



# Hill & Lake Press

‘Where the biggies leave off...’

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

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## EDITORIAL

By Craig Wilson, Editor

### MINNESOTA DESERVES THIS FLAG



The new Minnesota flag's star symbolizes the state's motto "The Star of the North," the dark blue is a nod to the K shape of the state and the light blue represents the translation for the original Dakota name for Minnesota, "Mni Sóta Makoce," or "the land where the water reflects the skies." (Photo State Emblems Redesign Commission)

*Craig Wilson is the editor of the Hill & Lake Press and lives in Lowry Hill.*

After months of tedious tweaking, Minnesota finally has a new flag worthy of this great state. It will be presented to the Legislature in 2024, and barring a veto, it will fly on Statehood Day, May 11, 2024. And I can't wait.

I'm one of the zealots who's followed every step of the process and I can assure you that we've ended up with an "A+" design — a white multicultural eight-point "north star," also reflected on the center of the floor of the Capitol rotunda, over a dark blue swallowtail representing the shape of Minnesota next to a brilliant sky-tinted blue that represents the many waters that unite us as Minnesotans from the Mississippi to Lake Superior to the 10,000+ other lakes, streams and rivers that grace our state.

Its simple and symmetrical design is lauded by experts as a worst-to-first design turnaround, like the class clown becoming valedictorian overnight.

According to a Star Tribune article on Dec. 20, flag expert Ted Kaye "gave Minnesota's new design an "A" and called it excellent."

"You can't make everybody happy, but Minnesota will come to be extremely proud of this

flag," said Kaye, secretary of the North American Vexillological Association. "The state has seized a wonderful opportunity to improve its symbolism."

#### Yes, I'm a nerd.

For years I have worked with a dedicated team of volunteers on a Facebook page called "Minnesotans for a better flag" (lower-case, not upper as that's another group) with other amateur flag designers dreaming up more inclusive representations of Minnesota.

In October 2020 I wrote a piece for the Hill & Lake Press calling for a new flag and seal to replace what I considered to be a racist and offensive symbol of 19th century white supremacy, colonialism and the displacement and genocide of native people.

In that time, I've learned a lot about vexillology (the study of flags) and the principles of good flag design according to "Good' Flag, 'Bad Flag," by Ted Kaye: "1) keep it simple: the flag should be so simple that a child can draw it from memory; 2) use meaningful symbolism: the flag's images, colors and patterns should relate to what it symbolizes; 3) use two or three basic colors; 4) no lettering or seals; 5) be distinctive or be related."

The current flag fails miserably at meeting these criteria and

was recently described as "a cluttered genocidal mess" by State Rep. Mike Freiberg, the author of the bill to replace it.

In contrast, the proposed flag would elevate Minnesota to the top tier of U.S. state flags and be a unifying symbol for all Minnesotans to be proud of.

#### Why do I care?

Perhaps I was more sensitive to this issue because I'm Native Hawaiian — as in my Polynesian ancestors crossed the Pacific ocean millennia ago and settled in Hawaii as its original human inhabitants.

As with North America, Europeans arrived in Hawaii with germs that killed off the vast majority of my people. Some of these Europeans are also my ancestors. In the wake of this catastrophe, Europeans came to hegemonically dominate Hawaiian institutions, eventually overthrowing our monarchy and annexing Hawaii, first as a U.S. territory and later as a state. Sound familiar?

Hawaii's flag, a merger of the Union Jack and the U.S. flag, was designed to appease both sides of the colonial interests in an attempt by the Hawaiian monarchy to maintain independence. It's a 19th century colonial symbol that is distasteful but not disgusting.

In contrast, Minnesota ended

Continued on page 5

### NEIGHBOR HEID ERDRICH APPOINTED FIRST MINNEAPOLIS POET LAUREATE

By James Lenfesty



Heid Erdrich (Photo Angie Erdrich)

*James P. Lenfestey is a poet and proud poet laureate of the 1800 block of Girard Avenue South. Maybe. Possibly. He lives in Lowry Hill.*

I remember when poetry giant (and neighbor) Robert Bly was enshrined as the first poet laureate of the state of Minnesota. "OK," he told me, "but I'm not going to do anything." Nor did he, aside from carrying on his global poetry impact.

Heid Erdrich happily did not offer the same response to the City of Minneapolis and the Loft Literary Center when they asked for applicants for the first-ever Minneapolis poet laureate. Not only were deep artistic experience and credibility required, which Heid dominates, but the Loft required certain very specific public obligations that might have intimidated lesser beings.

Heid is the perfect poet to fulfill them, smart as a whip, clever as a coyote, committed as an angel to illuminating our shared life on Mother Earth. The neighborhood and city are hugely lucky to have her reverence for words, word play, word magic, humor and spirit in our city's ceremonial life for the next year.

The daughter of teachers Ralph and Rita Erdrich, Heid grew up mostly in Wahpeton, North Dakota, near her mother's Turtle Mountain reservation, where her family is enrolled. She attended Dartmouth College, Johns Hopkins for an M.A. and sneaked in a Ph.D. from Union Institute.

She and her husband John Burke joined her sisters Louise and Angie in the Kenwood neighborhood from which the extended

Continued on page 9



# 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.

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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.*

## Council Member-Elect Katie Cashman Fails to Denounce Hamas

I was surprised to read Ward 7 Council Member-elect Katie Cashman's statement on X, formerly Twitter, earlier this month about Israel and Palestine. Cashman fails to mention Hamas. There would be no "escalation of violence in Israel and Palestine" without the violation of a permanent ceasefire by Hamas on October 7.

Cashman tweeted: "Since October 7, we have witnessed a heartbreaking escalation of violence in Israel and Palestine ... My heart breaks for the Palestinian people experiencing genocide at the hand of Netanyahu's Israeli military, funded by our tax dollars and supported by our President. My heart also breaks for Jewish people holding immense pain around the events of October 7th and the aftermath. This genocide has further animated antisemitism and Islamophobia across our country, pushing our communities into division, fear, and uncertainty. Our collective heartbreak requires us to meaningfully call for peace. We are all connected: our humanity and liberation are bound together. I'm joining several elected leaders across Minnesota who are demanding a permanent ceasefire and divestment from the State of Israel. I invite other community leaders to use the power you have to call for peace and justice."

Calling the kidnapping, rape, and killing of Israelis, Americans and others by Hamas on Oct. 7 an "event" is a telling choice of words. The real enemy of both Palestinian and Israeli people is Hamas, yet nowhere in her statement does she denounce Hamas or its barbaric attack on innocents in Israel on Oct. 7; Hamas' use of hospitals, schools and other population centers to shield its operations; or the ongoing violence perpetrated by Hamas on the Palestinian people.

She labels Israel's effort to eradicate Hamas genocide yet ignores Hamas' stated goal — the elimination of Israel as a nation and the eradication of Christians and Jews from the region through carnage, displacement and terror. This sounds like genocide to me. Since the proliferation of fake news and alternative facts, it is important to note that Judaism preceded Islamism as a religion by centuries in the region. As such, this is the ancestral home of the Jews and the unceded land of the Jewish people.

Moreover, demanding "divestment from the State of Israel" reveals naiveté about the role Israel plays as the only democracy in the Middle East and the only state in the region that protects civil liberties like women's and LGBTQ+ rights and whose citizens include Jews, Muslims and Christians.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

This is not complicated. There are NOT good people on both sides. Hamas and its supporters are evil. Their open call for a globalized intifada is a call for the death of Israelis and Jews everywhere. Never again is now. I will not be silent, nor will I be silenced. What about you?

Now that Ms. Cashman will be working for the people of Minneapolis' 7th ward and not for the U.N., I hope she will show more understanding of matters closer to home such as public safety and investment in the Uptown commercial area than she does of those in the Middle East.

*Dawn Erlandson  
East Isles*

### Thank You

Hello all. This is George Roberts writing to thank you for your coverage of the North Minneapolis WHAT WE WANT show at Isles Bun & Coffee.

Judy Longbottom, one of your readers, alerted me to the article. In getting to that article, I perused much of your December issue. I am impressed with the depth and breadth of your coverage. I particularly enjoyed reading about Jeff Bengstrom.

At a time when newspapers are having trouble adapting to the digital world and its exigencies, your paper seems vibrant and expansive. My thanks and my congratulations to you all.

You may be interesting in knowing the article led Judy Longbottom to invite me to place a broadside in her UPS store in the coming months. A special thanks for that.

Please keep up the good work.

*George Roberts  
North Minneapolis*

### A Question for Mr. Murphy

I have a question for Mr. Murphy, who wrote the article to which I am responding, "Uptown's Parking Fallacy." Do you, Mr. Murphy, patronize the businesses on the south end of Hennepin, from 26th Street south to Black Walnut Bakery and Perennial Cycle?

The tone of your article was more of "Get with the program, you people!" than any attempt to justify the hardship to businesses that have already weathered the protests and destruction farther east on Lake Street and the pandemic. And did I read that the Mall portion of the Uptown Art Show would be lost as well? I live on West Lake Street and drive almost daily east to the Hennepin corridor to go to Lund's, Walgreens, Kowalski's and other shops in the area. Before it closed, I drove to the YWCA for fitness classes. It was a great facility, and wonderful that it had easy parking.

I have visited Paper Source, used the nail salon on Lake, dined at Barrette and Lake & Irving, and brought things in for alterations to a shop on Lake Street. I could either walk from my daughter's house on Humboldt, or I parked along Lake Street or on one of the side streets south of Lake. Where I live I need to use my car to get to most of these places. Even through the existing commercial areas, the traffic wants to move too fast on Lake Street. Is Hennepin

next?

I understand that parking is always going to be a contentious issue. Merchants understandably want parking right outside their doors. Often customers do as well. People will walk a block or two along a street, but not much more if they are shopping or running multiple errands or have children with them. It is already daunting to cross Hennepin Avenue to go to the hardware or the UPS store, or other amenities along Hennepin. I think that there may be less concern with parking than with the speed of the traffic on Hennepin.

The Mall is essentially a residential street in a residential neighborhood, with apartments on the south and more apartments and single-family homes in the areas north. The Greenway and The Mall are wonderful features for walkers and bicyclists, as another writer wrote in the same issue. People walk their dogs and read on the benches. The green spaces define a safe quiet space buffering the residences from the busier traffic on Hennepin and Lake. I would oppose running buses or trains along there because there is not that much space, and it is already in use. It would, I believe, transform the character of these neighborhoods, and not in a good way. When I go to the library, I drive east on The Mall and then exit to the west on The Mall. The space is narrow yet it is working, and the narrow lanes force drivers to slow down.

If the purpose of the Lake Street work to the west is to calm traffic, the design looks like it is in fact going to speed it up, with the long wide curves sweeping along the lake. Even now I can see people getting ready to speed up after they get through the light at East Bde Maka Ska Parkway. There is one light on Lake Street near my condo building which seems set to allow me a brief few seconds of safety to pull out of our driveway. I worry about losing that light in some new design.

We have seen articles in the newspaper just this year about businesses that lost all of their parking with road work. If some streets need repair and improvement, getting that done is great. Maybe the Uptown Transit Center will get a facelift. Some temporary disruption can be dealt with if you have the participation of business owners and residents in the process and plans in place to help them stay in business. But if all this updating and overhauling is as destructive as you seem prepared to accept, what good will the street be except as an expressway, even if it is not called that. So, in honesty, Mr. Murphy, do you see a future for Hennepin Avenue as a commercial district, or it is to be a place for cars to drive through quickly?

*Laura Haule  
Cedar-Isles-Dean*

### Driving Under the Influence of Marijuana

On May 16, 2018, in Fremont, California, where cannabis has been legal since 2016, a young driver under the influence of marijuana caused a multi-car crash. The accident killed three people, two of whom were children.

Sadly, this scenario has played

out far too often throughout the United States. According to the National Institutes of Health, U.S. traffic deaths involving marijuana have more than doubled over the past five years. In the state of Colorado, where cannabis has been legal since 2014, marijuana-related traffic fatalities have increased by 138%. According to the Centers for Disease Control, the highest incidence of marijuana-related fatal traffic accidents is seen in 21-25-year-olds. These sobering statistics are of great interest to Minnesotans since our state has just legalized cannabis use for its citizens 21 years of age and older.

Minnesota drivers should be particularly concerned. Simply put, Minnesota drivers do not want to die. They want to be safe. Cannabis dispensaries can now be seen throughout the Twin Cities. While decreasing the number of cannabis dispensaries is one potential solution, I believe that the most effective way to decrease marijuana-related traffic deaths is to raise the legal age of cannabis use from 21 to 25 years.

According to Rand psychiatrist Kate Watkins, who has over 30 years of experience in drug addiction, the most impactful step that could be taken to reduce the number of marijuana-related traffic accidents is to raise the legal age of cannabis use to 25. As Dr. Watkins points out, the human brain continues to develop through the early twenties. Having fully developed brains, 25-year-olds are more capable than their younger counterparts of appreciating the negative and dangerous consequences of their actions and therefore less likely to drive under the influence.

She asserts that by raising the legal age of cannabis use to 25, all drivers will be safer on the road. Now that cannabis use is legal in our state, Minnesota will likely see a significant rise in traffic deaths due to marijuana use in 21-25-year-olds. The time for action is now.

*Ethan Edinburgh  
Lowry Hill*

**Fix Potholes, Protect People**

The people of Minneapolis are threatened by the danger of potholes and need a solution to this problem. Potholes lead to very dangerous driving conditions. A pothole could lead to a flat tire or mess up the axles under the car, hindering the driver's ability to control the car.

In addition to the many dangers potholes pose to drivers and bikers, they also come with a hefty price tag. According to a recent AAA survey, "the average cost of most pothole-related repairs is \$406" ("Potholes and Vehicle Damage").

The city's current method is to patch potholes instead of replacing the deteriorated roads. According to Steven Colin, a City of Minneapolis administrator, "When the money is tight, then they go to a patch rather than replace their roadway system." The Minneapolis government needs to invest more time and money into long-term fixes instead of just filling in the potholes.

This also means that the Minneapolis government should hire more workers to keep the roads in better condition. According to Steven Colin, "Managing your roadways is cheaper in the long run than constantly filling the potholes in." It would benefit the city, as well as the residents, to invest in longer-term solutions because it would be less ex-

pensive for the city to implement road systems that are built to last, rather than constantly making repairs.

*Sam Cockson  
Lowry Hill*

**Generation Alpha (2010-2024) Is Falling Short**

These children have had a completely different upbringing than any other generation has before. Their key developmental years have been stunted by COVID-19, and they've grown up with highly developed social media and ensnaring algorithms that alter their psychology.

Technology and social media today are highly developed, but dangerous to children. Kids today have a world of easily accessible entertainment at their fingertips. If they get bored of what they're watching, they can change it immediately. It provides a never-ending loop of entertainment, entrapping kids in a vicious cycle of getting bored and scrolling immediately. With platforms like YouTube Shorts, Reels, and TikTok providing shorter and easier entertainment, children can experience instant gratification, and move on if they don't. According to the Oxford Blue, these videos encourage creators to be short and fast, and train viewers to expect gratification within six seconds.

I interviewed two teachers from Bloomington, who said that they had seen a significant decrease in things like test scores, attention span, and social-emotional skills, especially after coming back from COVID. One comment about behavior was especially striking: "I have to work harder to prove myself more now than I did 15 years ago. It's hard to prove to these kids that what I'm teaching them matters." This aligned with other points they made, saying that respect and attention span have fallen significantly. This is corroborated by Bridge Care ABA, who state that the average human's attention span is only 8.25 seconds, shorter than the 9 second attention span of a goldfish.

I have a personal connection to this topic through my two sisters. They were born in 2012 and 2020, falling right into the timespan that constitutes Generation Alpha. Generation Alpha was dealt a bad hand, and it will take a village to set them back on a developmentally healthy course. It requires a change in parenting styles from parents (cutting down on screen time, limiting access to doom scrolling apps like TikTok), regulations on screen time, and it will require a drastic shift in how we envision our future.

*Ayan Akbar  
Lowry Hill*

**Kenwood Needs Pickleball Courts**

If you ever want to play a sport that's easy on your body, while also giving a good workout, then look no further than pickleball. Pickleball is a great way for people to get outside their houses and enjoy a sport with neighbors, friends and family.

According to Tom Beck of MUSC Health, "Racket sports such as pickleball boost the cardiovascular system which helps prevent many of the unwanted problems of older age like hypertension, stroke and heart attack."

Kenwood lacks pickleball courts,

having only one court in the whole neighborhood. The lack of pickleball courts impacts people to not try out or continue playing as it is either overcrowded or requires people to travel if they live on the opposite side of Kenwood.

According to Cliff Swenson of the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, they are planning to add more infrastructure to Kenwood but are not sure what to include in the parks. The average age of pickleball players is between 18 and 44, which makes up a little bit more than 50% of the Kenwood population.

Making pickleball courts more accessible to everyone would lead to an increase in activity in more than 50% of Kenwood's population. Making pickleball courts more common in parks in Kenwood would encourage people to be more active and play pickleball.

Kenwood has many beautiful places with great scenery all over the place that would make great spots for new courts to be added.

*Max Vinar  
Lowry Hill*



No ice, Lake Bde Maka Ska in late December (Photo Tim Sheridan)



I have never seen this many bald eagles in one place in Minneapolis. There were three adults and two juveniles eating a duck on the ice a bit after 9 a.m. on Monday Dec. 11 on the lagoon. (Photo and caption Candace Dow)

# Leaf Blower Brigade, Update

By Susan Lenfestey



Kim Havey, Director of Sustainability with the City of Minneapolis (Photo Kim Havey)

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

A small group of neighborhood residents met in November to discuss how to move ahead on getting the City of Minneapolis to pass an ordinance banning gas-powered leaf blowers and other lawn tools.

We were joined by Kim Havey, Director of Sustainability at the City of Minneapolis, who provided useful information on initiatives already underway in the city (and the state) using rebates as incentives for those who make the switch from the noisier and dirtier gas-powered tools to the quieter and less harmful battery-powered ones.

Many professional lawn service companies resist the switch, saying that the battery-powered tools don't last long enough and don't have the power of the gas-fueled ones. And the battery-powered tools bring their own problems, from the environmental impact of manufacturing and disposing of the batteries, to the health impact of blasting particulates into the air, to the disruption of the natural protection that fallen leaves provide to insects and other critters.

Short of going back to rakes, or letting the leaves stay put, there is no perfect solution to the problem.

Havey told us that Parkway Lawn Service did take advantage of the rebate program and that other companies that are currently reluctant to switch will eventually realize that a ban is inevitable and by waiting they lose out on the considerable financial incentives to do so now.

According to Havey, there is interest among some City Council members in working on an ordinance, but it's best to wait until the new Council Members are sworn in and committees are assigned.

So the blower brigade will take the month of January off and dream of healthier, quieter times ahead.

## PARKWAY LAWN SERVICE PROJECT

TOTAL COST TO SWITCH FROM GAS-POWER TO BATTERY POWER: **\$54,473**

MPCA (MINNESOTA POLLUTION CONTROL AGENCY) GRANT: **\$24,500**

GREEN COST SHARE (CITY): **\$24,513**

PARKWAY MATCH: **\$5,460**

### EQUIPMENT TO BE REPLACED AND DECOMMISSIONED:

- 2 – Redmax® Grass Trimmers, 3-year life span
- 1 – Redmax® Edger, 3-year life span
- 2 – Echo® Hedge Trimmers, 5-year life span
- 1 – Shindaiwa® Pole Trimmer, 5-year life span
- 2 – Echo® Back-pack Blowers, 4-year life
- 1 – Toro® 21" Mower, 5-year life span
- 1 – Toro® 30" Mower, 5-year life span
- 1 – Toro® 48" Mower, 8-year life span

POLLUTANTS REDUCED ANNUALLY: VOCS (VOLATILE ORGANIC COMPOUNDS): **2,418 lbs.**

NOX (NITROUS OXIDE): **12 lbs.**

PM (PARTICULATE MATTER): **72 lbs.**

*The MPCA didn't include information on reduction of CO2 (Carbon dioxide) emissions.*



**MINNESOTA POLLUTION CONTROL AGENCY**

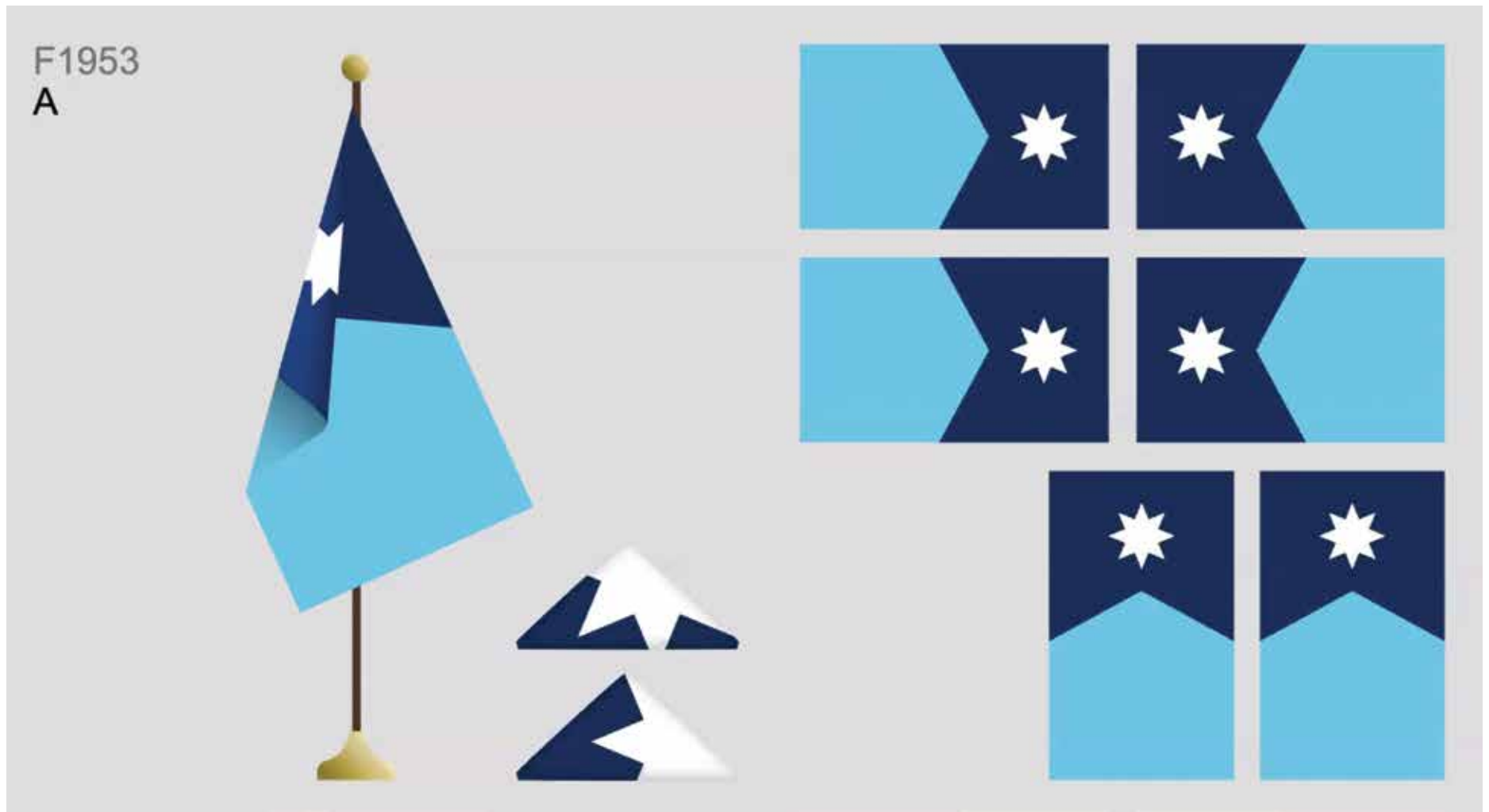
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MINNESOTA DESERVES THIS FLAG, Front page



The new Minnesota flag's symmetry enables it to fly without ever being upside-down. State Emblems Redesign Commission Chair Luis Fitch noted that when hanging vertically, the flag can be interpreted as the Mississippi River pointing to the “Star of the North,” its origin and a welcoming beacon of progress. (Image State Emblems Redesign Commission)

up with a racist seal on a flag depicting a white settler on his recently tilled land that he protects with a gun, seen leaning against a nearby tree stump, while a half-naked generic Indian man rides bareback on a horse into the sunset (aka, the Dakotas) adorned with a feather right out of a Land-O-Lakes ad. The Minnesota seal and flag is a sordid and repugnant cartoon depicting manifest destiny and white supremacy.

According to the Star Tribune on Dec. 28: “...real meaning of the (current) flag is conveyed in a poem by Mary Eastman, wife of Seth Eastman, whose drawing inspired the seal. The poem begins with ‘Give way, young warrior, thou and thy steed give way,’ before proclaiming that the settlers have taken control of the land. ‘The white man claims them now,’ the poem later states.”

Like many Minnesotans, I contacted state representatives, including Senator Scott Dibble, to right this wrong by developing a new flag and seal. He agreed, and along with other legislators, supported and advocated for the change.

In 2023 the legislature created a State Emblems Redesign Commission with a mandate to develop a new flag and seal.

**Remarkably, “design-by-committee” actually worked, and Minnesota won big!**

The State Emblems Redesign Commission was democracy at its messiest in its “design-by-committee” approach, but in the end, they came through with a showstopping design, renewing my faith in the process.

Diversity was built into the selection process with various cultural groups represented along with state leaders, such as Secretary of State Steve Simon.

The Dakota and Ojibwe representatives were the most vocal and persistent voices on the commission and most commissioners appeared to actively listen and learn from each other and professional vexillologists.

But the person who deserves the most credit is its chair, Luis Fitch, an “internationally renowned Mexican artist, mentor, and creative entrepreneur, specializing in fine art and working across gallery and urban art settings,” as described by his website, [luisfitch.com](http://luisfitch.com).

Luis did a masterful job managing strong personalities through a complex process and aesthetic minefield. He found the right tone and language to unite the commission, which

ultimately approved the design 11-1, with one commissioner holding out for additional green and white stripes.

David Kelliher and his staff at the Minnesota Historical Society also deserve kudos for professionally and efficiently administering the design competition and commission.

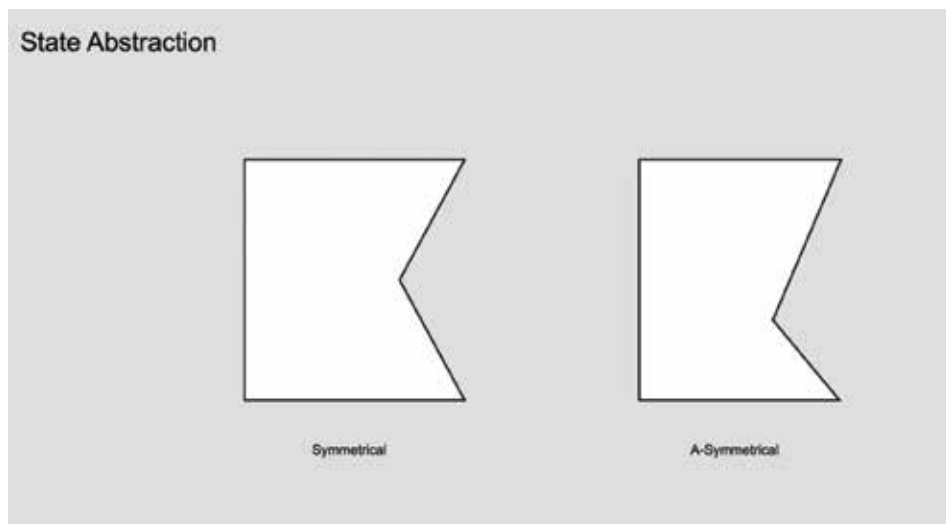
**What’s next?**

No matter what you think of the final product, the process is one to be proud of.

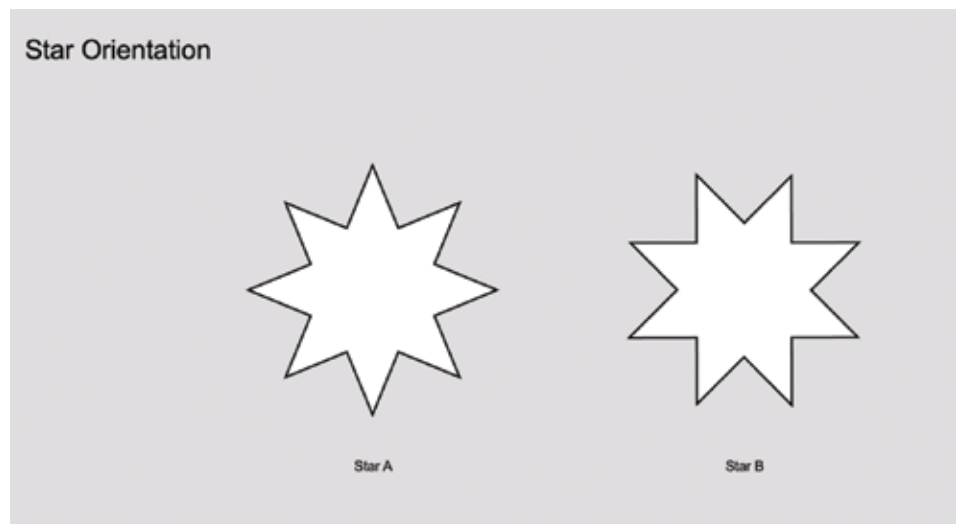
People from a wide range of perspectives spent hours together, engaged in respectful and constructive conversations about how to represent the best of Minnesota.

Unless the legislature vetoes it with a two-thirds majority vote, both the proposed flag and seal will become our newest state emblems this spring. It’s been a long time coming, but it’s well worth the wait.

Our state leaders deserve our gratitude for taking a stand and correcting this injustice with a beautiful, enduring and unifying icon.



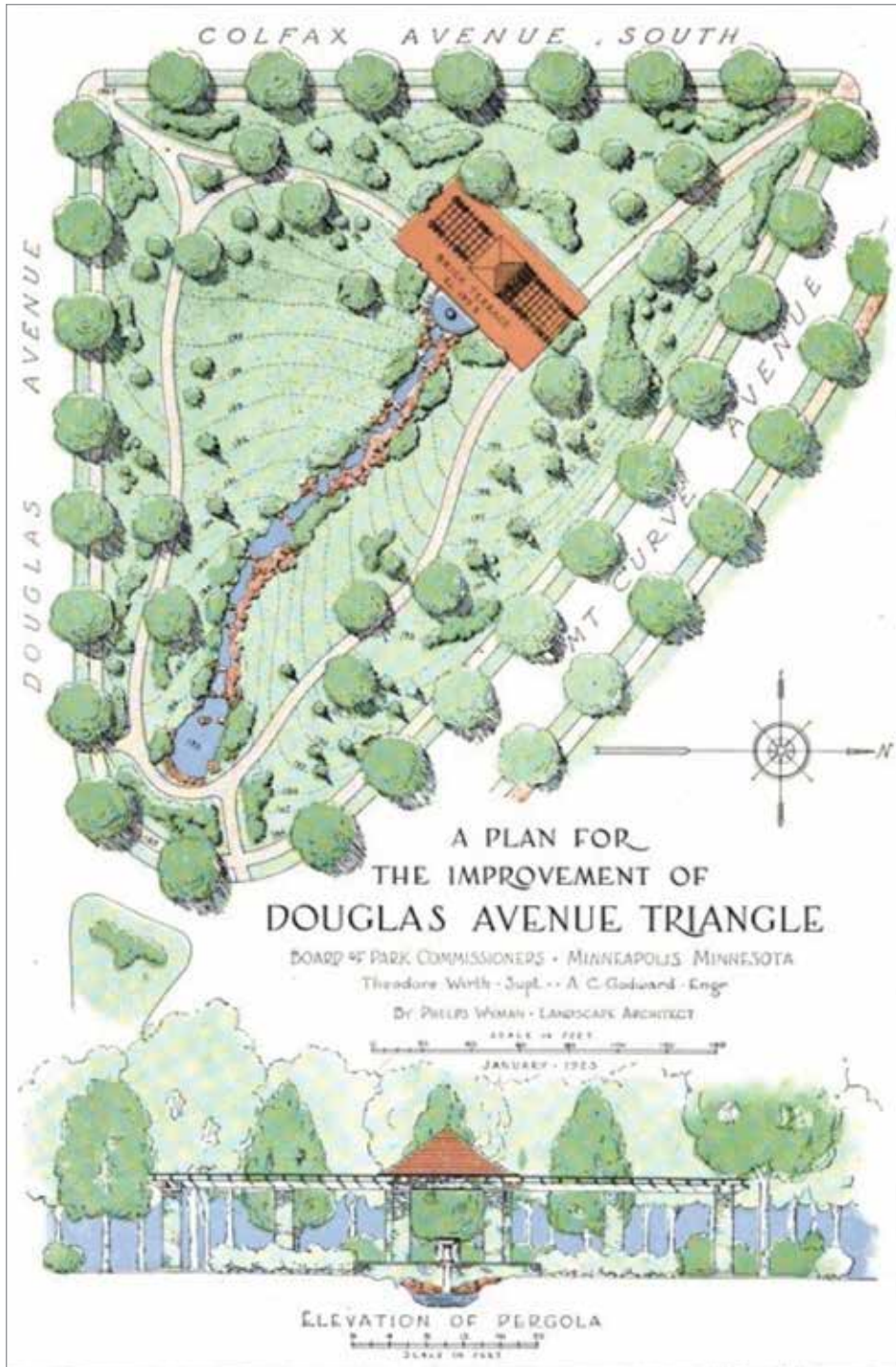
After considering symmetrical and asymmetrical interpretations of the K-shape of the state, the commission opted for a symmetrical version. Due to its symmetry, “The Star of the North” is always pointing northward. (Image State Emblems Redesign Commission)



The commission considered two stars. They referred to “Star A” as the Polaris star, due to its rays pointing in the cardinal directions, and “Star B” as the Minnesota star, a popular star known in many cultures such as the Dakota. Despite the optical illusion, the stars are identical with the exception of their orientation. The commission determined that the eight point star on the floor of the capitol rotunda points northward, like Star A, so they decided to approve that version. (Image State Emblems Redesign Commission)

# Thomas Lowry Park: Over 100 Years of Neighborhood Activism – Part One: 1872-1984

By Josie Owens



(Image Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board)

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

For such a small, tranquil piece of property, Thomas Lowry Park has a convoluted, arcane history.

Sitting on fewer than 2.5 acres, the park is nestled between Mount Curve Avenue and Douglas Avenue at the end of Bryant Avenue. Once known as Hofflin's Mound (1899), Douglas Triangle (1907) and Mount Curve Triangles (1925), the eponymous park now honors Thomas Lowry (1843-1909), a successful businessman who donated large tracts of land to Minneapolis for public parks like this one.

Thomas Lowry Park is one of several small parks owned by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board that serve as a neighborhood green space with a natural landscape design.

The pastoral design created by landscape architect and Park Board Commissioner Phelps Wyman (1870-1947) in 1922 may seem uncomplicated with its flowing water, meandering brick paths, assorted plants and flowers, and simple pergola, but it has required the dedication of several generations of neighbors over 100 years for Thomas Lowry Park to become this serene neighborhood haven.

Thomas Lowry Park is part of the Groveland Addition (1872),

one of the early additions to Minneapolis as the city expanded west. In 1874, Thomas and Beatrice Lowry elevated the neighborhood when they built their brick Second Empire-style mansion on a five-acre parcel at 2 Groveland Terrace (now the site of the Walker Art Center).

Thomas Lowry then decided to put the rest of the surrounding property that he owned on the market. The city's new money left the congested downtown areas and began building elegant homes in this 75-block area between Lynedale and Fremont.

In the center of the desirable neighborhood was an oddly shaped piece of land, block 29, created by the serpentine border of Mount Curve Avenue as it connected to Douglas Avenue. A September 1, 1907, Minneapolis Tribune article offers some background on the early neighborhood development.

There was a steady stream of municipal improvements until there was "practically no unbuilt portion of this property except what was then known as Hofflin's Mound."

The article explains that in 1892 the area at Mount Curve and Douglas was 30 feet higher than today and that "this enormous bank was all removed except the block between Mount Curve, Douglas and Colfax owned by Jo-

seph R. Hofflin," described as an "unsightly gravel bank setting about the three streets."

People came to the top of Hofflin's Mound to get a view of the city. Hofflin owned and ran the only all-night drugstore in the city located at 101 Washington Ave. S. but tried a real estate career that ended in 1903 when the real estate company of Hofflin & Conrad was dissolved.

Hofflin sold the Lowry Hill land and its nine lots to a Mrs. Hooper who with Lowry's help leveled the land. A 1903 map shows that the same parcel was redrawn with only five lots.

The 1907 article also states that the neighborhood residents, including Thomas Lowry, were now interested in preserving the beauty and property values of Lowry Hill.

At a Lowry Hill Improvement association meeting, a Mr. Bright made a passionate speech to have the park board take over this piece of land and stressed that the possibility of flat buildings on this land would "practically kill the entrance to the most noble residence property that Minneapolis possessed."

Real estate developer Edmund Walton said that such buildings would halve the property values of the neighborhood. A plan for a park with a monument to the Minnesota First Regiment was adopted. Thomas Lowry was part of the group who petitioned.

In April 1908, the Lowry Hill association formally offered to secure and "make fit" the small triangular section (.07 acres) on the eastern side.

This is the first example of the neighborhood attempting to spend money and personally care for this piece of land. It is likely that they were offering private money to fix at least the small triangular portion.

However, in September 1908, the park board denied the request for the simple reason that it did not own the land. There could have been push back from other neighbors who were already paying an assessment for the new Kenwood Park, acquired in 1907.

Consequently, the park board adopted a committee recommendation that "further consideration of this matter be indefinitely postponed."

However, in 1911, the park board listed this small triangle as a 1907 acquisition and referred to it as the Douglas Triangle. How it was acquired or paid for is unclear.

To the west of the Douglas Triangle stood the larger parcel that was still not developed.

John Friedman, a Minneapolis capitalist, noticed it and saw a great location for a luxury hotel. On Saturday, September 16, 1922, the Minneapolis Morning Tribune had a headline – "\$2,000,000 13-Story Apartment Hotel Planned for Site at Douglas and Mount Curve Avenues."

Well, that certainly grabbed the attention of the neighborhood. The language under the image of

the hotel didn't soften the blow – "The structure is to be the most pretentious of its kind west of Chicago." The advertisement concluded with the announcement of a public hearing on Monday.

One can only imagine the discussions and organizing that ensued that fall weekend about early activism. Follow-up articles in the Morning Tribune indicate that the neighborhood banded together to block the hotel and create a park.

The Minneapolis park commission used eminent domain to acquire the property from Friedman, who made "no objections to the arguments of his neighbors and stated that if the park board wished to convert the land into a park it would be satisfactory with him." The "benefitted properties" surrounding the new park were to be assessed over ten years to pay off the bonds.

As much as people wanted to stop the hotel, there was a lot of debate as to the assessment calculations. One can see from notes and drawings that the board went back and forth on who should pay. They questioned if assessment should have been all the way to Franklin or just to Lincoln.

T.B. Walker did not like that his large estate was assessed 3% of the total cost and felt that 1% was fair. It took a lot of haggling to reach the accepted payment plan in May 1923 and the rest of the year to get the bonds in place.

Theodore Wirth, the superintendent of Minneapolis park system appointed Phelps Wyman, a landscape architect, to create the design. Wirth wrote, "the little park will be very attractive and in a class of its own on account of its naturalistic effects in the heart of a residential district."

If the neighbors were feeling buyer's remorse, the December 21, 1922, Morning Tribune article should have brought them pleasure. The article explained the vision to make this historically unsightly spot quite remarkable.

It described "a brick terrace 80 feet long and 40 feet wide to be located on the highest point of the tract" with "a vine-covered pergola."

It continues with a lovely description of the stream of water that will flow over various sized rocks embedded in a concrete base with the side "lined with field stones and planted with shrubbery."

It specifies the "brooklet will start from a grotto basin in front of the pergola where the water will enter the grounds from under rocks, to produce the effect of a natural spring."

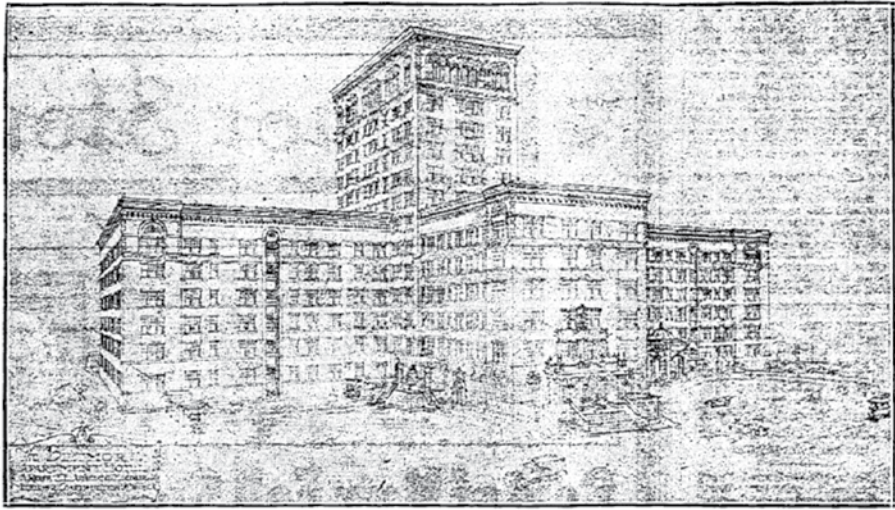
The article concludes with mentions of the meandering concrete path, the removal of 7,500 cubic yards of dirt, and a special lighting system.

Wyman's engaging plan was published in color in January 1923, and the artificial cascade of water led to the informal name of Seven Pools. The pergola was completed in 1925.

Wirth called the park one of

THE MINNEAPOLIS MORNING TRIBUNE: SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 16 1922

**\$2,000,000 13-Story Apartment Hotel Planned for Site at Douglas and Mount Curve Avenues**



John Friedman, Minneapolis capitalist, plans to begin the immediate construction of a \$2,000,000 13-story apartment hotel at Douglas and Mount Curve avenues on Lowry hill if the city council will grant him the necessary permit. The structure is to be the most pretentious of its kind west of Chicago. It will have a central section 13 stories high with two wings of six stories each, all to be bounded by Douglas, Mount Curve, Bryant and Colfax avenues. The building will contain 60 apartments ranging in size from three to 12 rooms. All rooms will have outside frontage. Apartments will rent for \$2,500 to \$15,000 yearly. On the thirteenth floor will be the ball room, ladies' reception room and a smoking room. The building has been designed by A. Ross, architect, and the Flaisher Construction company has the contract. The City Planning commission will hold a public hearing at 3 p. m. Monday on the project.

(Image Star Tribune)

the “most expensive undertakings” in the history of the park board at a total cost of more than \$100,000 for acquisition and improvement, roughly \$44,000 per acre. Once again, the area took on a new name and was officially named Mount Curve Triangles in November 1925 as Bryant Avenue still divided the space into two triangles.

Reports for the following years indicate that there were repairs needed periodically, but that the park saw no big changes. In 1984, the park board again renamed the space. It officially became Thomas Lowry Park.

This unassuming parcel of land was now an established part of Lowry Hill, a place where people came to picnic, play and gather. Problems to come were appearing in the cracks of the fountains and walkways as well as the failing pump.

Whether the neighborhood could preserve this idyllic spot would be the next challenge for Thomas Lowry Park and its dedicated community.

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[www.islesensemble.org](http://www.islesensemble.org)



## LOWRY HILL NEWS – January 2024



### NEIGHBORHOOD WALK

Saturday, January 20, 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, we'll hangout at Sebastian Joe's instead.



### NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY MEETING

Friday, January 26, from 6 p.m. – 8 p.m.  
 Kenwood Community Center

Join residents from Lowry Hill, East Isles, and Kenwood to talk neighborhood safety. Representatives from the city, including Chief of Police Brian O'Hara, 5th Precinct Inspector Christie Nelson, Ward 7 City Council Member Katie Cashman, and others, will be presenting and answering questions.



### ICE SKATING PARTY

Sunday, January 28, from 1 p.m. – 3 p.m.  
 Lake of the Isles Ice Rink + Warming House

Stay warm with neighbors at our annual winter party! Gather for open skating, then thaw out with treats in the warming house. Free skate rentals will be available for those who need them.



### LHNA BOARD MEETING

Tuesday, February 6, 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](mailto:lhna@lowryhillneighborhood.org).

Sign up for the LHNA email newsletter at [lowryhillneighborhood.org](http://lowryhillneighborhood.org)



## Trivia Night for Hill & Lake Neighborhoods

Thursday, January 25, 7 pm  
 Taberna (3126 W. Lake Street)  
 Event is open to all - Fun prizes

Come with your team or by yourself and join a team

Co-sponsored by Cedar Isles Dean and West Maka Ska Neighborhood Associations

## Neighborhood Safety Meeting

Friday, January 26, 6 - 8 pm  
 Kenwood Community Center

Hear about what's happening in our neighborhoods and tips to improve safety

Co-sponsored by CIDNA, East Isles, Kenwood and Lowry Hill neighborhoods



Next CIDNA Board Meeting  
**January 10** Wednesday, 6 - 7:30 pm  
 Jones-Harrison Senior Living



Cedar · Isles · Dean  
 Neighborhood Association

Go to [www.cidna.org](http://www.cidna.org)  
 Join our mailing list and donate to support events, or learn how to get involved



## Love Letter To A House

By Susan Lenfestey



The Bly House on Girard Avenue South in Lowry Hill (Photo Susan Lenfestey)

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

Dear Blue House,

Although you predate me considerably in years — you were one of the first farmhouses in the area after all — we do share some history. When we moved to Girard Avenue in 1974, you were there to greet us. You were yellow at the time and somewhat neglected, but that wasn't so unusual in Lowry Hill back then.

When the elderly-seeming owners moved on, the Clemence family moved in — Roger, a professor of landscape architecture at the University of Minnesota, and Gretchen, a teacher at Grace Nursery School, along with their three children, Peter, Ben and Liska.

With the trained eye of an architect and the attentive care of a teacher, they lovingly restored you to your former self and painted you

a perfect shade of ecru with bright white trim. But when the children grew up and out, the parents also moved on.

Which brought us the era of Ruth and Robert Bly, she a psychologist and he a poet. OK, not just any poet, a colorful world-renowned poet, author and activist. And being colorful, they painted you the beautiful shade of blue that you wear to this day. Robert wrote poetry in your carriage house and later built a multi-hued Scandinavian-style writing studio in your backyard. The days of the Blys were heady days, bringing a roster of A-list poets through your doors — and ours.

But now Robert is penning poetry across the firmament and Ruth is living in California to be near her daughter, and there you are, waiting for the next chapter.

Will your new owners respect your poetic past? Will they honor your farmhouse history? Will they protect the massive oak trees that lock their branches over your roof

like Chinese love knots?

Your neighbors from across the street fervently hope so. Until then, we'll "run along holding the wing-tips," as we have for each other all these years.

"Our good life is made of struts  
And paper, like those early  
Wright Brothers planes. Neighbors  
Run along holding the wing-tips."

From Robert Bly's poem, "I Have Daughters and I Have Sons" from the collection, "Talking Into the Ear of a Donkey," published by W.W. Norton in 2011.

## HEID ERDRICH APPOINTED FIRST MINNEAPOLIS POET LAUREATE, Front page



Heid Erdrich (Photo Angie Erdrich)

family set out to enlighten the city, state, nation and planet on Anishinaabe and other native languages, speech, values, humor, arts and more.

Poetry is Heid's major medium. She is the author of "Little Big Bully" (Penguin, 2020), for which she won the prestigious 2022 Bobbitt National Prize for Poetry awarded by the Library of Congress, "Curator of Ephemera at the New Museum for Archaic Media" (Michigan State University Press, 2017) and four other collections, for which she received two Minnesota Book Awards as well as numerous other fellowships and awards. A highly valued teacher, she has taught in colleges and universities around the country, and as a committed advocate for native arts helped found All My Relations Gallery, produced short plays and films, curated many exhibitions of Native American Art and was on the advisory board for the massively influential "Hearts of Our People" exhibit of Native American women's art at Mia, the Smithsonian and elsewhere.

On January 8, she will open the new City Council year with an original poem. I am not at all sure the Council has any idea what's coming its way. And on January 18, the Loft Literary Center at Open Book will host a public celebration for Heid from 6:00-8:00 p.m. I'll be there!

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# Meet Your Neighbor

By Alida Mitau

## LITT

*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.*

Litt Pinball, a pinball-centric bar boasting an impressive number and variety of machines, moved locations this fall from the Whittier neighborhood to the space previously occupied by Liquor Lyle's on Hennepin Avenue and Franklin Avenue. As a former Liquor Lyle's aficionado, I was curious to see what Litt planned to do with the space, so I connected with co-owner John Galvin in May 2023.

In doing so, I learned that John's involvement in the pinball community dates back to his childhood. His father operated and repaired pinball machines in bowling alleys, hotels and bars, and John would accompany him from place to place as a kid, watching and helping him fix the machines. John ultimately opened Litt to "cultivate an ever-changing lineup of cool machines in a welcoming space, where people could hang out, enjoy food and beverage and compete with one another (if they want to)."

After hearing his story and his excitement about the bar's new locale, I stopped bemoaning the closing of Liquor Lyle's (for the most part...) and looked forward to Litt's official opening in the new space. I also happen to live just a couple of blocks down from the bar, so my roommate and I have ambled over a handful of times for a drink, burgers and some pinball. On one such occasion, I was especially glad to notice an old Liquor Lyle's sign subtly displayed in the women's bathroom.

This month, I circled back with John to see how things have been going since the bar officially opened, and it seems like they're going quite well.

**When did the new location officially open?**

We officially opened to the pub-



lic on Thursday, Oct. 12 at 11 a.m.

**Are you happy with how the construction turned out?**

Yes, overall we are very happy with the way the building and space turned out. It wound up being a lot more work, and taking longer to complete, but it was totally worth it, both in the short term as well as long term.

**What has been the best part of the new location since you've opened?**

For me, the best part has been seeing the look on people's faces as they take in the new space!

**Have there been any unexpected hiccups that you've had to manage since opening?**

Really just the typical growing pains of getting things in place to handle the larger space, more employees, more machines, etc.

**Are you happy with how the turn-**

**out has been since you've opened (when I've gone it's been pretty crowded - in a good way!)?**

Absolutely. We've seen lots of new faces as well as plenty of familiar ones, which is awesome.

**How have things changed at Litt since opening in the new location?**

We are definitely seeing new faces. We now have the space and infrastructure to accommodate pinball players, sports spectators and people going out for food and drinks, all at once so that's exciting.

**Have you received any noteworthy feedback about the new location?**

Pretty typical feedback so far. Mostly positive. As expected we had some kinks to work out upon opening and are always looking for ways to improve our operation.

**Why did you decide to set up a DJ booth (did the previous location have one too? I wasn't sure!)?**

We love our DJs! We didn't have a dedicated booth at the old space, but still made it work to host DJs multiple nights each week. With that in mind, we knew we wanted to dedicate a space for that in the new location. It has also proved very useful for announcements during our pinball events.

**How did you decide on the food menu?**

We did serve food at the old location, most of which carried over to the new menu. We now have a vent hood in our kitchen, so we happily added some items to the menu. Our smash burgers have been a huge hit!

**Besides DJ sets, will the new Litt host any other special events?**

So far we've hosted some private parties as well as various pinball tournaments and beer events. We're excited to explore more opportunities in the future too.

**What are you most excited about for the future of Litt?**

I'm looking forward to continuing to grow the pinball community around us, while at the same time establishing ourselves as a great local bar for people to come together.

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# Litt Succeeds as Alternative to Liquor Lyle's

By Leah Harp

*Leah Harp lives in East Isles.*

Liquor Lyle's recent closing was a blow for many. While nothing can replace Liquor Lyle's traditional neighborhood bar atmosphere and musty smell, Litt Pinball Bar offers a solid addition to the neighborhood.

Litt Pinball Bar maintains Liquor Lyle's bartop in the front. They have comfortable booths and bartop seating. The majority of the bar offers rows of pinball machines ranging from vintage models such as the Eight Ball Deluxe (1981) to modern machines like Foo Fighters (2023). There is also a photo booth.

We came for lunch and were surprised by the appetizing menu with hot dogs, hamburgers, chicken or pork tacos, and vegetarian and vegan options. The female bartender was friendly and attentive. Our lunch was tasty, prompt and reasonably priced. There were a number of people there for lunch, and there was a lively bustling feeling. Multiple large wall-mounted screens played sporting events while heavy metal music played over speakers. The bathrooms were clean, and the iconic Liquor Lyle's sign hangs in the ladies' room.

Litt offers pinball leagues and a parking lot in the back, accessible from the driveway on the south side of the building. They have done a good job removing graffiti from their exterior walls. The only critique is they could remove cigarette butts from their sidewalks.

Matthew Haapoja, J.D., a long-term patron of Liquor Lyle's, shared: "...upon entering Litt I felt ghosts of all the prior Lyle's regulars and staff — even though I know they're not dead! It took some getting used to but I was up to it. I was glad the bartop was the same and the DJ was great!"

I will be returning with my teen and some of his friends. Make sure to support this new neighborhood business.

LITT Pinball Bar  
2021 Hennepin Ave S  
littpinballbar.com  
Open daily 11 a.m.-2 a.m.,  
18+ after 8 p.m.



Above: Liquor Lyle's former exterior (Image Google)  
All other images (Photos Leah Harp)

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# Uptown Winter Wonderland Holiday Market Draws Neighbors to Seven Points

Photos by Thang Holt

The festive market showcased local artists and makers sharing their work and gift ideas. The event also included live musical performances, interactive community murals for kids to add a touch of their creativity, streaming holiday movies, a roller skating party and photos with Santa and friends. There were also dining specials, and features at area restaurants and cafes. The event was held on December 16, 2023. Top: Event logo; Middle, left: Coloring on the one of the community murals; Middle, right: Thang the Elf and friends; Bottom: Vendors and their wares



The event was presented by the East Bde Maka Ska Neighborhood Association and sponsored by: Curioso Coffee, Lucent Blue Events + Design, Seven Points and The UPS Store, Uptown.



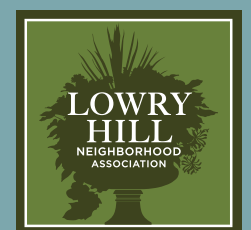
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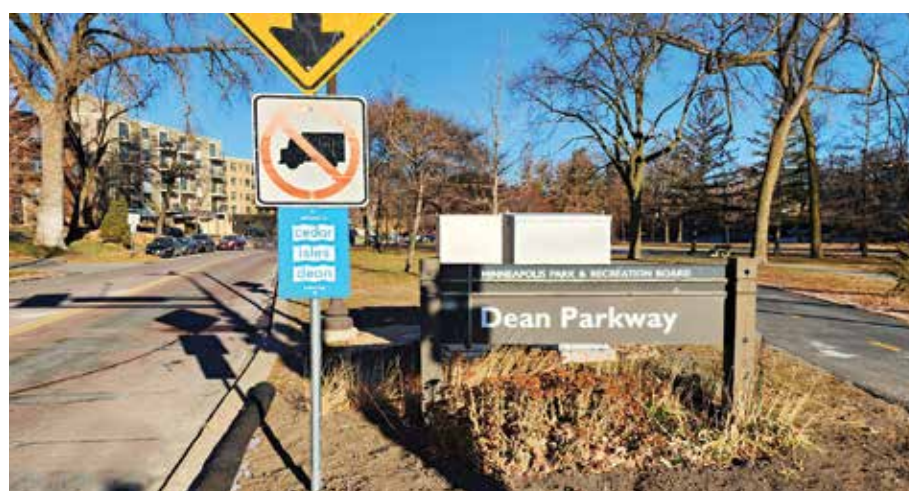
The Hill & Lake Press is a non-profit newspaper funded and supported by its advertisers and neighborhood associations:

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



# New Neighborhood Street Signs for Cedar-Isles-Dean Neighborhood

Photos by Tim Sheridan



Cedar-Isles-Dean  
Neighborhood Association

The new neighborhood street signs, based on the CIDNA logo, were designed by Woychick agency.

# Lake Street Station on the Southwest Light Rail Project

Photos by Tim Sheridan



Stairs and elevator up to Lake Street on the northeast side of the bridge.



Stairs and elevator up to Lake Street on the southwest side of the bridge.



West Lake Street Station platform.

# East Isles Update

Thanks to all who participated in our events and programs in 2023! Welcome 2024 by warming up with neighbors at our Winter Skating Party on Jan. 28, and jumping into our Safety Walking Club—it's a great way to get outside, pick up litter and build community spirit!

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### East Isles Safety Walking Club

Jan. 6, Feb. 3 Saturdays, 3:30 – 5 PM • Levin Triangle Park  
Jan. 21, Feb. 18 Sundays, 10 – 11:30 AM • Levin Triangle Park

#### East Isles Board Meetings

Jan. 9, Feb. 13 Tuesdays, 6 – 8 PM • Grace-Trinity Church

#### Neighborhood Safety Meeting EAST ISLES, LOWRY HILL, KENWOOD

Jan. 26 Friday, 6 – 8 PM • Kenwood Community Center

#### Winter Skating Party

Jan. 28 Sunday, 1 – 3 PM • Lake of the Isles Skating Rink

Consider a New Year's donation to support this work toward a cleaner, safer, connected community.

Visit [eastisles.org/join](http://eastisles.org/join) to:

- 1 **Donate** to support neighborhood events, resources and opportunities.
- 2 **Subscribe** to our news and follow our social media pages to get updates on events and resources.
- 3 **Join a Committee** to help address green issues, community safety, transit and more.



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# Walker-Talks

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Wednesday, December 6 | 1 p.m.

#### All In: Caring for Planet Earth

by Dale Howey of Green Rock Apartments



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 and Margaret Barrett of Safe Harbor

Walker Place features highrise premier apartments for adults 55+ with a youthful spirit and a zest for life.



## Warm December

Photo by Tim Sheridan



AVERAGE DECEMBER temperature in Minneapolis: 27°F

AVERAGE DECEMBER 2023 temperature in Minneapolis: 34.6°F  
That's *warmer than the warmest December* in Twin Cities weather records, which occurred in 1877 and had an average temp of 33.8°F.



According to the NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) there's a 54% chance that this El Niño event will end up "historically strong," potentially ranking in the top five on record. Looking ahead, it's likely that El Niño will end and neutral conditions return by April–June.

## Eulogies for a Cougar

By Keri Mabry

*Hill & Lake Press received the following tributes to the elegant cougar whose fame went viral after a security camera caught images of him padding across a driveway in Lowry Hill. Sadly, his life in the city was short-lived as he was struck and killed by a car on I-394 the very next night. According to the DNR, he had an ear tag that indicated that he was two-years-old and had travelled over 650 miles from northwestern Nebraska, most likely looking for a mate.*

Oh Kenwood cougar,  
whatever drove you to this city,  
we hope it gave you peace.  
Void of neurological disease,  
seems unlikely you would visit.

Yet, these days are hard,  
we will not fault you either way.  
Your grace was caught, on an app  
we humans call "Ring."  
No apparent harm was done  
to pets or kids alike,  
which gives us cause for relief

Did the porch pirates run in  
fright?  
We imagine that they did.  
For it gives us joy abound  
to watch them flee from sin

the Big Dipper led you further  
west.  
Then one last flash of light,  
your fear so intense, saddens us;  
we hope the end went quick.

Rest well, natural beauty  
modern cougars don't compare  
Thank you Kenwood cougar  
For visiting us that night

*Elizabeth Peterson-Thompson  
Kenwood*

If Columbus realized he had  
not reached the Orient, or if The  
Little Prince landed on the wrong  
planet, they could not have been  
more disoriented than our Ken-  
wood Cougar, ardently searching  
for a mate amid acres of pavement  
and loud machines. Its brief flight  
stirred a few locals lucky enough  
to see its picture. But even that



(Photo Laurel Ulland)

sent a pang of loss that still lingers  
in the neighborhood.

*Harry Edelman  
East Isles*

The Lowry Hill cougar was out of  
place — dangerous and magical.  
Powerful in his stealth and most  
likely hungry. I walk this way  
early, with two small dogs, Barley  
and Oslo. It's dark, sometimes I  
forget my glasses. We've come  
upon wild animals, deer, rac-  
coons, bunnies — but the cougar  
was far different. I imagined him  
stalking us in the dark.

Then came the upsetting news  
that he was hit and killed. He was  
big in the imagination for a min-  
ute — then made small. The sad-  
ness I've felt seems out of propor-  
tion for the short time I was even  
aware of the wild creature in our  
midst.

*Jeanne Bleu  
Lowry Hill*

I first heard about the "large  
cat" (was it a mountain lion?) on a  
Nextdoor posting. When I saw  
that it was in the Lowry Hill  
neighborhood my ears and inter-  
est perked up. I then heard about  
it on the local news. And now fi-

nally in the Hill & Lake Press.  
Obviously this story was going  
viral quickly.

As a frequent biker in the  
Lowry Hill neighborhood I ride a  
lot on the city streets and also on  
the many abundant paths near our  
neighborhood. I've run across  
deer and the occasional raccoon.  
I'm often on the lookout for coy-  
otes, which I also hear can be  
found in our urban landscape.

But I never dreamt that I could  
possibly run into a cougar! Very  
interesting but also a bit scary as  
well, not only for those of us who  
frequent places where animals  
can be found, but also for our cli-  
mate that's changing so quickly  
that many species that you would  
never have heard of in the city are  
now starting to appear.

*Carlos Eduarte  
Lowry Hill*

It was thrilling to learn that  
the elusive cougar had graced my  
backyard! His paw prints in the  
fresh snow were enormous and  
gave us a path to follow on his  
trip down Logan Avenue S. and  
through the neighborhood.

We all hoped that the DNR  
would help this magnificent ani-  
mal reach a safer habitat. His  
death on I-394 was devastating

news, but his ghost will remain in  
the neighborhood for a long time  
to come.

I am attaching a photo of my  
hand next to that huge paw print.  
It was taken on my back patio!

Thanks for covering the story.

*Laurel Ulland  
East Isles*

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# Park Board Plans to Create Educational Display Featuring the Minneapolis Mountain Lion

By Ben Johnson



The photo provided is a depiction of what the cougar might look like after it goes through the taxidermy process. (Stock Photo provided by Cam Winton)

*Ben Johnson is the Communications and Marketing Director for the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB).*

Cam Winton, a Lowry Hill resident and organizer of the effort to preserve the cougar had this to say, “The big cat brought everyone in the neighborhood so much joy, and it was such a shame when he was hit by a Hummer on the highway. So, I wanted to put a happier ending on the story. I floated the idea to the DNR and Park Board and everyone involved was instantly supportive. A special shout-out to Park Board Commissioner Elizabeth Shaffer for her key support and guidance.” — Cam Winton, organizer of the taxidermy project, lives in Lowry Hill.

The mountain lion that was repeatedly spotted on camera in

Minneapolis in early December will be featured in a new educational display hosted by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB).

The Minneapolis Mountain Lion generated a lot of excitement and attention when it was spotted on camera and left footprints in the snow between Dec. 4 and Dec. 6, 2023. Unfortunately, a vehicle on Interstate 394 hit and killed the mountain lion on December 6.

“Many of us were captivated by the prospect of such a majestic animal living among us and were saddened to hear how it met its end,” said MPRB Superintendent Al Bangoura. “Now, there is an opportunity to give the story a happier ending. I’m appreciative of the DNR and community members coming together to help educate future generations on the

wonderful variety of wildlife that can be found in our city.”

The Minnesota DNR took custody of the mountain lion’s remains and is working with the MPRB to send it to a taxidermist. A tag on the lion’s ear revealed he had walked 650 miles from the Oglala National Grasslands in northwest Nebraska to Minneapolis in search of mates, territory and food.

The DNR, MPRB and interested supporters are collaborating to taxidermy the mountain lion and mount it as part of an educational display, which will be available at program facilities for all residents to see. The MPRB will share more as details are worked out.

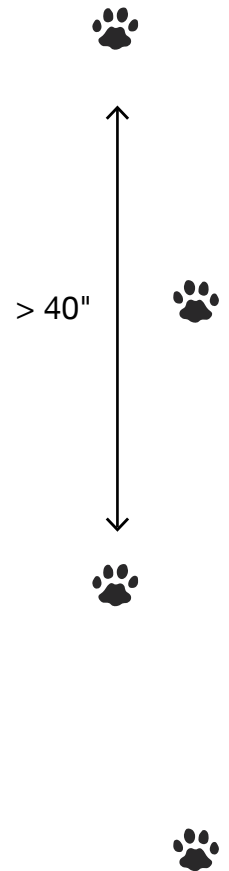
### Support the Minneapolis Mountain Lion Display

The MPRB is partnering with community members to help fund the upcoming display. People who would like to support the Minneapolis Mountain Lion display can write a check payable to “Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board” with “mountain lion” in memo line and send to:

Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board  
Attn: Customer Service – Mountain Lion  
2117 West River Road North  
Minneapolis, MN 55411

To use debit or credit card, please call MPRB Customer Service at 612-230-6400.

Average male cougar paw print measures about 3-4" long x 3-5" wide (front and hind foot measurements combined). When walking in snow, on level ground, mature males can have an average stride greater than 40".



Sunset at Cedar Lake (Photo Tim Sheridan)

## An Interview with Katie Cashman

By Marty Carlson



Cashman held an end of year fundraiser and meet and greet downtown to bring stakeholders together and build connections. (Photo Peter Aehl)

*Marty Carlson is a regular columnist and lives in Kenwood.*

Change and confidence: these are two words that are reasonable to associate with new Ward 7 Council Member-elect Katie Cashman. Change is her own word. When asked about the message voters sent in the 2023 Ward 7 election, Cashman says they voted for “change” and “something new.”

Confidence underlies that assessment. Viewed through the lens of conventional wisdom, it’s easy to regard that confidence as misplaced. In a ward with over 21,000 registered voters, she defeated Scott Graham by a razor-thin 177 votes — hardly the sort of margin that most armchair political observers would describe as a mandate for change.

But, on the other hand, only 37.5% of those 21,000 voters bothered to cast a ballot and, of those who did, Cashman won nine of the ward’s 12 precincts. And she did it by building a campaign from the ground up, campaigning in every precinct, but placing a special emphasis on registering first-time voters and turning out voters in some of the lowest turnout precincts in the ward — Loring Park, Downtown, Stevens Square — all precincts that skew younger and more renter-heavy. That’s 177 votes right there.

Added to that is the fact that her main competitor, Graham, was a longtime DFL insider, endorsed by Lisa Goodman, a respected Ward 7 Council Member

for over 25 years who was very much retiring on her own terms rather than being shown the door. Based on that alone, conventional wisdom would say the race was Graham’s to lose. So, viewed through that lens, it’s not difficult to see why Cashman might feel some confidence that voters were sending a message seeking “change” and “something new.”

Then, in what was arguably her first newsworthy public statement after the election, Cashman took to Twitter on December 6 and fired off a series of posts lamenting the violence in Gaza, characterizing the Israeli response to the October 7 Hamas attack as “genocide,” and calling for “divestment from the State of Israel.”

In past years, the conventional wisdom would mark these statements as an act of overt political suicide (or, at the very least, malpractice), given the complexity of the issues and the ward’s large, vibrant Jewish community, which is also home to Temple Israel, the city’s first synagogue. But these are not past years, and Cashman says her position comes from a place of personal conviction. She seems confident that her stance will be vindicated in the fullness of time, as it was with the election results.

So who is Katie Cashman? I sat down with her last week to learn more. For starters, she’s a relative newcomer to the ward, relocating to the Twin Cities in 2020 after years abroad, and moving into her current apartment in

Loring Heights in 2021. She lives there with her partner, Brandon (a woodworker and carpenter), and a rescue dog, and cultivates a backyard vegetable garden which she describes as her “happy place.”

Although new to the ward, Cashman has roots in the region. Born in Anoka, she moved around the metro area during her childhood, living in Plymouth before moving to Windom Park in Northeast Minneapolis with her dad and stepmother. From their home in Windom Park, she commuted to Benilde-St. Margaret’s for high school. After graduation, she attended McGill University in Montreal, where AP credits racked up in high school allowed her to graduate early, in 2016, studying geography and urban planning, with a minor in anthropology.

After getting her bachelor’s, she moved to Germany where she earned a master’s degree in urban management from the Technical University of Berlin in 2018. From there, she took a job with the United Nations, working as a sustainable urban development consultant for UN-Habitat. She was based in Nairobi, Kenya, where she worked on comprehensive planning and crafting urban legislation.

While there, she helped found the Mathare Slums Community Association ([mathare.org](http://mathare.org)), a non-profit community center serving a sprawling slum in the city’s Eastlands. The organization is a collaboration between local and international partners, and lists Cashman as being instrumental in communications and fundraising. Mathare offers services ranging from yoga to boxing to sexual health support programs for young women, but primarily provides food for children and families.

As her employment with the UN ended in 2019, she founded 2811/Climate Action Academy ([climateactionacademy.org](http://climateactionacademy.org)), an organization focused on providing tools to educate teachers and materials to teach children about climate change and climate action, an effort boosted by a \$1 million grant from the European Union.

Cashman moved back to the Twin Cities in 2020 due to the pandemic and decided to put down roots in the area following the George Floyd murder, which she says made her want to work in her own community. In 2021 she began a position with the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy, serving as a project manager, assisting a team of lawyers and administrative staffers with a wide range of court cases.

Cashman says she didn’t get bitten by the politics bug until Goodman announced her retirement last January, but before then, in her role as a community volunteer, she had become frustrated with what she perceived as a disconnect between services the city

said it was providing and services that were actually funded and could be easily accessed by residents and small businesses. In addition, she wants the city to be ambitious and forward-looking with regard to the climate and the city’s built environment, and views the council job as a high-impact position.

With encouragement from local leaders such as Anne Mavity, David Fey and Kate Knuth (and lots of young people, Cashman adds), she announced her candidacy on February 13, shortly before the DFL endorsing process got seriously underway.

Cashman views the Ward 7 DFL’s decision not to endorse anyone as a win, and says she likely would have dropped out had Graham prevailed. During the campaign, Cashman says she most enjoyed door-knocking and meeting new constituents, particularly in big apartment buildings, but also in less dense portions of the ward. More challenging was starting and running a campaign enterprise, navigating the election bureaucracy, and marshaling donors and volunteers. Cashman says she is “so proud” of her campaign, and that pride is evident when she speaks.

### Where does Cashman stand on the issues?

Cashman lists her top three priorities as public safety, economic revitalization and housing affordability. Regarding public safety, she says she would have voted against the mayor’s proposed use of \$15 million in one-time state funds for recruitment and retention bonuses but would find other ways to increase officer salaries. In addition, she views the city’s new consent decree as a valuable starting point, wants to emphasize alternative responders, and would like to help more young women enter law enforcement.

As to economic revitalization, Cashman says she is worried about property values and a potentially eroding tax base in downtown and Uptown but believes that continuing to add housing is key to downtown’s revival. She plans to work with Ward 10’s Aisha Chughtai to address the challenges facing Uptown.

On housing affordability, she reports that — among other things — she is opposed to rent control but wants to promote increased housing construction and inclusionary zoning, provide support to small landlords who own so-called “naturally occurring affordable housing,” and work to address the lengthy Section 8 wait list. As to encampments, Cashman says that they are not an adequate housing situation, but that there have to be viable alternatives for residents before there is a clearance, and there needs to be community input.

Regarding transit, she says she

is overall supportive of the proposed Hennepin Avenue redesign but faults the city for failing to involve and support local businesses in the process and wants to see that corrected in future projects.

As to the much-discussed Minneapolis 2040 Plan, she is broadly supportive of its goals, but is open to amending the plan to address specific issues such as walkable corner stores. She says that the 2040 Plan has not significantly impacted neighborhoods in the Hill and Lake area, but it has allowed for increased density along corridors, which she says is necessary to keep housing affordable.

Regarding the pending 2040 environmental lawsuit, she feels some tension between her general support of the plan, but also not wanting to weaken the state's environmental laws. That leads her towards supporting a legislative solution that aligns comprehensive planning with those laws, rather than exempting comprehensive planning altogether.

Also, as a matter of local concern, Cashman says she views neighborhood organizations as valuable partners and plans to work with them going forward.

But, in contrast to Goodman, she says she plans to hold regular “office hours” for neighborhood leaders to meet with her, rather than scrupulously attending association meetings, as Goodman was locally famous for doing.

Asked about local role models for her new council position, Cashman cites Hennepin County Board Chair Irene Fernando, Sen. Scott Dibble, Rep. Frank Hornstein, Rep. Esther Agbaje, former Rep. Betty Folliard and former council member Robert Lilligren, among others. She also describes Lisa Goodman as a role model, in that she was an effective Council Member who “moved the needle on a lot of issues,” and provided excellent constituent services (something Cashman says she wishes to continue). Asked to contrast herself with Goodman, Cashman says she has a different temperament, more calm, more collaborative. Cashman describes herself as a good listener.

As for her call to divest from the State of Israel — a position anathema to Goodman (who is Jewish) — Cashman explains that it and her call for a ceasefire is rooted in anti-war activism from a young age. She says when she was in fourth grade, during the

Iraq War, she had a button on her backpack saying, “Dump Bush, not bombs,” and one of her earliest political memories is of protesting with her uncle outside a Honeywell division that served as a military contractor. As to her specific call now, she reports that “so many” Jewish community members, along with people of other faiths and backgrounds, had reached out and asked her “to speak up on a way to reach peace,” and that her position is consistent with her overall anti-war stance and being concerned with the city's place in the larger world.

While her position on a ceasefire and divestment appears confident and unwavering, when pressed she concedes that reasonable minds can differ on resolution of the Gaza conflict, and that it is “not an inherently municipal issue,” although she argues that it does impact our community.

All in all, she sets up a sharp contrast with her predecessor. Change is definitely in the air; Cashman already has a record of accomplishment, and she seems confident in betting big right out of the gate.



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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 the New Year and time to make those resolutions. According to Forbes Magazine, the five most popular resolutions for 2023 were: lose weight (41%), improve mental health (39%), improve diet (35%), improve finances (33%) and improve fitness (32%).

I read list after list of resolutions (thank you, Google®), but somehow, none of them quite hit the mark....

We've all been there, scribbling on December 31, with an abundance of hope and a dash of delusion, promises that we'll be a better version of ourselves next year.

Growing up Catholic, I made my first confession in the second grade. I was seven, the age of moral reasoning. While no saint, I was a pretty good kid and, to appease the priest (an act of kindness!), I scoured the “Examination of Conscience” everyone in my class at St. Dominic's received and milked it for all it was worth. Lying is a sin, so I said I'd lied several times. The truth (hah!) is that I'd lied once — telling the priest that I'd lied. He forgave my sins and gave me penance, probably a few prayers (a full rosary for the real hooligans). That was little Dorothy.

The adult Dorothy has discovered that real penance is provided by one's conscience.

Recently I was at a large gathering of old friends — so large that our group took up three long tables in the restaurant, end-to-end, making for a fun, lively evening, yet impossible to connect meaningfully with everyone. As the evening wound down, now standing, we mingled with those not near us while seated. The topics were random, and I jumped in with a fresh-mouth comment — the kind that many people might find funny,

but not one of the few people I was talking to. She gently called me out, and immediately I realized what an idiot I can be, that the “joke” I'd made was boorish — as they say, it's funny only if everybody's laughing. A kind of deafness, Dorothy in exuberant, carried-away party mode.

I apologized abundantly, she said to not worry — no big deal, we hugged and left it at that. But I did worry. Something just didn't sit right with me.

A few days later I called her, begging forgiveness (I know begging is sort of over the top, but that's really how I felt), declaring that my big mouth should be sewn shut and the thought of offending her and damaging our friendship — she's one of the kindest, most generous, loved and admired people I know — sickened me.

Ever gracious, she assured me that she thought what I said actually was funny, that she, too, makes comments that make her children (this younger generation is ever so much more politically correct than we) roll their eyes to the point where ocular surgery is needed to get them back. I told her the thought of harming our friendship broke my heart.

My friend insisted that we were good, no need to self-flagellate any longer. (She was right, I was.) I said thank you with tears in my eyes, we hung up, and I was floating on air, happily assured that yes, we were indeed good.

Next year I want to apologize with the other person in mind, so that my apologies are both an acceptance of the nuttiness and frailties of the human species (moi included) but more important of the wonderful value of someone I love and of our relationship. I realized apologies are a standing up for another person against ourselves, our own pettiness, thoughtlessness, even cruelty — yes, I've been there, too. This kind of apology makes us stronger, connecting us back to

humankind. Apologies make us flexible, to be able to see that we are wrong, encouraging humility, always a good thing in opinionated folks that gets us out of the “I'm right; you're wrong” mental habit so easy to slip into. Apologies remind us of how much we care, an affirmation of our hearts.

In the end, all we can really claim with pride are the depth of our relationships, the ones we've cultivated, honed, stuck with through thick and thin. Invariably, apologies are going to be a part of this journey. And forgiveness. A genuine apology all but pretty much guarantees forgiveness. (If it doesn't, alas, maybe there is something wrong, off key with the friendship after all.) And I know this because I've been on both sides of that coin, and richer in each instance.

Well, that's it, folks. Happy New Year and happy resolution-making, finding the ones that suit you best for this new year and with any luck make 2024 a happier, richer and more complete year for you.

— Dorothy



# Joyce Murphy Passes on to the Big Artist's Studio in the Sky

By Jim Lenfestey

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

When the Hill & Lake Press was founded in 1976, one of the early volunteers was gifted illustrator Roger Boehm, resident of The Kenwood Gables, creator of the goose logo and countless other pen-and-ink illustrations for years before he had the effrontery to decamp to California. What would we do?

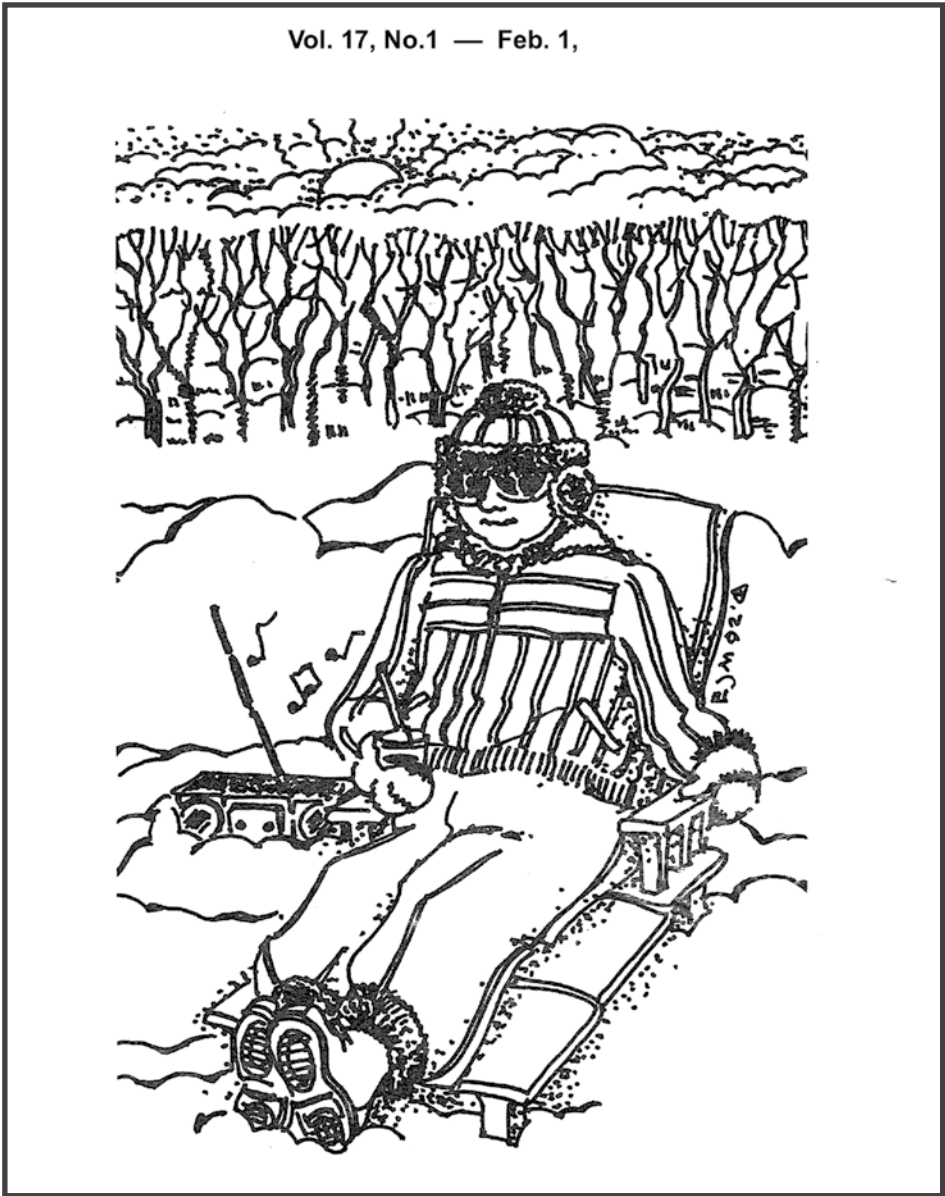
That was when our quiet neighbor Joyce Murphy stepped into the breach. Already an award-winning contributing cartoonist for the paper, soon enough she was adding elaborate illustrations for two-page layouts in her trademark pointillist style, and when needed, she took over designing and editing the whole paper, a freakish amount of work which she did with special care for design from her home on Girard Avenue and 22nd Street.

She quietly accepted the standard Hill & Lake Press wages at the time — zero — because she loved our community and loved making art for us. We only found out after she retired as editor that she had graduated from the University of Minnesota at age 50 with a BA degree in Fine Arts.

Joyce was so humble and dedicated she never pulled rank on her amateur journalist colleagues, tolerating the irascible consensus process that miraculously produced a paper every month.

We are sad to report that Joyce Murphy passed away December 1 at age 89. She is survived by her stalwart husband of 67 years, Ron Murphy; daughter Julie (Bob Robson); sons Dan (Deb) and Owen (Jackie); special cat Pumpkin; twin sister Joan Imlay; grandchildren Michael (Barbara), David, Violet (Kaylee) and Olivia; and nieces, other relatives and many Hill & Lake Press friends and beyond.

Funeral services were held December 13 at Davies Chapel at Washburn-McReavy. In lieu of flowers, the family suggested memorials to the Animal Humane Society of Golden Valley and Planned Parenthood. Welcome to the Big Artist's Studio in the Sky, Joyce. Your fellow community journalists have no doubt you'll be illustrating the monthly news in heaven, adding badly needed humor and art to the angels in their heavenly work.



(Illustration Joyce Murphy)

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