Low barrier housing
RS Eden employees envision filling Amber Apartments with tenants who are working but don’t make enough to afford market-rate housing—even what’s labeled as “affordable.” Maybe they’re working at a couple of part-time jobs. Or, they work next door at Walgreens or Cub as a cashier earning minimum wage.

“We will allow them to continue in the process of working and being responsible citizens, and not have to spend 50% or more of what little income they have on rent,” stated Cain.

Residents at RS Eden apartments often can’t pass background checks and don’t have high credit scores. So RS Eden offers “low barrier housing.”

According to RS Eden Vice President of Supportive Housing Lois Mueller, “Many of the people we meet have histories that have resulted in multiple barriers to securing housing, making it easy for landlords to screen them out. RS Eden’s commitment is to ‘screen people in.’ We look for reasons to believe that a prospective tenant will make it, and become a good neighbor.”

RS Eden focuses on creating intentional communities in their buildings. “We look for people who have buy-in to a culture of pro-social values and beliefs,” explained Cain. “They may not have always been that, but now they want to contribute to the community and take responsibility for their own lives. There are any number of barriers that people have had to overcome to make that full leap from where they’re coming to where they’re going.”

He added, “It’s breaking the cycle.” Right now there are some people who aren’t being served by the housing projects RS Eden already offers as they aren’t technically homeless because they’re...

Program focuses on seniors at risk of isolation and loneliness

By JAN WILLMS

It is nearly 5pm on a Monday, and Longfellow resident Jim Buskirk is anticipating a visitor. He is looking forward to conversation and a challenging game of tic, a card game similar to gin rummy.

Emily Wildberger has finished her work day as a project manager for Target Corporation. She is nearing the due date of her pregnancy and is tired and ready for a nap.

But all those feelings disappear as she looks forward to meeting her friend Jim, hoping that this evening she might actually win a card game with him.

Buskirk and Wildberger are part of a program initiated by Little Brothers Friends of the Elderly (LBFE), 1845 E. Lake St. The mission of the organization is to end social isolation and loneliness among older adults in the Twin Cities.

Although the program of visiting companions has always been a part of LBFE, a new project, Neighbor Connect, is starting now in the Longfellow neighborhood.

“Through Neighbor Connect, Longfellow community members will forge a path toward creating isolation-free blocks to ensure everyone, even those who live alone, are connected and feel a sense of belonging,” said LaAnne Speeter, communications director for LBFE.

Both Wildberger and Buskirk can attest to the benefits of connecting with each other. They began their visits last January.

Continued on page 3...
Affordable housing project
Continued from page 1

staying with a mom or brother or friend. Amber Apartments will provide a place for those people, said Mueller.

When RS Eden opens a new building, they often find that police calls go up in the area. It’s not because there is more crime in the RS Eden building, but because the residents of the RS Eden building are calling in about the crime they see in the streets around their homes, observed Cain.

One of the first steps RS Eden took in getting this project off the ground was to visit with the Longfellow Community Council and garner support.

“We look for a neighborhood that will support the transition for people to become involved in their communities,” stated Cain.

It wasn’t until the LCC Neighborhood Development and Transportation Committee approved the project that RS Eden purchased the property.

Five-story, 80 unit building

Amber Apartments will be located on the property that now houses the Bell Laboratory building, just north of Walgreen along Hiawatha Ave. and kitty-corner from the upcoming Snelling Yards housing development. It does not include the historic Flint Fountain structure.

The five-story, 53,950 square-foot building will sit on one acre. It will include 80 efficiency units that range from 418 to 518 square feet. A parking lot will have 40 spaces, or roughly one space per unit, and there will be inside storage for bicycles. One-third of the property will be green space along what planners hope will soon be the Min Hi Line linear park.

The entrance to the building will be off 45th rather than Hiawatha. The building will sit directly across from the 46th St. light rail station, and planners expect that most residents will not have a car. It was the proximity to a light rail station and A Line Bus Rapid Transit that drew RS Eden to this site.

“For low-wage workers, the expense of owning and operating a dependable car presents an extra barrier to success, but not having a car means not having access to jobs, health care, and other necessary amenities,” remarked Mueller.

Cain hopes that the city will consider constructing a pedestrian bridge near 45th and Hiawatha to serve residents, including high-density housing projects at Amber Apartments and the Snelling Yards site.

Donations needed

Amber Apartments is being named after Cain’s daughter as a legacy project to honor the 46 years he’s been with the organization. The majority of the $18 million cost of the project will be covered by various grants and low-income housing tax credits, but RS Eden needs to raise $700,000. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)

Amber Apartments is being named after RS Eden President and CEO Dan Cain’s daughter as a legacy project to honor the 46 years he’s been with the organization. The majority of the $18 million cost of the project will be covered by various grants and low-income housing tax credits, but RS Eden needs to raise $700,000. Donations can be made via the website at www.rseden.org.

Planners expect Amber Apartments to be fully funded by the end of 2019, and to start construction shortly after that. It will take 10-11 months to complete.

An affordable housing crisis

Minneapolis is in high need of affordable housing, according to Mueller, who pointed out that the city is in need of tens of thousands of affordable housing units according to a study by the Dougherty Financial Group. The definition of affordable housing is housing costs that are 30% of a person’s income. To afford rent payments of $700-$900 a person must make between $2,100-2,800.

Rental vacancies in the Twin Cities have dropped to 2.4 percent while the unemployment rate has dropped to 2.9 percent resulting in low rental vacancies and strong rent growth, according to the Dougherty study. Meanwhile, the compensation for private market workers in 2017 increased just 1.4 percent, making it difficult for low-income wage earners to find housing.

“There has been a lot of attention recently on the homeless encampment along Hiawatha Ave., but we’ve been facing a crisis in homelessness far before those tents went up—it just hasn’t been quite as visible,” remarked Minneapolis City Council member Andrew Johnson. “The Amber Apartments proposal helps address this crisis by creating some units for homeless individuals and families, along with providing necessary support services, such as helping them get and keep jobs. It also creates additional units that help address the affordable housing crisis hitting many major cities, including ours, with runaway rents that push working families out and destabilize their lives.

“We need more development proposals like this and I am thankful to have RS Eden as a partner in these efforts.”
They raised three children. Buskirk said she worked as a mailman, later being promoted into management. "I did that for 35 years, also," he said.

Buskirk has a great love of sports, which he shares with Wildberger. She, in turn, has taught him about dogs and love of fantasy fiction. "Being a mailman, Jim did not like dogs very much," she said.

Wildberger said she went through some training and received a little bit of information about Buskirk. "We went out for dinner, a couple of times, at Carbone’s and Applebee’s," she said, "so you could see if you liked me. And I guess you did."

These days, with Wildberg-er’s advancing pregnancy, they usually meet at Jim’s house and play cards and video games. "We don’t really have that much in common," Wildberg said. "But that’s good because we can learn new things from each other. I am learning about baseball, basketball, and football. And Jim is an expert on TV shows."

For his part, Jim has learned about her husband and the little pink house they share with her dog. And he has met her brother, Drew, who came over to play cards with them one day.

"So having these connections is what LBFE is all about," according to Speeter, the organization started in Paris in 1949 and has at times been promoted as the Longfellon United States in 1959. It opened in the Twin Cities in 1972. As well as helping form friendships between elders and other community mem- bers, it has a program called Friendship and Flowers, in which homebound residents receive visits and homemaker companionship.

"We have focused Neighbor Connect in the Longfellow area to try and get as many elders connected as possible," Speeter said. "There are about 1400 elders over the age of 65 in the Longfellow community who live alone and are at risk of isolation and loneliness."

She said the program primarily works with elders who do not have a strong family community nearby or a strong social network, but anyone who feels isolated can benefit.

"We get referrals from lots of different sources," Speeter explained. "Sometimes from family who lives out of town, or from social services. Sometimes people just call up and say they would like to have a friend." Speeter said Longfellow was chosen for the first project for Neighbor Connect because of the number of elders living in the community and also because some tools were already in place, such as organizations like the Longfellow Community Council and Longfellow/Seward Healthy Seniors. "We are partnering with them to focus on this neighborhood, and then replicate Neighbor Connect in other communi- ties," Speeter said.

"So many people are on so- cial media these days, and you just don’t see them out in their yards and interacting with each other. We hope this program will bring greater excitement and greater awareness among community members."

For Buskirk and Wildberger, the evidence of the success of the program is already in place.

The volunteers with Transition Longfellow create opportunities for South Minneapolis neigh- bors to get to know one another while also learning how to live more sustainably and prepare for changes ahead. Visit www.transitionlongfellow.org for more details on these and other activities.

Transition Parents & Kids Play Group meets Sat., Sept. 1, 10am-noon, at Longfellow Park, 3435 36th Ave. S. Join with other parents who are concerned about raising resilient kids, liv- ing a sustainable, less consum- er-oriented, low-waste family life. Share conversation, resour- ces, and ideas. In September, the group will be visiting a farmers market or a farm to learn about sustainable food production.

The Book Group meets Thurs., Sept. 13, 6:30pm, at Moon Palace Books (3032 Minnehaha Ave.) to discuss “The End We Start From,” by Megan Hunter. In this short novel, the reader is taken along on the journey of so many refugees flee- ing flood, fire or civil unrest. The mother telling this tale of escape from a London now underwa- ter is newly available in paperback and is what LBFE is all about. According to Speeter, the organi- zation was chosen as a pilot project for Neighbor Connect because of the number of elders living in the community and also because some tools were already in place, such as organizations like the Longfellow Community Council and Longfellow/Seward Healthy Seniors. "We are partnering with them to focus on this neighborhood, and then replicate Neighbor Connect in other communi- ties," Speeter said.

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Nokomis Days
Discover Nokomis Days on Sept. 8 and 9 in the Nokomis East neighborhood. Spend the weekend exploring our quiet, family-oriented community through three celebrations that highlight different facets of Nokomis East.

Start with the Minneapolis Monarch Festival on Sat., Sept. 8, 10am-4pm, with art, dancing, music and make and take activities. The festival happens at 49th St. and Woodlawn Blvd.

Then, enjoy a glass of beer and live music while your kids visit the balloon artist, face painters, and caricature artist at the Lake Nokomis Community School Big Tent Event. It’s hours of fun in the Oxendale’s Market (5015 S. 34th Ave.) parking lot on Sat., Sept. 8, 5:30-10pm.

Cap off the weekend with a visit on Sun., Sept. 9 to the Nokomis Block Party hosted by the Nokomis East Business Association. This event is packed with local foods, arts and crafts, music, games, kids activities, raffles, and more. Head to Oxendale’s Market at 5015 S. 34th Ave. from 11am-3pm.

Monarch Festival – Festival de la Monarca 2018
This year’s 10th Anniversary Minneapolis Monarch Festival will occur on Sat., Sept. 8, 10am-4pm. The Festival celebrates the monarch butterfly’s amazing 2,500-mile migration from Minnesota to Mexico with music, food, dance, hands-on art, native plant sales, and plenty of opportunities to get up-close with monarch butterflies, learn about their habitats, and what you can do to make a difference.

Festival participants can listen to music from Sala Del Soul and other acts, while your kids visit the balloon artist, face painters, and caricature artist at the Lake Nokomis Community School Big Tent Event. It’s hours of fun in the Oxendale’s Market parking lot on Sat., Sept. 8, 5:30-10pm.

Sign up for NENA News
Get your neighborhood news delivered to your inbox every other Wednesday. Sign up today at www.nokomiseast.org. Once you sign up, you’ll receive updates on news and happenings for your neighborhood.

For more information and an application, visit www.nokomiseast.org or for more information and an application.

Fall Neighborhood Cleanup
Litter is not only unsightly, but it also can have devastating effects on local water quality. Join us for a neighborhood clean-up and get to know the NENA Green Initiatives Committee. The event is on Sat., Sept. 22, from 10am-12:30pm at the Crosstown Covenant Church parking lot (5540 10th Ave. S.). Volunteers that show up between 10-10:30am will get free coffee and doughnuts. Bring a pair of gloves you do not mind getting dirty. RSVP on the NENA Facebook event page or just show up!

Mondawmin Market
A neighborhood clean-up event sponsored by the City of Minneapolis.

Canine Coach BARK!ART Festival
This new two-day family festival will be hosted by Off-Leash Area with community partner Canine Coach. BARK!ART will bring two communities together in a festival featuring all-ages outdoor talent shows, dog-related business, and a new production by Off-Leash Area called “Paws and Effect,” starring your dog!

Learn more by visiting the BARK!ART Festival page at www.offleasharea.org. The festival is supported by a 2018 MRAC grant.

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Residents call for compromise at Hiawatha Golf Course

After four years of disagreement, some are optimistic and others apprehensive about new Park Board direction

By TESHA M. CHRISTENSEN

Neighborhood residents are being asked to compromise and come together over the Hiawatha Golf Course after four years of disagreement.

Standing resident and Hiawatha Golf Course Community Advisory Committee (CAC) member Sean Connaughton pointed out that compromise was achieved by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) commissioners during a 6-2 vote on July 25.

"Picture an ecologically run 9-hole course, which maintains the key community asset of Hiawatha Golf Course while also maintaining a minimum 9-hole course. Voting in favor were Commissioners Musich, Forney, Vetaw, Cowgill, Meyer, Bourn; voting against were French and Severson. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)"

Although it gives nobody everything they want, it meets the basic needs of all constituents including Lake Hiawatha. Homes will be protected, climate resiliency restored, pollution mitigated and the golf course preserved as a 9-hole course," observed Connaughton.

Last year commissioners directed the CAC to begin a master planning process for the golf course property. Some CAC members felt that their official charge was not specific enough, and asked that the board, which had changed following the 2017 election, look at the issue again.

The Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board of Commissioners did that on July 25 and passed a resolution directing CAC members to reduce pumping at the golf course while also maintaining a minimum 9-hole course. Voting in favor were Commissioners Musich, Forney, Vetaw, Cowgill, Meyer, Bourn; voting against were French and Severson. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)

According to District 5 Commissioner Musich, "I am optimistic that the public planning process utilized by the MPRB will be able to proceed in a productive way now that the new board has reaffirmed the decision made by the previous board."

"The adopted resolution respects the past while considering the future of this park land and the need to design an ecologically diverse landscape that reduces pumping while protecting nearby homes from groundwater intrusion, and is resilient to the impacts of climate change." Musich pointed out that the decision to be much more comprehensive was that of Commissioners Musich, Forney, Vetaw, Cowgill, Meyer, Bourn; voting against were Lonn and Severson, AK Hassan was absent.

The golf course is currently pumping 242 million gallons of water each year in a circular fashion to keep water from flooding the course, which sits two feet below the lake, although it only has a permit through the Minnesota DNR for 16.5 million for irrigation. Commissioners directed CAC members to reduce pumping by 70% to 94 million gallons.

The revised compromise resolution was drafted by new At-Large Commissioner Vetaw, who resides in Southeast Minneapolis.

"I think it is wonderful that the public planning process was utilized by the MPRB will be able to proceed in a productive way now that the new board has reaffirmed the decision made by the previous board." Seibold of Friends of Lake Hiawatha is pleased with the park board decision.

"I think it is wonderful that the public planning process was utilized by the MPRB will be able to proceed in a productive way now that the new board has reaffirmed the decision made by the previous board." Seibold said.

"As someone who lives in a floodplain area that has been developed for residential purposes and has personally experienced the act of fluctuating groundwater levels, I am apprehensive to say that adding more water to an area, allowing it to flow back to its natural state, is a good idea—especially when you are now taking away a floodplain (Hiawatha Golf Course) that has historically protected the area," stated CAC member Joan Soholt, who resides near Lake Nokomis.

The concern that was expressed at the meeting is that we do not understand the hydrology in the neighborhood adequately to understand with high enough certainty to assure that pumping at the golf course will impact that water levels in the neighborhood," pointed out Dana Lonn, an engineer who lives between Nokomis and Mother Lakes and supports keeping the 18-hole golf course.

"There is a significant concern that reduced pumping will result in a further raising of the water table which put some homes at risk.

Some of the park commissioners see the issue as a very narrow decision as whether we are pumping only to save the golf course. The decision may be that narrow. However, a number of the commissioners and many in the neighborhood see the decision to be much more complex than that," said Lonn. "We are advocating for a more comprehensive study to understand the implications of reduced pumping at the golf course.

Residents associated with the Nokomis/Lake Nokomis Water Sustainability group are asking for an unbiased study from the United States Geological Society (USGS) to more fully understand the interrelated issues of water management in the area.

This issue is being evaluated by the Lake Nokomis groundwater and Surface Water technical team, which is composed of representatives from various agencies. Continued on page 7.
Dowling Community Garden celebrated its 75th anniversary on Aug. 18. The three-acre garden space is located on the grounds of Dowling Environmental School, at 46th Ave. and 39th St. S. Dowling gardeners live in Minneapolis and surrounding communities, are culturally diverse, of all ages and abilities, and come together to share their love of gardening.

Jerry Foley (right) was the opening speaker. “Our garden is the granddaddy of the growing movement of community gardens,” he said. “We contribute about 4,000 lbs. of fresh, organic produce each year to food shelves and meal programs.” Pictured at left is State Senator Patricia Tarren Ray, a neighborhood resident and longtime garden supporter.

Activities included heirloom tomato tasting and a display of vegetables grown on-site. Dowling Community Garden is committed to organic growing. The low annual membership fee includes access to water, compost, and a variety of garden tools.

A dozen bakers contributed cupcakes for the birthday celebration. Gardener Terry Barnes in the pollinator plot she created as part of her volunteer service hours at the garden. Every gardener contributes four hours of service each summer.

Dr. Lloyd Winfield (center) is principal of Dowling Elementary School. He said, “This garden is about community with a capital C. We’ve been grateful for longstanding partnership between the garden and our school.”

PHOTOS BY MARGIE O’LOUGHLIN

Dowling Community Garden was started in 1943, as part of the Victory Garden movement. Home gardening was a way to support the troops in World War II. It freed up canned food to be shipped overseas. The garden today has 190 plots and about 250 gardeners. It’s one of only two remaining Victory Gardens in the country.

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• PSEO, internships, Work credit
• Personalized Graduation Plans
• Catch-up on missing credits
Local Art Studio focuses on resilience against oppression through art

By MARGIE O’LOUGHLIN

Hiawatha Golf Course

Continued from page 5

from the city, the park board, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District.

Lonn worked for Toro Company in Bloomington for 48 years and was connected to the golf industry. “The MPRB has not done their homework on the impact of a golf property,” Lonn maintained. “Properly managed golf is an environmental asset to the community. The view by the community and various agencies to help design and develop a new wetland complex and mitigation system for the north pipe storm sewer.

Here’s how he envisions an effective mitigation system:

“How I envisions an effective mitigation system. It ‘must deal with the following pollutants: trash, sediment and waterborne pollutants including chemicals and phosphorus,” Connaughty said. “An effective mitigation system will use limited mechanical intervention to capture trash. It will also slow stormwater flow out of the pipe by using means, stream branching, and pond dilution to reduce velocity and drop sediment. Wetlands capture, absorb and transform pollutants.”

“Restoring wetlands on the property will also return some of the flood storage capacity to the land that was removed in 1929 when the creek was straightened, the lake dredged and the wetlands filled in to make Hiawatha Golf Course. Restoring wetlands to portions of the property will also reduce the impact of future floods on nearby homes (as shown in recent flood models created by Barr engineering).”

“The result of all this work will be a massive improvement in water quality for Lake Hiawatha,” Connaughty said. The Ford is leading the process, bringing in key partners and making sure the work is done properly. The art class art studios will come to visit, youth groups, seminary students, students, local artists, and other community organizations. This shop is important because it’s a space for us to find our community and culture, and student organizations. This shop is important because it’s a space for us to find our community and culture, and student organizations. This shop is important because it’s a space for us to find our community and culture, and student organizations. This shop is important because it’s a space for us to find our community and culture, and student organizations.

Connaughty also plans to work with the community to design a public art space that is integrated into the natural spaces that are created in these new wetland areas.

Hiawatha Golf Course

What’s being done about the trash on Lake Hiawatha?

By TESHA M. CHRISTENSEN

Sean Connaughty, Standish resident and Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) volunteer steward of Lake Hiawatha, continues to push for a solution to the large amount of trash that drains into the lake.

Since 2015, he’s picked up 4,500 pounds of trash from the lake. That doesn’t include the amount others have picked up. Connaughty also serves on the MPRB Hiawatha Golf Course Community Advisory Committee and is working with the community and various agencies to design and develop a new wetland complex and mitigation system for the north pipe storm sewer which drains 920 acres of Minnehaha Creek watershed.

“The result of all this work will be a massive improvement in water quality for Lake Hiawatha,” Connaughty said.

He continued, “No longer will 920 acres of South Minneapolis dump its pollution directly into Lake Hiawatha. The newly cleared wetland spaces that aren’t usable for golf will provide new habitats and areas of public access for recreation.”

Connaughty also plans to work with the community to design a public art space that integrates into the natural spaces that are created in these new wetland areas.

Artist Ricardo Levins Morales said, “I was born into a farming family on a mountain in Puerto Rico. Nothing in my life blinked, beeped, or had a pause button. From that, I learned a certain kind of patience—and to speak of the world through a narrative of abundance. When people are behaving in ways that are harmful to others, it almost always comes down to a perception of scarcity.” (Photo by Margie O’Loughlin)

Levins Morales reflected. “My first published piece of art was a flyer I drew for the Chicago Black Panthers when I was just a teenager. I have always made art about what’s important to me. When I was five, I drew chickens. When I was eight, it was pirates. For all the years that have followed, it’s been about art as a process of truth-telling. It only becomes political when it’s in an environment that’s full of lies.”

While Levins Morales never got a traditional art education, he said, “Growing up in Chicago, I was surrounded by art in the form of posters, murals, and newspaper cartoons. When I saw a style that I loved, I would try to figure out how to do it, and to absorb the artist’s techniques.”

He started working in linoleum and woodblock printing, eventually teaching himself silk screen printing and, about 25 years ago, got interested in a medium called scratchboard. To make his images, Morales scratches through an ink coated surface to reveal a contrasting layer of white clay underneath. To complete the colorful, vibrant process that is his signature style, Levins Morales colorizes the scratchboard with watercolor, and can digitize his images for in-studio printing.

In much the same way, Levins Morales helps communities to scratch through the surfaces of a struggle—and get to what we have healed. The art I make is meant to stimulate people’s emotional immune systems, to help them deal with the toxicity of our culture,” he said. “The process of working with groups is a way of saying that much. People come into the studio; they talk, and I listen. Together we try to find what’s encouraging in a difficult situation, what’s hopeful. A lot of what I do with my art is to re-frame narratives for communities that have been traumatized. It doesn’t mean that the art itself is telling horrific stories. Even in times of struggle, people need to laugh, and to look at beautiful things.”

The new space on Minnehaha Ave. has room for art making, sales, and community gatherings. “We feel more visible here,” Levins Morales said. “We’re easier to find, and it’s a good place for us to disseminate the art. We’ve had meetings with groups of all kinds, and the art class art studios come to visit, youth groups, seminary students, students, local artists, and other community organizations. This shop is important because it’s a space for us to find our community and culture, and student organizations. This shop is important because it’s a space for us to find our community and culture, and student organizations.

Connaughty also plans to work with the community to design a public art space that is integrated into the natural spaces that are created in these new wetland areas.
Share the Gorge 2018 celebrates the urban wilderness

Photos by MARGIE O’LOUGHLIN

This year’s Share the Gorge began under parting storm clouds on July 25. The annual ice cream social and community gathering celebrates the Mississippi River Gorge, with its easy access to the urban wilderness in the heart of the city. Share the Gorge is hosted by the River Gorge Committee of the Longfellow Community Council.

Michaela Neu (right) is the Youth and Community Outreach Specialist for the Mississippi Watershed Management Organization. Among other resource materials, she passed out copies of the newly published “Good Neighbor Guide” which addresses responsible water stewardship practices for homeowners. At left is Marya Macintosh, River Gorge Committee member. The committee always welcomes new members and meets the first Wednesday of each month from 7:30-9pm at the Longfellow Recreation Center.

Hennepin County Forestry staff Jen Kullgren (left) and Shane De Gray had three words of advice for homeowners, “Don’t plant maples!” Kullgren said, “The Asian Longhorn Beetle isn’t knocking on our door yet, but it’s likely coming—and its preferred food source is maples. The best thing we can do for our urban forest is to diversify our tree planting choices.”

Once again, the East Lake Dairy Queen donated boxes of Dilly Bars to the Share the Gorge event. Thanks to owner Jim Lee for his generosity.

Lyndon Torstenson of the National Park Service steadied a boat as it prepared to launch.

Photo right: Paddlers of all ages and experience levels were welcome to paddle the Voyager canoes provided by Wilderness Inquiry.

Friends of the Mississippi River (FMR) was on hand with resource information. The organization is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year, and the 10th anniversary of its popular Gorge Stewards volunteer program. For more information about volunteering, contact Amy Kilgore at akilgore@fmr.org.

Extend the Greenway Partnership commissions bridge study

By MARGIE O’LOUGHLIN

The Midtown Greenway is a 5-1/2 mile long bicycle and pedestrian trail through the heart of South Minneapolis. The trail begins near Lake Calhoun at Chownen Ave., and travels east across the city. It currently ends at W. River Pkwy, near 27th St. in the north Longfellow neighborhood. More than 35 organizations from both Minneapolis and St. Paul are working together in the newly formed Extend the Greenway Partnership. Their goal is to extend the Midtown Greenway over the Mississippi River and through St. Paul.

The extension of the Greenway would convert the Short Line Railroad Bridge (just north of 27th St.) into a bicycle and pedestrian bridge. Up for consideration is whether or not the train would continue to use the railroad tracks. Up for consideration is whether or not the train would continue to use the railroad tracks. One option is a 3-D map of the bridge. Engineers from the local firm Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. will complete the study, estimating the cost and efforts needed to make the bridge safe for biking and walking. We anticipate that the study will be finished in late summer.

‘We’ve been with the Midtown Greenway Coalition for seven years,’ Jensen continued, “and the question I get asked most frequently is, ‘Why doesn’t the Greenway cross over into St. Paul?’ Jensen provides the answer, ‘Apparently, when the final stage of the Greenway was completed ten years ago (the section that runs through Seward and Longfellow), Hennepin County commissioned an engineering study of the bridge. They determined that it had structural flaws, but they didn’t estimate what it would cost to make the bridge safe for public use. There are many of us who thought it warranted another look. We believe this extension would benefit a lot of people because the Greenway is a major commuter corridor. It would be a tremendous addition to the Twin Cities biking infrastructure.’

Jensen concluded, ‘We didn’t want this to be just an effort of the Midtown Greenway Coalition, so we built a solid partnership of organizations across both sides of the river. Our partners reached out to all of their members and supporters on social media with the details of this project. We ran a crowd-funding campaign for one month, with a goal of raising $45,000 to hire two drones and an operator, and to use the expertise of Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. to conduct the engineering study. Thanks to the reach of our partner organizations, we exceeded our goal and raised $47,000. Some of our partners in (or very near) Longfellow include The Birchwood Café, Brackett Neighbors, Hiawatha Academies, the Longfellow Community Council, Seward Re Design, and Nice Ride Minnesota.”

All organizations who share this vision are welcome to join the Extend the Greenway Partnership. The partnership seeks to include elected officials, government agencies, neighborhood groups, non-profits, and businesses from both Minneapolis and St. Paul.

For more information or to join the partnership, email Soren Jensen at soren@midtowngreenway.org. Check the website at www.midtowngreenway.org to learn the date and location of the next public meeting in September. The results of the engineering study will be discussed at that time.
**In Our Community**

**Rummage sale planned Sept. 21-22**

The annual Epworth United Methodist Women Rummage Sale is planned for Fri.-Sat., Sept. 21-22, 9am to 3pm, in the Epworth UMC Gym. 3207 37th Ave S. Find new uses for gently-used items donated by the congregation at a price you’ll love. Proceeds from the sale provide funds for the mission programs sponsored by Epworth United Methodist Women. There will be treats for sale in the kitchen during this event.

**Faith Book Club meets Sept. 1**

The Faith Ev. Luther Book Club meets the first Saturday of every month from 10-11:30am at the church (1 1:30st St.). The book for Sept. 1 is "The Book of Jonah" by Joshua Max. Join the group for coffee, tea, and conversation in the basement fellowship room. The planned book for October is "The Lost Track of the Wind" by Carlos Ruiz Zafon.

**LGBTQ support group meets Saturdays**

A support group for LGBTQ adults living with mental illness meets weekly on Saturdays, 1-2:30pm, at Living Table United Church of Christ, 3805 E. 40th St. This free support group is sponsored by NAMI Minnesota (National Alliance on Mental Illness) and led by trained facilitators who are also in recovery. For information, call David at 612-920-3925 or call 651-645-2948.

**Garden club meets to discuss foraging**

Join the Longfellow Garden Club on Wed., Sept. 12, 7pm, at Epworth United Methodist Church, 3207 37th Ave S., for their monthly meeting.

Although Longfellow neighborhoods, you may have noticed yards bright with yellow dandelions, walls blocked by gigantic rhubarb clumps, or head bees buzzing as they dive bomb apples or pears beneath a gigantic rhubarb clump, or every Tuesday and Wednesday night there is an AA meeting at 7:30pm. All are welcome to attend.

**September events at LS Healthy Seniors**

**AA and NA meets**

Every Monday night there is an AA meeting at 7pm at Minnehaha Commons and every Wednesday night there is an NA meeting at 7:30pm. All are welcome to attend.

**Telling Our Stories to meet Sept. 28**

"Elder Voices Telling Our Stories" will meet 10-11:30am on Fri., Sept. 28 at Turtle Bread Company (4205 34th Ave.). People will have an opportunity to describe the topics of their stories, includ ing what is challenging and encouraging. The group will include a brief update on a Senior Dialogues project introduced two months ago. There will also be an intro duction to the Minneapolis Advisory Commission on Aging and the Minneapolis for a Lifetime Strategy.

**Bagels and Bible scheduled Sept. 23**

You’re invited to join the Bagels and Bible group once a month in the Sunshines Room at Epworth United Methodist Church, 3207 37th Ave S. This month on Sun., Sept. 23, 9-10am, they will be reading Genesis and cover a synopsis of Genesis and the Sonshine Room at Epworth United Methodist Church, 3207 37th Ave. S. This month on Sun., Sept. 23, 9-10am, they will be reading Genesis and cover a synopsis of Genesis and the Sonshine Room at Epworth United Methodist Church, 3207 37th Ave. S. This month on Sun., Sept. 23, 9-10am, they will be reading Genesis and cover a synopsis of Genesis and the Sonshine Room at Epworth United Methodist Church, 3207 37th Ave. S.

**NA group meets twice weekly**

A Narcotics Anonymous group meets every Wednesday at 7:30pm, and every Friday evening at 7pm at Faith Evangelical Lutheran, 3430 E. 31st St. Everyone is welcome to attend.

**Float Fridays at Rick’s this fall**

Rick’s Place, 4307 E. 54th St., will sponsor Float Fridays through early Oct. Get $2 ice cream floats and fruit beverages. "Every Friday, 5-9pm, with all proceeds going to every third Saturday and help support veterans and their families."
In Our Community
Continued from page 9

Nokomis seniors plan upcoming events
Nokomis Healthy Seniors (NHS) would like to invite all, and for more information about Every Third Saturday and what they do, visit www.everythirdsaturday.com.

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Messenger Want Ads are $1 per word with a $10 minimum. Send your remittance along with your ad to: messenger@longfellownokomismessenger.com, 1860, Osseo, MN 55369. Want ads must be mailed to the Messenger before Sept. 17 for the Sept. 27 issue. Ad copy can be e-mailed to denis@deruyternelson.com. Call Bill 612-799-8265. B-18

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Next week:
First Aid Course planned Sept. 15
Minnehaha Community Lutheran Church, 4109 37th Ave S. will be hosting a free Youth Mental Health First Aid course on Sat., Sept. 15, from 8am-5pm. Participation will learn what to do in a mental health crisis by reviewing risk factors and warning signs and learning common support options. The course is designed for adults who regularly interact with adolescents, including teachers, school staff, coaches, youth group leaders, and parents. (Please note, this class may be too basic for those who work in mental health services.) This free class, valued at $170, is sponsored by Fairview Community Health and Minnehaha Community Lutheran Church.

Projects underway at Longfellow Park
Two improvement projects got underway at Longfellow Park and Recreation Center in August: installation of new equipment at the playground and replacement of the recreation center roof. Construction on both projects will take place through September.

The roof replacement at Longfellow Recreation Center is funded by NPP20, a historic agreement between the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) and the City of Minneapolis. NPP20 helps address racial and economic equity across 160 neighborhood parks and provides $11 million annually to maintain, repair and replace facilities.

Continued on page 11
DanceCo plans October performance

Following the success of its first self-produced performance last October, DanceCo is premiering "Which Witch Is Which?!" to Minnesota audiences in October.

DanceCo, a dance-theater company in the Twin Cities, was built on the creative vision and collective experience of Longfellow residents, husband-and-wife team Brittany and Matthew Klee. DanceCo's creative focus is to produce original dance for young audiences and their families.

"Which Witch Is Which?!" is an interactive whodunit-style dance-theater piece with wazards, witches, muggles and a lot of fun. Can you help solve the case of the missing key?! —Matthew Klee

Featured performers include Heather Cadigan-Brockman, Nicky Coelho, Benjamin Johnson, Stephanie Pellinger, Brittany Klee, Hannah Bendit and Rebecca Surmont.

There will be pre-show workshops (20 minutes before curtain) teaching the audience dance moves to become part of the show. New, this year, a craft to help transform the kids into magicians.

The Klee’s are seasoned dance professionals with roots in the Twin Cities. Their collective work ranges from performing with numerous professional dance companies to teaching, choreography, stage management, administration and leadership roles. Complete bios can be found online at www.jimpellinger.com.

Jim Pellinger has performed at colleges, clubs, coffeehouses and festivals throughout the upper midwest as well as Central America. He has released several albums and singles, on his other fine digital music vendors. Learn more about Pellinger at www.jimpellinger.com.
Local author earns national Pinckley Prize for debut novel

By JILL BOOGREN

Standing resident Marcie R. Rendon won the 2018 Pinckley Prize for Crime Fiction for her debut novel “Murder on the Red River” (Cinco Puntos Press). Her book was also a finalist in the Western Writers of America 2018 Spur Awards in the Best Western Contemporary Novel category.

On being recognized in two distinct genres, Rendon said simply: “Wow. Wow! I’m happy, you know?” An enrolled member of the White Earth Nation who has lived in the Twin Cities for more than 30 years, Rendon also notes what the awards aren’t Native American. “Often our work gets categorized into a Native American category, and neither of these awards is a Native American award.” Not that she wouldn’t also welcome that. But she’s glad her novel “moves outside of a certain box.”

The story follows Renee (“Cash”) Blackbear, a Native American woman entering adulthood after a traumatic childhood, and her longtime friend Sheriff Wheaton, as they work together to solve a murder that takes place along the Red River. More a refined character portrait than a bracing whodunit, the story moves quietly and deliberately across the Red River Valley—in Minnesota and North Dakota, on and off the Red Lake Indian Reservation. Rendon paints a landscape both raw and familiar and sketches a protagonist to match. You can see the dirt caked on the soles of boots, smell the inside of the bar and hear the crack of pool balls on the break. Cash, in turn, is tough as nails, resourceful, edgy and funny.

But instead, in came Cash, this no-nonsense character altogether like the one Rendon started writing about.

Rendon has been writing her whole life, deciding in 1990-91 to make her living as a writer doing “anything that pays.” This has included journalism, children’s books (she wrote “Powwow Summer: A Family Celebrates the Circle of Life”), plays, and poetry. A fan of Stephen King, Rendon enjoys reading crime fiction. She started writing a couple of crime novels herself but shelved them and instead set about writing the story of a woman who writes poetry, goes to Nashville and writes country music.

But instead, in came Cash, this no-nonsense character who demanded her story be told.

“Cash appeared, and it was like ‘No, no no no, that’s not the story we’re doing,’” said Rendon. It was a struggle at first, but once she started writing it just flowed. “This was the story that was there to be told.”

Cash is a product of the foster care system, a part of her life the author presents as not something extraordinary, just blunt fact. In writing her story, Rendon didn’t set out to educate people (“I intended to write a murder mystery that anyone could enjoy”), but here it was: Cash’s experience, so commonplace for Native Americans but foreign to most Minnesotans.

“Well, people don’t know this history of the taking of native children,” she said, referring to the government practice early last century of sending Native children away to boarding schools and then during the 1950s and ’60s of adopting Indian children to non-Indian homes or institutions (the percentages were higher on the White Earth and Red Lake reservations) before the 1978 Indian Child Welfare Act mandated that welfare agencies work to place Indian children with their biological family first, or an extended family of the tribe.

“When you meet native people, everybody has a story about social workers and foster care,” said Rendon, who lived in the Red River Valley and White Earth area until she was 24 or 25 years old. “I was just writing a part of life... much in the same way that someone who grew up in the Bayou in Louisiana would write about it.”

Representation is important to Rendon. An avid reader when she was growing up, she could never find any books about Native American people like her. It was all Plains Indians and Edward S. Curtis photographs and cowboys and Indians.

“I wanted pictures and stories about who we are now,” said Rendon. “As an artist, writer, who does plays, poetry, novel, I wanted other Native people to see themselves.”

Her children’s book “Powwow Summer” shows a contemporary family going to a contemporary powwow: people in cars, a mom in shorts putting her child in dance regalia, and going to the powwow.

“I want to be able to do that for us. I think it’s important not just for Native people but for everybody in this diverse world,” she said. “It’s hard to know the value of your existence when you have no picture of yourself. I want to be able to give people that, [the sense that] they do matter, they do exist, that their pictures and lives are just as important and valuable as anyone else’s.”

Rendon also gives voice to others through the Women’s Writing Project, a program in which she and fellow writer/poet Diego Vázquez Jr. teach women in county jails to write.