, just say no to "like."

— Dorothy

P.S. For more on this topic, Google "Luke Priddy, Valley Girl is a Mind Virus" on YouTube. It's brilliant and insightful.



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GINNY CRAIG LIT UP THE ROOM

By Jim Lenfestey



Ginny Craig (Photo Craig Family)

Jim Lenfestey is a longtime columnist and co-founder of the Hill & Lake Press. Jim lives in Lowry Hill.

Light-filled neighbor Ginny Craig passed away on Christmas morning, age 78, after a multiple year battle with ovarian cancer. When it came back for the third time she had had enough. And oh, have the city lights dimmed.

The Hill & Lake Press neighborhoods knew her well, after she and husband Will Craig moved onto Sheridan Avenue in 1971 to live and work (Will at the U) and raise their

two children, son Josh and daughter Jessie. She taught middle schoolers for seven years, and Ginny's greatest love was education, says Will, adding that no volunteer activity was safe from Ginny's energy and enthusiasm.

But the best for our Hill & Lake Press community was when she volunteered for the Hill & Lake Press as a writer and to take part in our wild and woolly and hilarious layout sessions back when the media were rubber cement, IBM typewriter typescript and Let-raset rub-on headlines.

Many a late-night dining room session was leavened by Ginny's energy and enthusiasm and kickass sense of humor, and of course her writing and editing chops, which she later parlayed into positions with the park board and the Minneapolis public schools communication department. When she took on the mantle of volunteer Hill & Lake Press editor it was more of the same, the paper filled with neighborhood and school news and humor, on time and on budget (if we had a budget).

Ginny Craig lit up the room. Yes, she was a daughter of Austrian immigrants and a radiant beauty, the pride of Little Canada, but that wasn't it. It was her laugh, her bright eyes, her inclusive personality. You wanted to be working with her and her infectious energy 'til three in the morning.

Or running the Minneapolis public schools YES campaign for the successful public school referendum. Or raising scholarship money with the American Association of University Women (AAUW), of which she was once president. Or you wanted to improve city parks by rebuilding the Lake Harriet band shell and adding restful benches

around city parks, two of her projects as executive director of People for Parks (now Minneapolis Parks Foundation).

We are all going to the Yellow Springs at the end of this life, as the Chinese say, and Ginny dealt with that better than most. We will meet her again at the Great Layout Session in the Sky for more hilarious and productive confab, many more good works, and a good cry for our beloved neighborhoods much ennobled by her angelic presence and diminished by her earthly absence.

The last public education project Ginny nailed was at the AAUW, where for four years she headed the college scholarship program that currently supports 13 female Minneapolis public schools alumnae with four-year, \$4,000 per year scholarships plus a mentor for their entire college career. At the annual AAUW fundraiser just this past November 11, she raised \$16,500 in scholarship donations.

A memorial service for Virginia Sherman Craig will be held at the Gale Mansion, home of the AAUW, this spring, date TBD. Watch this space. It is righteous to assume that we attendees will be tapped for donations to public education, and we will dig deep.

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