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UNDER FEDERAL SIEGE: MINNEAPOLIS IS RISING!

Images and Article by Will Stancil



ICE places a handcuffed 16-year-old Latina American teenager in the back of an SUV, even though she tells agents she is an American citizen and identifies herself.

Will Stancil is a lawyer and housing policy researcher. He lives in Lowry Hill.

The federal government has launched an invasion of Minneapolis, deploying thousands of heavily armed men from ICE and Border Patrol across the city.

Minneapolis has organized to

peacefully resist. The resolution is still unclear.

The reasons behind “Operation Metro Surge,” likely the largest deployment in history by federal immigration agencies, remain opaque.

Officials claim it is a response to benefits fraud in Minnesota, yet the operation bears no resemblance to an accounting review. The federal government did not send auditors.

It sent 3,000 masked and heav-

ily armed agents with assault rifles, tear gas and body armor.

Once here, these agents have carried out what I, as a firsthand observer, can only describe as a campaign of aggression and intimidation. Hundreds of neighbors have been stolen; two have been shot dead.

Unmarked vehicles filled with armed, masked ICE agents lurk across the city. I’ve seen confirmed ICE vehicles on Douglas and Summit in Lowry Hill, on Girard in East Isles, circling Lake of the Isles, and at Kowalski’s and Lunds.

They have been omnipresent along Hennepin, Lyndale, Lagoon and Lake.

Abductions in Broad Daylight

These agents lurk and sometimes detain residents. I have personally witnessed four “detentions,” which are better described as abductions.

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(Image: Courtney Cushing Kiernat)

MINNEAPOLIS IS UNIFYING. AMERICA IS DIVIDING.

Editorial by Craig Wilson



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

Editor’s note: We are going to press Monday, Jan. 26, with layout ending Jan. 25. News is changing quickly, and we are doing our best to keep up. Please visit hillandlakepress.org and enter your email address to stay informed in real time. We will begin posting news stories on our website before they appear in print to stay ahead of the news cycle.

The ICE invasion of Minneapolis proves that American society is living through a moment when

shared truth has collapsed.

Events in our city are largely unifying us because we have witnessed them firsthand or trust those who have.

But people elsewhere are interpreting the same footage through ideological filters that create wildly different realities.

That fracture has been widening since the killing of Renee Nicole Good.

And now, with the death of Alex Jeffrey Pretti, who was beaten and shot by federal agents in broad daylight in front of multiple witnesses, the distance between what Minneapolis residents see and what the nation is being told

Craig Wilson was at his gym in Whittier when honking and whistles erupted at Blaisdell Ave. S. and 28th St., where federal agents in army camouflage were arresting people. The person standing next to him thought ICE was “AI” until he witnessed it firsthand. (Image: Craig Wilson)

has become impossible to ignore.

Bearing Witness

Earlier this month, before Pretti’s death, I experienced this divide in an unexpected place: the gym.

In mid-January, I saw ICE agents detaining several people outside my gym at Blaisdell Avenue South and 28th Street, in Whittier. It was about 1:45 p.m. Protesters gathered immediately.

Whistles, horns and shouts filled the block. Phones were raised in every direction. Like most people around me, I filmed what I saw.

As the scene cleared, the man next to me said something that shocked me. Because of the constant flow of propaganda online, he believed the clips of masked agents circulating on social media were “AI” and not real. Seeing it in person changed his mind, he said.

But even before the killings of Good and Pretti, the collapse

of a shared sense of reality was already underway.

Federal Abuse Prompts a Community to Push Back

Minneapolis residents have been living with this for weeks; indeed Operation Metro Surge would be better titled “Operation Metro Siege.”

ICE agents have appeared throughout the Hill & Lake community, from Bryn Mawr to Linden Hills, and at places as ordinary as Yum!, Kowalski’s and Wrecktangle Pizza. This lurking federal presence stretches into western Wisconsin, Red Wing, St. Cloud, Mankato and beyond.

So does the resilience. Neighbors are stepping outside, filming, supporting one another and refusing to look away.

Yet nationally we are watching the same videos, reading the same statements and reaching radically different conclusions. That divide is not accidental. It reflects a broader shift in how authority, truth and belonging function in American life.

The Extrajudicial Killing of Alex Pretti

Nothing illustrates this more clearly than the killing of Alex

Continued on page 4



Hill & Lake Press

Founded in 1976, the Hill & Lake Press is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit reporting community news and events, educating and informing neighborhood residents about issues of the day. Views expressed are not necessarily those of the 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 (750 words for a commentary or as space permits), and we reserve the right to edit for clarity and length. We do not publish submissions from anonymous sources; all contributor identities must be verified.

First They Came...

My son shared this poem with me, and I was struck by how much it speaks to what we're experiencing in Minneapolis. I hope your readers find it meaningful.

*First they came for the socialists,
and I did not speak out —
because I was not a socialist.*

Then they came for the trade unionists, and I did not speak out — because I was not a trade unionist.

Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out — because I was not a Jew.

Then they came for me — and there was no one left to speak for me.

— Martin Niemöller in 1946

Ginny Llop
Lowry Hill

U.S. Citizenship: Once a Treasured Privilege

I am a resident of Lowry Hill and have been involved in many local nonprofits as a volunteer.

My most recent years have been spent working with immigrants learning English and preparing for the U.S. citizenship test. It has given me great joy over these last seven years and has been a truly eye-opening and rewarding experience.

I have had the privilege to meet people from Kenya, Somalia, Ethiopia, Liberia, Mexico, Ecuador, Haiti and Cuba, to name a few of the countries my students have come from. I learned their stories and heard about their journeys to the United States.

All had difficult lives and traumatic journeys to get here, and yet they remained positive and hopeful. Everyone was excited to be in the United States, which gave me a deeper appreciation for what we often take for granted in our country.

All the students I have tutored were working many hours in difficult jobs, such as housekeeping

in local hospitals and hotels, cooking in restaurants, cleaning people's homes and caregiving for elderly or disabled Americans.

They were also supporting families and using their free time to study for the U.S. citizenship test — a test I would not have passed until I started helping others prepare.

The 100 questions (now 128 under the new administration) include items such as: "The Federalist Papers supported the passage of the U.S. Constitution. Name one of the writers." I am not sure many Americans could answer that.

The old test also included a geography section, which I thought was valuable.

One question asked: "Name one of the longest rivers in the United States." That was removed from the current test.

Along with learning the answers to 128 questions on U.S. history, civics and government, applicants must also be able to write sentences in English and show they understand English through conversations with immigration officers.

Many of my students came from small villages and had no formal schooling. They worked countless hours to spell difficult vocabulary words so they could write a simple sentence like: "Lincoln was president during the Civil War."

They were inquisitive and genuinely interested in how our government works, and they were excited to vote in elections and give their children better opportunities.

I take great pride in the fact that none of my students has failed the exam. The smiles on their faces when they pass are life-affirming.

In the current state of our country, we are removing opportunities for wonderful new citizens who want to work and participate in the democracy that was once our pride.

Now many are too scared to leave their homes, despite having a U.S. passport. Let us work to curb the unnecessary cruelty and violence directed at immigrants in our city.

Searcy Lillihei
Lowry Hill

Thank you for publishing the Hill & Lake Press

I am of the age when people still read newspapers.

I lived in Southwest Minneapolis for more than 30 years. I sold my house when Linden Hills became a suburb of Edina and am now an apartment dweller at Highland Gables on Douglas.

I looked forward to the Southwest Journal, which, as you know, is no longer with us.

I grew up in an apartment on the North Side of Chicago where we read two newspapers a day.

People move for love or money. I moved for money — a job. I have lived in Minneapolis

for almost 50 years. Yes, I'm old.

Anyway, thank you for all the work you and your team do on the paper.

Jim Crue
Lowry Hill

Minneapolis Parks Deserve Leadership, Not Politics

Many Minneapolis residents remain uncertain about whether the new commissioners on the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board will put politics aside to deliver mission-focused, nonpartisan governance of our park system.

Concerns are justified. In 2017, political activists recruited and helped elect a majority of commissioners who knew little about the park system and yet were eager to change it.

The politicized board soon lost sight of the MPRB's core mission to protect natural resources and provide recreational opportunities.

During the challenges of that term, from 2018 to 2021, observers witnessed a decline in effectiveness, credibility and civility as some commissioners prioritized personal interests over their responsibility to constituents. The board became less independent, transparent and accountable.

Some of newly elected President Tom Olsen's recent actions, taken before the first meeting of 2026, have heightened concerns that history might repeat itself.

Olsen is pushing two resolutions before mostly new commissioners who have little historical context for why the previous board made these decisions.

One would restart a pilot closing sections of the Grand Rounds Scenic Byway to automobiles. The other would reverse a decision to delay consideration of closing roads near The Mall Park in Uptown. Both issues are complicated and involve other agencies and differing interpretations of community input.

More troubling than the timing and limited notice is Olsen's criticism of those who disagree with him, using labels such as NIMBYism, misinformation and fearmongering. At-large commissioners such as Olsen are elected to represent all Minneapolis residents, not a subset or special interest.

The election is over. It is time to govern, not campaign. As Minneapolis and Minnesota weather a chaotic, violent and unconstitutional federal occupation, we need leaders who listen, communicate clearly and model respect while working to unite people.

A new board can bring new ideas rather than recycling old, divisive ones that would further strain our park system and ignore years of community input.

We should expect commissioners to govern with good faith and inclusivity, learning from the past and drawing on the experience of incumbents to strengthen

our park system in alignment with the MPRB's core mission and values.

Constance Pepin
Park District 6

Why I'm Supporting Anders Folk for Hennepin County Attorney

I am writing to inform your readership about an excellent candidate for Hennepin County attorney: Anders Folk.

I support Anders, a lifelong Minnesotan, because of his experience as a career prosecutor and his balanced approach to fighting crime and protecting victims. He began his career in the Hennepin County Attorney's Office and later served as senior counsel to the deputy attorney general of the United States, where he worked on federal criminal policy, law enforcement strategy and justice reform. He also served as an assistant U.S. attorney and became the acting U.S. attorney for the District of Minnesota, where he led major prosecutions, including the federal case against Derek Chauvin's co-conspirators.

Anders also brings the perspective of his service in the U.S. Marine Corps, where he was a judge advocate prosecuting and defending service members under the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

He promises a nuanced approach to prosecuting violent

criminals, including juveniles, emphasizing that in some cases prosecuting juveniles as adults is necessary for public safety. He is committed to honoring the perspectives of victims and their families.

Anders understands the importance of building relationships with system partners to achieve the best outcomes and keep Hennepin County residents safe. Those who have worked with him praise his judgment and compassion.

The level of violent crime in Hennepin County and recent encounters with ICE underscore the importance of the county attorney role, as prosecutors have attempted to hold ICE officers accountable amid claims of absolute immunity and withheld evidence. We need someone with Anders' experience, judgment and legal expertise as Hennepin County's chief legal advisor and prosecutor. I am proud to support him.

Mitch Kern
Kenwood

Poor Trees!

I was happy to see Susan's article about the severe pruning that Xcel inflicts on trees. As a friend of all trees, I share similar concerns, though I do not hold much hope for change. Most utility easements give power companies wide discretion on what and how they trim, typically following the

mantra "clearance, not appearance."

In March 2025, Xcel increased its clearance requirement from 6 feet to 10 feet because of wildfire risk. A majority of wildfires begin with downed power lines. Even without that, most people prefer reliable power during storms over aesthetically pleasing trees.

Species selection is also an issue. Elms, lindens, hackberries, poplars and maples grow tall enough to reach or overhang power lines. One solution would be planting species that mature at lower heights, though that sacrifices some shade benefits. Another would be to revisit burying power lines, as Susan mentioned.

Poor trees — the compromise she illustrated may be the best we can get.

Thomas Regnier
Lowry Hill



Huckleberry encourages all Minnesotans to dress appropriately this winter — and to do it with style. Public service announcement. (Image: Trevor Porath)



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MINNEAPOLIS IS UNIFYING. AMERICA IS DIVIDING. Front page

Pretti, a 37-year-old Minneapolis ICU nurse and VA researcher.

Unlike the footage of the killing of Renee Good, that some think is more ambiguous, the videos documenting Pretti's death are stark and direct.

The operation that masked federal agents were undertaking was at a Glam Doll Donuts on the east side of Nicollet Avenue.

"Once people adopt a narrative, they often adopt the community that goes with it, and vice versa. Even clear video evidence can be interpreted in opposite ways when viewing it one way threatens your place in community."

According to CNN, Nilson Barahona, another witness, said that he was at Glam Doll Donuts when someone fleeing federal agents ran into the restaurant.

The donut shop staff quickly locked the doors, and when agents couldn't get inside, they turned their attention to "those who were outside, who had come to help," Barahona said."

Agents left the scene of their operation, crossed the street and attacked — ultimately killing — Alex Pretti.

The images show a masked agent shoving a woman into a snowbank after spraying her with a chemical agent, after which Pretti moved toward her to help.

Several agents then swarmed him, forcing him face down on an icy street as they punched and struck him.

During the struggle, an agent removed Pretti's legally carried handgun from his person. He held a valid permit and never had the weapon in his hand.

Moments later, while Pretti remained face down on the icy street, agents fired multiple shots into his back.

One agent can be seen nearby clapping as the shooting ends. They then handcuffed his lifeless body.

Yet the Trump administration insists, without evidence, that Pretti was an "assassin." Stephen Miller pushed that narrative immediately. JD Vance reposted it.

Trump published a photo of Pretti's legally owned firearm and essentially declared the case closed.

Truth Versus "truth"

Capital "T" Truth, meaning what actually happened, is visible on video and supported by personal accounts from multiple witnesses.

But the administration's version of "truth" is something else entirely. It is a manufactured narrative held together by lies, repetition, intimidation and propaganda, all funded by tax dollars.

The Guardian recently documented how federal channels circulated doctored images of Minneapolis civil rights leader Nekima Levy Armstrong to discredit her and undermine local resistance.

The original photograph shows her calm, composed and professional. The altered version darkened her skin tone, distorted her features and recast her expression to suggest instability. The intent was clear: portray a well-known Black leader as erratic.

When those in power control both the megaphone and the editing tools, reality itself becomes contested terrain.

How We Interpret What We See

To make sense of this moment, I return to what I studied in college: cultural studies and comparative literature.

The program required three core classes: (1) Text and Context, (2) Discourse and Society, and (3) Knowledge Persuasion and Power.

"Text and Context" teaches that no one is a neutral viewer. Each of us brings our full history, including our joys, fears, experiences, values and ideology, to every "text."

Today the texts are videos, body-camera recordings, official statements and social media posts. The context is not the footage. The context is us.

This helps explain why the deaths of Good and Pretti are being interpreted so differently. The capital "T" Truth is that both were shot by federal agents.

The lowercase "t" truth, which is the meaning people attach to the events, depends on their worldview, their media sources and their need for belonging.

Narratives are how people make sense of the world. They tell us who the heroes are, who the threats are, and where we fit in.

"The unaltered videos do not lie. People do."

They also signal which group or community we identify with, and that sense of identity shapes what feels believable or even possible.

Once people adopt a narrative, they often adopt the community that goes with it, and vice versa.

Even clear video evidence can be interpreted in opposite ways



Original DHS photo of Nekima Levy Jones at left and a White House-altered version at right. (Images: The Guardian)

when viewing it one way threatens your place in community.

One Country. Two Epistemologies.

For many in Minneapolis, the footage reflects abuses of power and a collapse of professional control. For many outside Minnesota, the same footage is framed as "lawlessness" or "domestic terrorism."

Yet on the ground in Minneapolis, the reaction has not fractured. It has unified. Demonstrations have been peaceful and grounded in mutual care.

Neighbors are organizing vigils and mutual aid. Faith leaders, small businesses and residents across political differences are stepping forward.

Minneapolis is not splitting apart. Minneapolis is locking arms.

Why Belief Systems Matter

"Discourse and Society" teaches that discourse is the system of ideas, language and shared assumptions that shape how people understand the world.

These belief systems offer belonging. For many on the right, that sense of belonging is tied to loyalty to Trump and a focus on "law and order."

For many on the left, it is tied to defending democracy, civil liberties and vulnerable people. Algorithms deepen these divides until it can feel as if we are living in different universes.

"Knowledge, Persuasion and Power" teaches that this divide is cultivated, not accidental. Hegemony, which is the dominance of one group's values and narratives over others, works by making certain ideas feel natural or inevitable. It decides which stories count and which ones are dismissed.

I name my own bias as an independent liberal, meaning someone who values new ideas, civil liberties, democratic institutions, freedom of speech and debate.

Conservative traditions emphasize continuity, skepticism toward rapid change, private enterprise and long-held norms.

Both can offer insight, but only

one is currently being weaponized from the top down to distort evidence and justify violence.

Minneapolis Knows How to Stand Together

People are exhausted. Some are losing relationships over disagreements about what should be obvious. These fractures are everywhere.

And yet Minneapolis has lived through this before. The murder of George Floyd reshaped not only our city but the world.

This moment stirs a familiar

"Minneapolis is not splitting apart. Minneapolis is locking arms."

mix of fear, grief and uncertainty, but the way Minneapolis is responding now is different.

The unity, discipline and mutual care show a community tempered by trauma rather than broken by it.

Federal officials misread this unity as disorder. They do not understand that we have already been through fire and emerged not unscarred but unbroken.

Minneapolis Chooses Truth

National debates will continue. Reality will continue to be contested. And local journalism matters more than ever. It gives us a shared civic space, which we desperately need when the nation feels like it is coming apart.

It is up to each of us. Believe propaganda from the federal government, or believe your own eyes? The unaltered videos do not lie. People do.

We must decide what we will believe, and whom we will stand with.

Here in Minneapolis, we choose the Truth. And we choose to support each other.

UPTOWN BUSINESSES LEAD COMMUNITY PUSH AGAINST ICE:

Images and Article by Brian Lucas



Smitten Kitten is seeking cash donations for families affected by ICE actions and has a growing waiting list. Follow @SmittenKittenMN for updates and ways to help. The store, at 3010 Lyndale Ave. S., is open Tuesday through Friday from 1 to 8 p.m., Saturday from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m., and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Brian Lucas is a regular contributor to and board member of the Hill & Lake Press. He lives in Kenwood.

In normal times, seeing crowds of people lined up outside a retailer would signal that business is booming. For the Uptown retailer Smitten Kitten, these are not normal times.

Over the last month, the self-described progressive, education-based sex toy store has been transformed into a hub of mutual aid supporting local families affected by ICE, the Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency of the federal government.

"We have always at Smitten Kitten been really passionate about taking care of our community, giving people accurate information about how to make choices for their own lives, in their own bodies," said Anne Lehman (they/them), the store's social media coordinator. "So we're just extending that even further to the most basic human needs, which are food and safety."

The scene outside the store near Lake Street and Lyndale Avenue South is a mix of communal joy and high alert.

Volunteers with whistles around their necks stand watch for ICE agents while a steady stream of visitors drop off food, toiletries and other essentials.

Employees and volunteers sort donations before loading them into cars for distribution. A small table with snacks and hot drinks offers supporters a place to rest.

For Lehman, the level of community support has been inspiring, but not surprising.

"Honestly, this neighborhood has always been an awesome place for the arts, for musicians, for immigrant businesses and small businesses," they said. "Immigrants make this community what it is."

And it's our responsibility to use our platform to take care of them the way they have supported us for the last 22 years as a business."

Lehman said they were moved to act after Smitten Kitten's neighbor, Wrecktangle Pizza, had to shut down one day because workers were afraid to come in. Volunteers helped the restaurant reopen, and the owners launched a "Buy a Pizza, Give a Pizza" effort to donate a frozen pizza to a family in need for every pizza sold.

"I thought, well, if you need food, you probably also need diapers, home goods, all of those things," Lehman said. "So I did a Costco run and put up my Venmo. I think I made \$500 in like 10 minutes."

We bought two cartloads and that stuff went out the next day. My boss was out of town, so I said, 'Well, I'm sorry, but I just turned your business into a hub of mutual aid.' And they were like, 'Okay, cool. I'll see you when I get back.'"

Lehman admits it has been nerve-racking at times to be so publicly visible in resisting ICE.

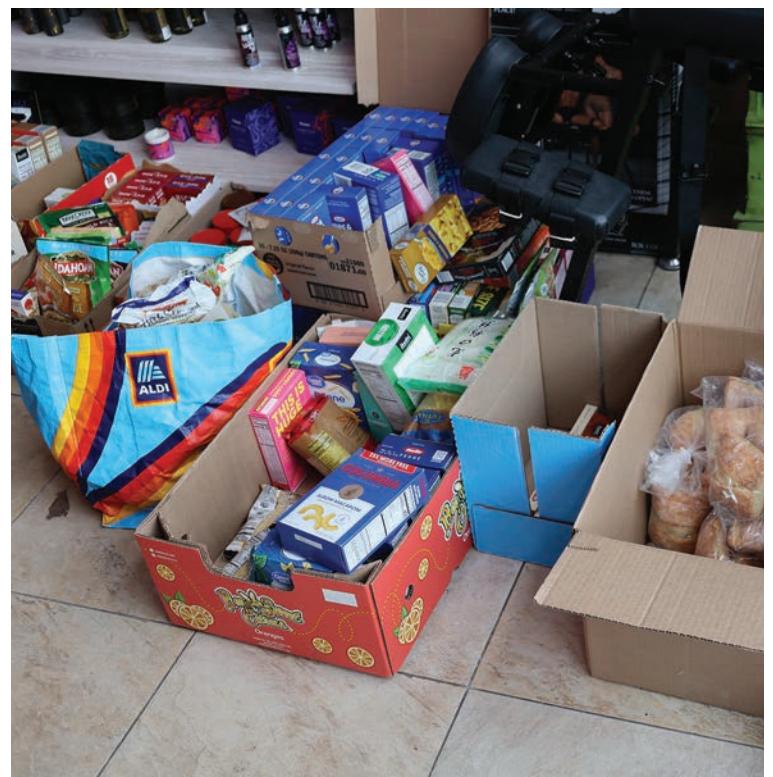
"When we first started, ICE kind of caught on to what we were doing and would come around the block spitting at us, pointing at us, trying to intimidate us," they said.

"And while it was scary at first, it only made me want to do more, because I know if we're a target, that means I'm doing something right. Those guys have no soul. So we're just gonna blow them away with our amount of soul."

Smitten Kitten is no stranger to progressive activism.

As a trans-owned business committed to being a safe space for marginalized communities, it has a long record of community involvement.

Staff distributed personal protective equipment during the COVID pandemic, supported activists after the murder of George Floyd and maintain training in



"It is super inconvenient to open up your business to this type of thing, but you know what else is inconvenient? A military occupation outside," they said.
"We can sell sex toys all day long, but we'll do that another time. The world is watching, and it is all hands on deck."

Narcan overdose rescue. Last year, employees used that training to save a woman's life outside the store.

Still, Lehman said something feels different in this moment.

"We need to set an example for other people that it's go time," they said. "They've been targeting our Black and brown neighbors for fucking ever. And a lot of people have been talking about how Renee Good lost her proximity to whiteness by putting her life and her body on the line, which is what everyone else needs to do."

While turning Smitten Kitten into a mutual aid headquarters has been disruptive, Lehman says it is the right thing to do, and they hope more businesses will join the effort.

"It is super inconvenient to open up your business to this type of thing, but you know what else is inconvenient? A military occupation outside," they said. "We can sell sex toys all day long, but we'll do that another time. The world is watching, and it is all hands on deck."

Lehman said they hear from many people who feel uneasy about confrontation.

"People are saying, 'I don't want to start a civil uprising or a civil war,' but I would love to beg the question, 'What are we doing right now?'" Lehman said. "We have all these goons pulling up on us all day long, not only here, but in the suburbs."

This is their training ground to see what they can do in other places. So they might not be where you are now, but they're coming."

Smitten Kitten plans to help families as long as ICE remains active in the community. In addition to food and essential items, the store is accepting cash donations.

"We realized, what good is a roll of toilet paper if you're evicted from your home and don't have anyplace to keep it anymore," Lehman said.

They hope more people and businesses join the effort to help neighbors feel safe.

"The amount of people that come in every day, every hour that are like, 'My family has been separated. My dad is detained, my mom is detained,'" they said. "We need to continue to stand up and stand together."

Lehman said while they are frustrated by politicians and the courts, the people on the ground give them hope.

"We're the real people, the real community that is holding this s--- down, and that is our responsibility," they said. "This isn't going to be solved by paperwork and lawsuits."

"You can make a difference with 15 minutes, a carload of groceries and an address. Period."

With no sign of an end to ICE's presence, Lehman said they are confident Minneapolis will continue to rise up and serve as an example for the nation.

MINNEAPOLIS UNDER FEDERAL SIEGE Front page

"ICE abhors being watched. But thousands of us are watching anyway."

In two cases, heavily armed men jumped from a moving convoy and seized a random nonwhite pedestrian walking alone — someone whose identity they could not possibly have known.

The person was shoved into the back of a black SUV that sped away within seconds. Observers were unable to obtain names, meaning those individuals simply disappeared.

In another instance, a platoon of ICE agents pulled over a car with two teenage Latinas. Sobbing, they were handcuffed.

As the crowd gathered, we were able to confirm their names and ages — both 16, both legally in the country. They were still taken. Agents then beat and pepper sprayed observers and fired tear gas into a residential block as they fled.

Border Patrol convoys have been even more menacing. Led at times by their local commandant, Greg Bovino, they park on public streets while agents brandish rifles, waiting for crowds to emerge.

No immigration enforcement of any kind seems to take place — though Bovino often strolls into the street to pose, like some kind of conquering legionnaire, for the small army of photographers he always has in tow.

They then proceed to brutalize any onlookers unfortunate enough to be stuck in their way, and often deploy tear gas into the crowd before moving on to do it again. This bizarre tactic resulted in the separate tear-gassings of Mueller Park and Wrecktangle Pizza in Uptown recently.

These scenes have repeated across the region. Few know the full scale, but the level of chaos is overwhelming.

Fear Across the City

Outside the military brutality of their operations, the psychological toll is profound. ICE now outnumbers MPD five to one and operates in secrecy.

That means any dark SUV with tinted windows could contain two to four masked, armed agents. Since the operation appears to indiscriminately target people of color, regardless of citizenship status, tens of thousands of our Black, Asian and Latino neighbors have been afraid to leave their homes, go to school, or go to work for weeks.

Given the lack of federal restraint, it is little surprise that ICE eventually killed two Minneapolis in seemingly arbitrary shootings — Renee Good and Alex Pretti, both 37, a poet and nurse respectively. Pretti's slaying,



An ICE agent threatens a driver at Hennepin Avenue South and 22nd Street.



Greg Bovino and Border Patrol agents pepper spray neighbors at 24th Street and Hennepin Avenue South.

in which he was shot many times in the back while being brutally beaten by Border Patrol for no apparent reason, has especially shocked the nation.

But instead of fracturing the city, these deaths galvanized it. In its wake, thousands of neighbors in the Lakes area, and tens of thousands across the city, have banded together to slow ICE down.

A Citywide Network of Resistance

I was one of them. In days, an ICE neighborhood watch system grew from a small group of volunteers into a dense citywide network.

The concept is simple: neighborhood-based voice and text channels where participants report suspected ICE activity. Foot patrols walk

"There are far more of us than them, and Minneapolis have set aside their differences to protect one another."

blocks with whistles, sounding alerts.

Another group, calling themselves commuters, patrol in vehicles throughout neighborhoods. I have mostly served as a commuter. The neighborhood watch groups maintain trained dispatchers on rolling shifts, who relay reports between local networks.

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Border Patrol deploys tear gas and films bystanders at 29th Street and Blaisdell Avenue South.



Dozens of observers gather as ICE attempts to enter an apartment on Lyndale Avenue South.
(Images: Will Stancil)

A crowd-sourced directory of known and suspected ICE plates is maintained by volunteers so that vehicles can be quickly verified.

The directory is imperfect, and federal agents often obscure plates, so observers rely on their eyes and judgment. For example, two masked men in sunglasses driving a dark Ford Expedition are almost always federal.

ICE abhors being watched. But thousands of us are watching anyway.

When ICE is spotted, observers rush to the location. Their role is to record, not interfere. They keep eyes on the agents — often by following in their vehicles — and record anything that happens. Physical or forcible interference is illegal, but recording, observing and

alerting has proven surprisingly effective at restraining this secretive operation.

Intimidation Tactics

Since ICE abhors being watched, it will work hard to intimidate observers. They speed away, leading observers on lengthy pursuits through the city. They will surround observer cars, threatening the occupants, in some cases smashing car windows and illegally detaining observers.

A common tactic — which I have experienced twice — is for agents to run an observer's plates and then tail them all the way home, an unsubtle threat that effectively advertises that they know where the observer lives.

In one instance, as I followed an ICE vehicle, two additional SUVs pulled in behind me. The lead car, blacked-out and without plates, announced over a loudspeaker, "This is where you live. Go home."

I shouted back that observing is legal and leaned on my horn, prompting a dozen neighbors to come outside with whistles. The agents sped off, finally escaping me by running a red light outside Kowalski's.

This experience is representative of thousands of observers. Many have heroically endured long cold watches in subzero temperatures or physical abuse by government agents, to help ensure that their neighbors are not aducted secretly. Many more are spending endless hours helping feed and assist the people of our city stuck in their homes.

Meanwhile, social media algorithms have been amplifying false claims that observers and protesters are paid actors or from out of state. I have been on the ground witnessing this in real time. These narratives are lies. The protesters are local volunteers. The media presence is global, but it is Minneapolis residents who are fighting ICE.

A City Rising

Nobody knows how this ends. From my view on the street, the federal government's mission appears to be fear — to provoke chaos, terrify and incite violence, possibly an excuse for greater domestic military repression.

Many seem to misunderstand Minneapolis as the city they remember from 2020: ready to erupt into unrest. They seem unsure what to do with a city that has responded to brutality not with riots but with organized, peaceful resistance.

There is no clear path through this crisis. Our neighbors are being taken in secret. Children are missing school. Businesses are struggling. But I am confident of this: ICE cannot win. There are far more of us than them, and Minneapolis have set aside their differences to protect one another.

What I have seen on these streets is not despair. It is solidarity and courage: neighbors choosing to show up for one another again and again, no matter the hour, no matter the cold. The city is hurting, but it will survive.

"What I have seen on these streets is not despair. It is solidarity and courage."

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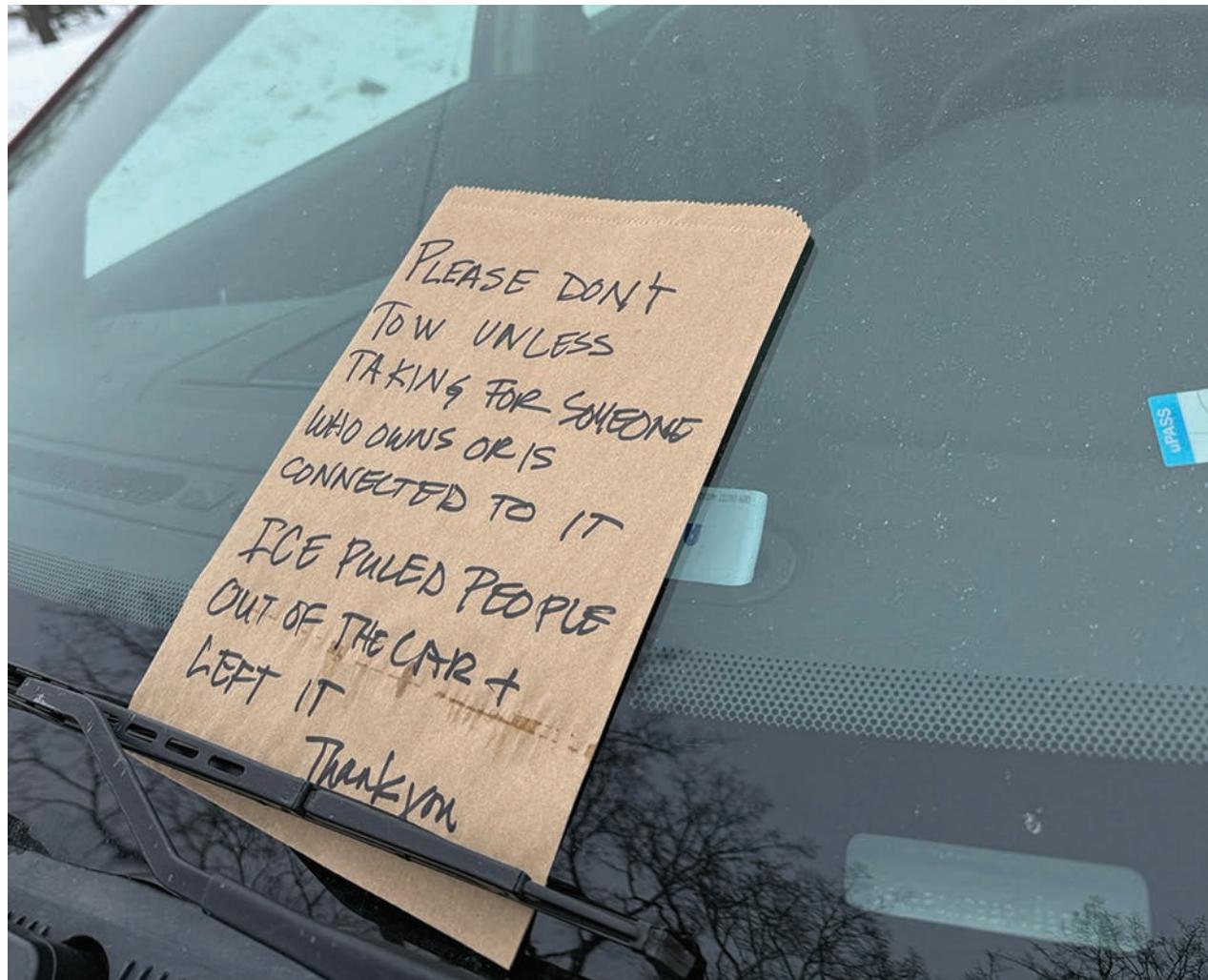
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ICE IN KENWOOD PARK

By Laura Kinkead



The note Laura Kinkead left on an abandoned vehicle in Kenwood Park. (Image: Courtney Cushing Kiernat)

Laura Kinkead lives in the Cedar-Isles-Dean neighborhood.

On Saturday, Jan. 3, I took my 7-year-old grandson sledding in Kenwood Park.

It was a wonderful morning, crisp with no wind.

This 65-year-old made it down the hill without hurting too many parts. We had a great time until we were getting ready to leave.

We heard a disturbing noise and looked over to see a black SUV with its siren blaring pull over a car on Franklin Avenue.

My grandson loves all things police, ambulance and fire truck, so he was very focused on what was happening. But these were not individuals trained to help. This was ICE.

Agents jumped out wearing body armor vests like those we have seen on television. They pulled people out of the car, forced them into the SUV and drove off. People who are someone's father, uncle, brother, neighbor were taken.

People quickly gathered to witness what

was happening. I was near the playground and wary of getting too close with my grandson. I often carry a whistle to alert others that ICE is nearby, but I did not have it with me and had never needed to use it before.

"My grandson loves all things police, ambulance and fire truck, so he was very focused on what was happening. But these were not individuals trained to help. This was ICE."

I do have a powerful two-finger whistle, so I tried that, though it had little effect.

ICE abandoned the car, leaving it on the no-parking side of Franklin Avenue to be towed. This will be another hardship for a family that relies on the vehicle.

I was able to take a photo of the license plate and the car and shared it with an organization I know that tries to alert families when someone has been taken.

That group can also, I hope, connect with a towing company that has been towing vehicles for free so the car, often a significant asset for a family, is not lost.

I noticed a rosary hanging from the rearview mirror and a registration for a residential parking permit.

It is hard to believe that a hardened criminal, "the worst of the worst," would take the time to register for a parking permit.

My grandson lives in a neighborhood where ICE has been active. He had not witnessed this before, but his mother has talked with him about ICE.

"The events of that morning weigh heavily on me."

When we returned home, I noticed him sitting quietly on the couch, looking out the window and blowing a whistle on a toy he received for Christmas.

The events of that morning weigh heavily on me. I think about the harm to the individuals taken, their families, those who witnessed it and even those carrying out the act of disappearing people from our community.

It has been reported that 73% of those taken have no criminal record and that only 5% have been convicted of violent offenses.

We do what we can from where we are. I encourage you to help in whatever way you are called.



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PRECINCT CAUCUSES ARE FEB. 3 AS LOCAL DEMOCRACY MEETS A TENSE MOMENT

By Terry White

Terry White is a regular contributor. He is also the author of the Better Minneapolis newsletter and podcast. He lives in Field.

Precinct caucuses will be held Feb. 3 across Minnesota, with local democracy moving forward even as tensions persist around federal immigration enforcement.

The fatal shootings of Renée Good and Alex Pretti by a federal immigration agent in Minneapolis and a series of clashes that have included tear gas, pellet guns and violent arrests has marked weeks of anger and unrest across Minnesota.

Some residents are hoping colder weather might slow federal activity. It may be wishful thinking, but people are searching for ways to look beyond the current moment.

Although daily life has been unsettled, precinct caucuses are still expected to move forward. The purpose of caucuses is to elect delegates who will attend future conventions and represent preferences for local, state and federal candidates.

The leaders chosen by voters help shape the policies that govern their communities. For residents interested in Minnesota's future, attending a local party caucus can be a first step.

CAUCUS DETAILS

WHEN: Feb. 3, 2026 at 7 p.m.

WHERE: Secretary of State's caucus finder at caucusfinder.sos.mn.gov

WHO: Both Republican and DFL caucuses are held the same night. To vote on caucus business, participants must be 18, live in the precinct and consider themselves members of the party. The DFL allows noncitizens and residents with restricted voting rights to participate.



WHAT DELEGATES WILL ADDRESS -

Delegates elected at precinct caucuses will go on to shape endorsements for:

- Hennepin County Commissioner
- Hennepin County Attorney
- Hennepin County Sheriff
- State Senate and House
- Attorney General
- Secretary of State
- State Auditor
- Governor and Lieutenant Governor
- U.S. Senate and House

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR DFL DELEGATES -

Between March and June, DFL delegates will participate in several conventions:

- SD61 Convention: March 21 at Washburn High School, 10 a.m. gavel
- CD5 Convention: May 9 at St. Louis Park High School
- State Convention: May 29–31 at the Mayo Civic Center to endorse statewide offices, including governor, attorney general and U.S. senator
- Hennepin County Convention: June 13, location to be announced, to endorse county offices

IMPORTANT ELECTION DATES FOR VOTERS -

- Primary election: Aug. 12
- General election: Nov. 4

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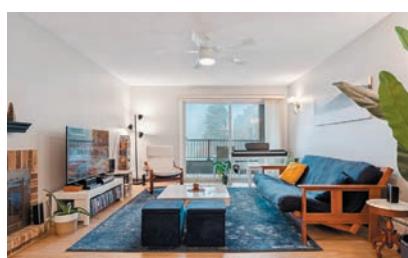
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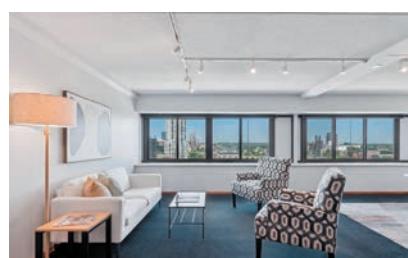
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CONTROVERSY GROWS OVER PARK BOARD PLANS FOR MALL PARK AND PARKWAY CLOSURES

By Terry White

Terry White is a regular contributor. He is also the author of the Better Minneapolis newsletter and podcast. He lives in Field.

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board was scheduled to consider two proposed amendments at its first regular meeting of the year on Jan. 7. Due to the fatal shooting of Renee Good, they were rescheduled for the January 21 Planning Committee meeting.

“Despite the shortened timeline, the board received hundreds of emails and public comments opposing the proposals.”

Both amendments were introduced by new Board President Tom Olsen, an at-large commissioner. The measures could significantly affect parkland use and traffic flow.

There were 54 speakers signed up for Open Time during the board meeting, most of whom were there to express their dissatisfaction over the amendments. Both amendments passed out of the Planning Committee and will now be considered by the full park board at their February 4 meeting.

One proposal, a version of which failed last year, would direct the park superintendent to remove roadway and replace it with grass following sewer work by Metropolitan Council Environmental Services, tentatively scheduled to begin in spring 2026.

The project would include closing roads, removing asphalt and eliminating parking to return the area to green space.

“Residents of North Minneapolis express concerns about closures being a traffic barrier to their accessing the parks and other parts of the city.”

The second amendment, known as “Open Parkways,” would allow parkways to be temporarily closed to automobile traffic using road-closure devices to be installed. Specific configurations would be determined through a pilot program.

The proposed pilot directs the superintendent to create criteria to evaluate temporary parkway closure infrastructure for economic revitalization in the downtown riverfront area between 4th Avenue North and 11th Avenue South, and Main Street Southeast between Merriam Street and 6th Avenue Southeast.

Community members who closely follow Park Board actions said they were not surprised Olsen advanced the proposals, as he publicly supported them during his campaign.

Some, however, said they were taken aback by what they described as an accelerated process that brought the amendments forward at the board’s first meeting of the year, with limited opportunity for public comment.

Despite the shortened timeline, the board received hundreds of emails and public comments

opposing the proposals. Attendance at the January 21 meeting further confirmed resident opposition to the amendments.

Opponents of the Mall Park amendment argue the area already has sufficient green space and say the changes would eliminate parking relied upon by nearby residents.

They also contend the redesign could restrict access for emergency vehicles, including fire trucks serving surrounding buildings. When the proposal was previously introduced, more than 780 members of the East Isles Neighborhood Association formally opposed it.

Supporters say the amendment would expand green space and aligns with the Park Board’s long-term planning goals.

They also argue that coordinating the restoration with the Metropolitan Council Environmental Services sewer project could reduce overall costs.

Supporters of the Open Parkways amendment say existing park space is insufficient for biking, walking and rolling during peak-use days and argue the proposal advances the park system’s health equity goals.

Opponents counter that the Park Board already has procedures and equipment in place to temporarily close parkways to traffic. They argue that installing permanent infrastructure, such as fixed gates or fencing, would be unnecessary and costly.

They also say the amendment could lead to more frequent closures, making access more difficult for residents who rely on vehicles, including older adults and people with disabilities.

Residents of North Minneapolis express concerns about closures being a traffic barrier to their accessing the parks and other parts of the city.

Some critics also question claims that the closures would benefit the environment, arguing

drivers would be forced to take longer routes to reach destinations elsewhere in the city.



LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD

Members of the public may speak during Open Time, which begins at 5:30 p.m. at Park Board headquarters, located at –

**2117 West River Road N
Minneapolis, MN 55422.**

To reserve a spot on the speaker list, residents must call 612-230-6400 by 3 p.m. the day of the meeting. Written comments may be submitted by noon that day to – OpenTime@minneapolisparks.org.

Community members also may contact the Park Board commissioners directly. Contact information is available on the Park Board’s website. If you would like to have your comments considered, the next park board meeting scheduled for **February 4th**.

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M Mary
6 reviews



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C Courtney
3 reviews



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N Nicholas M
Local Guide · 113 reviews · 35 photos



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R Rachel
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M Mary
10 reviews



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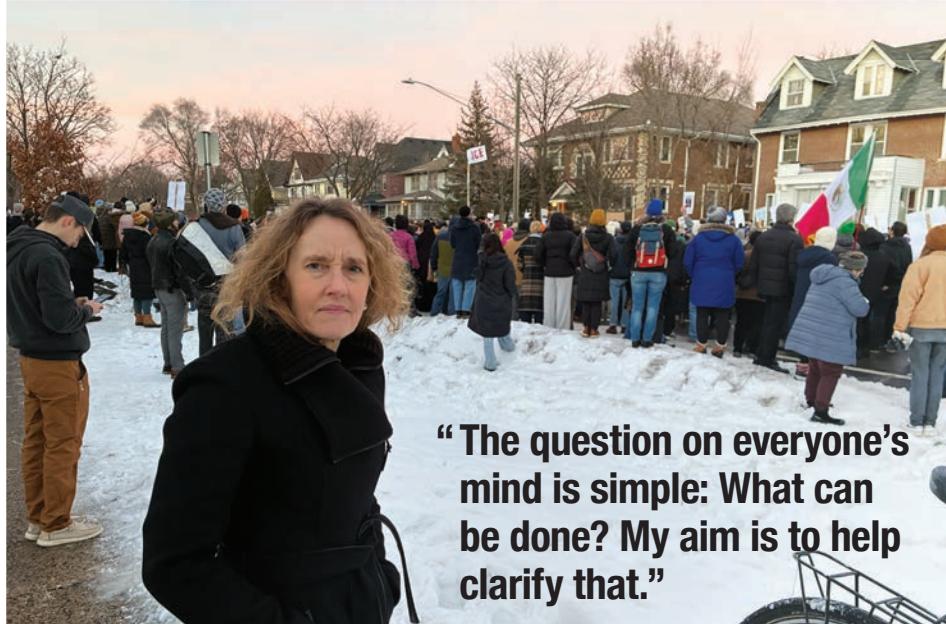
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ICE IN MINNEAPOLIS: WHAT CAN BE DONE?

By Council Member Elizabeth Shaffer



Ward 7 Council Member Elizabeth Shaffer attending the vigil for Renee Good.
(Image: Dave Berge)

Council Member Elizabeth Shaffer represents Ward 7 at the City of Minneapolis. She lives in Lowry Hill.

It is hard to believe that as I write this, it has been only three weeks since my inauguration as your Council Member. Less than 48 hours into my new role came the killing of Renee Good by a federal ICE agent.

Since then, I have seen things I never imagined I would see as an American — masked agents in our streets and entire families hiding in fear. Then just yesterday we witnessed the extrajudicial killing of Alex Petti by a cadre of ICE thugs. We all feel fear and revulsion when confronted by such pointless violence.

Yet I have also been touched by the acts of bravery, kindness, generosity and creativity shown by Minneapolis residents from all walks of life, offering support for the most vulnerable among us. Thank you to everyone engaged in these on-the-ground efforts, through text chains, community and school networks and countless other means. You are all heroes.

We love Minneapolis.

We love our immigrant neighbors, regardless of legal status. An attack on them is an attack on us all, and trust me — we're all feeling attacked.

Like you, I am committed to doing everything in our power to support them in this moment. People be-

ing afraid to leave their homes, go to work, take their children to school or seek medical care is not what our country stands for.

When nonviolent protesters can be killed in broad daylight with no consequence, the Constitution becomes little more than a doormat.

The question on everyone's mind is simple: What can be done? My aim is to help clarify that.

What government is doing

The short answer is that state and local governments are doing what they can, but it may not be sufficient to immediately put an end to this.

At all levels, concrete and targeted steps are underway, though significant barriers remain.

From the city's standpoint, the most significant action to date has been joining Attorney General Ellison and the City of St. Paul in filing suit in federal court to stop the surge, through a motion for a temporary restraining order.

If granted, such an order could potentially halt the surge and restore something resembling the pre-surge status quo.

At this point in time, we do not know how the city's case will unfold. The killing of Alex Petti certainly adds horrific weight to the initial hearing scheduled for January 26, and I hope the judge will permit the issuance of a restraining order.

Yet even if this outcome is realized, it will most likely not be the last word, as we have seen with the paral-

lel ACLU case, where an injunction was issued and almost immediately paused.

These same uncertainties apply to the city's lawsuit.

Let me be clear: The city's lawsuit has the potential to be a walk-off home run, but we cannot pin our hopes on it alone. This moment is no longer solely about immigration, if it ever was. It is also about politics and the rule of law.

The city has taken other steps. As many residents know, the City Council voted unanimously to refer a potential eviction moratorium to Gov. Tim Walz.

While its prospects at the state level are uncertain due to funding constraints, I hope the vote sent a clear message that the Council stands united in opposition to this aggressive federal intervention.

Gov. Walz has stood firmly with Minneapolis, joining Mayor Jacob Frey in opposing what they have rightly described as a federal invasion.

The governor has also worked to keep the peace by deploying the State Patrol in support of the Minneapolis Police Department and placing the National Guard on standby.

I appreciate and support these efforts, though I remain uncertain whether they will be enough.

What residents can do

I am most optimistic about the actions being taken by local residents. As Martin Luther King Jr. said, "Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that."

At the hyper-local level we see this light and love in action through constitutional observing, video documentation, honking horns, blowing whistles, distributing food and emergency financial assistance.

Today Loring Park high-rise residents and I met to learn about initiatives to help families at local dual-immersion schools. I am constantly inspired by the bravery, ingenuity and commitment of our neighbors.

These may seem like small acts, but we know none are without risk. Yet collectively, I believe they can help bring an end to this federally imposed chaos.

Every time a fearful resident hears a honk or whistle and finds cover, that's a win. Every time a family in fear receives help, whether food, schooling or rent assistance, that's a

win.

The thousands of videos documenting reckless and unconstitutional behavior by ICE are potential tools for fair process and justice, even as we reel from the violence and loss of life in our streets.

These videos are shaping the national conversation, and they're key to how this ends. When patriotic Americans from all over the country can see with their own eyes what the witnesses to Alex Petti's murder saw, we can stand together and demand an end to these authoritarian tactics.

In the meantime, like all of you, I am unsure what tomorrow holds. Yet I am certain of one thing — the resilience and ingenuity of the people of Minneapolis.

We are in this together, and we will come through it together. Please do not hesitate to reach out.

"Thank you to everyone engaged in these on-the-ground efforts, through text chains, community and school networks and countless other means. You are all heroes."



PLEASE BE IN TOUCH:
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FAITH AND COMMUNITY LEADERS REFLECT ON ICE IN MINNEAPOLIS

By Paula Chesley



Faith leaders and community leaders from around Minnesota and the nation, including U.S. Sen. Amy Klobuchar, U.S. Sen. Tina Smith, and the Episcopal bishop of Washington, D.C., the Rt. Rev. Mariann Budde, gather at Temple Israel on Friday, Jan. 23, for an interfaith prayer service in response to the federal government's actions in Minneapolis. Budde is known for urging compassion and speaking out against President Donald Trump's rhetoric on immigration. (Images: John Stumme)

Editor's note: The Hill & Lake Press invited community voices from multiple faith traditions and therapeutic fields to speak to the emotional, spiritual and civic moment Minneapolis is living through. Their insights reflect both shared grief and shared resolve. The interviews occurred prior to the murder of Alex Patti.

Paula Chesley is a regular contributor and lives in East Isles.

Since the death of Renée Good, I have needed time to grieve and to make sense of this profound loss for Minneapolis and for our country.

Good, a 37-year-old Minneapolis resident and mother of three, was fatally shot by a U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agent during a federal enforcement operation in south Minneapolis — a shooting that has sparked national debate, protests and legal conflict over federal immigration tactics.

To help people process what many describe as an ICE occupation of our city, I reached out to faith leaders, community leaders and therapists to ask how they are supporting people who feel afraid, overwhelmed or unsure what to do next.

Across these conversations, several themes emerged. Nearly everyone emphasized the need to ground ourselves before taking action, both for personal well-being and to avoid rash decisions.

Some spoke of grounding through prayer.

Others mentioned creating beauty, using weighted blankets, reading poetry, physical movement, quiet reflection and getting enough sleep. Many urged peaceful community action. Almost all spoke of the need to de-escalate and stay connected.

said. "What we are called to do each day is different for everyone."

She said a helpful framework is to imagine support in concentric rings. "Once we're grounded, who can you support? A neighbor. A family member. A friend. Then you expand outward — coworkers, your neighborhood, and eventually the wider world, if you have the bandwidth."

"It's like a layer cake, except it's not sweet."

— Julia Edelman, LMFT

Julia Edelman, a licensed marriage and family therapist and chair of the Safety Committee for the East Isles Neighborhood Association, said the emotional responses she sees vary widely.

"People's responses have been all over the place," she said, "but everyone is responding somehow. For people with trauma histories, and really for all of us, it's like a layer cake, except it's not sweet. Each added layer takes a toll on our individual and community psyches."

Edelman said some clients feel guilty for not doing more or for feeling frozen while others take action. "It's imperative to honor it all," she

"Oppression rarely stops because people ask nicely."

— Imam Makram El-Amin, Masjid An-Nur

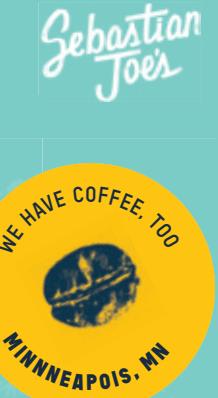
Imam Makram El-Amin, who has led Masjid An-Nur in North Minneapolis for 30 years and serves on the Downtown Minneapolis Interfaith Senior Clergy, described a mix of emotions in his congregation.

"People feel a spectrum of emotions, including anger — and rightfully so," he said. "We are diverse politically, but the consensus is that what happened was wrong."

He emphasized the long history of faith communities standing against injustice. "Oppression rarely stops because people ask

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nicely,” he said. “Change requires pressure. I don’t agree with every tactic, but strong emotions create a range of responses.”

On messaging, he warned that repeated narratives, even false ones, can shape public memory. “That’s why faith leaders must be consistent. Narrative determines how history remembers a moment.”

“When things calm down, that’s when the needs appear.”

— Kate Fischer,
Executive Director,
Walk-In Counseling Center

Kate Fischer, LICSW, directs the Walk-In Counseling Center on Chicago Avenue South, where people can access free, anonymous therapy without appointments.

“We’re not unfamiliar with community-level trauma,” Fischer said. “What we’re seeing now is complex and ongoing.”

The center has seen rising demand but also increased volunteer interest. She noted that an immediate surge did not follow Good’s death. “Some people are activated. Others freeze. I think there’s a lot of freezing now.”

Fischer used a childhood memory to describe trauma’s delayed impact. After a fire in her grandmother’s kitchen, she recalled, her grandmother put out the flames calmly. “But when it was all over, she cried,” Fischer said. “It feels like that’s what’s happening here. ‘When things calm down, that’s when the needs appear.’”

“Be a presence of peace to the person three feet in front of you.”

— Pastor Arden Haug,
Lake of the Isles
Lutheran Church

The Rev. Arden Haug of Lake of the Isles Lutheran Church described widespread confusion and anxiety among his congregation.

“People are struggling to understand how people they trust can see this moment so differently,” he said.

Haug noted that Lutherans have deep connections to refugee and immigrant histories. “After World War II, 20% of Lutherans worldwide were refugees,” he said. “This history shapes how we see immigration. The current policy does not make sense to us because innocent people are being caught up.”

His guidance was grounded and simple. “We can only be a presence of peace, compassion and listening to the person three feet in front of us,” he said. “You can’t do it for everyone.”

He added that following Christ requires a difficult discipline. “We must dare to pray for both Renee Good and Jonathan Ross. I know that stuns people, but that is what we must do.”

“I decided they were not going to steal my joy.”

— Robert Lilligren, Chair,
Metropolitan Urban
Indian Directors

Robert Lilligren, a Loring Heights resident and member of the White Earth Band of Ojibwe, described how, as after the murder of George Floyd, Native communities mobilized their Indigenous Protectors Movement and turned Pow Wow Grounds into a space for mutual aid..

He spoke of “blood memory,” a visceral connection to generations of state-sponsored violence. “You could see the trauma on people’s faces,” he said. “But also the desire to be in community.”

Lilligren said reactions differ between Native and white communities. “It matters that Renee Good was white,” he said. “White people may suddenly recognize, ‘That could be me.’ For Native people, it always feels like that.”

On sustaining hope, Lilligren grew emotional. “I decided early in this administration that I was not going to let them steal my joy,” he said.

“The health of the city is our health.”

— Rabbi Marcia Zimmerman,
Temple Israel

Rabbi Marcia Zimmerman of Temple Israel said her congregation feels fear, outrage and deep concern.

“We strongly believe in Jeremiah’s teaching that the health of the city is our health,” she said. “Our address is not just geographic. It is a mission.”

Zimmerman noted that most Jewish families in the United States are only a generation or two removed from immigration or persecution. “I’m the granddaughter of immigrants,” she said. “My parents-in-law were Holocaust survivors. This moment is frightening.”

She said the Downtown Minneapolis Interfaith Senior Clergy aims to elevate a narrative of hope. “We believe we are here to take care of each other,” she said. “When civil rights are attacked, that never ends well. What endures are the stories of people who stand on the right side of history.”

“...I reached out to faith leaders, community leaders and therapists to ask how they are supporting people who feel afraid, overwhelmed or unsure what to do next.”

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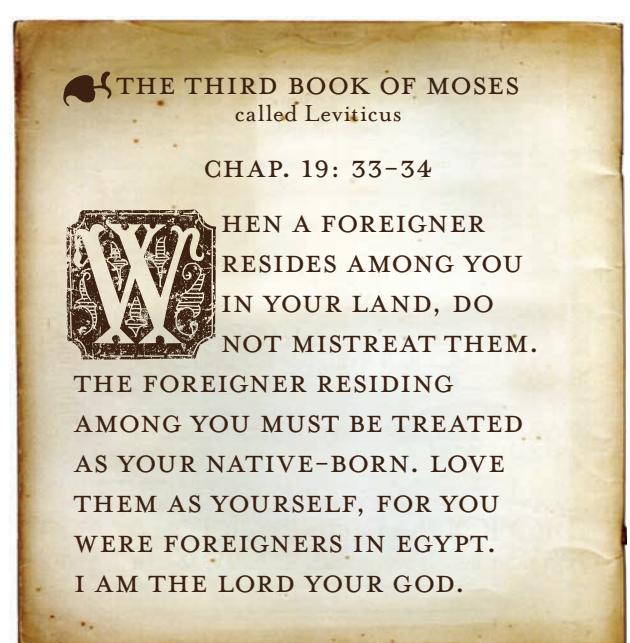
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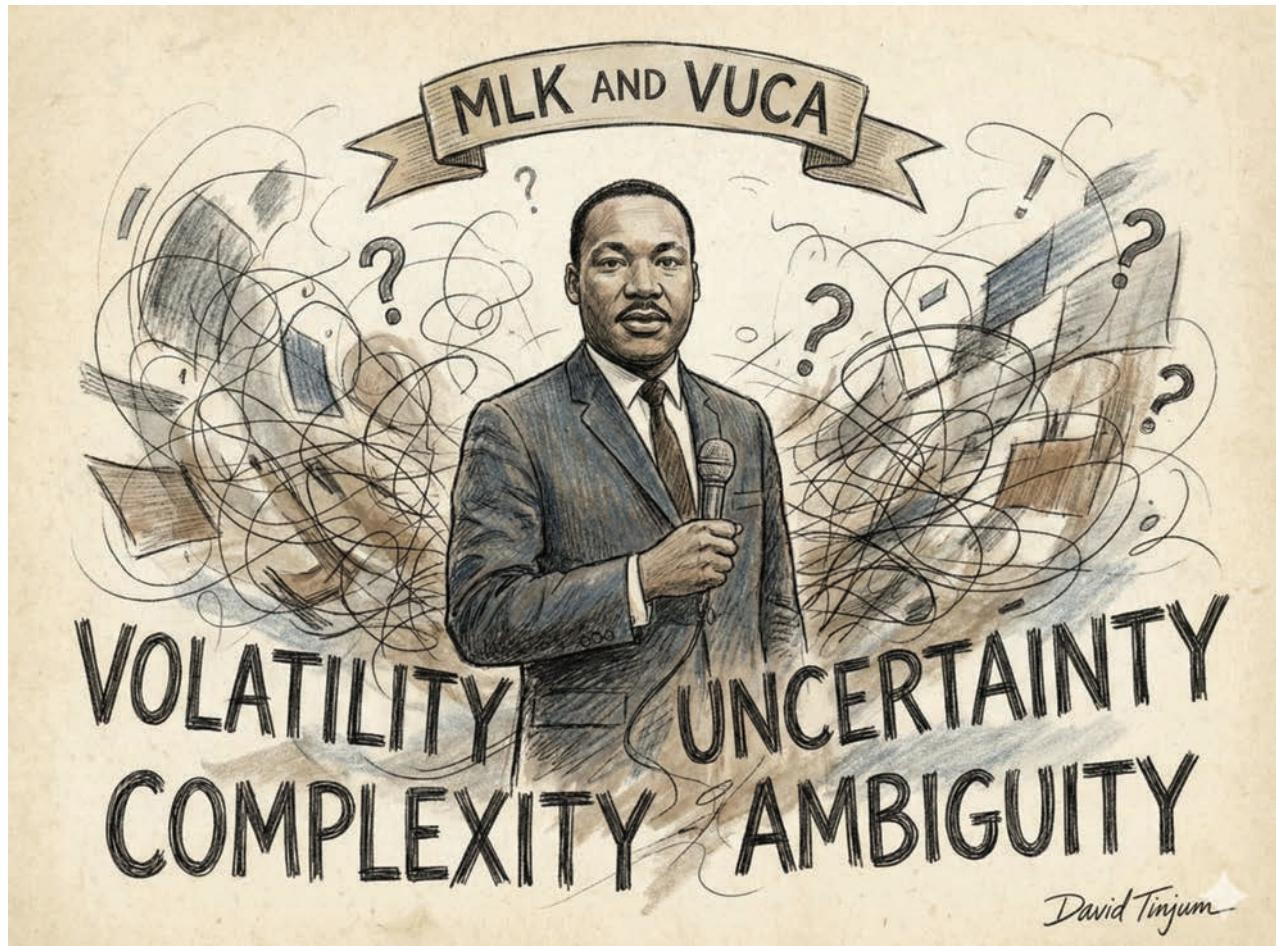
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COMMUNITY STRONG

MLK AND VUCA?

Opinion by Mari Ann Graham



Would the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. have embraced VUCA and WHOA? (Image: David Tinjum)

"The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. also lived in a VUCA era. He faced different, yet eerily similar, forms of volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity. It is fair to ask: What would Martin do?"

Mary Ann Graham taught at the University of St. Thomas for 25 years before becoming the Master of Social Work program director at St. Catherine University. She lives in St. Paul. This story originally ran in the Minneapolis Times; it was edited for clarity and our style guide.

Can there be any doubt that we are living in VUCA times, meaning a time of “volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity?”

Whether one looks domestically, at unprecedented ICE deployments, mass protests across the country, at least two deaths during encounters with an ICE agents, the resignations of six federal prosecutors and multiple lawsuits filed against the Justice and Homeland Security departments, or the killings of Minnesota legislators, or a mass shooting at a Minnesota Catholic school that killed two children and injured 26 children and four adults, volatility is everywhere.

Internationally, the United States has seized six sanctioned Venezuelan tankers and removed the Venezuelan president without congressional approval in order to “refine and control oil production.”

The Venezuelan opposition leader then presented the Nobel Peace Prize to the U.S. president. The United States has issued repeated threats to annex Greenland and taken a

controversial role in Ukraine, including related threats toward NATO and European countries.

The U.S.-negotiated peace plan in Gaza followed mass casualties in both Israel and Gaza. Volatility and uncertainty with layers of complexity and ambiguity are now global conditions.

The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. also lived in a VUCA era. He faced different, yet eerily similar, forms of volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity. It is fair to ask: What would Martin do?

Would he join mass protests, tweet, write a blog, deliver sermons, blow whistles or have a YouTube channel? Would he write another letter from jail or walk for peace with the Dhammacetiya Buddhists? Might he even come up with his own acronym?

Here is one MLK might approve: WHOA, which stands for wisdom, harmlessness, opportunity and action.

He might remind us that because we are hopelessly entangled and flawed human beings, just as he was, we need to resist the tendency to separate ourselves from others in order to feel superior.

"While alive, King urged people to be 'wise as serpents and harmless as doves,' meaning not just wise or harmless, but wise and harmless."

King was committed to resistance, but not just any kind. He consistently urged people to be motivated not only by their own concerns, or even by the concerns of their group, but also by the concerns of their opponents. This radically inclusive motivation is practical,

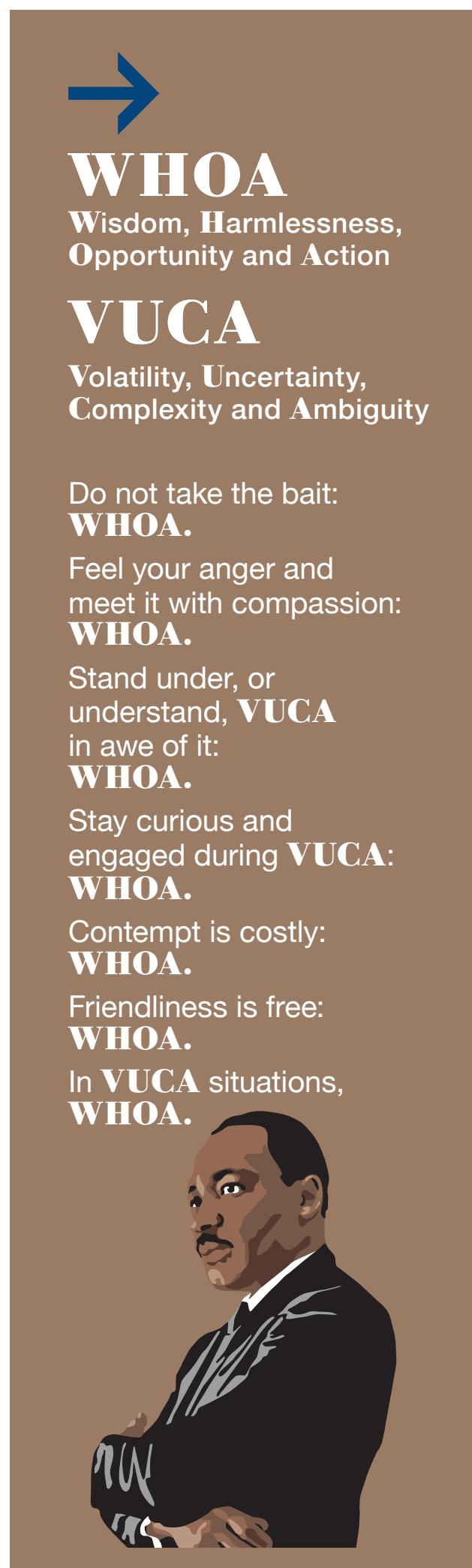
given how intertwined our lives are.

While alive, King urged people to be “wise as serpents and harmless as doves,” meaning not just wise or harmless, but wise and harmless.

He asked us not to give up our intention to change unjust laws, policies or procedures, and not to give in to reckless or harmful emotions that contaminate our actions and injure both ourselves and others.

He insisted that we hold both qualities inside ourselves. He called it having a tough mind and a tender heart.

Once we can hold that internal tension, we can then find, or create, opportunities to act from it. The actions available from that place vary widely.



COMMUNITY STRONG

WHAT IT'S LIKE TO LIVE IN MINNEAPOLIS RIGHT NOW

By Molly Mogren Katt



Volunteers have been delivering groceries and other supplies to immigrant families who are at risk of being taken from cars or off the street if they leave their homes or send their children to school.

(Image: Susan Lenfestey)

Molly Mogren Katt is a writer and mother of two. This story originally ran on her post Hey Eleanor! on Substack. She lives in the Wedge.

It is wondering if it is safe to walk your kids to school. What might we witness? What if the busy intersection we cross gets blasted with tear gas.

It is answering your first and third graders' questions about where their friends have been for the last month.

It is trying to be normal with groceries, swimming lessons and haircuts when nothing feels normal.

It is questioning who is sitting in the idling pickup truck in the parking lot of your favorite neighborhood restaurant. Who is driving the SUV parked in front of your house.

It is coordinating with parents to make sure kids get to school safely.

It is knowing someone might disappear at school pick-up for the crime of parenting while Black or brown.

It is hugging already overwhelmed teachers and school staff, grateful their students

“It is wondering if people across the country think you are overreacting when you are really not.”

can safely learn from home, while knowing being in school is best for learning and for getting fed.

It is so many tears.

It is moms and school staff stepping up to handle things yet again.

It is delivering 200 bags of groceries, iPads and hot spots to families, wondering if walking from your car to an apartment building will put people in more danger.

It is an ICE agent on the ground floor marching past you because you are a “nice white lady.” It is using your privilege for good.

It is a hug of gratitude from a terrified mother who has not left her apartment in six weeks.

“In our own generation's version of 1930s Germany or 1960s America, we know which side we are on. We are the helpers.”

It is wondering how many more weeks or months this will continue. It is wondering how to keep helping without burning out.

It is feeling unbelievably exhausted.

It is ICE agents patrolling hospital hallways, listening for Spanish speakers. It is pregnant women too scared to show up for their OB visits.

It is U.S. citizens traveling with papers or passports or whatever they think will prove their legal status.

It is knowing it may not matter.

It is a video of a Texas man with a neo-Nazi neck tattoo outside your corner bar.

It is being scared to walk your dog and doing it anyway.

It is looking at every SUV and truck on the road, wondering who is inside and praying you do not panic or make one wrong move. It is knowing they could kill you without consequence.

It is canceled gymnastics practices because a mother was shot in the face six blocks away.

It is constant helicopters overhead.

It is a tired police department outnumbered five to one.

It is bracing for the next terrible thing.

It is wondering if people across the country think you are overreacting when you are really not.

It is cross-country skiing on the lake near your house, grateful for a moment of normalcy.

It is feeling like a chump because your family can move around freely.

It is your gym collecting food and hygiene products. It is the pizzeria raising \$83,000 in donations over the weekend. It is the local adult toy shop being targeted by ICE for stocking up on diapers and formula.

It is feeling like every resident of your blue city and state is the enemy of the federal government because you have the audacity to live here.

It is knowing you are part of a community filled with good people.

It is loving Minneapolis. It is being a proud Minnesotan.

It is wondering who you would have been in 1930s Germany or 1960s America or 1860s America and knowing that in your own generation's version, you are on the side of human decency. You are one of the helpers.

And you do not have to look far to see who is not.

→

**BE
THE
GOOD**

I am collecting supplies for Minneapolis families in need of groceries and hygiene products and help with utilities. If you would like to contribute, my Venmo is – **@Molly-Mogren**

Even five dollars makes an impact.

Thank you.



MINNEAPOLIS PROTESTS ICE





Scenes from Minneapolis in January: neighbors gathered in Powderhorn Park to protest, downtown crowds countered an anti-Muslim rally led by a Jan. 6-affiliated podcaster, and voices rose in song at the Singing Resistance Twin Cities vigil. All events took place on Jan. 10 and 17. (Images: Courtney Cushing Kiernat)

WEEKEND ON ICE: MINNEAPOLIS STRIKES IN THE COLD

By Wynne Yelland

Wynne Yelland is an architect and California transplant. He lives in the Page neighborhood.

A City Marches in the Cold

Friday afternoon, in the coldest temperatures the Twin Cities has seen since 2019, an estimated 50,000 Minnesotans gathered at The Commons, the downtown park west of U.S. Bank Stadium, where the Vikings play.

Sixty years in, the team has yet to win a Super Bowl, but fans still show up. We know something about struggle here. It was 15 below and thousands still took to the streets, doing what little they could to oppose what many see as an unlawful and aggressive federal occupation of our city.

The crowd was riled up and occasionally shouting, but still unmistakably Minnesotan. Angry? Yes. Violent? No. When someone bumped into you, they usually stepped aside, apologized or said “excuse me” and offered directions to the volunteers handing out free hand warmers.

Protesters lifted handmade signs, including riffs on Minnesota Nice such as “Minnesota Nice Doesn’t Include ICE.” Signs rose and fell in the crowd as chants rolled through the cold. People admired costumes, stamped their frozen feet and waited for the march to begin.

I was one of them. I am a California transplant who has lived here longer than anywhere else. Whatever that makes me — immigrant, inter-immigrant, or something in between — I stood with these neighbors. For their dignity. For each other. For purpose. After more than an hour, when the march finally moved west, I was grateful to feel my toes again.

Signs, Chants and a Minnesota Sense of Humor

A kid on his father’s shoulders held a sign reading “EAT S—” with a face inside a toilet seat that looked like either Donald Trump or Stephen Miller. The sentiment was clear even if the phrasing was crude. Hundreds of “F— ICE” signs dotted the crowd. “ICE Agents

Are Stinky Butts” read another. The most common chant:

Call: ICE out!

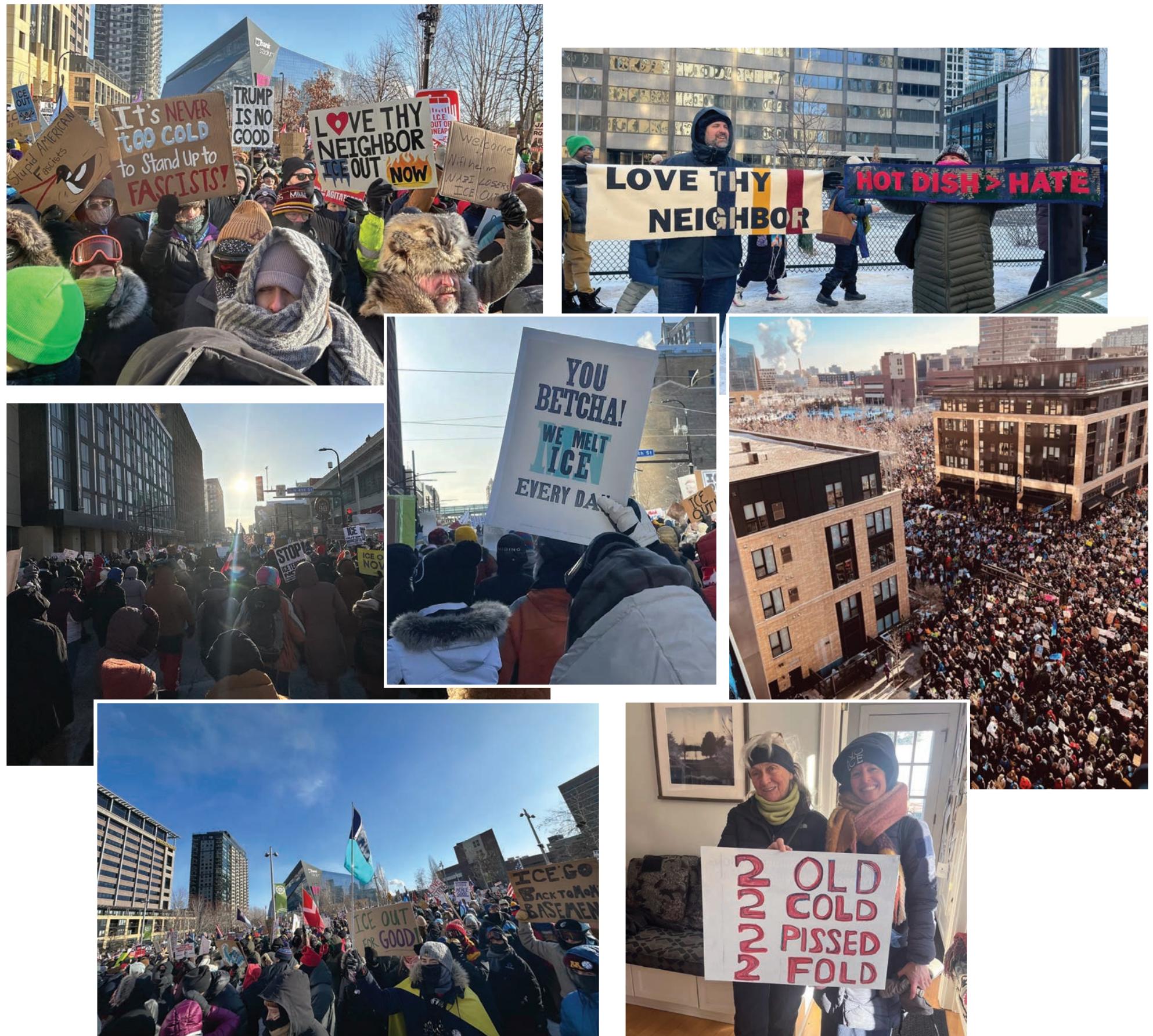
Response: F— ICE!

Minnesota is the home of Fitzgerald and Louise Erdrich, so perhaps we could use better material. And nobody literally wants to “f— ICE.” Not I.

Some signs showed creativity. “DE-ICE OUR STREETS” worked well in a winter like this. “HANDS OFF MY TEACHERS” made me smile, even if its connection to ICE was unclear.

“NOT A PAID PROTESTOR” felt about right. “ICE OUT,” for most Minnesotans, describes spring when the lakes open after winter. For many, it now means we want federal agents gone. January is a long way from spring but people were imagining sunlight anyway.

A woman with a small megaphone chanted “Kristi Noem is a bow-legged ho!” to delighted onlookers. Nearby, giant puppets of Donald Trump and Kristi Noem moved through the crowd, reminiscent of the old



MayDay Parade from In the Heart of the Beast.

Puppet Noem wore a cowboy hat reading “F— ICE.” Maybe that explained the chant. I didn’t ask.

Warming Up at the Library

My friend Dan and I stepped into the Central Library to warm up with dozens of fellow “domestic terrorists,” as some federal officials call us.

Police officers at the entrance asked protesters to remove face coverings and pointed to the restrooms. People complied. Lines stretched down hallways.

Protesters sat on the floors massaging frozen feet. Voices dropped to a hush out of respect for families using the library. The swearing stopped entirely.

For a group allegedly weaponizing vehicles or preparing a massacre at a doughnut shop, we were remarkably polite.

Outside, hundreds of officers and security staff guided traffic. I saw no one threatening them or pushing barricades. It made me wonder how many pardons would be needed to release these so-called agitators in a future administration. Apparently none.

Once warm, we finished the mile-long walk to Target Center. Dan complimented everyone with artistic posters. A man dressed as Darth Vader wearing a feathered headdress lifted his mask to tell us he works in youth theater.

He smiled and drifted back into the crowd, possibly toward the tamale stand or the library restrooms. Thousands of people were out practicing civic responsibility together.

No agitators. No obstructionists. No one doing anything illegal.

A Glimpse of Hope

In The New York Times on Jan. 25, reporter Charles Homans recounted a Minneapolis story I keep returning to.

A week before the march, a transgender woman helped Edward Jacob Lang escape a beating in front of City Hall. Lang had received a Jan. 6 pardon. He ducked into her car while fleeing. She told him she did not support him politically, but she helped anyway.

Two people who appeared to have opposite values still chose decency. She made the

Continued on page 24



(Images: Paula Chesley, Stephen Herzog, Lara Miklasevics, Josh Sundby and Wayne Yelland)



MINNEAPOLIS STRIKES IN THE COLD Page 23

decision many parents teach their children: be good, assess the moment, and do the right thing.

That is who we aspire to be in Minnesota and across communities everywhere. I am tired of being demonized for empathy or for questioning authority, especially when that authority demonstrates so little of its own.

The Fear Today

There were 50,000 people in the crowd, likely most of them liberal, progressive or Democratic. Were some carrying legal firearms? Possibly. No one was shot or assaulted. The worst offense was strong language, as my father would call it. I never once worried a protester might spray chemicals, pin me to the ground or kill me.

I do worry that people employed by my government might.

In the past month, ICE agents in Minneapolis have repeatedly been filmed using aggression and force — sometimes lethal — against U.S. citizens and undocumented residents alike.

At press conferences, DHS officials cast us as violent actors protecting violent criminals. They argue that our mere presence is obstruction. This is the definition of misinformation.

These federal employees are well compensated with our tax dollars. These paid agitators are harassing our neighbors and us — with our money.

Power and Force

In a recent interview with Jake Tapper,

Stephen Miller spoke about Greenland and said, "We live in the real world, Jake, that is governed by strength, that is governed by force, that is governed by power."

Not laws. Not freedom or liberty. Not sovereignty. Not the Constitution conservatives used to cite. I want to believe Miller was also taught to do the right thing. As my kids say, I'm not feeling it.

Seventeen hours after I returned home from the march, Alex Petti — an ICU nurse at the VA hospital — became the second person shot and killed by ICE in Minneapolis this month.

He was shot 10 times at point-blank range after being beaten. By strength, force and power. By people wearing masks, accountable primarily to themselves, who investigate their own and claim immunity. They say they cover their faces for safety. Really? Because when they shoot, they shoot to kill.

A Community in Mourning

My wife, a friend and I visited the memorial forming around the parking space where Petti died. It was somber and tight with candles, handwritten notes and wreaths.

A choir of nurses sang. Others prayed. Speakers asked the crowd to remember his bravery. I thought of his last moments, face down on the cold pavement, knowing he would not get up.

During a quiet moment, a man outside the circle yelled at Minneapolis police officers who were stationed to keep order. "They are part of the problem. They are complicit!" The crowd responded softly with, "Go away."

I wasn't sure whether they meant him or the officers. I was glad the police were there; the scene felt fragile. Cars crawled past. Were they mourners or something worse?

Someone started singing "Amazing Grace." Only two or three knew the lyrics by verse three, but people hummed along.

A Latina woman spoke at length, thanking Minneapolis for supporting her community. She cried while describing a pregnant friend afraid to seek medical care.

Her son kneeled in the snow lighting a candle. The crowd told her, "We're so glad you're here," and "You're brave," and, "Thank you for sharing."

A friend of Petti spoke next, dissolving into tears as he struggled to describe the loss. "How will this end?" he asked. Someone answered "Love," though it was the only reply.

When he could no longer speak, people he had never met embraced him. A woman in a red coat moved through the memorial rearranging flowers and hugging each speaker.

It was beautiful and painful. Renee Good and Alex Petti were trying to do what was right. They were killed for believing that helping one another matters more than force.

What Comes Next

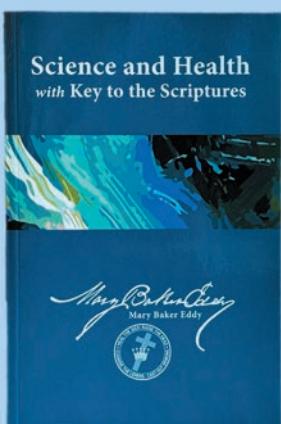
To all my fellow Americans, I hope this traveling circus and its cowgirl ringmaster skip your town.

If they do come, hand them a copy of the Constitution and patiently explain what it means. Start with habeas corpus. They still do not seem to understand it.

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NEIGHBORS BUILD COMMUNITY: PLEASE SUPPORT THE LOPPET FEB. 7

Images by Courtney Cushing Kiernat



BETWEEN ICE AND ICE

By Susan Lenfestey



Susan Lenfestey brought an ice sculpture she made to the memorial site for Alex Patti, placing an imperfect heart with tulips inside it near where the 37-year-old ICU nurse was fatally shot by a Border Patrol agent during a federal immigration enforcement operation in Minneapolis. Standing at the intersection of Nicollet Avenue and 26th Street felt surreal to her, but being among other grieving residents offered some comfort as the community continues to mourn and protest. Along Eat Street, many restaurants, still reeling from his death and the transformation of the area into a memorial, served food and coffee and opened their doors for warmth and support. (Images: Susan Lenfestey)

Editor's note: this article was written prior to the murder of Alex Patti.

Susan Lenfestey is a regular contributor. She lives in Lowry Hill.

It's the time of year when some of us in Minnesota get heavily into what I call ice gardening — creating ice globes and lanterns and ice "glass" for our yards and for friends and for the Luminary Loppet on February 7.

But this year I'm torn between creating ice and crushing ICE. Between filling balloons and buckets with water to create the magic of ice vs. filling bags and baskets with groceries to defeat the terror of ICE.

It's not really a choice. We need to do it all.

We need creativity to keep our spirits alive and we need resistance to keep our city alive.

We need Ice Shanties and the North Side Light Up and the Luminary Loppet and we need school safety patrols and grocery shoppers and delivery drivers.

We need layers of warm clothing and whistles and yes, water balloons, to push back against provocateurs and to protest peacefully wherever we find ICE.

We need to shop where we may not always shop and eat where we may not have eaten before because small businesses are being hammered by the loss of employees and

customers who are too frightened to leave their homes or worse.

And we need the embrace of community. Two days after Renee Good was murdered, husband Jim and I left for a six-day sojourn on a beach.

Leaving felt wrong, like leaving a very sick child to attend a New Year's Eve party and being there felt worse. The city didn't need me, but I needed my city. We cut the trip short and came home.

Being away made me realize again the importance of community.

And although the etymology of the word doesn't mention it, community ends in unity.

We had a divisive election last fall, but the invasion of ICE just may be uniting us.

We are bound by our shared sense of decency and pride in our plucky little city.

Everyone I talk with says the same thing. "We are exhausted." Which is what this vindictive administration wants us to be, so muster up. Our job is to keep going for those who truly cannot.

The weather has given us a huge advantage and for once I don't want winter to end.

I've signed on to patrols and protests, but for now I'm making ice.

It's time to contrast their ugly ICE with the beauty of our Minnesota ice and to drive the invasives from our garden.



A PAPERBOY'S PROOF: IMMIGRANTS HAVE ALWAYS BEEN HERE

By Paul Hinderlie



Paul Hinderlie, the author, has no images of himself as a paper boy. This image offers a glimpse of what being a paper boy was like in the 1960s. The morning Minneapolis Tribune and the evening Minneapolis Star were both dropped at this shack at 26th Street and Penn Avenue North, where young carriers picked them up for delivery to households. (Image: Craig Luedemann)

Paul Hinderlie spent his childhood in the Hill & Lake community in the 1950s and 60s. He and his wife Carol later founded the renowned Harbor View restaurant in Pepin, Wisconsin, and enjoyed successful careers in the food and hospitality world. They now make their home in Stockholm, Wisconsin.

Long before debates over ICE tactics, federal immigration enforcement and the protests playing out on Minneapolis streets today, I learned some-

thing at 13 with a canvas bag over my shoulder.

Immigrants have always been an important part of this city. In the 1960s they were my customers, the families who held front doors open for me and filled the hallways of Lowry Hill with the smell of cabbage and a dozen languages.

That small newspaper route taught me more about who lived in Minneapolis than any classroom ever did, long before federal immigration agents were in our neighborhoods and

long before recent confrontations involving Immigration and Customs Enforcement in Minneapolis sparked protests and intense local attention.

The learning opportunity presented itself when the 111-day strike against the Minneapolis Star and Minneapolis Tribune ended in August 1962. Before that, I had been an eighth grader hauling around the Minneapolis Herald, a strike-born, barely legible little sheet, to scattered homes near Lake of the Isles. By late September, I graduated to the big leagues and became one of the thousands of paper boys for the Minneapolis Star.

My "territory," as I grandly thought of it, was a crooked three-block triangle bordered by Hennepin and Franklin. Eighty daily subscribers. One hundred twenty on Sunday for the hefty Tribune. Behind Thomas Lowry's statue, where Lyndale and Hennepin pinch together, the Star's paper shack guarded Aldrich Avenue's dead end. It was a boy's kingdom if a kingdom can smell faintly of newsprint and radiator heat.

Those walk-up apartments were packed with new Americans from Poland, Hungary, Latvia and places I had to look up on a map. My predecessor, Don, who later died in Viet Nam, gave me the best orientation I ever received. "You'll know who lives where, by the cabbage," he said. He was right. Every building had its own aroma, its own rhythms, its own hopes. These families loved the daily newspaper. They soaked up the Star like they were memorizing their new city one column at a time.

Collecting payment was its own education. Some folks had just a little extra to spare. Once, an entire two-week subscription — all \$1.20 — was handed to me in pennies. I counted every one.

The apartments varied wildly. One was a four-story walk-up exposed to the weather. Another had a freight elevator in the middle of its atrium big enough to park a truck in. Sixty-five years later, the Aldrich and Franklin

apartments mostly stand where they were. Some duplexes and fourplexes were home to widows who always pressed a nickel into my hand. Others, like the buildings at Bryant and Hennepin, disappeared under freeway construction.

Along the edge of my route stood Little Andy's Uptowner, a narrow 24-hour diner where I treated my younger sister Mary Alette for helping on those punishing Sunday mornings. She remembers smoky hallways and one yellow-toothed woman who slipped me an early tip before church.

A few seasons later, I earned a Tribune morning route across Hennepin. It came with mixed blessings. I could sleep in on Sundays but paid for it by dozing off in Algebra on weekday afternoons. That side of Hennepin had Burch's drug store, Bjorkland's funeral home and Becky's cafeteria. Becky's was a warm refuge on collection nights, mostly because they slid food across the counter without much fuss.

Those apartments felt a notch fancier than my old route, and I needed keys to get into the lobbies. The rooming houses on Colfax and Dupont north of Lincoln were their own labyrinths. I liked them, but I missed the energy of the immigrant buildings. I missed the languages I could not quite catch. Mostly, I missed the cabbage.

It has been more than six decades, and that scent still brings me back to those steps and doorways. Immigrants have always been here. They helped build this neighborhood as surely as any streetcar line or sidewalk. I did not know it then, walking those halls with ink on my hands, but they were teaching me something about Minneapolis that has stayed with me ever since.

"Immigrants have always been an important part of this city."

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ANITA GOPALASWAMY

By David Piper



Anita Gopalaswamy (Image: Peter Garrard Beck)

David Piper is a retired judge and regular contributor. He lives in Kenwood.

Born and raised in India, East Isles neighbor Anita Gopalaswamy emigrated to the United States in 1996 and became a naturalized citizen in 2008.

She and her husband Hari and their two children have lived in Lowry Hill since 2020.

Anita and I discussed whether it was wise for her to sit for this interview. She readily agreed because she wanted to speak about the contributions immigrants have made to our community.

This interview has been edited

for clarity and brevity.

How did you transition from India to the United States?

I had a privileged upbringing in India as a member of the Brahmin caste, including attending excellent schools and graduating from a then all-girls Catholic university. The Brahmin caste is the highest social class in the Hindu caste system.

But at a young age I became aware of the horrific caste system. For example, a gardener working at our family home was not allowed to use the same utensils we used.

After college I worked with a documentary filmmaker in Mumbai. I had always been interested in psy-

chology and later earned a master's degree in psychology from Duquesne University in Pittsburgh.

I met my husband in Pittsburgh where he was completing his Ph.D. We moved to Minneapolis because he was offered a job at Seagate Technology. I said, "Where is Minneapolis?" because I thought only the two coasts existed.

Seagate rolled out the red carpet, and we could not pass up that opportunity. We were poor graduate students starting our careers.

How was the naturalization process for you and your husband?

It was seamless for us because my husband was identified as a person of national interest, meaning someone the United States wanted to fast-track because of his distinguished academic career. As his spouse I was along for the ride.

What do you mean by person of national interest?

The United States government, when screening green card applicants, identifies people it wants to fast-track. He had a distinguished academic record. If you have ten publications, they look at you more closely, and he was able to get his green card in one year.

What about your career in the United States?

After I had lived in the United States for a few years, I remember telling my mother that I felt isolated.

She said I had choices and to quit grumbling and give back to the community that you receive from. My mother is many wonderful things, but sweet she is not. She said it clearly and I took notice.

I started volunteering at Chrysalis, where I took calls on the crisis phone line.

Now I work with a collective of 650 families, mainly in West Bengal, India, who create extraordinary cloth. We spin, weave, dye, quilt and do a small amount of tailoring. It is an ancient craft.

I am an unpaid member of this collective. I represent them internationally, influence function and quality and tell their story every chance I get.

Our family provided the seed

money for the initiative, and everything goes back to the community in West Bengal. We sell the finished products in the United States.

Have you found our community to be welcoming?

Yes, absolutely. My best friend lives here. I have known her for 30 years. We birthed our babies together. I feel deeply supported by our neighbors, friends and the community in general.

Do you still feel that way today, given the recent crackdown on immigrants?

I stay in my bubble. I feel less safe today.

Are you going to continue to live in Minneapolis?

My husband Hari and I want to return to India to die. Not in a maudlin or morbid way, but to be cared for in a way that is more comfortable and meaningful to us.

I want to be contributing, viable and relevant until the end. There is a lot of work to be done in India, and we have already started that process because I spend three months of the year there.

What do immigrants have to offer?

We are the fabric of this nation. We provide richness. My dearest hope is that this nation recognizes there is not just one way to live.

How do you navigate your native culture in India with your culture in the United States?

I have deep, solid bonds here, and I have deep, solid bonds in India. With the work I do I want to bridge my community in India with my community in the United States.

Are you optimistic or pessimistic about the future of immigration in this country?

In this moment I am looking for ways we can resolve and survive this crisis.

I recently met a neighbor from East Isles who enveloped me in a hug and whispered, "We will overcome this."

I will carry that with me when I leave for India for three months for work.



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WHY GO? THE DAKOTA

By Jason Suss



Guests enjoy dinner and live music at the Dakota in downtown Minneapolis, a venue known for its blend of top tier performances and chef-driven cuisine. (Images: The Dakota)

Jason Suss spent 15 years in tech before leaving the corporate world to pursue his passion for cocktails. For the past 12 years, he has worked on both sides of the bar at local restaurants. He now lives in Lowry Hill and owns @AProperPour.

Go Out. It Matters.

The whole reason I started this column is to share with people the bars and restaurants I like to go to and why. As I write this, it's Jan. 15, and the bar and restaurant industry in our state is being devastated. I hope that by the time this article comes out we are past this moment, but here are my "Why Go" thoughts for right now.

January is always the most difficult month for restaurants. We just finished the holiday season. People are on a health kick, not drinking, partied out or otherwise staying home. It's also cold and dark, which makes going out even less appealing. And now this. Restaurants are among the hardest and most direct targets of ICE activity. Employees are scared to go to work, guests are scared to go out, and the impact grows from there.

"They took the risk for us. We owe it to them now. So go somewhere."

So this month the "Why go anywhere?" answer is simple. Because it's essential that you do. Because you need to support the same people our country called essential just a few years ago. Remember that? Workers in restaurants and grocery stores, cleaning crews, the health care workforce. They were at the top of the list. Many of us stayed home in our pajamas on Zoom while they went to the front lines. They took that risk for us. We owe it to them now.

So go somewhere. Like the Dakota.

Order takeout or delivery on a night you normally wouldn't. If you go out, add an appetizer or a dessert. Small gestures make a real difference.

Here's one of the places I went this week. Established in 1985, the Dakota just completed its 40th year. It started in St. Paul and later

moved to downtown Minneapolis, where it's remained.

The Twin Cities is known for its music scene, giving us artists like Prince, Bob Dylan, the Replacements and, of course, Sisqó.

First Avenue is the most famous venue downtown and has hosted nearly every major musician at some point, but the Dakota is something different. It's a music venue and a restaurant — and a good one.

This is as much a restaurant with music as it is a music venue with food. It's not a deep fryer in the back. They are making and serving real food. It began with Ken Goff, then chefs Jack Riebel, Tim McKee and Remy Petrus spent time in the kitchen. If you follow the

"The Dakota is as much a restaurant with music as it is a music venue with food."

food scene, you know those names.

The kitchen is now led by Asher Larson, a friend from my own restaurant days. He has worked with some of the best in the cities, and it's great to see him shine in this role.

The menu has everything a venue like this should offer: shareable snacks, substantial sandwiches and well-composed entrees for those making a full night of it.

The ingredients are fresh and seasonal, and Asher's technique shows. I had the cavatelli bolognese. It was hearty and rich, and the house-made pasta had just the right texture for the meaty sauce.

The bar program gets the same attention. The Dakota was a leader in the craft cocktail movement. Bartenders like Johnny Michaels, who was my mentor, and Pip Hanson of Marvel Bar fame worked behind its bar.

The cocktail list is still excellent. You'll find house-made ingredients like guajillo reduction in a mezcal sour, spiced clarified butter and brown sugar in a hot rum cocktail, and all the whiskey and brandy a jazz club should have. There's something for everyone: wine, local beer, THC drinks and NA options.

And of course, the music. I went to see the Travis Anderson Trio. They play great jazz

and also do themed shows with jazz versions of film and video game music. This one featured songs from Disney, Pixar, Studio Ghibli and, naturally, a bonus number from Super Mario 2 — yes, the weird one with the vegetables.

The Dakota is open seven days a week. The calendar includes jazz, rock, tribute bands and even hip hop. You can pre-order valet service to save money and avoid the cold.

So check their schedule and pick a night. Or go somewhere else. But go.



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THE CASE FOR READING IN AN UNSETTLED MINNEAPOLIS

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,

January was a rough month for Minneapolitans, and I hope you are safe and showing love to your neighbors near and far. Love comes in all shapes and sizes. This month, let's talk about the love of reading.

Reading for pleasure has taken a hard hit in recent decades. Proof of this decline, and the seed for this column, came to me last year on December 7 in the New York Times Sunday Style Magazine.

The story featured the cloistered elegance of a penthouse in Milan. I usually love looking at swanky houses in magazines, the house porn my friend Sanja jokes about, but this one felt lifeless. The rooms were predictably ritzy and outfitted with furniture that cost more than most cars. Then came the library. Technically one could call it a library because it had shelves, but those poor shelves, starving for books, held only vases and knickknacks. Not one book. On the coffee table sat a few glossy picture books, the kind that announce "I am worldly." If a picture is worth a thousand words, shouldn't a library offer at least that many? I was aghast.

When I was a junior in college, my then boyfriend visited my room for the first time. He immediately sat on the floor in front of my bookcases. I asked what he was doing. Still scanning the titles, he said, "You can tell a lot about people by their books." I fell in puppy love on the spot. I cannot remember his name, but I have never forgotten his words. It is true. Our books reveal our interests, tastes, inspirations and thoughts. They remind us how we became who we are.

Love of reading is love of learning, the outgrowth of curiosity.

A few years ago I hosted a large family gathering. Three kids were there, ages 4, 6 and 9. I had never met the 9-year-old before because he was the grandson of a far-flung relative. The adults were holding court in the living room, so I took the bored kids to the basement where we still had toys from earlier days. The 4-year-old went for the trains. The 6-year-old dove into Lily's American Girl dolls. And the 9-year-old looked adrift.

Trying to draw him out, I asked what he liked to read. He replied, "I don't read," in the same firm tone someone uses when refusing a cigarette. He preferred video games. I felt a wave of sadness.

Why should people read? There are many reasons. It makes you smarter, hones your focus and is free through the library. It relaxes and entertains. But the main reason is that reading teaches more than facts or information. It gives you an understanding of others, yourself and the world.

This boy became my mission for the evening. I was not going to make him read a book, but I told him this was a social occasion and his tablet was not invited. "Join us in conversation." And he did, reluctantly at first, then laughing and visiting like the others.

My daughter's first grade teacher got me thinking about reading as a quality of life issue again. I approached him with all the earnest bluster of a first time, first grade mom, wanting reassurance that she was getting solid math, social studies, music and language arts instruction.

He said he covered all the basics, but focused on reading. "If a student cannot read by the end of first grade and is not reading for pleasure by third grade, he or she is lost." Lost. Reading grants access to nearly

everything life offers. It is the lynchpin of learning.

When I turned 8, my godmother sent me a copy of E.B. White's "Charlotte's Web." I read it in a little nest I built in the living room under a window between the piano and a bookcase. It was the best book I had ever read and the first one that made me cry. Charlotte's words about friendship moved me deeply.

I was in 4-H, so that August I entered my pig, a gilt named Lucy, in the Dakota County Fair. Before showtime, I gave her a buttermilk bath, just as Mrs. Zuckerman had given Wilbur to make him radiant. Lucy won a blue ribbon.

Many books later I met "Catcher in the Rye," which shaped my adolescent mind. In my early 20s I discovered H.L. Mencken for his wit and eloquence, then Tolstoy for his morality, then a host of writers who now live, with my gratitude, in my library.

What books are you grateful for?

— Dorothy



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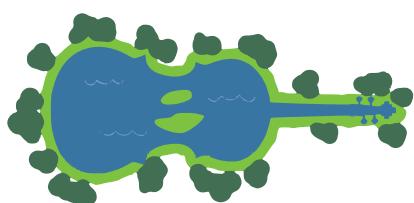
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