



Hill & Lake Press

‘Where the biggies leave off...’

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

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HILL & LAKE PRESS NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT! By Susan Lenfestey, Co-Founder

Hill & Lake Press

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SCAN HERE TO DONATE

In 1976 a few of us got the idea to start a newspaper. We were young, new to the city, and in love with our neighborhood. It would be a volunteer effort, informative but fun, and fun to produce. We would cover local news, “...where the biggies leave off,” at the time the Star and the Tribune. And so, we did.

Forty-six years later, some of us are still here. More important, so is Hill & Lake Press.

As technology changed, so did the paper. What had been a group effort—spending a few nights per month sitting around a dining room table pasting typewritten articles into semi-straight columns and pressing waxy letters into hilarious (to us) headlines—became an increasingly solo activity. One person could lay out the paper on a computer and send it to the printer electronically. For the last two decades, that heroic person was Jean Deatruck.

Last February, when Jean decided it was time to pass the editorial baton, Craig Wilson agreed to take it on. With the backing of a newly formed board of directors, Craig has overseen the shoring up of the paper’s underpinnings while filling the pages with in-

depth articles and eye-pleasing graphics. The most recent issue included a glorious eight-page tribute to the retirement of photographer Dorothy Childers, who, after 34 years at the paper, is joining Jean in retirement.

Craig and the board also decided to increase the circulation of the paper from 6,000 issues to 9,000. This included having the paper mailed directly to 8,000 residents—both single-family dwellings and apartments—so it is no longer tossed in the general direction of your front door or left to molder in foyers of apartment buildings.

The result is this paper you are holding. While it is free to you, it is not free to produce. We rely on ad revenue but also on the generosity of our readers.

So, in the spirit of the season, we hope you will consider making a gift of any size to Hill & Lake Press via check or credit card by following the instructions provided or visit us at www.hillandlakepress.org. With your help, we will still be picking up “...where the biggies leave off” for another 46 years.

Susan Lenfestey is a co-founder of and present board member of Hill & Lake Press. She resides in Lowry Hill.

Feature Letter to the Editor

Tree Removal Along Hennepin Avenue

by Margaret Anderson Kelliher



Hennepin Avenue at intersection of W 25th Street (Photo Tim Sheridan).

Hennepin Avenue is a critical transportation corridor that will be transformed for future generations. The goals of this project are to improve conditions for all modes and make the corridor even greener.

The full reconstruction of Hennepin Avenue South is needed due to the age and deteriorated condition of the street, and the new layout will improve pedestrian safety, fill a bicycle network gap, include space for dedicated transit lanes and incorporate green stormwater infrastructure improvements.

Reconstructing our most constrained corridors is challenging. But projects like this also provide the greatest opportunity to make bold changes to advance mode shift goals, greenhouse gas reduction and reductions in vehicle miles traveled. Investment in trees and carbon offset are a priority for the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board

(MPRB) and the City with the mayor’s budget addition of a tree program coordinator.

Building a new corridor requires substantial removal of existing hard surfaces as well as the natural environment. Two recent examples of such corridor work in Minneapolis are located downtown along Hennepin Avenue and Fourth Street. The process involves extensive underground work to upgrade critical utility infrastructure including water and sewer services, natural gas and electrical needs as well as telecommunications, lighting, signals, transit facilities and irrigation needs. The corridor reconstruction will impact most of the existing trees.

The corridor vision includes more innovative green space than what is currently on Hennepin today. Additional planted areas are supported by green storm water infrastructure that helps our natural

environment by capturing water runoff, allowing the water to soak into the ground and not through pipes to adjacent bodies of water.

Tree removal is not taken lightly, and the project team is working with MPRB on a complete tree inventory. The inventory will include the tree type, size, health and current condition. The design will deliver a greener corridor from what we have today as well as a natural environment that can thrive and not just survive. We can accomplish this by getting the right green features at the right locations.

In addition to the trees that are not impacted, replacement trees will be added to the corridor. The new trees will be larger beginning on day one, and the final corridor will have more trees than exist today. Adding and improving green infrastructure is a vital element to every street reconstruction project.

Hennepin Avenue is a critical transportation and business corridor. As the team completes final design leading up to construction in 2024, please stay connected through the Hennepin project page and email list: <https://www.minneapolismn.gov/government/projects/hennepin-ave-s/>

Margaret Anderson Kelliher is the Director of Public Works, City of Minneapolis.



Announcing the Palio Winter Games

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(Photo Tim Sheridan)

Native American Art: Teaching in the Present Tense

By Tim Sheridan
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Hill & Lake Press

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

P.O. Box 50052
Minneapolis, MN 55405
www.hillandlakepress.org

Staff

Craig Wilson, Editor
craig@hillandlakepress.org

Barb Davis, Advertising Manager
barb@hillandlakepress.org

Tim Sheridan, Photographer
tim@hillandlakepress.org

Christopher Bohnet, Production Designer

Jill Field, Copy Editor
Jeanette Colby, Proofer
Susan Lenfestey, Proofer
Kathy Low, Proofer

Board of Directors

Barb Davis
Mike Erlandson, Vice-Chair
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(Photo Tim Sheridan)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

SW LRT Update

As part of the construction of the Kenilworth LRT Tunnel in Minneapolis, Cedar Lake Parkway has been closed to vehicle traffic since May, 2022. For the duration of this closure, the project has committed to preserving trail access across the corridor in proximity to Cedar Lake Parkway.

The new temporary bridge is currently under construction. By early to mid-January, trail access will shift from the current location at Depot Street to the north, closer to Cedar Lake Parkway. Signage and striping will guide trail users along the relocated temporary path. This temporary trail alignment is expected to remain in place until Cedar Lake Parkway is reopened to traffic in spring 2023. (GreenLineExt.org)

David Davies, Manager, Public Involvement, Southwest LRT.



Tom Maakestad at the Groveland Gallery: ARTIST TALK & PAINTING DEMO

Saturday, December 17 from 2:00-4:00pm

We're excited to have Tom Maakestad at the Gallery one week from today. You're invited to visit and see how

Tom creates the oil landscapes like those in his current exhibit. "Novellas" runs through January 14, 2023.

Sally Johnson has been the director of Groveland Gallery in Lowry Hill since 1983



2023 Art Shanty Projects Bde Umág / Lake Harriet, Minneapolis, MN

Weekends, January 21 – February 12, 2023
10:00am – 4:00pm

We're excited to be back on the ice this winter in South Minneapolis!

We look forward to welcoming grown adults and kids of all ages to play / learn / grow / laugh / smile / sing / groove / gather with us in the Art Shanty village.

Art Shanty Projects is a four-weekend winter art festival attracting over 27,000 annual visitors of all ages to explore interactive public art in an extreme environment.

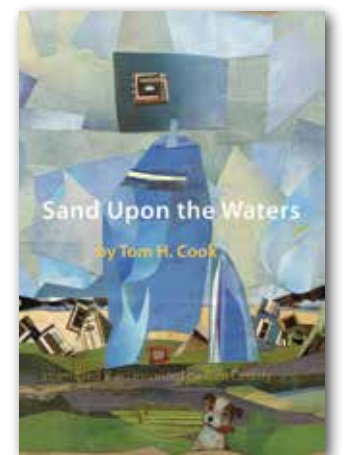
More than 150 artists are given stipends to use the frozen lake as a public platform to create and present interactive art shanty installations and a rotating schedule of daily performances. Visitors can ride bicycles decorated like butterflies, peer through a huge kaleidoscope, write a love letter to a park or climb

inside a giant bird house.

Erin Lavelle, Artistic Director



Need a Neat Gift Idea?



Tom Cook's new book **Sand Upon the Waters** is available at **Magers & Quinn Booksellers in Uptown**. Cook was a long-term contributor to the Hill & Lake Press and was featured in the September 2022 issue.

The book highlights some of his best works over the past several decades writing for the Hill & Lake Press. Cook retired earlier this year and completed the book this summer.

Cook lives in Los Angeles, California with his wife and editor JoAnne Cook. (Cover provided by the publisher.)

PLACEMAKER HOSPITALITY INTRODUCES

pinoli

TAKEOUT & DELIVERY

Amore Uptown has changed hands and will soon be called Pinoli, which translates to the word “pine nut” in Italian. The newly remodelled restaurant will open for business in early 2023 at 1601 W. Lake St., in Minneapolis.



Until the restaurant’s opening, Pinoli is offering a variety of Italian-inspired menu items for takeout and delivery through Placemaker Hospitality’s award winning Barbette, a French-inspired restaurant located across the street from Pinoli, at 1600 W. Lake St., in the Uptown neighborhood of Minneapolis.

Placemaker Hospitality Culinary Director Nicole Pederson and Chef Segundo Chaguan developed a specialized takeout and delivery menu for people to get an early taste of what’s to come when the Pinoli restaurant opens. “We’re having fun offering a small taste of our menu to come as we develop this concept, and as always, we welcome feedback and ideas”, says Kim Bartmann, the founder.

If you’d like to order takeout or delivery from Pinoli today OR if you’re interested in booking a party at Pinoli in 2023, please contact us through our website, pinolimpls.com.

get a taste of what’s to come today



PALIO WINTER GAMES

SUN 1/29 2-4PM • LAKE OF THE ISLES ICE RINK

- NEIGHBORHOOD PARADES
- PICKUP HOCKEY
- WINTER CREATION STATION
- BONFIRES AND MUSIC
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LHNA

LOWRY HILL NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

Ice Skating! Join us Sun Jan 29th from 1:45 - 4pm at Lake of the Isles. The annual ice skating event is back; free and fun for all ages! This year, Lowry Hill, East Isles, and Kenwood will gather for the "Palio Winter Games." Residents from Lowry Hill will represent the Green Turtles and are encouraged to wear green. Join us for a short parade, prizes, neighborhood competitions, bonfires, treats, warm drinks, and, of course, ice skating! For more details, or if "Palio" is new to you, please visit our website.

Thank You for Your Generous Donations! Your support is important to us and we appreciate anything you're able to give! We are able to continue doing the fun things we do because of your help. Please consider making a charitable donation on our website, or send a check to: LHNA, PO Box 3978, Minneapolis, MN, 55403 **OR** you can use our QR code by opening your phone's camera app and pointing it at the image:

Scan here to donate!



Lowry Hill Safety Walking Club. Enthusiasm is growing for a walking group in the neighborhood. If you are interested or would like to know more about this community building initiative, please email us at lhna@lowryhillneighborhood.org.

Please Keep Sidewalks Clear of Snow & Ice. Remember to shovel them down to bare pavement. Sidewalks that aren't cleared are difficult to navigate and sometimes dangerous. More information on the City website.

LHNA Meetings: The next board meeting is Jan. 3rd at 7 p.m. via Zoom.



safety tips to KEEP YOUR HOME SAFE

- **Keep exterior lights on!** On front porches, back porches, side doors, and near your garage. Motion detector lights are also very effective.
- **Keep exterior doors and windows locked.** Use quality locks, including the garage doors. Keep garage doors closed unless you are in or near the garage, even during the day.
- **Don't leave a garage door opener in a car** parked outside on the street, parking pad, or alleyway.
- **Don't leave wallets, purses, computers, or other valuables in a car, even if the car is in the garage.**
- **Don't leave valuables, like bicycles, unsecured on porches, patios, or in the yard.** And, if you have very valuable bicycles, even if stored in the garage, keep them locked.

Sign up for the LHNA email newsletter at lowryhillneighborhood.org



ANNOUNCING THE PALIO WINTER GAMES

East Isles Blue Raccoons, Kenwood Red Egrets and Lowry Hill Green Turtles Come out of Hibernation!

By Shanti Mittra

An alliance once existed among the neighborhoods around Lake of the Isles...

For three decades, Lake of the Isles neighbors of all ages gathered annually to proudly show off their neighborhood colors and mascots.

This winter, the tradition of friendly neighborhood rivalry continues—East Isles Blue Raccoons, Kenwood Red Egrets and Lowry Hill Green Turtles will march again and compete in winter games on the lake on Sunday, January 29 from 2-4 pm.

Brightly dressed and cheering loudly, residents from each neighborhood will march from designated gathering spots to converge

at the Lake of the Isles warming house (2500 East Lake of the Isles Parkway) where noble judges will select one neighborhood above all the rest to lift the Parade Award!

A figure skating program featuring skaters from all the neighborhoods will open the Games, followed by pickup hockey and open skating. Don't let a lack of skates or skating prowess keep you away—there will be free lessons and rental skates for anyone who wants to join in.

ARTrageous will also run a winter creation station on the lake to tap into everyone's creative powers. So come out to Palio! Stave off the chilly air around roaring bonfires,

share treats and warm drinks as you visit and exchange stories with neighbors new and old.

From its start in 1982 when two Kenwood residents transplanted the idea from Italy, Palio has been a neighborhood favorite: 400 residents gathered at this inaugural event in Kenwood Park. Over the years, Palio has raised funds for various Park Board projects, ranging from a new popcorn machine to finishing the sidewalk connecting the east side of the lake to Kenwood Park.

Palio Winter Games will continue this tradition and each year will support the Lake of the Isles ice rink. Palio Fall Games will return to reunite our neighborhoods, and funds raised will continue to support Kenwood Park.

Shanti Mittra lives in East Isles.

Happy Holidays from East Isles Neighborhood Association!

Dear Neighbors,

Community is what you make it. Our mission is to foster connections among East Isles residents and merchants, embracing renters and owners alike, of all interests, ages, and experiences.

We invite you to participate. Our Committees focus on neighborhood green issues, public safety, transit, outreach, and more. East Isles residents can attend our monthly Board Meetings, and run for the Board this spring—voices from the renter community are especially needed at the table.

We welcome your ideas. Neighborhood initiatives, speakers, block parties, or passion projects to share, all ideas are appreciated. Look for our resident survey in the New Year, or email ideas@eastisles.org.

Wishing you good health in 2023!



eastisles.org  

East Isles Safety Walking Club

Dec. 29 Thursday, 5:30 – 7 PM

Jan. 8 Sunday, 10 – 11:30 AM

Jan. 26 Thursday, 5:30 – 7 PM

Meet at Triangle Park · 26th St. & Irving Ave. S.

Get outside, meet neighbors, and help public safety! Bring flashlights as needed. Dates are subject to change with weather—check eastisles.org for the latest.

Monthly Board Meeting

Jan. 10 Tuesday, 6 – 8 PM

Grace-Trinity Community Church · 1430 W. 28th St.

All East Isles residents are always welcome to attend and participate in our Board Meetings.

Palio Winter Games

Jan. 29 Sunday, 1:30 – 4 PM

Meet at Triangle Park · 26th St. & Irving Ave. S.
Parade to Lake of the Isles Warming House

East Isles [Blue Raccoons] gather to show neighborhood spirit! Help us win the Parade Award: don raccoon masks and tails, wear blue scarves, gloves, hats, coats—whatever you have! We will march to the lake and kick off the Palio Winter Games!

OPINION

By Constance Pepin

Cedar-Isles: Nature First



(Photo Tim Sheridan)

A recent bulletin from the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board announced that the draft Cedar-Isles Master plan is expected to be published in January for a 45-day public comment period.

As the Park Board staff drafts this plan, their approach should be clear: the path to sustainable recreational use of our parklands is ecology first. Not to prioritize the health of our natural resources—and of animals who need these resources—is a form of climate change denial.

One case in point is pressure by a small special interest group to allow bikes in East Cedar Woods. Despite the lack of enforcement for many years of no-biking rules in these woods, the plan should prohibit bikes.

These long-neglected woods need rescue to recover and regain ecological function. The master plan must finally prioritize the removal of invasive species that are destroying this natural area, along with planting and nurturing native trees, shrubs and other vegetation. The plan must protect more land, trees and plants for pollinators, birds and other wild-

life struggling to survive in this important bird area. Nature is more important than any sport.

Volunteer stewards for this area strongly advocate for pedestrian-only trails in the woods, both for pedestrian safety and for ecology. Other (non-human) “users” need this space more than bikers.

Most of the proposed bike trail runs parallel to the existing Kenilworth Regional Trail that already provides easy access to the Cedar Lake Regional Trail. Nearby in this same regional park, mountain biking dominates the Brownie Lake landscape and unwisely cuts through the South Wirth Woods, including the Quaking Bog, the most ecologically sensitive area in our park system.

Farther north, an elaborate system of bike and other recreational trails through Wirth Park has hopelessly fragmented wildlife habitat there and likely driven out any remaining species of special concern whose habitat was not (but should have been) protected as those trails were built.

Minneapolis ranks as one of the best biking cities in the country, with over 100 miles of off-

road trails and bikeways. With existing trails and minimal built amenities, both Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles are already celebrated as accessible gathering places for very diverse visitors in the region, who flock to enjoy the natural beauty and unique characters of these lakes.

Based on extensive community engagement during the master planning process, the “preferred design concept” did not include bike trails in these woods. There is no valid reason for staff to change this decision, despite any pressure from a small special interest group determined to put their own preferences above the compelling need to protect wildlife habitat and biodiversity.

A redundant bike trail that fragments habitat would not improve equity or accessibility for park visitors. The Trust for Public Land’s 2022 Access score for Minneapolis parks is 99%, based on the percentage of the population who live within a 10-minute walk of a park with public access.

TPL’s Equity scores for Minneapolis are 99 points (out of a possible 100) based on the percentage of people of color who

live within a 10-minute walk of a park with public access, and 98 based on the percentage of low-income households within a 10-minute walk of a park.

Residents in neighborhoods of color, however, have 60% less park space than those in white neighborhoods, and low-income neighborhoods have 65% less park space than those in high-income neighborhoods. To improve equity, the Park Board is rightly focused on increasing park space by acquiring land for parks in underserved neighborhoods.

Issues of equity and access also need to consider non-human animals, and the amount of acreage available to them without the disruption of human activity that fragments and diminishes habitat. And as a matter of equity, all people have a right to enjoy nature in pedestrian-only areas.

Constance Pepin served on the Cedar-Isles Master Plan Community Advisory Committee.



Friends.
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Crime Meeting Renews Hope

By Janet Hallaway



Andy Luger, United States Attorney or the District of Minnesota. (Photo Tim Sheridan)



Sue Westerman, Lowry Hill Neighborhood Association board member and crime and safety committee chair. (Photo Tim Sheridan)

At a November 28 meeting held in Lowry Hill, government and community leaders offered glimmers of hope that things are moving in the right direction. While no one wanted to go on the record officially, it is clear that neighborhood and city crime are trending downward.

The meeting, spearheaded by Sue Westerman, chair of Lowry Hill Neighborhood Association's Crime and Safety Committee, drew about 100 concerned neighbors to a

private home in Lowry Hill.

The evening's first speaker, Andy Luger, U.S. Attorney for Minnesota and one of Minnesota's highest-ranking officials, stated that prosecuting violent crime is a top priority of his office. Taking office in March, 2022 for the second time, the first during the Obama administration, he is expanding capacity within his administration to prosecute violent crimes.

Now, every attorney on staff carries a caseload of violent crimes along with other federal crimes. In addition, Luger has expanded staff so that violent crimes like carjackings, shootings, and robbery are federal offenses and handled expeditiously.

Prosecuting these local crimes at the federal level carries harsh sentences, some up to 30 years. Luger's office is communicating this message broadly through news conferences and Twitter, the latter intended to reach gang members, in the hopes of deterring crime.

Inspector Katie Blackwell, a 22-year veteran of the Minneapolis Police Department and commander of Minneapolis' Fifth Precinct, described new strategies to anticipate, respond to and reduce crime. Along with staking out crime hot spots, enhanced collaboration with police from neighboring cities is one strategy proving helpful to identify repeat offenders of violent crime.

Blackwell's most promising comments of the evening included strong praise for newly arrived Police Chief Brian O'Hara who joined the force in early November. After the past two years of tension and uncertainty around morale within the police department, Blackwell's sentiments were hopeful.

With police staffing levels a few hundred short of the 900 police on staff in May, 2020, efforts remain steady to recruit new hires from throughout the state as well as nationally. A bright spot was mention of efforts to create a police-led youth sports league as a way to build positive relationships between police and youth.

Government alone can not solve the problem of rising crime. Three speakers gave evidence of private and grassroots approaches to improve public safety.

Lowry Hill resident Cam Winton championed a project called the Minneapolis Safety Initiative to raise private funds to cover the cost of police auto patrols in Lowry Hill. The patrols have been active since early 2022 and Winton reported the police presence is making a positive difference.

Not content to sit on the sidelines amid rising crime, North Loop resident Aileen Johnson organized a Neighborhood Safety Patrol for her neighborhood. The group has grown to 60 members who walk

in shifts of small groups. Clad in recognizable bright orange tee shirts and matching hats, the group builds neighborhood connections, assists anyone in need, distributes flyers with resources to people experiencing homelessness, and aids out-of-towners, by providing directions and business recommendations.

Johnson believes her group is deterring crime. As word-of-mouth grows about the Neighborhood Safety Patrol, Johnson has now organized orange-shirted teams from new neighborhoods including Loring Park and East Isles.

As the evening wrapped up, host Sue Westerman reminded Lowry Hill residents to sign up for Lowry Hill Neighborhood Association's "Know Your Neighbor," an email and text communication system designed to disseminate facts quickly and accurately about serious crime in Lowry Hill. Currently 80% of Lowry Hill blocks are participating in this program. Residents can sign up at lhna@lowryhillneighborhood.org.

Are these changes making an impact? It will take time to tell. However, it's evident that it takes collective action at all levels—government, neighborhood and individual—to drive change in public safety.

Janet Hallaway is a Hill & Lake Press board member and lives in Lowry Hill.

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THE KENWOOD RETIREMENT COMMUNITY

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MEET NEIGHBOR MARIA BALES

On any given day, you probably won't find Maria Bales in her Kenwood apartment. The self-described "Hungarian Minnesotan and world traveler" makes a point to get out every day. Among her activities are her daily, early morning walk around Lake of the Isles, working out at the Uptown Y, and going to the Guthrie, the Jungle, Orchestra Hall, Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, Theatre Latte Da...

Maria was born in Keszthely, Hungary. She has vivid memories of World War II. After the Russian Army occupied Hungary in 1945, Maria was at first enthusiastic about the possibility of social justice and economic equality touted by the Russians but became disenchanted in 1948 when the communist party put a dictatorship in place. After the Hungarian Revolution broke out in October 1956 Maria fled Hungary with a friend, first walking to Austria, then traveling to Germany, and then on to New York.

After her arrival in the United States at age 20, Maria worked hard to learn English and not long after she received a scholarship to Hobart, William Smith College in Geneva, New York. She met and married Kent Bales in 1958 and they moved to Menlo Park, California where Kent taught at a private boy's school. Maria continued her studies, resulting in a BA in Social Science and an MA in History. When Kent enrolled in the PhD program at the University of California, they moved to Berkeley where Maria taught in Berkeley public schools.

Kent then accepted a position at the University of Minnesota in the Department of English and the couple moved to Minneapolis in 1967, settling into their home on 27th and Irving with their children Tom and Elizabeth. The neighborhood was turning over at the time, and people of their generation were moving in. Their Irving home served as a hub for gatherings. Maria and Kent were actively involved in DFL politics, for Eugene McCarthy's presidency and against the Vietnam War. Kent was twice chair of the Department of English at the U which also led to a lot of entertaining. One of her friends, Martha Geffen, won the contract as manager of the prestigious Gallery 8 Restaurant at the Walker Art Center, and later at The Minneapolis Institute of Arts restaurant. Maria, not wanting the commitment and responsibility signed on

to work for her as an employee.

Her main job was to bake French bread, but she also cooked, baked desserts, and helped with catering, as

needed. Maria worked for Martha for about 15 years in the 1980s and 1990s. She enjoyed the flexibility of the job, which allowed her to join Kent on sabbaticals and then return to her baking and cooking, adding to the delicious menu.

Maria and Kent were great travelers and went all over Europe and the United States, including yearly visits to Hungary to visit Maria's family. Their adventures include canoeing on the Zambezi River, climbing Kilimanjaro, walking across England, and biking 120 miles around Lake Balaton, Maria's hometown lake. In 1996 at age 60, she biked from Hanoi to Saigon. When Kent died in 2012 Maria was heartbroken. But she continued to travel, and the only thing that stopped her was the COVID-19 pandemic. Now that travel is safer, Maria has resumed her adventures, and has just returned from a tour of the British Isles.

After Kent died, Maria stayed in their home until 2019 when she moved down the street to The Kenwood Retirement Community. Maria is thankful she had already established her new home at The Kenwood before the pandemic. She loves her apartment with its view of Loring Park and downtown and appreciates being able to walk down the hall and spend time with her new-found friends. She enjoys the many opportunities for staying active at The Kenwood, including Great Courses, live music, and films.

Maria's skills at cooking often are in evidence at The Kenwood where tempting aromas waft out her door. Although Maria loves to cook for herself in her Kenwood apartment, she also enjoys her free daily breakfast in the dining room with friends which she calls a "significant part of the day." She also relishes the yummy appetizers served at Kenwood Happy Hours.

Maria is just one of the many residents at The Kenwood who have fascinating back stories. You may meet her one day, walking around Lake of the Isles. But you will have to get up early.



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Meet Your Neighbor

A monthly column by Craig Wilson, Editor

Ankhubayar Erdenebaatar



Ankhubayar (Anka) Erdenebaatar and host family Jennifer and Eva Breitinger (photo family friend).

Where are you from?

My name is Ankhubayar Erdenebaatar. In my home country of Mongolia, I live in our capital city Ulaanbaatar with my two toddlers, whose names are Ariunbold and Az, and my husband Mr. Altan-Uya. Mongolia is known as the land of the eternal blue sky due to more than 250 sunny days a year. It is the 18th largest country in the world by land size.

What brought you to the US?

I came here to do a month of fellowship in Minnesota. My aim is to learn the best practices of integrating immigrants into society and to cultivate my newly found knowledge to returnees in Mongolia. I think my aspiration for making a positive change in our community is what brought me here. I came through a program which is organized by the State Department and the National Committee (National Committee on US-China Relations). I want to use this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to those organizations and their staff who are doing the fantastic job of giving us this opportunity.

What do you do in Mongolia?

I work as a return and reintegration specialist for the International Organization for Migration Mongolia, a UN Migration Agency. It is dedicated to promoting humane and orderly migration for the benefit of all. My main duty is to assist Mongolian returnees to reintegrate into our society and help to bring vulnerable migrants from countries through the implementation of the return and reintegration program.

What do you hope to achieve during your stay here?

I want to learn how resettlement and integration policy implementation works as a system at a non-governmental organization level from the world's top immigrant country, the USA.

What organization are you working with here?

Daily Work is a non-profit organization whose mission is to provide employment services and mentoring so all job seekers can thrive, resulting in a community

where everyone can work grow, and contribute. I admire how efficiently this organization works and contributes enormously to society.

Before coming here, I researched the organization's scope and activities a bit. Frankly speaking, I did not believe what I read. It said that 100 interns and volunteers, as well as one to two staff have supported over a thousand immigrant job seekers since 2015. Between 206-225 job seekers come and receive 1590-1671 sessions of consultation meetings annually, out of which 60-80% are immigrant job seekers and more than 50% get employed. The annual budget was between \$180,000-\$200,000, including operational and administrative costs. I doubted how it could be possible to work with over 200 job seekers, each of them having to meet seven to eight times on average and receive other types of support besides employment, all within this budget. How they attracted volunteers and interns and how they retained and engaged them was a big question for me.

I have been working here for four weeks, and now I realize that good guidance programs, excellent supervision and an opportunity to see immediate changes in people's lives attract a lot of volunteers and interns. It helps them to develop their life skills and become more passionate about providing employment support services and mentoring that can lead to financial stability and full lives for the job seekers. Not only job seekers benefit from the services of Daily Work, but volunteers and interns also gain from this. I can see and feel that every participant of this non-profit organization receives value, and every donation is making an impact on the well-being of society.

What are your impressions of the US?

I am impressed by many things here. First, I am impressed by size of everything here. Big portion of food, stores, houses, etc. I am also amazed by the real diversity, justice and liberty of this country. I wish my country had this justice for everyone regardless of their position and wealth. Lastly, I

am enthralled by the pure air and water, as well as forests teeming with wild animals in Minneapolis. The capital city of Mongolia where I live had this air approximately 10-15 years ago. Global warming, pollution and desertification were not problems only a decade ago. Now we are experiencing bad air quality during winter even though we have similar temperature as Minnesota. Because of that children and elders easily get sick and suffer from flu and asthma. Hospitals are fully occupied during winter with sick toddlers and infants. Coming here made me remember the teeming nature we once had in the city when I was a child. It made me strongly believe that we need to save our mother nature through immediate actions, by using less electricity, water and plastics, for the sake of our future generations. So please cherish and preserve this beautiful natural environment you have, I love it so much.

How is life different in Minnesota from Mongolia?

I saw many similarities and differences. As a working mom with two toddlers, I tried to learn about social support for young families with children here. Generally, I support women to work after birth without dependency on their husbands. In addition to this, we need to contribute to our society by our ideas and efforts. However, here in the USA, I think the maternity leave period is quite short compared to Mongolia and public day care/ pre-school for toddlers are expensive. In Mongolia, we have four months of paid maternity leave and three years of unpaid maternity leave entitlement. These public supports relieve a lot of stress and pressure from working mothers and families. Also, our public kindergarten starts at the age of two which

helps parents to work full time. Living with pets is not common in Mongolia.

How are they similar?

The cold and snowy weather reminds me of Mongolia. Also, here in Minneapolis, everyone is eager to have their own cars for their convenience, just like Mongolians. I think Minneapolitans as warm-hearted as Mongolians. When I ask for directions, a lot of people help me.

What have you learned from this exchange?

This was an invaluable experience for me. Learning is only valid when you apply it, right? Therefore, I cannot say I am a "complete" learner right now, but I will prove myself by my actions. I started by saving energy, having less consumption than before, trying to be more punctual and seeing things from different vantage points.

I am fortunate for having a great host family. My host mom Ms. Jennifer and her daughter Ms. Eva treated me as their daughter and sister during my stay. I saw how Americans live and was impressed with their hospitality. Also, our everyday chit-chat enabled me to understand the culture. Before I came here, I hadn't lived with dogs and cats. This experience helped me to love animals more.

All in all, I thank my host family, organization and organizers of this program and I want to thank my parents and family who were always there for me.

Craig Wilson is a Lowry Hill resident and the editor of the Hill & Lake Press. Craig has been contributing to this column since 2008.



Anka Erdenebaatar at the Walker Sculpture Garden (photo Jennifer Breitinger).



Anka with Judy Sharken Simon, Operations Director - Daily Work (photo Mr. Madhi).

KENWOOD ARTS & SMARTS Native American Art: Teaching in the Present Tense

Article and Photos by Tim Sheridan

Kenwood Elementary Celebrates Seven Years of Innovative Native American Art Curriculum

Margaret Zimmerman-Swenson is known to be a fantastic art teacher but even she felt nervous about teaching Native American art.

In 2015, she decided to collaborate with Heid Erdrich and Angela Erdrich, Ojibwe tribal members whose children were her students. They had faith in her, that she could do justice to the subject matter. "Teachers are cautious about teaching Native American topics. They do not want to offend or be culturally inappropriate. I could see that when she accepted the challenge, she accepted it deep inside," said Angela. "The school system is not set up to start something innovative. Margaret needed to develop the curriculum and study many artists and fit her ideas into rubrics that conformed to standards."

The Erdrich sisters say that one change teachers can make is to speak about Native people using the present tense. Too many teachers keep Natives frozen in time but there is a way to change sentence structure to acknowledge the past in the context of today's thriving traditions.

Ms. Zimmerman-Swenson brings contemporary Native artists into classroom for four of the six grades, which makes a huge impression on the students. Two classrooms learn by

studying the techniques of artists of the past.

Each November, it's impressive to view Zimmerman-Swenson's method of displaying children's grade level artwork side by side because with an identical assignment, students exhibit a delightful variety of ideas and interpretations.

Birchbark Books sponsors an annual award in recognition of Margaret Zimmerman-Swenson's efforts. The award honors a member of the Kenwood community who successfully bridges the gap of cultural understanding.

Students will remember their feelings of curiosity, pride and accomplishment and connect those positive feelings to learning about Native American art and culture from great artist role models and their beloved teacher.

Kindergarten: Tree of Life drawings inspired by the artistic technique of the late Canadian artist, Norval Morrisseau.

First grade: Artist Gordon Coons shares his colorful Ojibwe style animal paintings and teaches students to draw and color their own whimsical animals.

Second grade: James Autio, Ojibwe artist and poet, shows the use of bold color as children paint Minnesota animals.

Third grade: drawings of Native

corn. Angela Erdrich, Ojibwe, visits to show Native crafts, birchbark art and her watercolor illustrations.

Fourth grade: Marlina Myles, Dakota, challenges the children to create meaningful images in silhouette using sharpie marker on a tissue paper background, inspired by the example of Myles' digital designs. Myles enjoys banter with the inquisitive Kenwood Elementary children whom she recognizes as well-trained by their excellent art teacher.

Fifth grade: students study the exquisite technique of the late Red Lake Ojibwe artist Patrick DesJarlait and through watercolor, learn about Minnesota fish and contemporary Red Lake traditions.

Tim Sheridan the staff photographer for Hill & Lake Press and lives in the Cedar-Isles-Dean neighborhood.



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Dear Neighbor

A monthly column by Dorothy Richmond



Let's talk about squirrels. I'm aware that many of you already are groaning, so I'm going all in: I love 'em.

I didn't always delight in squirrels, or any of the feral fauna that populate our yards. But I never hated them. Like many people, I was indifferent: Squirrels were just there.

My fondness for squirrels began about five years ago, and the root cause was the Southwest High School Nordic team of which both of my daughters, Daisy and Lily, were members. (Go, Lakers!) Each year at the end of the season they hosted an awards ceremony and catered Mexican buffet. I would work fluffing the tablecloth and cutting cake, and at the end of the evening there were always lots of leftovers. It was 2017, and there was a run on the meat, cheese, beans, guacamole, etc., leaving only bags and bags of tortillas going begging. I said I'd take two packages. When I got home I discovered that someone had snuck in

the bag two more packages (36 tortillas each) leaving me with 144 tortillas—a gross—of corn tortillas which I do not like. I favor the flour variety.

I put them in the freezer and embarked on a giving (getting rid of) mission. No takers. A month later I had a party and needed room in the freezer so I moved the gross of gross tortillas to the adjunct freezer, aka the back porch. The day after the party, when I'd unsuccessfully tried to foist the tortillas on guests like so many parting booby-prizes (again, no takers) I went to the porch to retrieve the partially thawed tortillas and noticed a forlorn squirrel in the yard, desperately foraging for food. If squirrels lived on snow, he could have had his fill, but that's not how it works. So, I flung out one of the tortillas, and I swear Mr. Squirrel looked at me and said, "Thank you, dear Lady." This made me happy.

So, I threw out a few more. Half an hour later they were gone.

Finally, I found takers! Sometimes I got to watch the squirrels devour the bounty, holding a tortilla, chomping on it like an old typewriter, clickety clack. Word got out that it was par-tay in Dorothy's back yard and soon I had a scurry of squirrels. When I ran out of tortillas, I Googled "What do squirrels eat?" And I learned that barks, twigs and soil are a good source of minerals and roughage, but their favorite food is dried corn on the cob—hence their robust attitude toward my corn tortillas.

Squirrels are basically herbivores but, when desperate, will dine on caterpillars, crickets and larvae: pest control! I've discovered they also like leftover salad, vegetables, bread, fruit and the occasional piece of chicken. As a lousy cook, I deeply appreciate my most grateful guests.

In the midst of the tortilla festival, I was at a party, talking with a very intelligent man, and we had a frighteningly stupid conversation. Only the Messiah knows how we got on the topic, but I confessed to him that I loved squirrels. His response was "Ugh. They're rats with furry tails." I argued that they have fur all over their bodies, and he contended that their body fur wasn't so furry as the tail. I coun-

tered that it was still furrer than a rat's. Pure sophistication.

Still, the "rats with furry tails" comment haunted me, and I wondered, are squirrels, like war, good for absolutely nothing? So, I turned again to Google and asked, "What do squirrels contribute to the world?" And I learned that squirrels are a vital part of our ecosystem. They shape plant composition, taking seeds and burying them in undisclosed locations. It turns out they're not real smart and often forget where they left them. The result is that we get trees. Thank you very much—a lot cheaper than Bachman's and more prolific than Johnny Appleseed: There are approximately two billion squirrels in the United States and four to ten billion worldwide. Squirrel census-taking, like so much of our lives, is a capricious discipline.

As they say, you can take the girl out of the farm, but, well, you know the rest.

- Dorothy

Dorothy Richmond is an experienced Spanish instructor and the author of several Spanish textbooks. She is a longtime resident of Cedar-Isles-Dean.

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