January 27, 2023

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After being sworn in as Senate President, Bobby Joe Champion gave a brief speech

Champion of the Senate:

Northside state Sen. Bobby Joe Champion takes the gavel as Senate president.

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North High grad starts for Timberwolves as the new PA announcer Page 11

Letter from the Editor **David Pierini**

NORTH NEWS

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David Pierini

Editor/Reporter/Advertising

This edition of North News marks my first anniversary of stepping into the role of editor for your hometown newspaper. This letter is a note of thanks to the residents and change-makers of North Minneapolis who trusted us

I am 56 and have worked for newspapers since the eighth grade. I leave the math to you.

North News came along later in my career. It doesn't have the same type of reach as some of my other stops in journalism. North News and North Minneapolis have the largest piece of my heart. I hope the paper has an important place in your life, even if it is only for a day or two

Page 2 does not allow enough space to list individually the many people who make it possible to produce a newspaper that informs, mourns and celebrates the people and events of North Minneapolis. We are grateful for your trust and we will continue the work in 2023 to maintain and build the faith you have in North News.

Hold us to that, please. Always let us know if ever we fall short of your expectations and where you think we

North News, as former editor Kenzie O'Keefe likes to say, punches above its weight. Staff writer and youth program manager Azhae'la Hanson and myself feel good to have you all in our corner.

Not much for New Year's resolutions, I try to pick words or phrases to guide me through the year ahead. Gratitude is one word that sticks right now. I've written the word on the cover of the first fresh reporter's notebook of the year.

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Azahe'la Hanson

Reporter/Photographer/Youth Program Coordinator Anva Johanna DeNiro Thomas Tolev

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Story ideas and letters to the editor under 300 words are always welcome. Unsigned letters will not be run

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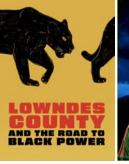
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MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

North Minneapolis at a glance



A button from the memorial for Deshaun Hill Jr., in 2022. File photo

School Board approves \$500,000 settlement to the family of Deshaun Hill Jr.

The Minneapolis Public Schools Board of Directors approved a \$500,000 settlement with the family of 15-year old Deshaun Hill Ir. who was fatally shot while waiting at a bus stop in February.

Hill, the starting quarterback for North High, was shot while North students were let out of school to protest the police shooting of Amir Locke.

The settlement was approved "in exchange for a full and complete release of all claims against the Minneapolis Public Schools, the named officers, its employees, agents and representatives, and authorizing the General Counsel to execute any and all documents necessary."

After the settlement was approved at a meeting on Jan. 9, MPS released a statement later that evening:

asserted Minneapolis Public Schools arising out of his tragic death. While the school district denied all liability, it reached settlement with the family. While the school authorized board settlement, ultimately, settlement be approved and distributed by the Hennepin County District Court. The senseless murder of Deshaun Hill will always be the ultimate tragedy. We hold his family and close friends in

our hearts and always will."

The Hill family attorney, William Walker, said that the family is "not happy with the value placed on their son's life."

named a Rising **Young Professional** to watch

Hennepin County for businesses impacted by the COVID-19 shutdowns. By tracking data on grant and service numbers, she transformed the organization's reporting system. She developed grant timelines,

criteria and decision-making processes.

"My job duties include planning and executing the grant-making process, reviewing applications, disbursing grant funds, managing documents and deadlines, producing reports, keeping track of grantee results and ensuring that our funds are put to good use," Hatcher, who was recently promoted to asset wealth manager, told Finance & Commerce.

Wendy's House of

After losing its lease at the beginning

of December, Wendy's House of Soul has

Soul moves in to

North Market

Owner Wendy Puckett revealed on Jan16, that the restaurant will move to North

> Camden neighborhood. In a Facebook post, the restaurant wrote "Thanks for your business and we look forward to serving you at 4414 North Humboldt Ave. in North Market!"

found a new location in North Minneapolis

Market grocery store in the Webber-

Wendy's will be open five days a week: Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays, 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. and Wednesdays and Fridays from 11 a.m.-8 p.m. Puckett will serve the same menu with one addition. the "Humboldt special" to celebrate the move that consists of a smoked turkev lea and two sides.

Darsherria Hatcher

Darsherria Hatcher was an intern three years ago with the Black Women's Wealth Alliance. Hatcher ended 2022 recognized as a Rising Young Professional by the Minnesota business news outlet Finance & As a grants manager for BWWA, Hatcher managed \$280,000 in grants from



Northside renters just might win David and Goliath battle with corporate landlord

By David Pierini, Editor

A corporate landlord with more than 200 homes in North Minneapolis has agreed to upgrade dangerous conditions plaguing its properties after the city threatened to revoke its rental license.

The Minneapolis City Council voted on Jan. 12 to accept an agreement with Front Yard Residential, which was facing mounting code violations, charges of neglect and a lawsuit filed by the state Attorney General.

It was a major victory for tenants of the formerly named HavenBrook Homes, which had organized and campaigned for safe living conditions.

"I am very excited about today," said Shanika Henderson, who rents a home on Girard Avenue North. "We appreciate the city holding this private equity landlord accountable.

At one point last year, city records showed 378 open violations among the 215 North Minneapolis homes owned by Front Yard Residential, part of the portfolio of Pretium Partners, a hedge fund based in New York. It is the second largest property owner in the country with more than 55,000 rental homes.

In January 2022, North News reported on some of the tenants' efforts to get repairs made and hold property owners accountable for the conditions under which they lived. The following month. Attorney General Keith Ellison sued the owners for keeping its properties "uninhabitable" for

Tenants reported a wide range of problems, including mold, leaking roofs, shoddy flooring, going days without heat, pest infestations and crumbling foundations. Some described getting served unnecessary fees and rent increases. Their calls to property managers went unanswered

So they organized with the help of Inquilinxs Unidxs Por Justica. Tenants kept records of their requests for repair and calls to 311. Some put their rent in escrow, held news conferences and attended meetings where they could corner some of Pretium's investors

"We had to hit them hard where the money is," Henderson said.

The offensive started to work

There was an uptick in inspections, court-ordered repairs and Ellison's lawsuit.

This past December, lawyers for Front Yard Residential signed the agreement that was adopted by Council members and went into effect immediately after the vote. Representatives of Front Yard Residential could not be reached for comment

three-page agreement keeps the homes now managed by Progress Residential on a strict respond-and repair schedule as determined by city inspectors. The



Shanika Henderson addresses reporters following a city council vote that forces Front Yard Residential to be accountable for conditions of its rental properties. Photo by David Pierini

"We had to hit them hard where the money is."

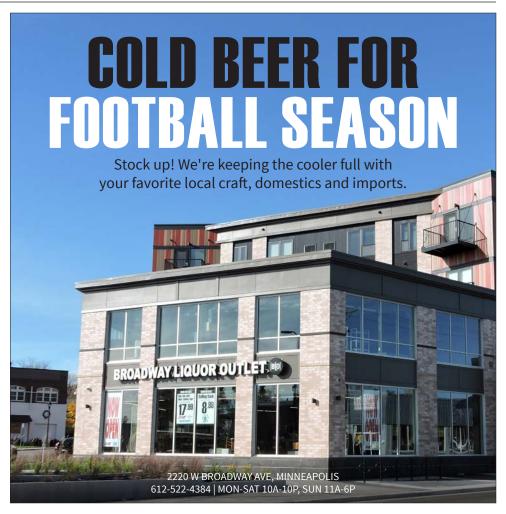
Shanika Henderson, tenant

company must respond to problems with heating, ventilation, air conditioning and water leaks within 24 hours. It must also maintain a 24/7 maintenance telephone

Progress Residential agrees to allow tenants to move out without a lease penalty if life-safety issues are not resolved by the due date. The management company must also pay relocation assistance to renters if a property is condemned.

Front Yard Residential can not purchase additional properties until it shows it has consistently met the conditions of the agreement consistently for six months. The city can revoke the rental license on individual properties or the entire portfolio.

"Oftentimes, the critical issues are not addressed by the due date set by inspectors, including broke fire alarms, dirty air vents, missing floor joists in the basement... cracking foundation and caving ceilings," said Angela Bonfialijo, an organizer with Inquilinxs Unidxs Por Justica. "Many renters took matters into their own hands and got better results through legal action."



Minnesota poised to pass **Driver's License** for All

By David Pierini, Editor

NEWS

Susanna Guzman's life in Minnesota has been harder because of one thing the state won't give her – a driver's license.

A 10-minute drive to her work from her Northside home requires three buses each way. A nephew got deported to Mexico after police pulled him over while driving Guzman's sister to her kidney dialysis appointment. Police detained him and left the man's mother to walk to the hospital.

Guzman, 62, could not get to the hospital in time when that same sister later died from cancer. And she fretted while her own daughter went on hunger strikes to draw attention to the cause of undocumented residents trying to get a

"I have these memories," Guzman said. "It would be a dream for me to get my driver's license. Not just me, everybody. You can't get a car without a driver's license, you can't get places without one. If I could get a license I would drive everyone."

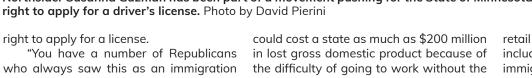
Guzman and more than 80,000 undocumented people living in Minnesota have their best chance this year as lawmakers consider a bill to grant them the right to apply for a driver's license.

Since 2003, applicants had to show proof of citizenship to get a license, a mandate started by then Republican Gov. Tim Pawlenty over growing fears following the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

Attitudes have shifted and what was once largely seen as a cause supported only by Democrats has growing bipartisan support. Legislative committee hearings have been packed with a wide range of people speaking in support of eliminating the mandate.

Companion bills from the House and Senate are moving through committee hearings and are likely to be voted on this

In addition to residents like Guzman, representatives of law enforcement, the business community and agricultural sector have testified in favor of a law that would grant undocumented people the



bill," said state Sen. Bobby Joe Champion, DFL-District 59, who is co-sponsoring the Senate bill and has authored DLA bills in the last three sessions in an attempt to do away with the citizenship requirement. "I've pushed it as a public safety bill and an opportunity to allow folks who have made valuable contributions to our state to be able to drive the kids to school or drive to work. They should be allowed to pass the driving tests and get insurance so that all are safe'

Framed as a public safety issue, residents without legal status would have to pass a driver's test to get their license and be required to purchase insurance to drive like everyone else. According to the Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota, states that allow Driver's License privileges to undocumented residents saw significant drops in uninsured drivers. Some states reported decreases in hit-and-run

As an economic issue, workers lacking economic status would have access to more full-time jobs, which increases spending power. A study out of Oregon estimated states barring immigrants

"It would be a dream for me to get my driver's license. Not just me, everybody. You can't get a car without a driver's license, you can't get places without one. If I could get a license I would drive everyone."

Susanna Guzman

During the shutdowns at the start of the pandemic, 42 percent of the essential service workforce in Minneapolis were immigrants, said Grace Waltz, Vice personal to me. My mother was a green President of public policy at the Minneapolis card holder for over 30 years. She never Regional Chamber of Commerce.

in our region's ability to weather the never cast a ballot in a United States pandemic," she said. They were 18 percent election. But she did carry a Minnesota of healthcare workers, 18 percent food service workers, 25 percent of warehouse lacking legal status from getting a license workers and 15 percent essential

retail trade. These industries already include disproportionately populated by immigrants and refugees are the same industries that are still struggling to find workers today.

"Most people need a car to get to work and employers need and want them to be able to do that safely."

Critics of the DLA bill say it makes elections more vulnerable to voter fraud, but in a letter to the Senate Transportation Finance and Policy Committee, Secretary of State Steve Simon rejected this concern saying licenses have never been used for proof of citizenship. At the polls, voters must sign a document swearing under oath that they are a U.S. citizen.

"The penalties for violation are severe—not only is it a felony but it is also a deportable offense and can be a permanent bar to citizenship for those on the path to citizenship," Simon wrote. "Finally, let me add that this issue is became a United States citizen. As much "Immigrants played a critical role as she inspired me in public service, she driver's license for decades. Her license looked just like yours or mine."



NEWS

catch up with our

Council Members



LaTrisha Vetaw

Hello, Ward 4!

easy transition back to normal life after the Holidays. After my team crews had been plowing streets got back into the swing of things. there was guite the onslaught of messages, calls, social media posts, start of the snowfall. Alley plowing pushing snow to the curb in etc. after the historic snowfall we had at the start of January.

On Ian. 3, we started with 3.5" of snow. With the National Weather Service predicting up to 8" of additional snow that night and the following day, the Public Works Department chose NOT to declare a snow emergency that day. Instead, 40 pieces of snow removal equipment focused on arterial streets and bike lines all day.

By the morning of Jan. 4, we saw an additional 8-10" with snowfall continuing throughout the day. Public Works declared a snow emergency with snow emergency routes beginning that night at 9 pm and alley plowing beginning at 11:30 am. Because of the amount of snow and alley conditions, the City suspended trash, recycling, and Organics routes caught up on and alley collection services to resume the following day, Jan. 5.

snow event since the 1880s. All with a focus on main arterial streets continuously since the proved to be difficult due to private residential areas, clearing corners, round would be taking place the received via 311. As temperatures following day, January 6th. Public rose, crews revisited residential Works had all the City's 60 pieces of large snow removal equipment on the streets around the clock with help from all divisions of Public Works, Regulatory Services and their Traffic Control unit and the Minneapolis Police Department. By Jan. 6, snow had stopped. All

60 pieces of the City's large snow removal equipment were still on the streets with an additional 40 pieces of smaller equipment. The second round of alley plowing started in the morning. It takes 12 hours to plow every alley in Minneapolis, so alley plowing continued into the evening. Solid Waste, Recycling, most routes during the week and By the morning of Jan. 5, we Throughout the weekend and into of snow storage and will continue

saw approximately 14" of snow the following week, Public Works to target the worst areas. In some I hope everyone has had an in total. This was the 14th largest crews did additional passes on areas, one-sided parking was

Minneapolis City Council members LaTrisha Vetaw (Ward 4) and Jeremiah Ellison (Ward

them to keep in touch with the community through this monthly column in our newspaper.

5) were inaugurated in January 2022 and January 2018, respectively. We have invited

clearing work. On Ian. 9, crews focused on vehicles getting stuck, but another and responding to complaints streets where snow had fluffed up, causing bumpy conditions. Corner clearing continued with plans to be completed in the normal 10day schedule following a snow emergency. Public Works continued to evaluate the need for one-sided parking and work with public safety partners to factor in emergency response time

By Jan. 12, Public Works crews had been on each residential street a minimum of three times each with a focus on areas of concern from Public Safety and 311 feedback. gov. Corner clearing work was finished for the whole city, 2 days ahead of schedule. Public Works posted onesided parking and plowed some of were fully caught up by Saturday. the most challenging areas in terms future.

residential streets where cars were temporary for plowing purposes, in parked, alley plowing, and corner other areas one-sided parking was put in for Public Safetv.

I am aware that this was a frustrating time for everyone involved and snowfall is bound to happen again. This is a good time to remind everyone that the only way Public Works can plow streets completely and in a timely manner is to get parked vehicles out of the way. Due to staffing and tow truck availability, it is not possible to ticket and tow every vehicle in violation during a Snow Emergency. However, neighbors can help remind one another to move their cars for a better snow removal experience for everyone. If street/ alley access issues persist, please report all plowing concerns to 311 or contact my office at 612-673-2204 or ward4@minneapolismn.

I appreciate everyone's patience and grace during this major snow event and look forward to working with you on similar matters in the

Happy New Year, Northside! I am proud of what we were able to do in our community throughout 2022. I saw many of you at various conversations or People's Assemblies the Ward 5 office put on or the variety of Blue Line Transit community discussions that were held. It was wonderful seeing Open Streets robust this past year and was fun hostina a successful Black

WARD 5: Jeremiah Ellison

Business Week panel discussion at NEON. I was honored to join many groundbreakings in our Ward to celebrate new housing, businesses, and ownerships by my neighbors. I had great conversations with those who joined my weekly coffee hours and my team responded to over Assistance Programs and the Gas who may qualify to apply for 470 constituent cases in 2022. Affordability Program. We are excited to do even more in

To kick of this year, my office heat disconnections during the four making \$55,500 or less would along with the Ward 2 office winter months with payment qualify.

Works shared opportunities for off between Oct. 1 and April 30. experienced CDL drivers and positions that require no previous Assistance Program helps incometraining. As well as, offering paid and cooling energy costs, bill internships opportunities for both high school and college students. The City currently has many open positions. To see what positions are available, visit the City's website at: www.minneapolismn.gov/jobs

As we continue to experience winter advisories, I wanted to share that Minnesota has three ways to protect people from utility shut offs during the winter: the Cold Weather Rule, Low-Income Home Energy

Minnesota law that prevents funding. For example, a family of

held a Public Works job fair at Rule protects customers from The Low-Income Home Energy

experience and offer paid on the job qualified households with heating payment assistance, energy crisis assistance, weatherization and energy-related home repairs by awarding grants. This program is open to people who rent or own their home. Applications are available in multiple languages. Eligible applicants will also qualify to have the additional cost of a winter storm surcharge removed from their gas bills. The City of Minneapolis is encouraging anyone assistance, even if you have applied The Cold Weather Rule is a in previous years and didn't receive

is a State-mandated program Shiloh Temple on Jan. 14. Public having electric or natural gas shut available to residential customers who have received assistance from the Energy Assistance Program since Oct. 1 this year. It helps with gas utility bills based on a percentage of household income spent on heating and helps resolve late or incomplete bills. All of these programs can be found on the state or city website and of course feel free to contact my office if you need

As always, you are more than welcome to reach out to our office at any time with whatever you may need. Whether it's a meeting with me, a constituent services issue, sharing a concern, or inviting our team to an event, we are here to serve you. You can sign up for the Ward 5 newsletter, RSVP to my weekly virtual office hours (Monday at 12 p.m. - 1 p.m.) or request a one-on-one meeting with me at arrangements. The Cold Weather The Gas Affordability Program www.minneapolismn.gov/ward5.



A Northsider sits in the seat of the new PA announcer for the Timberwolves

By Azhae'la Hanson, Reporter

As a kid, Jedidiah Jones only focused on being on the court, not beside it. Jones expected his stature to take him to his dream of being in the NBA. Today, he is living out his childhood dream, but not in a way he would have expected.

Not on the court, but very close. He started the 2022-23 NBA season as the new Timberwolves public address announcer.

"It's so surreal," Jones said.

Jones beat out more than 300 other candidates for the position. He has no prior announcing experience other than working a summer job at a radio station when he attended North High School.

"During high school I was always kind of shy and quiet, I really didn't say much,"

lones said, "And I'm still like that to this

When lones entered his eighth-grade year, he noticed that his voice was a lot different than his peers. His teachers would often refer to him as Berry White because of his deep voice.

"I had no PA announcing experience, so it's groundbreaking that I'm here."

ledidiah lones

By the time Jones entered high school, he was well aware his voice was different, but it wasn't until he met his former radio teacher, that he became aware of what he could do with it.

Former North High radio teacher Dale Olson was shocked when he first heard lones speak. The first time the two met. Olson joked that ledidiah had the voice of

"A good announcer should have good enunciation, and good interpretation. ledidiah has all of these," Olson said. "The first time I heard his voice it was smooth, deep, and filled the room. I immediately knew he had a future using his voice."

Olson went on to convince lones to join the radio program, where he hosted on KBEM under the alias "Quiet Storm" until he graduated in 2016.

"People used to call into the station with praise and say 'who's that kid?', and it felt good to know that my voice made people happy," Jones said.

After much praise working as a jazz announcer for KBEM radio, it seemed all of the glory ended when he walked across the stage to receive his high school diploma.. He was now seen as an adult, so the shy kid with a powerful voice didn't impress like it used to.

"After graduation, I started dealing with the wrong people, people who weren't encouraging me to do the right things in regards to life, and I began making poor decisions," Jones said.

He dropped out of college twice and struggled to keep a consistent job.

"I was out of a job for up to like two or three months at one point," said Jones.

Jones was in a dark place and struggled to get a grasp on life. But one day, Jones met someone else who loved his voice – and loved him.

"The woman who is now my wife was always pushing me," he said." She was what I really needed. She was my support entertainment field. He realized he needed more than just a voice. He took up acting.

He joined a talent agency and played the waiting game. He began volunteering player, there's many different ways you with the KMOI radio station under a new alias, "Mr. AllState" where he still appears on air when he has time.

However, the name he's most proud to go by now is his own.

"'Quiet Storm Jedidiah' and 'All State Jedidiah' are in the past," said Jones. "They are a lot different than who I am right now, which is just Jedidiah Jones."

He discovered the PA opportunity while working his full time position at a Stryker manufacturing company, overhearing the available position on the radio, and after a lengthy application process, was chosen as the final candidate for the Timberwolves.

"I was ecstatic," Jones said. "Me and my wife were jumping like little kids."

The man who struggled holding one Timberwolves. He is looking forward to fanning over his favorite NBA players.

Jones's wife Ciara Flowers-Jones sharing his story with younger people who inspired him to resume his path in the had dreams of being in professional sports

"I want to be an example that you can be anything in sports," he said. "You don't have to be an NFL player or a NBA can achieve your dream."

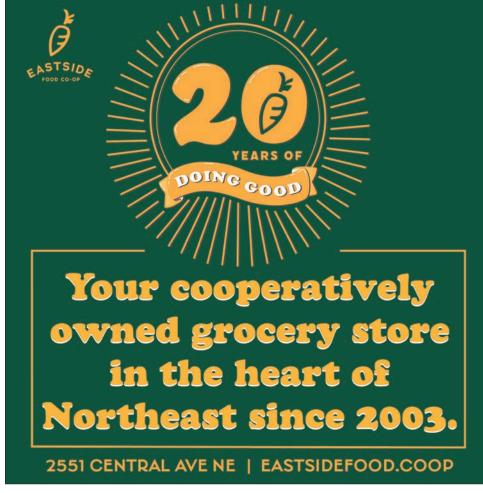
have good enunciation and good interpretation. Jedidiah has all of these. The first time I heard his voice it was smooth, deep, and filled the

A good announcer should

room. I immediately knew he had a future using his voice." Dale Olson,

former North High School radio teacher

You can find Jones announcing job now juggles three, still working on every home Timberwolves game at the the assembly line at Stryker, volunteering Target Center hyping up the crowd and at KMOI, and announcing for the occasionally, trying to keep his composure,





Champion gathered everyone for a prayer, including the Rev. Dr. Charvez Russell of Greater Friendship Missionary Baptist Church, left, Champion's wife, Angela, and their son, Myles.

'Graceful orator' Champion appreciates the significance of his Senate presidency

By David Pierini, Editor

Bobby Joe Champion has little use for

He is up by 3;30 each morning to start his day in the gym. He walks the halls of the Minnesota Capitol building with a spring in his step, leaving younger staffers and colleagues trailing a skip. Even when his wiry frame is in a chair in his Senate office, he is buoyant and burning calories in conversation.

Champion radiates "I can."

The four-term Senator representing North Minneapolis made history on Jan. 3 when he was the first African-American elected Senate president. Even amongst a body of lawmakers where Democrats hold a one-seat majority, Champion picked up a couple of Republican votes.

Most of the Senate stood and clapped as Champion walked from his District 59 seat near the back to the front of the floor, where he took the president's oath and the gavel to begin the new session.

Family and friends drove through



Champion takes the oath of office as administered by state Supreme Court Justice Natalie E. Hudson. Photo by David Pierini

a snowstorm to celebrate this historic occasion with Champion. They posed with him at the president's podium for pictures, prayed with him before his swearing-in and cheered from the east balcony when the vote made his presidency official.

NEIGHBORS

Beforehand, when he walked with his staff from the Senate Building to the Capitol, they paused at a photo showing all of the Senate presidents. Champion's official portrait had already been added to his surprise. The significance of his ascension was sinking in.

"It's a good feeling to say I am going to break that barrier," Champion told North News beforehand. "There's an opportunity for kids who look like me to say, 'Wow,' and at least start asking questions and maybe get inspired to do something similar or greater. We never ever do anything for it to stop with us. It is to create momentum."

"It's a good feeling to say I am going to break that barrier. There's an opportunity for kids who look like me to say, 'Wow,' and at least start asking questions and maybe get inspired to do something similar or greater. We never ever do anything for it to stop with us. It is to create momentum."

State Sen. Bobby Joe Champion

Champion will need momentum, confidence and patience to navigate an often discordant group. His party has control of the governor's office and both chambers, but the Democrats hold the Senate with just a single seat.

Nothing about the party's ambitious agenda – drivers' licenses for all, codifying a woman's right to choose, marijuana legalization, paid family and medical leave, affordable housing and education funding to name a few – is a slam dunk.

But Champion loves vigorous discourse and sees his role as making sure Senators engage one another with respect and decorum to the extent that is the bottom to the top." possible.

"I've sat next to him for the last six years on the floor and he has such an ability to grasp the issues and have those

discussions." Senate Majority Leader Kari Dziedzic said, "He is a graceful orator and has a commanding presence. He is extremely respectful when you disgaree and he can move the conversation forward. He's good at reaching out to both sides and finding that common ground."

The 'I can't' kid

Champion has had a rich career in three spaces, music, law and politics. A North High graduate, he grew up watching the TV courtroom drama Perry Mason. It sparked an interest in law and he went on to earn degrees in political science and law at Macalester College and William Mitchell College of Law.

He grew up with a love for music that was fostered by The Way Community Center. There, he led the Leo Johnson Drum and Bugle Corp and ran shows by the house band, The Family, fronted by a shy and gifted kid named Prince Rogers Nelson.

Champion went on to direct the choir Excelsior, which produced seven CDs and a Grammy nomination. After law school, he practiced law with now Attorney General Keith Ellison, worked for the Legal Rights Center, worked as an assistant state attorney general and then eventually turned to music law, working with Flute Time Productions and its Grammy Award-winning founders, producers Terry Lewis and Jimmy Jam

He served two terms in the House before running for Senate and has championed issues ranging from iob creation, affordable housing and transportation to education, health and criminal justice reform. Champion said he never wanted to hold elected office. He worked to get others to run. But in instances when no one stepped forward and others encouraged him, Champion answered the call.

The counselors at The Way understood Champion's potential when he first showed up there around the age of 8. But the kid needed a lot of work.

"His favorite word at 8 was 'I can't. I can't do what the other kids do,' " said Spike Moss, a counselor at The Way. "He said it so much, I told the staff I want total focus on Bobby Joe until we get 'I can't' out of his mouth. I put him next to Prince. Both had real struggles but they went from

Moss credits two of The Way's most fabled educators, Vusi Zulu and Mahmoud



Champion chats with legislative assistant Alexis Varner in Champion's office at the Senate Building. Photo by David Pierini



Champion and members of staff, including executive assistant Shemeka Bogan, right, and legislative assistant Alexis Varner, wait for an elevator to head to a reception. Photo by David Pierini



Prior to the opening of session, Champion met with Senate staff and members of the leadership caucus to go over rules and procedures. Those in the meeting with Champion included first assistant Secretary of the Senate Mike Linn, left, Secretary of the Senate Tom Bottern, second assistant Secretary of the Senate Jessica Tupper and Senate Continued on page 19 Majority leader, Sen. Kari Dziedzic. Photo by David Pierini

'Why pull a gun on a kid?' North students grapple with safety

By Ayanna Melander, North High School

Mariyah Hardeman was looking forward to walking the halls of North High with the pride that comes with being an upperclassman. But Mariyah, like many students across the country, was confronted with the reality that school isn't always carefree. Sometimes, it's a

Hardeman was on her way home from a volleyball game this past fall when shots rang out on 14th and Knox, two blocks from campus. As the bus pulled around the corner into North's parking lot, light flooded the dark bus with flashing police lights and the sound of sirens silenced the team.

Peering through the windows, the street was blocked off with yellow caution

"Someone's dead," whispered players. The bus full of teammates began to receive notifications that someone was indeed shot, and Mariyah received devastating news. It was her friend, Jerimiah, who was fatally shot near the school while walking down the street.

Everyday, America is confronted with the reality that schools are becoming less and less safe spaces. Since the start of the new millennium, administrators, teachers, and students have had to juggle protecting students inside and outside of the buildings from potential threats.

In extreme cases, it has proved almost impossible to prevent, especially when the threat comes from within.

Students like Mariyah assume their only job is to grow and learn, but such a simple task can be intimidating when students die doing just that daily.

"I don't understand why people are pulling out guns on kids," Mariyah said. " And then I think about it, and it's other

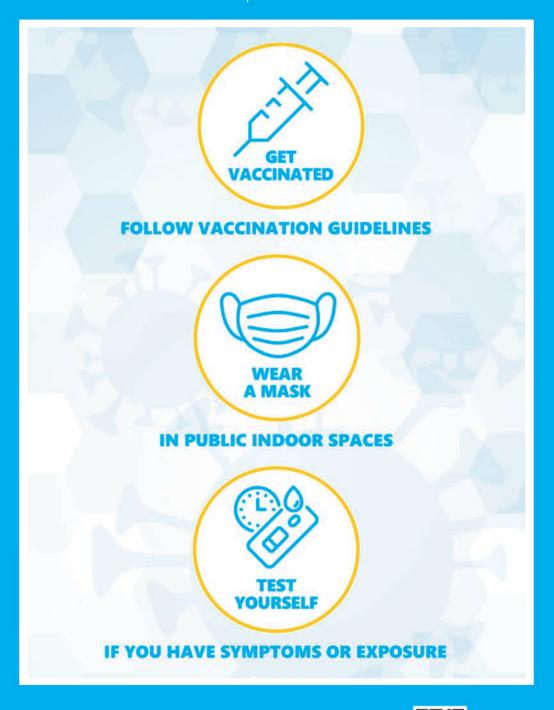


Teachers have expressed concerns from their students who frequently face potentially Continued on page 19 life-threatening scenarios on their way to and from school. Photo by Azhae'la Hanson





As we spend more time indoors, here are some important reminders:



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The JXTA apprentices who designed the limited edition boot include, Milo Olim, left, Essence Enwere, Isaiah Hunter and Ciojwe. Photos courtesy of Red Wing Heritage

JXTA students put fresh design on classic Red Wing boot

By David Pierini, Editor

ground on a new Juxtaposition Arts version of Red Wing's Classic Moc boot. building, the boots they were wearing caused a bit of a stir.

boots made special for the occasion hooded sweatshirt went on sale on the and presented by a former JXTA student JXTA website on Jan. 18. The 30 pair of Always looking for opportunities for who now heads the iconic company's \$350 boots and 40 hooded sweatshirts students to grow, Cummings and brand and creative team. Several people sold out in just a few hours. attending the September 2021 event wanted pairs for themselves.

That's when a photo opportunity around the city. became a business and teaching

When founders, artists and other opportunity. Four JXTA apprentices mainstream, but the demand and interest dignitaries lined up with shovels to break recently helped design a special-edition

The black boots with touches of red and a IXTA logo embossed on the sides They were wearing Red Wing and especial-edition screen-printed

boot is currently featured on billboards business, from design and prototype to

"It was nothing meant to go

that day was really palpable," said Aaron Seymour-Anderson, a JXTA alum and creative director for Red Wing Heritage.

Seymour-Anderson has stayed in touch with his JXTA family and became friends with co-founder Roger Cummings. Seymour-Anders chatted about teaching All the proceeds go back to JXTA. The some JXTA apprentices the footwear manufacturing and marketing.

Seymour-Anderson understood the

value of the opportunity. As a teenager, he magical." did not see himself on a particular journey. He liked graffiti art and IXTA gave him an outlet to paint murals and make longlasting friendships. The experience made him see how it was possible to create a profession with art or leveraging art.

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Minnesota and worked for brands through creative agencies. He eventually landed in Portland, Oregon and Nike, before moving back to Minnesota three years ago to work for Red Wing.

"I look back on that time (with JXTA) fondly," Seymour-Anderson said. "It was a she said. "I've never designed a boot, way for us to productively focus every into never worked with a company that big. It an outlet that was hopefully beautifying sounded like a great opportunity to learn the city. One of the amazing things about JXTA...is the their model has built a way create really beautiful new connections." for young people to get paid. If you can

Essence Enwere can speak to the magic. She was part of the boot design team that included apprentices Ciojwe, Milo Olim and Isaiah Hunter.

Enwere, 22, has been with JXTA for more than six years and is currently He graduated from the University of studying graphic design at the University of Minnesota. She has been part of the textiles lab learning screen printing and apparel design. Like Seymour-Anderson she has painted murals.

"I feel like they've given me an opportunity to spread my wings farther," a different aspect of the industry and

The biggest challenge was doing a do art and make money, that's pretty fresh design that still feels on brand with

the Red Wing legacy. "That was hard to challenge. do," she said, "You have to understand

"This really celebrates the idea of two places coming together that are kind of Minnesota originals in their own right connected by craft."

Aaron Seymour-Anderson, Creative Director for Red Wing Heritage, JXTA alum

selling to make it fresh in a way that still appealing to the masses."

Seymour-Anderson believed the JXTA apprentices successfully met the

He said Enwere made a critical marketing and understand who they're insight right before production. She noticed a leather loop on the back of the boot, designed to help the wearing pull it on, made it look like a competitor's boot. That led to the design team nixing the

> Enwere also contributed the idea of the red stripe on the boot's upper sole.

> "There's a bunch of serendipity that came from this project," Seymour-Anderson said. "Red is a key color for JXTA and it's a key color for Red Wing,

> "This really celebrates the idea of two places coming together that are kind of Minnesota originals in their own right connected by craft."



It's a classic Red Wing boot with modern styling and design from the JXTA apprentices. Photos courtesy of Red Wing Heritage



The North High football team takes a knee before the start of their first game of the 2022-23 season to commemorate the loss of former quarterback Deshaun Hill Jr., who would have been starting his junior year at North. Photo by Azhae'la Hanson

North High football gets the spotlight in Showtime's Boys in Blue

premiered in early January on Showtime and you might see some familiar faces.

the day to day of Northside city kids, the going on in the community." series follows North High's varsity football

The four part docuseries Boys in Blue mostly active or former police officers.

In an interview with The Guardian, director Peter Berg said, "I sensed that Sanders, De'meiko Anderson, Tae-Zhan In the midst of a pandemic, unrest, and there was something unique and special Gilchrist Cashmere Grunau, and, Deshaun at the intersection of 17th and Girard

The general relationship between

Black players and their coaches, who are Floyd in 2020, leading to multiple "pro cop." Others argue to not let politics campaigns to radically change policing.

Four students were highlighted, Mario the players.

team through their 2021 season and the MPD and citizens of Minneapolis have received by most who view it. Some take Football

By Mariyah Hardeman, North High School relationship between its predominantly been uneasy since the murder of George issue with the documentary being too muddy take away from the brilliance of

Regardless of the overall tension, Hill Jr, who was fatally shot last February Avenues sits Hobbs Field, and the two The docuseries has been well parties came together for one thing.



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Davis helps correct the shooting form of his player Arman Rice while he practices a layup. Photo by Azhae'la Hanson

New Farview sports program connects park players to local high school

By Azhae'la Hanson, Reporter

Farview Park is introducing its newest non-profit program, Farview North, that aims to create a pipeline from the Farview Parks' recreational basketball and football programs to North High School.

As a former Polar and former Farview kid himself, founder and coach Edward 'Eddie' Davis played alongside talented athletes at the local recreation centers. But he noticed many would leave the community to play for other schools.

He created Farview North with the goal to restore youth sports on the Northside and keep athletic talent from leaving home.

"The whole outcome and this program program

is to run a pipeline to North's football and basketball programs," David said. "Kids do that there's nothing wrong with playing

The program is starting with one 11U basketball team and is planning to branch into football next fall.

In December, parents and their children lined up for tryouts to pioneer the program and the first-ever team hit the courts in January. The team is currently 2-0.

Lupita Sherrod recently pulled her son Cameron from a program in Brooklyn Park when she heard about the Farview North

"I know that he (Davis) has a passion surrounds the community. for it," Sherrod said. "There's not a lot of have a choice about where they want to space for young kids nowadays, and it's was all for it," said W.H Nelson, a Farview go, but it's our job to help them understand crippling to them, because they have no staff member for 24 years. "I figured we place to go. I want my son to be a part of

With his young team and new program, another goal of Davis' is to bring back the "glory days" of Park Board basketball.

"When I was a kid and I played for Farview, this was a park that was always busy," he said. "And it breaks my heart that lives. that's not really going on right now."

In recent years, Farview has struggled with attendance and retention and are still recovering from a combination of the pandemic and a negative narrative that

"Davis came to me with the idea and I can fix the wrinkles along the way. But right now, we need something positive in our program going so that we can get kids back into the building."

Davis hopes to generate some excitement for the new program. He also wants to use it as a vessel to save young

"Sports is what kept me out of trouble, and they continue to keep all types of kids out of trouble," Davis said. "Kids in our

Continued on page 19

Park officials want public input on North **Commons design** concepts

By **David Pierini**, Editor

Major improvements for North Commons Park are in the planning stages and park officials are seeking feedback from residents and community leaders through February on four design concepts.

Whichever concept moves forward, it will be the largest park improvement plan ever undertaken by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board.

And at projected costs ranging from \$35 to \$50 million, the most expensive park

"We want this new water park and community center to be a project that engages with North High to the south and YMCA on West Broadway to the North and is a hub of community activity and economic stimulation for the area," said Daniel Elias, design project manager for MPRB. "We need community input and community involvement in this process in order to serve this purpose."

Last year, the North Commons project received \$5 million in state bonding from the state and Gov. Tim Walz is proposing awarding \$6 million more this year. A philanthropic campaign is also underway.

Two proposals would expand the recreation center, while two others call for its raising and for a new large field house. All four designs show a range of possibilities to transform the water park, including new play areas, a lap pool, overhead sprayers and expanded waterslide activity.

The pool building would be removed and would merge with the field house. Concessions and a changing area would also be part of the new field house.

The ice rink and ball diamonds will be moved (North High's baseball team will get a new facility at Bethune Park) and construction would replace 25-year-old playground equipment.

"Folks are passionate and excited about the project and obviously have differing views on where they think the project should go," Elias said. "We're asking people to tell us what works about a specific concept and what doesn't. The 1,400 participants. About

eventual outcome that we would take to 60 percent of the our board...is to take the best elements of each concept and combine them into a singular concept.

Some 75 community members attend the a Jan. 10 open house to view the concepts. improvements, A Jan. 23 open house was scheduled. There are a few more opportunities to view and

The Park Board will host two more open houses at the North Commons park-projects/ Community Center in February. One takes current_projects/ place Feb. 7 from 6-8 p.m. and the other is north_commons_ Saturday from 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Residents can go online to review and_waterpark/ concept plans and take a survey or do a virtual open house from noon-1 p.m. on Feb. 6 and Feb. 24 (click https:// www.minneapolisparks.org/wp-content/ uploads/2023/01/NorthCommons_ UpcomingCE_Flyer_FINAL.pdf to use QR codes for all three).

Concepts 1 and 2, which calls for renovating the existing community center. would cost about \$35 million and would be the quickest turnaround (2025). Concepts 3 and 4, with a brand new field house, would be on the high end of the cost range and do not have a project open date.

"I, personally, am a real advocate for

staying with and adding to the old building," Commissioner Becka Thompson, who represents the Northside on the Park Board. "It's exceedingly more cost effective and we could implement it sooner. But also a lot of people who live around there like the old building. It is a wellused community center."

Built in 1971, the 15.385square-foot community center has a small regulation basketball court. A renovation or new building, between 52,000 58,000 square feet, would hold three to four courts and is a likely destination for tournaments and other community functions. The park opened in

1907 and covers nine blocks, 26 areas. More than 12,000 kids live in the surrounding blocks. The recreation center last year offered 59 pr0grams, totaling 1,763 hours and more than

participants were aged 17 and under.

To go over proposed minneapolisparks. org/park-careimprovements/ community_center_







Concepts 1 and 2 builds out the existing community center. Concepts 3 and 4 show a brand new field house. Renderings courtesy of MPRB.



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COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Help with homework: St. Olaf Lutheran Church offers after-school tutoring with an "expert mathematician" on hand. Sessions run 3 to 5 pm, Mondays and Thursday and 3 to 6 pm Tuesdays and Wednesdays. The church also offers a Youth Club for grades 6 through 12 on Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. Transportation available. Call 612-529-7726 to enroll in tutoring or the Youth Club.

Skate through the winter: North Commons Park is offering figure skating lessons and a youth hockey program beginning Nov. 1 at a low cost. Sign up on Wednesday from 6-8 p.m. Transportation is available. Call 612-588-9177 for more information.

Free legal advice: Legal Aid takes on civil cases, such as housing, family, consumer tax, immigration and public benefits. The non-profit organization now has a clinic in the office of the Harrison Neighborhood Association, 1501 Glenwood Ave. Services

200% of federal poverty guidelines or age 60-plus. Hours are Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m.. Walkins welcome, but appointments are preferred, Call 612-746-3611 to make an

back at Zion Missionary Baptist Church, 621 Elwood Ave. N. It is committed to healing trauma in the Black community by helping to break the cycle of oppression. It is a safe space if you need a prayer, a into Minneapolis's cultural radio programs Irene Fernando, call 612-348-7882 or conversation or just a place to sit. Every for COVID-19 updates. The city is email her at irene.fernando@hennepin. Wednesday from 1 to 5 p.m.

Food Distribution: Fellowship Missionary Baptist Church, 3355 4th Street N., will distribute free fresh food on the second and fourth Saturdays of each month from 10 a.m.-noon. There are no prequalifications. Everyone is welcome.

Free Dinners: The Camden Collective and the Sanneh Foundation sponsor a weekly free food pickup at Salem Lutheran Church, 4150 Dupont Ave. N., each

Pet supplies: Are you in need of pet Minneapolis Ward 5 contact info: If you 764-273-0710 to place an order and bethany.turnwall@minneapolismn.gov leave a voicemail.

Radio updates in your language: Tune To reach Hennepin County Commissioner broadcasting updates on KMOJ 89.9 FM us. For constituent services contact policy (English), La Raza 95.7 FM (Spanish), aide Bill Emory at 612-348-3526 or at bill. KALY 101.7 FM (Somali) and WIXK AM emory@hennepin.us 1590 (Hmong).

Minneapolis Ward 4 contact info: If you live in Ward 4 and want to reach City Councilwoman LaTrisha Vetaw, contact Maggie Kohl via email: maggie. kohl@minneapolismn.gov or cell: 612-258-3982. Contact Betsy Brock with other needs via email: betsy.brock@ minneapolismn.gov or cell: 612-257-Saturday from 1-3 p.m. Call 612-521- 5242. You can also reach Vetaw via email:

are free for those who qualify. Must be 3644 for more information. Walk ups are latrisha.vetaw@minneapolismn.gov or cell: 612-322-1143.

supplies or pet resources? The North live in Ward 5 and want to reach City Minneapolis Pet Resource Center, 1401 Councilman Jeremiah Ellison, call his office 44th Ave. N., is open for curbside pickup at 612-673-2205 or email him at ward5@ Tuesdays and Thursdays from 5 p.m.- minneapolismn.gov. You can also contact The Healing Place: The Healing Place is 8 p.m. and Saturday 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Call his policy associate Bethny Turnwall at

Hennepin County District 2 contact info:

Minneapolis Public Schools, District 2 contact info: Sharon El-Amin is the Board of Education director representing North Minneapolis. She can be reached at 612-986-3281 or Sharon.El-Amin@mpls.k12.

Do you have an ongoing program, meeting or event you would like to see published in North News? Please send the details to DavidP@pillsburyunited.org



Bobby Joe Champion Continued from page 9

NEWS

El-Kati, for instilling in Champion and others pride, self-esteem and self-motivation.

The Way also gave Champion his first taste of community service. Moss would put his management and organization skills to good use by organizing cultural

One of Champion's most valuable sessions in service came on a field trip to Washington D.C. in 1981, when The Way and Opportunities Unlimited brought kids to the now famous rally at the Washington monument led by singer Stevie Wonder as he led the crowd in calling for a national holiday observing the birthday of Martin Luther King Jr.

"He used an analogy on that cold January day," Champion remembered. "He said the world is like a symphony. It's important for us to pay our part in order to make beautiful music that will become the soundtrack of our life. What are we doing in order to make sure that we are. I was young and I was listening.

"That moment is what led to me having a real thought about how we function together. How do we create that sense of fairness and opportunity? It takes all of us to collectively make a valuable contribution to get the desired outcomes we're looking for."

The challenge ahead

Champion has always ensured his district is in the conversation, whether its education funding, affordable housing or health care reform. Now, as Senate president he must do that and convince more conservative members that their constituents have many of the same needs.

To get the Senate to perform collectively like a symphony will take mettle and every lesson he has learned about respect, tolerance, organizing and persuasive speaking. Champion says the job is not ceremonial, as some media outlets have described.

"What you're doing is creating an opportunity for a robust conversation to happen and to understand fairness," Champion said, "Everybody is making a contribution. I think of this role as creating an environment where robust discussions on behalf of all Minnesotans can happen. How do we put up the guardrails when somebody else wants to tear up a little too loudly or just say provocative things? We don't have to agree but we all should have an opportunity to speak what we think and then let the chips fall where they may."

The job has been described as

ceremonial, but Champion is not letting tradition stop him from sponsoring legislation. During the second week of session, Champion sponsored a bill that protects natural hair from discrimination. It is a companion bill to that of Northside Rep. Esther Agbaje. The Crown Act passed the House on June 11. The following week, Champion introduced a bill that would make Juneteenth a state holiday.

He is also a co-sponsor of a bill that would give undocumented residents the right to apply for a driver's license. He has put forth this bill during each of the last three sessions and with Democratic control, it has its best chance of landing on the governor's desk for signing.

Moss would like to see Champion go to Washington D.C. as a representative or senator. He had announced intentions of running for the U.S. House seat vacated by Ellison in 2018, but pulled out over concerns of an ugly primary skirmish (Ilhan Omar won and just began her third term in Congress)

"He's so humble and when he had a chance to go to Congress and make a difference there, he stayed because he's concerned about his community," said Dr. Russell Pointer, the pastor of Minneapolis Central Church of Christ, who led Champion, family and friends in prayer circle just before the senator took the floor. "He's a homeboy and I appreciate the fact that he never forgets where he comes

"That's why I couldn't stay away no matter how bad the snow storm was."

Student Safety Continued from page 10

kids that pull guns on kids."

Shootings on school property have been on the rise, spiking in frequency since the infamous Columbine shooting in 1999. Since then, school shootings seem to have a permanent place in news headlines. The tragedy always seems to begin with youth having easy access to

Some school shooters get their weapons from home, either as a present or because they take them from their parents. Some guns get passed around through gang affiliations. As a consequence, guns are the leading cause of death in youth ages 1-19 in the United States. Homicide is the number one cause of death in teenagers ages 15-19.

School safety issues concerning guns have shaken our country and our

During this school year, North High staff and parents had to block off 16th Avenue because students were being intimidated by people flashing guns near school property. This led to town hall with city, school and police officials, who faced students and parents asking for help.

Students wonder where they can be safe if not at home, in school or their neighborhood

"There are other ways to deal with your problems, get money, or get support, that don't involve violence," Mariyah said. "I will never understand why people go down that path."

Farview sports program **Continued from page 16**

community tend to wander to the streets. because that's the thing to do when there's

He remembered important people in his life, all former coaches, who supported

his journey through sports and beyond. Two of which are those he is now collaborating with to build the program.

North High Athletic Director Kale Severson and football coach Charles Adams are other crucial pillars to Davis' dream. Both coached Davis when he was a kid and when Davis went to them with his idea of the program, they fully supported the opportunity.

"My goal is to bring the community back into our parks," Severson said. "Davis was the perfect choice to start this program because he is someone who's been through our system."

Although Farview North has just one team now, Severson has big plans for the future of recreational sports on the Northside.

While the Farview North builds its momentum. Davis will continue to wash cars and rally for donations to keep his program funded

"I'm ready to make a difference," Davis said. "Let's play."



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