



# Hill & Lake Press

‘Where the biggies leave off...’

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

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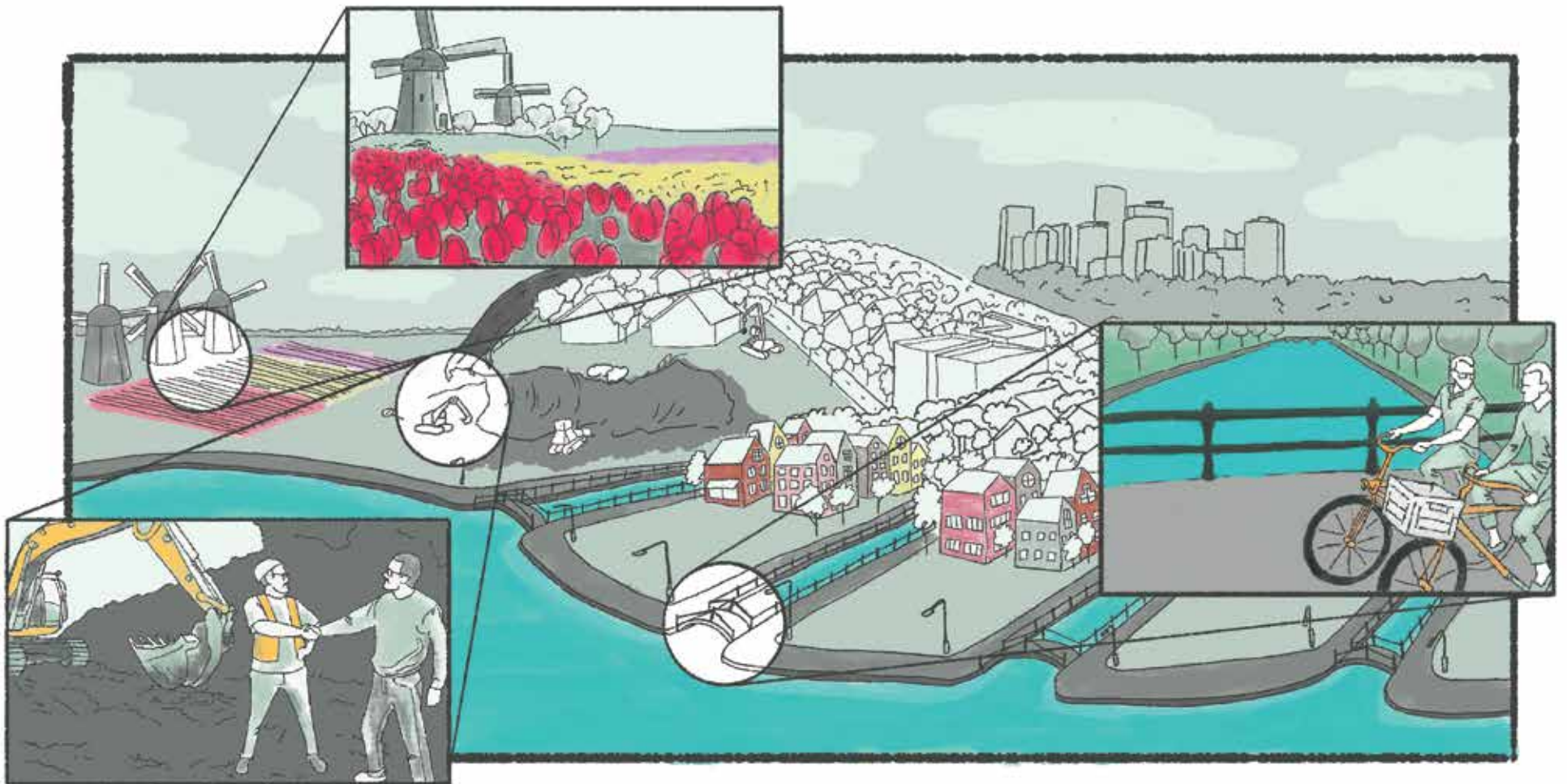
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April 2024

## Minneapolis Goes Dutch!

By Susan Lenfestey



Local government leaders move forward on Minne-Amsterdam plan. (Illustration by Tierney Anderson)

**“...with Uber and Lyft leaving the city, we have a real opportunity for people to experience what it’s like to walk or pedal to their medical appointments, day care centers and coffee shops ... To be a city that works for everyone we need to go full Amsterdam.”**

*Susan Lenfestey lives in Lowry Hill.*

The Minneapolis City Council has voted 10-3 to take the bold step of removing cars from all city streets. “We’re not going to get to where we need to be by 2030 unless we go big,” said Hans Vanbender-bicken, spokesperson for the city planning department.

“When we look at Hennepin south of Lake, we realize that it doesn’t work to take parking off just one street, it only works if

all streets are car-free. And with Uber and Lyft leaving the city, we have a real opportunity for people to experience what it’s like to walk or pedal to their medical appointments, day care centers and coffee shops.” He added, “To be a city that works for everyone we need to go full Amsterdam.”

The Hennepin County Board voiced support for the change. “We were facing the politically loaded issue of removing parking on Lyndale to accommodate bike lanes, but now with the city’s visionary plan for the entire city to be car free, we no longer have to take that difficult vote,” said one commissioner who requested anonymity.

The beleaguered Met Council expressed similar relief. “Don’t quote me,” said one council member, “but given the cost overruns on the SWLRT and safety issues on the Green and Blue Lines and at bus stops — which we are having to spend gobs of time and money to address — we’re thrilled that this is one issue we don’t have to contend with.”

### So just what does going “full Amsterdam” mean?

According to Vanbender-bicken, phase one calls for the leveling of Lowry Hill and rebranding it the Lowry Lowlands.

“First off, the obvious, there are no hills in Amsterdam. Most bicyclists prefer a level ride such

as can be found here on 26th and 28th streets. Those bike lanes may appear empty, but data shows they are heavily used when no one is looking.”

“Second, when you think of the history of Lowry Hill, it was built by robber barons on stolen land, and de facto redlining was rampant. It’s a pretty ugly history and people should understand that plowing it under is not a bad thing. Homeowners will be compensated at a rate to be determined by the Met Council.”

“Third, it will provide shovel-ready lots for single bedroom apartment buildings, with easy access to entry-level jobs at the new tulip fields on Parade Stadium. Windmills will power the whole enterprise. It’s a win-win. We bury our racist past and create a more just and flatter future.”

“Change is hard,” said Vanbender-bicken, “so we expect a lot of push back from the entrenched NIMBYs on this one.”

Phase two calls for canals to be created on the streets running perpendicular to Lake of the Isles. “So far, we’re looking at Franklin, 22nd, 25th, 26th, 27th, 28th and we’re really excited about the one linking the lagoon to The Mall. We supported the park board’s plan to create a traffic calming woonerf on The Mall because nothing says Amsterdam like a woonerf, but now with no cars to calm we see a lot of potential for

the people-calming power of canals.”

Phase three calls for revitalizing neighborhood businesses. “With the job-training center opening in the old YWCA building and new businesses moving on to the car-free Hennepin corridor, there is real synchronicity here,” said Vanbender-bicken.

“We’re talking about truly going Dutch, with stroopwafels, bitterballen, kroketten, kibbleing, and of course, now that pot is legal, recreating the cannabis coffee shops of Amsterdam. Think of it like shopping at 50th and France, only stoned and without the hassle of trying to find your car in the free parking ramps.”

When asked if going full Amsterdam included creating a red-light district, perhaps repurposing the old Victoria’s Secret building, Vanbender-bicken drew a blank.

“I’m more of a visionary,” he said. “When it comes to reality, I defer to the nine clear thinkers on our City Council. Without their bold action, we’d still be arguing about bike lanes.” April Fools!



# 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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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

### Keep Lyndale Friendly to Businesses!

As the founder of Vibrant Lyndale, now the Minneapolis Business Alliance, I've seen our group swell from 72 to 336 members, encompassing downtown and Uptown. Despite this growth, a prevailing frustration among business owners and stakeholders is the waning attention from city leaders to our needs.

Maintaining a tax base supportive of all income levels is vital for a thriving and diverse city. Yet, we're witnessing declining property values, a shrinking tax base, and rising crime rates, prompting population decline.

According to World Population Review, Minneapolis has a current population of 419,508. It is declining at a rate of -0.66% annually and its population has decreased by -2.59% since the most recent census, which recorded a population of 430,684 in 2020.

Many city council members, aligned with the Democratic Socialists of America ([www.dsusa.org](http://www.dsusa.org)), prioritize untested policies over constituent interests. This disregard for our concerns is evident in their refusal to support fair police wages and their backing of policies detrimental to small businesses and residents.

The Minneapolis Business Alliance aims to amplify voices often overlooked at City Hall. At a recent meeting, attended by over 70 stakeholders, the consensus was clear: with safety being at the top of consumers' minds, especially in the downtown and uptown corridors, safety and accessible parking are paramount for attracting customers and retaining local shoppers.

While groups like Move MN and Our Streets advocate for bike and bus lanes at the expense of short-term parking, we urge residents and business owners to counter this nar-

rative. We cannot afford to witness our business corridors deteriorate due to lack of parking and access, akin to the situation on Hennepin Avenue.

We appreciate the 4-3 conversion and love our already bikeable city — including the bikeway on Bryant just two blocks away — and advocate for additional green space, improved lighting, and tree preservation. Hennepin County's forthcoming plans demand community engagement to ensure our collective voice shapes the city's future.

Your input is crucial as we navigate these changes. The voices of working families and small business owners must be heard to preserve the city we love. Please take two minutes to sign our petition by visiting [www.vibrantlyndale.com](http://www.vibrantlyndale.com).

Andrea Corbin  
LynLake Business Owner

### Dear Council Member Cashman, would you please reconsider your vote in favor of the ride hailing service minimum wage ordinance?

I live in East Isles and travel for work, using Uber and Lyft for transport to and from the airport.

My spouse and I rely heavily on Uber and Lyft for ridesharing service around the Twin Cities.

Because of the ridesharing services we were able to avoid purchasing an additional vehicle for years, saving thousands of dollars in fuel, auto insurance and car payments.

The ridesharing services provide a critical service to our community, and the ample supply of drivers responding to rider demand is evidence the current economic model is working.

What special expertise does the city council have to intervene in setting pricing as opposed to allowing market forces to establish pricing?

Pushing Uber and Lyft out of Minneapolis will leave thousands of ride sharing customers without viable options, resulting in more cars on the road, more pollution, more impaired drivers and imposing inconvenience and transportation cost increases on Ward 7 and Minneapolis residents.

I urge you to work with the Mayor, Uber and Lyft and Governor Walz on a solution.

Brian Lammers  
East Isles



An early sign of spring arrived on March 16 with this sunny daffodil. (Photo Craig Wilson)

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## DEAR COUNCIL MEMBER KATIE CASHMAN

Commentary by Curt Gunsbury

**“...can you please tell me, what are you planning to do about crime and the erosion of business confidence in our city? How are you giving energy to local issues, rather than global concerns?”**

*Curt Gunsbury is a real estate developer and lives in Cedar-Isles-Dean.*

*I wrote the following letter to Ward 7 Council Member Katie Cashman on February 4. It has been edited from the original version for brevity. I am still awaiting a reply from her or her office.*

Dear Council Member Katie Cashman,

I'm a resident in your ward. My request of you is this: Can you please tell me, what are you planning to do about crime and the erosion of business confidence in our city? How are you giving energy to local issues, rather than global concerns?

Our company, Solhem, has typically delivered 10 to 15% of all the new housing units in the City of Minneapolis each year for the past dozen years. We have built over 2,300 units in the City in total since 2009, about \$750,000,000 of new construction.

We have longstanding relationships with city staff and work closely with them on a regular basis. In our conversations with staff, it's uniformly apparent that they're concerned the council's newest leading majority lacks both gravity and ability. I hope that's not true.

As you may have read in the Star Tribune, property tax payment delinquencies are on the rise. This is a trailing indicator of the stress that property owners are experiencing in the current city environment.

It's also the tip of the iceberg — the stresses we are seeing today are the result of difficulties faced over the past two to three years. In the coming months, and years, our community will face serious hurdles to not only maintain, but also to add to our tax base.

As you know, the tax base is what drives all possible solutions for social or economic goals in the city. If it is eroding, then we all share a smaller pie. Conversations will become much more difficult than what we face today. There are virtually no new land use applications pending in the city at this time.

At Solhem, we have not undertaken any new land use applications in the city for the past three years, and our last project opened in 2023. We do not foresee undertaking any in the near

future, and perhaps for many years. Any new building we could build in Minneapolis today would be worth less than the cost to build it. The model is broken.

**What would it take for us to choose to invest in the city again, you ask?**

First off, it will take several years to regain trust in the authorities that run our city. Capital is on strike given the raft of impediments to making a return on the risk required to invest here. It's much smarter and vastly safer to invest in things like government securities, or to develop housing in other regions of the country.

Equally, it will take an enormous amount of work for our community to combat the crime that has eroded all aspects of our civic life. Each time there's a carjacking, or a break in, or worse, residents lose faith, are faced with lifelong traumatic scars, and frequently vote with their feet to leave the place where they were harmed.

Our buildings are regularly robbed, vandalized, crashed into by stolen cars, and in at least one case burned by criminal elements in the city. Our building entryways may hold unhoused individuals who are not able to or not choosing to avail themselves of the systems set up to help them. Their suffering is real; people are not getting the help they need.

We see this when they urinate and defecate on our property, cause property damage and in some cases, accost residents and customers. There is a cost to every one of us when these unfortunate situations occur.

We own and manage eight properties in the city constituting commercial, industrial and residential uses, including about 1,000 apartments. Some sites see multiple break-ins per week. The rest weekly.

This is a vast change from prior to May 2020 and the aftermath of the pandemic and social unrest when we might have seen criminal activity at this level possibly once per quarter per building. We rarely report crimes anymore given the lack of any kind of restitution or even knowing that the criminal may face a consequence.

Any crime statistics you may see are understated by the fact that so few people like us are reporting these now continuous crimes. Our building costs have gone up tremendously for repairing entry and garage doors, managing frustrated residents who wish to break their leases, and "hardening" any access points.

Copper, cars, bicycles and packages are frequently the prize for criminals. Purses, phones and other belongings as well. We've had one murder and one attempted murder adjacent to our properties in the past few years. Our property insurance costs have tripled — or more — since 2019. Our staff is regularly at risk of harm. None of this is sustainable.

**Our police do yeoman's work.**

My understanding is that the current condi-

tions frequently require officers to work six shifts per week, on a team where the staff has been reduced by a third of its former employee count.

Can you imagine your workplace with a third less people to do the job along with a greater workload than prior? Who would stick around? Our police investigators now rarely have time to investigate, and we seldom solve murders in the city.

There's virtually no time for solving things like property crime. All of these issues drive kind, decent people out of our city, while the criminals enjoy the mayhem and count the proceeds.

**Crime is close to home for all of us.**

On our own little block of 20 homes this week, we had first a house invasion, and then an attempted car theft. Sadly, neither of these are surprising anymore. Two of our elderly neighbors have been physically assaulted by thieves in the past 18 months, with one ending up in the hospital with serious injuries. This is among a group of about 45 individuals.

As far as we know, none of these crimes have had resolution — only victims. Neighbors are openly talking about leaving the city. I know it's far worse in some other neighborhoods. If you'd like to meet with me or others in our neighborhood in person to discuss our block or our business and the issues we face in staffing, building and maintaining our beautiful, award-winning, sustainable communities, please let me know. I'd be happy to give you a tour and further share our story with you.

Again, please share your plans for how we will resolve these issues — our leaders have not gotten traction for years now, and the wheels are off the bus.

In hopes that we can all have a better city, that is more successful and more just, I wish you well.

**I emailed Cashman the following on March 20:**

Elevating my request in your inbox. Please respond.

I'm adding a link to the recent 2024 City Assessment Report (<https://lms.minneapolis-mn.gov/Download/RCAV2/34608/2024-Assessment-Report.pdf>), prepared by the Minneapolis City Assessor, which reports a 3.1% decline in property tax base across the city this past year, consistent with the trends I suggested above, but alarming given the speed with which this is already occurring.

How will you manage a required 3.1% decrease in the city budget? Or, are you proposing we increase taxation on a declining property tax base? Please advise, what are your plans?

Best Regards, Curt

**SPRING IS HERE.  
TIME FOR A SCOOP.**

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## My Saturday with the DFL

By Marty Carlson

**“I went to this event as a first-time delegate, and with some fear and trembling given the miserable displays of incivility we’ve seen at recent meetings of our DFL-controlled City Council. This wasn’t one of those gatherings.”**

*Marty Carlson is a regular contributor to the Hill & Lake Press. He lives in Kenwood.*

On Saturday, March 23, the DFL party held its Senate District 61 convention at Washburn High School in Minneapolis. With over 400 delegates in attendance, the main question was whether to endorse a candidate to replace retiring Rep. Frank Hornstein in District 61A. After hearing from the six announced candidates and participating in three rounds of balloting, the delegates opted not to issue an endorsement.

### The 5th Congressional District

Also of interest was the race to select delegates to the 5th Congressional District convention in May, where delegates will decide whether to endorse a U.S. House candidate in the contest between incumbent Ilhan Omar and challenger former City Council Member Don Samuels.

If the preferences of the Senate District 61 delegates are any indication, that one’s going to be a real horserace. In the first round of the dreaded “walking subcaucus” process, 139 delegates joined groups explicitly connected to Omar, while 147 lined up for Samuels.

In the second round, 130 delegates assembled for Omar, with 147 for Samuels, which resulted in 10 Omar delegates being selected for the CD5 convention, and 12 for Samuels. Factoring in two other groups not explicitly aligned with either candidate (each of which gained four delegates), the conventional wisdom in the room was that SD61 was a toss-up, marking this as a race worth watching.

### Balloting for the 61A candidates was also interesting.

There were six candidates, in alphabetical order: Jared Brewington, Katie Jones, Dylan McMahon, Isabel Rolfes, Will Stan-

cil and Trevor Turner. Both Brewington (an entrepreneur) and Turner (a disability rights advocate) were eliminated in the first round, getting two votes and one vote respectively. Jones received 69 votes, Rolfes garnered 63, Stancil got 60 and McMahon picked up 35.

McMahon was eliminated in the second round, with 21 votes, dropping him below the 25% threshold for that round. After that it was Jones (74), Stancil (67) and Rolfes (65). With 60% needed to gain the endorsement, no candidate was close. That pattern continued in the third round, with Stancil overtaking Jones by one vote: Stancil (77), Jones (76), and Rolfes (56).

### The take-away?

This race is also going to be one worth watching, with multiple candidates gaining meaningful support. Next stop? The primary election on August 13, where the voting public will winnow the field for each major party.

### Impressions?

If I had to pick a word, I’d say “hopeful.” I went to this event as a first-time delegate, and with some fear and trembling given the miserable displays of incivility we’ve seen at recent meetings of our DFL-controlled City Council.

This wasn’t one of those gatherings. While it was, obviously, an overtly partisan event, it was still a congenial gathering, with little needless drama and only a few isolated and brief outbursts. The chilliest reception of the day was for Hennepin County Attorney Mary Moriarty, who was greeted with a number of audible “boos” as she took the stage.

The chair, parliamentarian and head teller appeared experienced, efficient and fair. The candidates struck me as serious, thoughtful and brave (for putting themselves out there!), and I found the delegates themselves to be neighborly and pleasant.

There were divergent views in my seating area, but they struck me as principled, articulate and sincere, and I enjoyed hearing a range of viewpoints from our neighbors. In short, while I wasn’t looking forward to the event in the morning, by day’s end I found myself feeling unexpectedly uplifted and hopeful. It felt like democracy in action, and I’d do it again.

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## A New Hue Turns Streets and Moods Blue

Opinion by John Peterman

**“We invested our own money to create a certain ambiance for our community to recreate the original warm glow of gas lamps that lit our neighborhood at the turn of the twentieth century. Now, without any input from residents, the city has decided to make these changes out of the blue (pun intended).”**

*John Peterman lives in Lowry Hill.*

As the sun sets over Lowry Hill, East Isles and Kenwood, a new type of light illuminates our streets — and not everyone is happy about it.

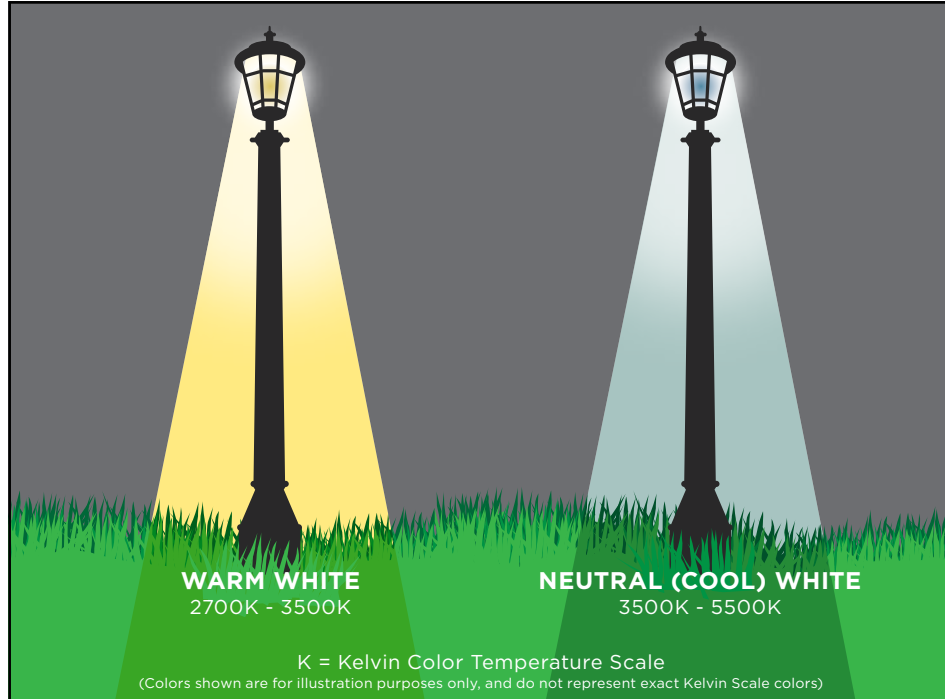
Minneapolis Public Works has recently begun replacing its existing 2700k warm white street light bulbs with 4000k LED bright daylight bulbs, a move that has caused some neighborhood residents to feel left in the dark.

Neighbors have expressed frustration with the new blueish bulbs, which they say create a stark, clinical atmosphere that is at odds with the character of our community.

### Warm hues are historic and homey.

The warm, golden glow of the old bulbs is an integral part of what makes our neighborhood feel like home.

In fact, when the new lighting was installed in 2005, a survey of East Isles residents showed that 78% rated the appearance of



New cool tone bulbs replace warm hues which has angered many neighbors. (Illustration Christopher Bohnet)

the lights as either “good” or “very good.”

As many longtime residents will recall, these streetlights were paid for by the neighborhoods themselves, using Neighborhood Revitalization Program funds, commonly referred to as NRP.

We invested our own money to create a certain ambiance for our community to recreate the original warm glow of gas lamps that lit our neighborhood at the turn of the twentieth century.

Now, without any input from residents, the city has decided to make these changes out of the blue (pun intended). Even more frustrating is the patchwork appearance of these mixed light colors, which will continue for the next 10-12 years.

I have talked to several residents who have attempted to voice their concerns to Ward 7 Council Member Katie Cashman, but their calls have gone unreturned. I personally left three voicemail messages with her office over the last two months, and I, too, have not received a call back.

This is in stark contrast to the responsiveness residents received from Council Member Lisa Goodman and her staff. It's always frustrating for residents to feel

like their elected officials aren't listening.

### Bureaucratic Blues

I reached out to the Public Works Department, and they spoke to me about this decision to standardize the city's street light bulbs. As suspected, the decision was made with efficiency and cost-effectiveness in mind.

A department employee said that by using the same bright daylight bulbs throughout Minneapolis, they can streamline their maintenance and replacement processes. It may take some getting used to, but in the long run, this will be more cost-efficient for the city as a whole, the employee explained.

As the debate over street light bulbs continues, one thing is clear: the warm, inviting glow of Minneapolis' neighborhoods may be a thing of the past.

For many residents, that's a bitter pill to swallow. Only time will tell if the city's techno blue-toned future will be embraced by all — or if some will be left longing for the warm, familiar candlelight of years past.



# Hill & Lake Press

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

- East Isles Neighborhood Association (EINA)



- Cedar-Isles-Dean Neighborhood Association (CIDNA)



- Kenwood Neighborhood Organization (KNO)



- Lowry Hill Neighborhood Association (LHNA)



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## Volunteer Highlight: Kristin Dolphin

Thank you for all you do Kristin, we are lucky to have you in CIDNA!

## April Events

Earth Day Cleanup & Activities: Saturday, April 20

May Day Baskets for Seniors: Tuesday, April 30

Learn more at [cidna.org](http://cidna.org)

### How long have you lived in the CIDNA neighborhood?

My family (husband and 3 kids) and I have lived in CIDNA for a little over 4 years!

### What drew you to this neighborhood?

We used to live in St Louis Park but always found ourselves in this neighborhood on weekends, because of the lakes. The mature trees, winding roads, and different architectural styles of homes were all things that added to the charm and desire to live here. Now we have a full garage of bikes, kayaks, canoes, snowshoes, and just about everything else you could use for outside fun!

### Where is your favorite place to go in the neighborhood?

Cedar Lake South Beach - because we are located just a block away, it's really easy to walk down to the beach with a pizza or two from Punch, a blanket, and a sand bucket! We enjoy doing this most summer nights!

### What do you like most about where you live?

I love that over my lunch hour I can walk around LOTI with a podcast playing and enjoy the scenery - it's so beautiful, I never get sick of it. The Luminary Event in winter is another event I've been attending for over 14 years!

### How are you involved with CIDNA?

Since my husband and I bought our house in SLP, and now CIDNA I've always felt it important to be involved with the community and I love volunteering my time to bring people together, so it's something I sought out immediately.

I've helped host and organize the Fall Festival for 3 years, which is my favorite event! I've also helped the social committee with happy hours, and a rummage sale a couple years back! I've met some really great people and hope to meet more!

### What is one thing you would like to see in the neighborhood?

More volunteers mean we can put on more events! More events have the opportunity to bring more people together and build community and belonging. Sign up to volunteer or even plan an event we've never seen before in our neighborhood. I'd love for more people to share their passions, skills, backgrounds, cultures, or traditions through neighborhood events, for all to enjoy!



## LOWRY HILL NEWS – April 2024



### SEEKING BOARD MEMBERS – APPLY NOW!

Interested in getting more involved with LHNA? Apply to be a Board Member! The LHNA Board carries out the organization's mission of working toward the preservation and improvement of our neighborhood, and providing a forum for fostering communication, participation, and advocacy for Lowry Hill neighborhood stakeholders regarding issues and events meaningful to our community. LHNA has an active group of 15 board members. Board members are volunteers who serve a 2 year term. No special experience or qualifications are required to serve—just a love for Lowry Hill. Renters are encouraged to apply. Please apply on our website by Friday, May 3. Elections will be held at our Annual Meeting on June 4.



### EARTH DAY CLEANUP

Saturday, April 20, from 10 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.  
Meet at Sebastian Joe's

Join us in cleaning up on neighborhood in honor of earth day! This event begins at Sebastian Joe's. We'll have some supplies available, but please bring trash pickers, gloves, and bags if you have them.



### LHNA BOARD MEETING

Tuesday, May 7, 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).



### SAVE THE DATE: LHNA ANNUAL MEETING

June 4, from 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.  
First Unitarian Society of Minneapolis

Join us to hear updates from city leaders, learn about LHNA's activities over the past year, and elect new board members. Meet and socialize with neighbors—join us from 5-6 p.m. for social hour.



Thank you for your generous support.

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

## The Cedar Lake Prairie to Burn This Spring

By Neil Trembley

**“Most prairie experts recommend burning every two to three years. Unfortunately, the Cedar Lake Prairie has not been burned in over seven years. During that time, many noxious invasive-species plants have taken over large parts of the prairie.”**

*Neil Trembley is a member of the Cedar Lake Park Association and lives in Bryn Mawr.*



The Cedar Lake Trail seen cutting through its prairie. (Photo Mededith Montgomery)

To thrive, a prairie needs periodic controlled burning or it will revert to forestland. In the past, nature and Indigenous people performed this task. But in the present, it is up to the park board.

Most prairie experts recommend burning every two to three years. Unfortunately, the Cedar Lake Prairie has not been burned in over seven years.

During that time, many noxious invasive-species plants have taken over large parts of the prairie. And invasive trees, such as Russian elm, cottonwood and gray dogwood have sprung up. (There is, of course, a need for trees in the Minneapolis canopy — but not in a prairie.) These invasives threaten the health of the prairie.

### Fortunately, fire is on the way.

The park board designated the Cedar Lake Prairie as a high-priority area. In 2022, the park board started brush-clearing shrubs, including aggressively invasive sumac that has threatened to take over large swaths of the prairie. In 2023, it used herbicide spot treatments to eradicate large clumps of noxious crown vetch.

In the summer of 2023, park board staff walked the prairie with a volunteer from CLPA to discuss the overall condition of the site. During the walk the staff member

detailed MRPB’s plan to begin a rotational burning of one-third of the prairie starting in 2024, with another third burning in 2025 and a final third burning in 2026.

Of course, the schedule is contingent on several factors, since burning such a large section of prairie can be done only under optimal weather and soil conditions: not too windy, not too wet, not too dry. But CLPA was delighted to hear that the area has been prioritized and the burns tentatively scheduled.

The Cedar Lake Prairie is a gem. The Cedar Lake Park Association envisions the prairie flourishing for the next hundred years and beyond — for future generations to enjoy. Now there is a plan and schedule in place to make that vision a reality.

### How did the prairie come to be?

The Cedar Lake Park Prairie is composed of a swath of reclaimed land just north of Cedar Lake. Once the domain of the Burlington Northern (now BNSF) Railroad, it was a flat, bare space with ribbons of tracks lining the corridor. Due to redundancy, the railroad decided it no longer needed the rail yard and in the mid-1980s it pulled up the tracks and put the acreage up for

sale.

Some thought the best use of the land would be to build condos on it, but a group of citizen-activists thought differently. They banded together to “Save Cedar Lake Park.” It did not faze them that Cedar Lake Park didn’t technically exist for them to “save.”

They named it and claimed it. They raised funds and awareness, vowing to “Nurture Nature” and transform this barren piece of land into a nature park. Their message was simple: “Who doesn’t love a park?”

### And they were successful.

In 1991, the park board purchased a total of 48 acres from Burlington Northern with \$1.2 million in public funds and \$500,000 in private funds raised by the Cedar Lake Park Association (CLPA). The purchase included a small section of forestland, as well as a wedge-shaped area that has become the largest prairie in the Minneapolis park system.

The land was contoured and planted in 1995 in conjunction with construction of the award-winning Cedar Lake Regional Trail. Since 1998, volunteers from CLPA — under the auspices of the park board — have supplemented the original

prairie plantings with over 20,000 native-species grasses and flowers.

The result has been a proliferation of butterfly weed, prairie smoke, leadplant and many other pollinator-friendly flora. The view from the prairie is spectacular, as seen in this photo.

**MORE INFO**

In 2021, the park board completed work on Phase II of its Natural Areas Plan. A section of the plan identified restoration goals for the Cedar Lake Prairie, including increasing biodiversity and improving ecological quality where needed.

To reach these goals, the park board has advanced the following management strategies:

- Manually remove invasive trees and shrubs (except oak species).
- Conduct prescribed burns (rotational burn of one-third of prairie each year).
- Mow and brush saw as necessary to control woody invasion.
- Conduct stump and foliar spray treatments with park board approved herbicide.



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## My EMS Ride Along Adventure

By Courtney Cushing Kiernat

**“We hear the sirens and see Hennepin Healthcare ambulances responding, but until I had my own experience, I took it for granted and didn’t give it much thought... That all changed on August 3, 2012 when my husband and I received the call you never want to get.”**

*Courtney Cushing Kiernat lives in Kenwood.*



(Photo Courtney Cushing Kiernat)

The recent murder of three Burnsville first responders and the outpouring of support and recognition for their sacrifice caused me to reflect on the critical and mostly hidden role paramedics, Emergency Medicine Services (EMS) first responders, play in our community.

We hear the sirens and see Hennepin Healthcare ambulances responding, but until I had my own experience, I took it for granted and didn’t give it much thought.

### Life altered!

That all changed on August 3, 2012 when my husband and I received the call you never want to get.

A good Samaritan, who found “mom and dad” in our son’s phone, was on the line saying our 13 year old, Quinn, had been hit by a car at Lyndale and 25th while biking home from his friend’s. He was unconscious, and the EMS were loading him into an ambulance. I asked to speak to one of the paramedics, and he asked me what hospital we preferred.

At that moment, I had no idea as we are lucky to have a number of good options, so I asked the paramedic what he thought, and he said without hesitation, “I think he should go to HCMC.” And it finally hit me, this was really serious, and Quinn needed the best Level One trauma care, and he was going to Hennepin Healthcare (known to many as HCMC).

Quinn is now 25 years old, living in Boston and heading to law school, and we attribute his recovery to two main factors: he chose to wear his bike helmet, a decision for which we will forever be grateful, and he received amazing care from the Hennepin Healthcare (HHS) team from the moment EMS was on the scene.

Our personal experience with HHS prompted us to get involved as donors, volunteer with the dog

therapy program and join the Hennepin Healthcare Foundation board, an organization created to support the important work of HHS.

### The Ride

My involvement gave me an eye-opening opportunity, an EMS ride-along with HHS Emergency Management Services Chief, Marty Scheerer. Fellow Foundation board member and Lowry Hill resident Katie Severt and I started our five-plus-hour experience with a tour of the EMS training facility and offices where staff are double- and triple-stacked. Thankfully, the EMS facility is the first area to be addressed in the Hennepin Healthcare facility redesign.

Before heading out, Marty offered us each a bullet-proof vest, something some EMS choose to wear during their shift. Not something I had considered when I had heard the wail of sirens in the past.

After watching how the EMS teams prepare for their shift, we jumped into Marty’s EMS SUV outfitted with sirens, call monitor and radio. I sat in the front seat and monitored the various emergency calls from dispatch that came through.

One of our first calls was an upscale Minneapolis hotel, where a man was reported to be struggling with balance. When we arrived, firefighter first responders and EMS were calmly talking to the man who said he didn’t want to go to the hospital because he didn’t want to give up his gun. Police were notified, EMS continued to calmly talk with the man, and Marty quietly and quickly escorted Katie and me away from the scene.

An early lesson that what may seem like a routine call is always laced with a level of danger. I asked why I never see EMS running to a call and Marty explained that as they enter a scene,

they are observing the surroundings looking for potential issues, exits and information.

That evening we responded to a litany of calls from dispatch across Minneapolis and suburbs including a line-drive fan injury at the Twins stadium, an older man with a possible stroke, a wheezing toddler, a confused older woman who the EMS knew by name and a man passed out with a needle in his arm. We took a detour back to the hospital to witness the arrival of a critically ill patient from greater Minnesota who was flown in by helicopter for life-saving care at HHS.

We wrapped up our night at an apartment building where a young man had overdosed. Prior to our arrival, the man was given multiple doses of Narcan. The EMS dedicated doctor on shift had jumped in his car and with lights and sirens arrived to lend assistance because the man’s heart had briefly stopped.

We arrived as the man was coming to and attempting to leave. The doctor and EMS team gently talked with him about the importance of going to the hospital by ambulance. They explained that because his heart had stopped, he needed to receive additional care.

The man’s father was there and had called 911, sadly not for the first time, and he was obviously concerned, but did not speak English. We departed as the EMS team patiently persuaded the man to go with them to the hospital and contacted translation services to help communicate with his worried father.

**I arrived home that night full of adrenaline and replaying the night’s events.**

I came away with an immense respect for the EMS team that responds to all kinds of emergencies across 266 square miles of our city and surrounding suburbs. They respond to all calls

that come into dispatch regardless of income, life experience, or language spoken.

Katie and I witnessed EMS provide the highest quality, cutting-edge, life-saving care while also taking on the role of social worker, mediator, confidant and critical bridge to police, firefighter first responders and the Behavioral Health Response Team. We were witness to one five-hour shift, just a few of the 100,000 calls Hennepin Healthcare EMS responds to each year.

At some point in your life, you may receive the call my husband and I did, or you may be making the 911 call yourself. You may see Hennepin Healthcare EMS at an U.S. Bank Stadium concert, a Lynx game or responding to an emergency on your block. Take a moment to acknowledge them for their medical expertise, patience under pressure, collaborative work with fellow first responders, dedication and willingness to risk their own health and safety for the betterment of our community. Thank you, Hennepin Healthcare EMS, and all first responders.

**LEARN MORE**



If you are interested in learning more about Hennepin Healthcare, contact me at — [courtneyck@comcast.net](mailto:courtneyck@comcast.net)





Courtney Cushing Keirnat and Katie Severt. (Photo Marty Scheerer)



Courtney's dog Ruby receiving attention from a paramedic. (Photo Courtney Cushing Kiernat)

## An educational series Walker-Talks

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**FRIDAY, APRIL 19 | 5 P.M.**

**Honeybees and National Poetry Day**

5 p.m. cocktail hour; 6 p.m. "Sweet Secrets of Honeybees; Owning and Operating an Apiary with Scott Nelson of AARP followed by National Poetry Day readings by the Writers of Walker Place.



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## Hidden Treasure: Thomas Barlow Walker's Legacy Gift to Minneapolis

Story by Thomas Regnier and Photos courtesy of Hennepin Avenue United Methodist Church



Hennepin Ave UMC exterior, 2022. (Photo by Adele Dahm)



The church spire looms above the Walker Art Center, 2022. (Photo by Adele Dahm)

**“With its towering spire, Hennepin Avenue United Methodist Church is one of the most striking of the line of monumental buildings along the Hennepin-Lyndale Crossroads. A little-known fact is that it is home to one of Minneapolis’ most obscure yet valuable art collections.”**

*Thomas Regnier lives in Lowry Hill.*

With its towering spire, Hennepin Avenue United Methodist Church is one of the most striking of the line of monumental buildings along the Hennepin-Lyndale Crossroads.

A little-known fact is that it is home to one of Minneapolis’ most obscure yet valuable art collections. Hennepin United Methodist was

built between 1914 and 1916 on land that Thomas Barlow Walker (T.B. Walker) had donated in 1910.

Hennepin United Methodist has a rich history of social justice, inclusion and stewardship. Consider its interfaith ministry, the Dignity Center, which specializes in offering strategies and support to help people achieve more stable lives.

Neighbors may recall Steeple People, also run by the church, which operated from 1979 to 2017 on Lyndale near Franklin. The store now operates in Stevens Square and is now called Old School by Steeple People.

The congregation originally worshiped at 10th Street and Hennepin in a beloved red brick church that was later razed. They relocated to Fowler Methodist Church, the building that is now the Scottish Rite Masonic Temple on Dupont and Franklin.

The lofty, cream colored building we know today on Hennepin-Lyndale attained its current form incrementally over the years: major additions include the education wing fronting the street in 1950 and the east entrance in 2003-2004.

The building itself is full of curios and delights that will impress and amuse visitors. An abundance of leaded and stained glass, woodwork, carvings, statuary, marble bathroom stalls, a cornucopia of antique hardware, lighting and other fittings are among the numerous minute delights

to be savored there.

Perhaps the most notable is the artwork gifted to the church by T.B. Walker.

### T.B. Walker

T.B. Walker originally came to Minneapolis from Ohio and worked a variety of jobs along the way — even applying an assistant professorship of mathematics at the University of Wisconsin — before settling on a career in lumber and real estate. An early developer of St. Louis Park, Walker owned large tracts of land throughout the country for use in lumber production, including the land that is now occupied by the lake-cottage haven of Walker, Minnesota.

This is the same T.B. Walker of the Walker Art Center and the Walker branch of the Hennepin County Library. In fact, Walker was one of the founders of the Minneapolis Public Library in 1885. Art and learning were a passion for him.

A man of the 19th century, Thomas Walker had eclectic tastes. His collection included a diversity of Asian art such as jades, bronzes, porcelains and ceramics, Southeast Asian artifacts, ivories, textiles and rugs. T.B. Walker’s art collection included old masters, as well as what were then-contemporary works in various genres.

Naturally, given the Walker Art Center’s contemporary art mission, Walker’s original collection doesn’t

quite fit in thematically today.

### The Evolution of the Walker Art Center

Although the Walker Art Center is the best-known fruit of Walker’s efforts to promote the appreciation of fine art, it owes its lineage to earlier galleries operated by T.B. Walker personally.

Repeatedly overruled in his attempts to convince the city to operate a public art gallery, Walker opened one in his own home on 8th and Hennepin (the site of the State Theatre today) in 1879.

With 20 paintings, it has been claimed to have been the first gallery between Sacramento and Pittsburgh.

When Walker moved to Lowry Hill in 1917 after purchasing the late Thomas Lowry’s original house between Vineland and Groveland, he kept the Walker Galleries downtown operating.

T.B. Walker offered his collection and the Lowry site to the city of Minneapolis in 1918. Prior to that the galleries were privately run.

In 1927 he built the Walker Museum in a Moorish style on the site of the present-day Walker Art Center, adjacent to his new home. Walker Art Galleries opened on Lyndale Avenue on May 21, 1927. T.B. Walker died on July 28, 1928.

The T.B. Walker Foundation turned the Walker Art Galleries over to the Minnesota Arts Council, who

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in turn made a petition to the WPA Federal Arts Projects to transform the galleries into the Walker Art Center. It was the largest of the WPA Community Art Centers. The T.B. Walker Foundation reclaimed the running of the Art Center when the federal program ended in 1942. The present museum is the result of a 1971 replacement of the then-remodeled 1927 building, and another 2005

addition that occupies the site where the Lowry house stood.

The challenge was where to house Walker’s traditional collection of artworks.

**A Permanent Home**

In 1918 Walker donated 24 of his paintings with religious themes to Hennepin United Methodist, which now reside in a handsome room con-

structed for the purpose.

The paintings vary in style, from intensely realistic to flattened, stylized work: the palettes are bright as well as muted. They also vary in size, from only a few feet across to wall-size scenes. The gallery is open whenever the church is, and all that is required is to open the door.

Although a collection of 15th to 19th century works brought over

from Europe — mostly sight unseen — may seem distant from the experimental and contemporary avant-garde on view at the Walker Art Center, the spaces are actually a continuation of T.B. Walker’s vision that art should be accessible to all and that its ability to challenge and enlighten are vital to a city’s health.



Antonio Ciseri, *Ecce Homo*, circa 1870s. (Photo by Adele Dahm)



Juan Correa de Vivar, *Annuciation*, circa 1550s. (Photo by Craig Wilson)



Pieter Pourbus, *Abraham and the Three Angels*, 16th century. (Photo by Craig Wilson)



Art Gallery, Correos, 2023. (Photo by Adele Dahm)



UMC art gallery during Doors Open Minneapolis in 2023. (Photo by Adele Dahm)

**▶ NOTE TO READERS:**

**ADDRESS & HOURS:**  
 Hennepin Avenue United Methodist Church  
 511 Groveland Avenue  
 Minneapolis, MN 55403

Monday - Tuesday: 9 a.m.-6 p.m.  
 Wednesday: 9 a.m.-5 p.m.  
 Thursday: 9 a.m.-6 p.m.  
 Friday: 9 a.m.- 1p.m.  
 Saturday: CLOSED  
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*\*Business Hours are subject to change to accommodate special events.*

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# Inaugural Kenwood Safety Patrol

Photos by Courtney Cushing Kiernat



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# Come Shop With Us! Kenwood School Plant Sale Raises Funds for Fifth Grade Trip

Article and Photos by Karin Olson



Ike the dog working the Kenwood Plant Sale

Karin Olson lives in Kenwood and is a parent volunteer at Kenwood Community School.

to YMCA Camp Widjiwagan in Ely near the Boundary Waters Canoe Area.

Kenwood School will host its annual plant sale at the school playground from May 3 to May 5.

Said Principal Heidi Johnson, "This trip is one of our treasured traditions at Kenwood. For fifth graders, it's part of the culmination of their experience here. It's exciting to travel with school friends, learn new skills, and find joy in the beauty of the natural world in northern Minnesota."

Families and students host the sale, and proceeds help fund the annual fifth grade trip to northern Minnesota. This year's trip will bring all Kenwood fifth graders

## Kenwood Neighborhood News



**EARTH DAY NEIGHBORHOOD CLEAN-UP & SAFETY WALK**  
 Saturday, April 20th, 10:00-11:30 a.m.  
*Neighbors OF ALL AGES* meet at the Kenwood Rec Center  
 – Trash bags and gloves provided

### KENWOOD NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION'S ANNUAL MEETING

Monday, May 6th, Kenwood Rec Center  
 6:00 p.m. Dinner featuring Nico's Tacos  
 6:30 - 8:00 p.m. Board elections and meeting  
 – *KIDS ARE WELCOME! Creative art projects hosted by Artrageous Adventures*



Interested in joining the KNO board, email [kno55405@gmail.com](mailto:kno55405@gmail.com) to learn more.



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## Meet Your Neighbor, Hazel Turner

By Craig Wilson, Editor

**Hazel Turner talks about being a Southern transplant, a retired English as a second language public school teacher and a volunteer with the Little Library at St. Paul's Episcopal Church on Lake of the Isles.**

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

### Where did you grow up?

I was born in Charlottesville, Virginia, and grew up in Virginia and on St. Simons Island, Georgia.

My father was an Episcopal minister and had parishes in different parts of Virginia, mostly old, historic ones, so we had some moves as I was growing up.

### What brought you to Minneapolis?

My husband took a job here after we were married. It was a very new place for both of us, as he was from the West coast, and I was a Southerner.

### How long have you lived in Lowry Hill?

We bought our house in 1973 and have enjoyed living here ever since.

### What was it like raising a family here?

It was really good! Our daughters were in good schools and made lasting friendships. Our whole family enjoyed the arts scene and particularly enjoyed going to museums and art galleries. And, of course, summers were al-



Hazel Turner at the Little Library. (Photo Craig Wilson)

ways great times for outdoor adventures — both girls liked (and still like) to swim in Cedar Lake! It didn't take long for us to feel like a real part of the neighborhood.

### What is it like living in a multi-generational duplex?

It's been a real delight for us. We've always had our own spaces and own activities, but it's also easy to spend time together. It's been especially wonderful being able to watch my granddaughter grow up and have so much time with her.

### How long were you a Minneapolis Public Schools teacher?

I taught for a while in the Mounds View schools, then for a short while at Hamline University, then in the Minneapolis Public Schools for 25 years. I taught En-

glish as a Second Language. When I first started there, our students were mostly Lao and Hmong. Then, in addition to those groups, we had Mexican and Somali kids, as well as students from various European countries, including Ukraine.

### What is the Little Library at St. Paul's Episcopal Church?

The Little Library at St. Paul's serves as one of our community outreach programs. It's a place where people can come to meet and have conversations and opinions about books (and other subjects, as well!), and enjoy making new acquaintances or seeing old friends, too. It can also provide a moment of quiet reflection as visitors take time to rest on a busy day. I always love it when I drive by on my way home and see people perusing the shelves!

### How did you come to be involved in it?

We've had the library for almost four years. From the outset, I've been very much involved in it, as have other people, too. Because I live not far from the church, I can go over to check on the library almost every day and straighten it, if need be, or add more books. We ALWAYS welcome book donations from our neighbors, and over time, it's been gratifying to know that other people are joining us in this outreach.

### How does the library brighten people's lives?

It can be a pleasure to find a special book, either one you may have already been looking for, or something new and unexpected. And as I already mentioned, people can enjoy the company of others who have a similar interest in books and reading and can have fun connecting with neighbors old and new.



## The Little Library

This Little Library is located in front of St. Paul's Episcopal Church and is always open.

St. Paul's Episcopal Church on Lake of the Isles' address is 1917 Logan Avenue South in Lowry Hill.

To learn more about starting your own Little Library, go to – [littlefreelibrary.org](http://littlefreelibrary.org)



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# Dear Neighbor

A monthly column by Dorothy Richmond

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

Dear Neighbor,

It's April, the month that hosts a special day for fools, myself included, and my only wish is that it landed more often on the calendar so we could celebrate our tomfoolery.

Just as we have the vernal equinox (March 21) and autumnal equinox (September 21), April Fools' Day is the six-month counterpart to Halloween when we're allowed to be preposterous, zany, have fun, and lose control.

Control is multifaceted. While self-control is good, admirable, and should be taught via example by every parent, adult, guardian, leader and teacher out there, the operative part of this term is "self": Keep your word, clean up your messes, pay your bills and debts on time, apologize when you screw up, mow your lawn, and take out the garbage. Be your own hall monitor. This makes for a good life, for you and for everyone around you.

Self-control is good, but the impulse to control others is not, and makes for unhappiness. Life runs smoothly when we take care of business — our own business. So, let's talk about control freaks.

I've encountered more than a few control freaks, and probably you have, too. One thing I think we can all agree on is that they're not fun because excessive and picayune hovering takes the joy out of life. The only way to deal with control freaks is to run as fast and far away as possible: Distance is your only ally.

This itch to be superintendent of all mankind (or even a few neighbors) comes from an exaggerated sense of self: While we all have the right (and duty) to surveil all that goes on within

our property lines, control freaks have an outré sense of boundaries. Their purview is as far as the eye can see, like drones gone amok.

It's not "My way of the highway," but "My way or my way; pick your pleasure." (Run away!)

Yesterday I had a hair appointment with my darling Matthew, who has coiffed me for nearly 20 years. On behalf of hairstylists everywhere he confirmed the agony control freaks can afford.

Remember "The Nanny Diaries," the book in which the authors dished on their previous employers, those especially rotten? Matthew could write "The Hairstylist Diaries," and regaled me with eye-rolling tales of outrageous clients who stare with laser eyes, monitoring every snip, bring in highly Photoshopped and airbrushed photos of A-listers, demanding to look "just like her." Matthew would counter, to no avail, "Even movie stars don't really look like this." One woman brought in her own products, proclaiming they were superior to those of the salon, then demanding a discount. (Aren't we special?)

The worst one, after showing up late — Do not do this! You're paying for his skills and his time — with beady eyes following Matthew's every movement and commenting critically on each, finished with, "Oh, this looks great. I wish I could afford to tip you."

Matthew has also decided to run away from the control freaks: The next time one of these women (alas, it's almost always women in the salon because men tend to be control freaks elsewhere) tries to book an appointment, there won't be one available. Matthew agrees that distance is your best ally.

Control freaks think they're smarter than anyone in any and every room, thus granting them the freedom to micromanage, criticize, berate, and generally treat people like doormats.

Of course, they don't see it this way "It's not criticism, it's 'advice.'" This was said to me years ago when I'd had it with a nitpicker who'd criticized my vacuuming skills. I responded, "You say advice; I say criticism." Tomatoes, tomahtoes. The message is the same: You're a mental giant; I'm incompetent.

Everyone has talents and a genius, maybe intellectual, maybe emotional, maybe technical. I'm a good Spanish teacher but would be a nightmare tackling your taxes, being a chef, or driving an Uber. Don't just pick your lane; know what it is and own it. Protect yourself from the control freaks who regard every lane on the freeway of life as their own. You have a right to a lane, too.

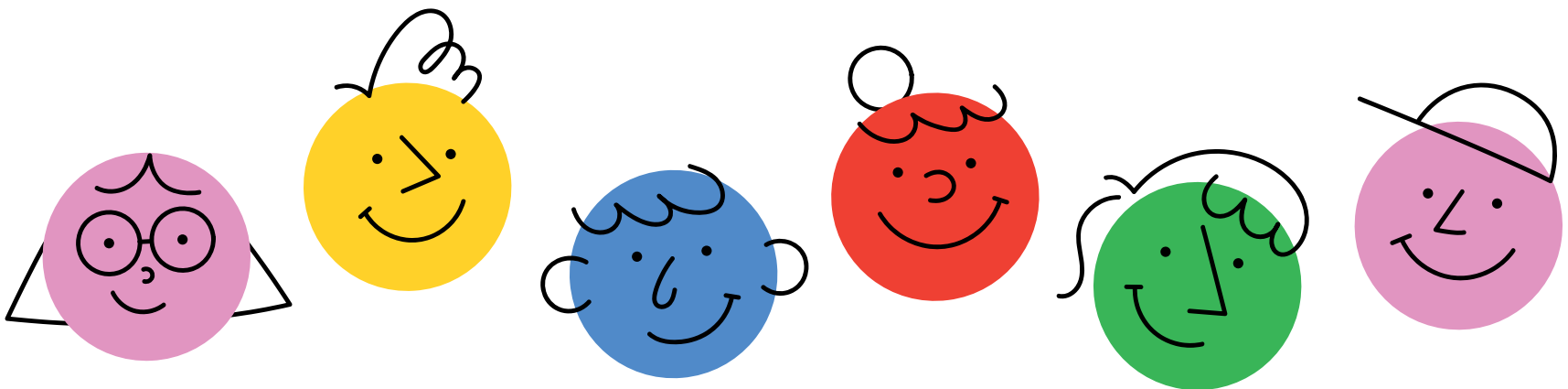
Similarly, everyone has what I call "potholes," those areas where our skill set nears zero. To drive happily down the highway of life, recognize and revere others' talents, especially those you don't have. I've known neurosurgeons I'd trust my sliced-open brain to, but not a leaky faucet. And then there's Mike, my wizard plumber, who isn't the guy I call when my laptop gets hinky.

Know and respect your genius and everyone else's. In other words, you do you. And let them do them.

— Dorothy



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# Polar Plunge 2024!

Photos by Courtney Cushing Kiernat



Dedicated Bde Maka Ska neighbors braved a blustery Sunday for the 17th Annual Ice Out Plunge. Started by East Maka Ska neighbors Rebecca Skoler and Michael Keller, the word-of-mouth event is now organized by longtime East Maka Ska resident Sheila Eldred. In February, an email goes out to neighbors to place a friendly wager on when the ice will be out on Bde Maka Ska, and the plunge is scheduled for the following weekend at the 32nd Street Beach. Some choose to watch, and others don't miss the chance to plunge, defined as going fully underwater and emerging with wet hair. This year's attendance was impacted by cold temps and strong winds, but the brave plunged triumphantly!



**3174 DEAN COURT...**Sunny interior spaces overlooking a park-like greenspace at this Cedar Isles townhome, in the heart of the City. Dramatic two-story solarium connects indoor & outdoor settings. Open main floor plan is great for entertaining, living and dining. Upper level features large owner's bedroom with walk-in closet, second bedroom and renovated bath features a walk-in shower and deep soaking tub. Lower level media room. \$465,000



**1324 DOUGLAS AVENUE...**A special Lowry Hill home available for the first time in a generation. Stately 1909-built home featuring four second-floor bedrooms, south-facing living room with adjacent sun-room, charming kitchen featuring original cabinetry, 'icebox' refrigerator and Carrara marble countertops, third floor suite of rooms, mini-split AC and wonderful woodwork throughout. Large backyard for gardens and summer enjoyment. \$599,900



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