

### IN THIS ISSUE

- KNA Information/Map** ..... 2
- Letter From the Chair**..... 3
- You Make Kenny Great (cont.)** ..... 4
- Neighborhood Update**..... 5
- Chili Cook-Off** ..... 5
- Kenny School Update**..... 6
- Historic Aerial Photos of Kenny** ..... 6
- Road Projects Coming to Kenny**..... 7
- Kenny Calendar**..... 8-9
- Salt Smart**..... 10
- Energy Efficiency Case Study** ..... 10
- Crime & Safety Update** ..... 11
- Word on the Street**..... 12
- Who’s in the ‘Hood** ..... 13
- Kenny Park News**..... 14
- Buckthorn Busting** ..... 15

**Comments, questions, ideas?**

Contact Kenny Neighborhood Association: 612-392-4477 or [info@kennyneighborhood.org](mailto:info@kennyneighborhood.org)

A publication of the Kenny Neighborhood Association. The Association is open to all Kenny residents. We meet to determine neighborhood needs and establish a sense of community.

**The mission of KNA is to foster a welcoming, thriving community that is inclusive in all that it does.**

To that end, KNA will encourage and support community involvement in the Kenny neighborhood; to stabilize and improve the residential, educational and economic status of the community; to function as a non-partisan, non-sectarian community action group keeping residents informed of proposals that affect the neighborhood; to coordinate and publicize activities in the community; to facilitate programs and projects to improve the neighborhood; and to represent the Kenny neighborhood before city boards, commissions, and other governmental entities.

## You Make Kenny Great

By Mike Ferrin

2024 has been a year to remember for the Kenny neighborhood! KNA has had some of the best turnout and participation at our events and activities throughout the year. There is no better example of this than at our annual Ice Cream Social/Green Fair. Despite some rain, we had more than 500 residents and others stop by Kenny Park to participate in the festivities.

We scooped more than 600 servings of Sebastian Joe’s ice cream that evening! There was also wonderful entertainment from the Crosstown Community Band, a balloon artist, and rescue dogs.

In its second year, the expanded Green Fair offered more than a dozen organizations sharing tremendous information on how to make your home and lifestyle more environmentally friendly.

Events like the Ice Cream Social/Green Fair are really what KNA is all about — bringing community together, having fun, providing information, and creating space for neighbors to get to know one another. It would not be possible for a small organization like us to put on an event like this without the countless number of volunteer hours, our fantastic partners, and of course fiscal donations from residents and businesses.



KNA donations are down in 2024, so as we enter the end of the year, we ask that you include us in your charitable giving. All donations to KNA are tax-deductible, and there are many ways to give: a one-time donation, sustaining donor, estate beneficiary — you can even donate to a particular cause or to general KNA operations. We cannot exist and do what we do without support from the best community in SW Minneapolis.



You can use the self-addressed envelope in this newsletter to send a check to KNA; use the QR code in this story; or go to our website at [www.kennyneighborhood.org](http://www.kennyneighborhood.org) and click on the Donate button on the home page to make an online contribution.

***Thank you for your support!***

**Kenny Neighborhood Association**

P.O. Box 19593  
Minneapolis, MN 55419  
Message Line: 612-392-4477  
email: info@kennyneighborhood.org  
www.kennyneighborhood.org

**KNA Board 2024**

**Chairperson** Barb Brady

**Vice Chair** Vacant\*

**Secretary** Scott Elton

**Treasurer** Kim Rosenfield

Kelly Barbes            Zack Kahn  
Grace Barcelow        Vicki Olson  
Amy Gustafson        John Petrie  
Chris Henjum         Shelly Ragland  
Jason Hofsess         Kim Rosenfield

\*Contact Mike Ferrin if you're interested

**KNA Coordinator:** Mike Ferrin

All KNA meetings and events are accessible. Accommodation requests are welcome. Please make requests at least 10 days in advance: 612-392-4477 or emailing: info@kennyneighborhood.org.

Meetings are held at 7 p.m. on the third Tuesday of each month and are open to all community members. We meet at Kenny Park with a hybrid Zoom option. Visit [www.kennyneighborhood.org](http://www.kennyneighborhood.org) and click on "Calendar" for Zoom meeting info or email: info@kennyneighborhood.org for the following:

- For interpreters, listening devices and/or readers.
- To place an item on the agenda or for further information.

**Newsletter Team**

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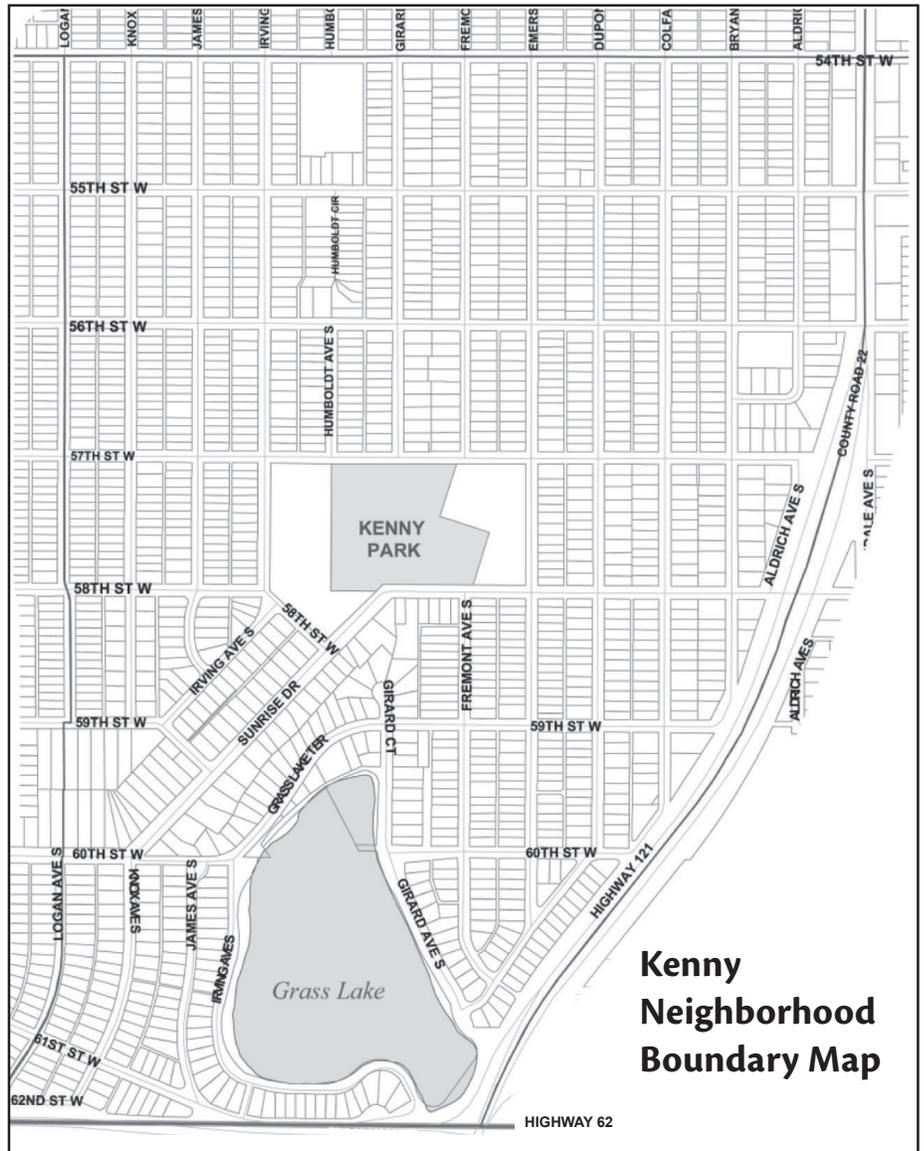
**PHOTOGRAPHY:**

Pat Hagan

Kenny Neighborhood Newsletter is published four times each year. The newsletter is sponsored by the Kenny Neighborhood Association, donations from neighbors, and support from our advertisers. To place an ad, contact Mike Ferrin at info@kennyneighborhood.org.

**KNA Board Members Needed**

For more information, call KNA: 612-392-4477 or email: info@kennyneighborhood.org.



**Kenny Neighborhood Boundary Map**

**KNA Committees & Working Groups**

**GENERAL INQUIRIES AND QUESTIONS:** info@kennyneighborhood.org.

**Communications:** Meets the second Wednesday of the month. 7 p.m. Kenny Park. Contact Amy Gustafson, amymgustafson@yahoo.com

**Community Engagement:** Meets the second Monday of the month. 7 p.m. Goal is to develop and support opportunities for all neighbors to gather. Contact Kelly Barbes, barbes11@msn.com.

**Crime and Safety:** Promotes a safe, secure, and resilient neighborhood. Contact Kim Rosenfield, rosenfield.k@gmail.com.

**Environmental:** Meets the second Monday of the month. 6 p.m. Goal is to develop and support education, learning opportunities and activities. Contact Vicki Olson, vicki.t.olson@gmail.com.

**KENNY INTEREST GROUPS:**

**Kenny Garden Club/Grass Lake Upkeep:** Contact Bridget Rau at bridgetrandyrau@gmail.com or Ann Davenport at afdavenport@gmail.com.

**Kenny School Gardens:** Contact Sarah Staab, sarah.m.staab@gmail.com.

**KORE (Kenny Organizing for Racial Equity) KORE** is a Kenny-based group whose purpose is to foster a spirit of anti-racism in the Kenny neighborhood, building a welcoming, safe and healthy community/city/state/country for all. The KORE Book Club meets monthly. Any and all are welcome. The only guiding principle is we read books by authors of color that the group collectively decides on from month to month. More info: Janet Dahlem: jldahlem@stkate.edu, website: <https://sites.google.com/view/kennykore>, or Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/KOREmpls>.



## Letter from the Chair

By Barb Brady

Kenny Neighborhood Association Chair

**Please welcome KNA Board member Kim Rosenfield as our new treasurer.**

She agreed to step up and take on the treasurer's duties beginning this fall. Thank you, Kim!

## Community building comes in many forms

KNA focuses on building a sense of community and belonging in the Kenny neighborhood, but community building reaches far beyond our borders. We work and build relationships that benefit Kenny with many government, business, faith, and neighborhood associations throughout Southwest Minneapolis.

Kenny is not an isolated neighborhood: we connect with people in other neighborhoods. We eat, shop, and use services at businesses and organizations all over Minneapolis.

As the nonprofit association representing Kenny residents, KNA works with the City Council and city departments, such as Public Works and Neighborhood and Community Relations, on issues such as funding and updating us on issues and projects.

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board and staff are amazing allies. They sponsor sports and social events that so many Kenny residents enjoy, including Earth Day, Movie in the Park, and Fire & Ice. It's a joy to see so many people using the park and facilities — it creates such a sense of community.

Kenny is a small neighborhood, so when we work with others, the load is lighter and we can accomplish more. We have limited funding, so collaboration is necessary.

We also coordinate with other neighborhoods on serious and fun issues.

- KNA was one of eight neighborhoods sponsoring a school board candidate forum in September (See sidebar for details);
- KNA and Armatage are sponsoring a holiday lights contest;
- KNA is involved in a six-neighborhood collaborative looking at ways to maximize funding opportunities and events;
- As of this writing, KNA is working to help the victims of a major October fire at 56th Street and Lyndale. The site is in Windom, across Lyndale from Kenny, so we're connecting with the

Windom Community Council, churches, and other organizations to volunteer our resources. Watch our Facebook, Instagram, and website for updates;

- We'll look at co-sponsoring events like hazardous waste drop-offs and tech dumps with other neighborhoods.

City Church is a strong partner for KNA. City Church sponsors the ice cream at our annual Ice Cream Social and will once again host our 2025 Chili Cook-Off. Annunciation Church helped with tents at the Green Fair, which was especially helpful when the rain started!

We also rely on businesses inside and outside Kenny for support, whether it's advertising in this newsletter, or providing donations and gift cards at our events.

Thanksgiving is on the horizon, so I'd like to say a special thank you to all our partners and volunteers who make our neighborhood so strong and vibrant. The KNA Board is a dedicated group of volunteers who find time out of their busy lives to work on our many projects and events that benefit all Kenny residents.

## SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATES SHARE VIEWS AT FORUM

Residents of Minneapolis Schools District 6 had the opportunity to see and hear from their candidates for school board in person, thanks to eight neighborhood associations, including Kenny, that sponsored a very successful September 23 forum.

The neighborhoods agreed to work together because public education is such a critical part of our community.

The forum is available online at <https://youtu.be/URWGm1t6SZI?feature=shared>

Kenny neighbors have spoken — through surveying and conversations over the years — that environmental initiatives are top priorities. This, in part, is how the Green Fair evolved to become a staple and a reflection of what our neighborhood values. KNA hears you, and intends to allocate resources in 2025 (and beyond) to developing programs and addressing environmental needs.

Polling over the last several months has identified the top three priorities that you all would like us to focus on:

**#1 Add to Tree Canopy.** We lost many trees in the storms this summer and we already knew

there were areas in Kenny where there are opportunities to plant more trees. See the Extreme Heat Map Tool ([arcgis.com](http://arcgis.com)) to visualize the metro heat map. Enter your address to see our neighborhood. The percentage of tree canopy in Kenny is currently between 30-40% coverage with an opportunity to add 10-20% to the tree canopy.

**#2 Develop program to reduce buckthorn around Grass Lake.**

Buckthorn is an invasive species that reduces native plants and degrades wildlife habitat and contributes to erosion by outcompeting the plants that hold the soil in place. See “New opportunity to help Grass Lake

thrive” on page 15 for more information about buckthorn and tentative plans for a new group called Friends of Grass to assist neighbors already clearing and cleaning around the lake.

**#3 Advocate for Kenny hazardous waste drop-off event.**

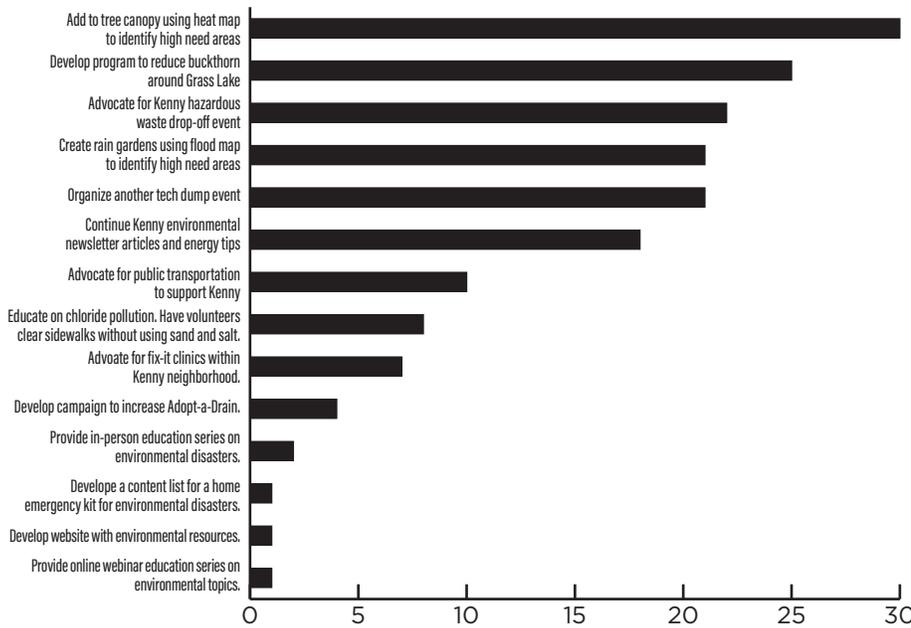
Hennepin County holds events four times a year. In 2024, these events resulted in 172,236 pounds of hazardous waste collected from 3,345 households. This included 4,588 pounds of household batteries.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to respond and help us shape the future of our organization’s priorities. KNA and our Environmental Committee will focus on what the community feels important as we head into 2025 and beyond. We are already planning programs and initiatives to implement immediately. We are coordinating with other neighborhoods around a hazardous waste event. And we’re looking to allocate funds to purchase trees this spring to give away to residents.

If you would like to be involved in planning, please contact us at [info@kennyneighborhood.org](mailto:info@kennyneighborhood.org).

Your financial support is also necessary. See page 1 for details on donating to KNA. Our residents are the ones who keep Kenny such an amazing community.

**Kenny Environmental Priorities by Neighborhood Voting**



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## Neighborhood Update

By Mike Ferrin

Kenny Neighborhood Coordinator

### Neighborhood Update

As we wind down the year, I am thankful for all the people, organizations, and businesses who contributed to such a wonderful year in Kenny! KNA added two Board members, four members to our Environmental Committee, and created a Communications Committee to roll out an improved website and overhaul our communications in general. We re-launched our Security and Safety Rebate Program — dormant for many years — to award \$250 grants to Kenny residents to improve their home safety.

We also held our first-ever Chili Cook-Off where 10 entrants wowed nearly 100 community members with their delicious recipes.

The rebate program and chili cook-off will return in 2025!

Next year promises to be even bigger and better for Kenny. As we enter our 2025 budgeting process, KNA plans to allocate new funds for environmental initiatives voted on by community members. This has always been a priority for our organization, and 2024 offered a sample of our commitment to this by expanding our Green Fair this summer with 14 organizations tabling and offering fantastic information on how to make your home and lifestyle more environmentally friendly. This was Kenny’s largest event of 2024, as we paired our annual Ice Cream Social with the Green Fair for the second year. More than 500 residents stopped by Kenny Park to enjoy the festivities.

If you have ever been interested in getting more involved with your community, consider volunteering with KNA! Our Board of Directors is responsible for governing the organization and we currently have openings. If you have a particular interest, joining a committee might be right for you.

- The Community Engagement Committee plans all KNA events.
- Our Environmental Committee focuses on the sustainability of life in our community.
- The Communications Committee looks at all KNA communications, including our website and social media.
- The Crime and Safety Committee addresses neighborhood safety and security issues.

And of course, we can always use help at the many events we host throughout the year, so please reach out to us at [info@kennyneighborhood.org](mailto:info@kennyneighborhood.org) if you would like to be more involved in 2025!

**Neighborhood Update** continued on page 11



### Chili Cook-Off is back

**Saturday, February 1, 2025**

**City Church, 1501 W 54th St.**

Mark your calendars! After an incredibly successful inaugural event this year, the Kenny Neighborhood Chili Cook-Off will return in 2025!

Do you make the best chili in Southwest Minneapolis? Want to test out that recipe before your Super Bowl party? Join us for another chili cook-off!

Last year, nearly 100 residents stopped by to try 10 delicious chili recipes. Do you have what it takes to participate this year? The winner will receive the highly sought-after 2025 KNA Chili Cook-Off Trophy, gift card from a local business, and bragging rights. Registration link will be posted on our website as we get closer to the event.



2024 winner Devette Evans:

***"I am so thankful and greatly appreciate being part of the Chili Cook-Off. I had a wonderful time and met some really nice people."***

## Historic Aerial Photos of Kenny

The University of Minnesota Libraries has completed digitization of more than 4,500 historical aerial photos of Minneapolis, as part of a collaborative effort with the City of Minneapolis and the Minnesota Historical Society. All of the large-scale, detailed aerial photos, dating back to 1938, are freely available for viewing by the public.

<https://apps.lib.umn.edu/mhapo/>



*These two photos show the changes from gravel pit to Kenny Park and Kenny School*

## Hello Kenny Neighborhood

By **Jessica Busse,**  
**Kenny Elementary School principal**

I am so honored and excited to be leading the gem in the middle of your neighborhood — Kenny Elementary School. While I am not a stranger to Kenny, the welcome and start of the year have made me even more proud to be part of so many Kenny kids' educational journeys.

Schools bring families and communities together, and the energy from the neighborhood contributes to the passion of the school community. Thank you so much for the support from the Kenny Neighborhood Association and the ongoing collaboration with our neighborhood partners. We strive to be good neighbors and work to instill that in each student.

Kenny is host to lots of fun activities and events throughout the year, and we would love to invite our neighbors to visit. Please check out our website at <https://kenny.mpschools.org>, Facebook, X (formerly called Twitter), and YouTube for more information.

If you are interested in supporting the school in additional ways, please reach out to our front office (612)668-3340 or [kennyvolunteers@gmail.com](mailto:kennyvolunteers@gmail.com). The Kenny Parent Foundation is a huge benefit and asset to our school by supporting the success of our students. Take a look at all of the great things that they do for us at Kenny at [thekpf.org](http://thekpf.org).

(For more information about Principal Busse, check out 'Who's in the 'Hood' on page 13)



**Get your happy on at your favorite neighborhood liquor store, market, deli & wine bar!**



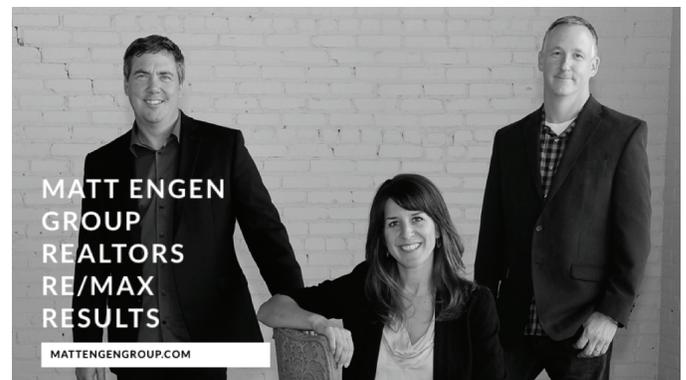
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# Road Projects Coming to Kenny

Kenny residents will see two road projects in 2025:

## Highway 121/County Road 22

The Minnesota Department of Transportation is planning to resurface and reduce the number of lanes on Highway 121/County Road 22 from 56th Street to Highway 62. (The segment from 35W to 58th Street is State Highway 121; and the section from 58th Street to 56th Street is County Road 22.)

The state will remove the inside lanes in each direction, making it a two-way road, and improve the intersection at 58th Street. The median will not change.

According to MnDOT Communications and Engagement Coordinator Jesse Johnson, the project is not a major reconstruction.

“We’re resurfacing, eliminating lanes, replacing the signals at 58th Street, and improving accessibility there.”

The low volume of traffic on the road means four lanes are not needed, according to Johnson.

“You can expect lane closures on 58th Street and Highway 121,” he says. “The biggest impact is on northbound Highway 121.”

MnDOT crews will close northbound Highway 121 from Highway 62 to 58th Street. Traffic will be detoured during

this closure.

MnDOT will also make minor changes at the concrete island — shaped like a “pork chop” — where drivers enter westbound Highway 62 from Highway 121. Johnson says the plan is to make that exit less confusing and safer for drivers.

The road work will start next spring and continue into the fall. KNA and MnDOT will keep you updated.

## Residential street resurfacing

The city is planning to resurface several streets in the Kenny and Armatage neighborhoods next year. The affected Kenny streets include Logan, Knox, James, and Irving avenues from Highway 62 to 58th Street, as well as the cross streets, not including 60th Street.

The project is part of the Minneapolis Resurfacing Program, which involves replacing the top portion of the asphalt road to extend a street’s life and prevent costly reconstruction.

The city will keep affected residents informed through informational meetings and mailings next

spring, according to Public Works Engineer Ryan Gottsleben.

Homeowners will pay assessments for the work. The 2025 assessment rate is \$0.25 per square foot for residential properties. For a standard 5,000 square foot lot, the total assessment is \$1,250.

“Resurfacing work usually begins in early summer and finishes in November,” Gottsleben says. “A given project will usually take several weeks to complete within this time period.”

If you have questions, please contact Gottsleben at Ryan. Gottsleben@minneapolismn.gov.



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## Get rid of Winter Blues!

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

# JANUARY

Fire & Ice / January 25



# FEBRUARY

Chili Cook-Off / February 1



# MAY

- Board Meet & Greet
- Annual Meeting



# JULY



# SEPTEMBER

New Neighbor & Renter Event



# OCTOBER



Here's a year of ev

# KENNY

# NEIGHBORHOOD

Clip and save this calen

Check [www.kennyneighborhood.org](http://www.kennyneighborhood.org)

# MARCH



# APRIL

- Earth Day Cleanup
- Arbor Day Celebration



# JUNE

Ice Cream Social & Green Fair  
June 26



# AUGUST

Movie in the Park



# NOVEMBER



# DECEMBER

Holiday Lights



ents!



OD

dar!

## BOARD & COMMITTEE MEETING INFORMATION

Board Meeting:  
3rd Tuesday 7 p.m.

Environmental  
Committee:  
2nd Monday 6 p.m.

Community Engagement  
Committee:  
2nd Monday 7 p.m.

Communications  
Committee:  
2nd Wednesday 7 p.m.

[kennyneighborhood.org](http://kennyneighborhood.org)

orhood.org for more info.

# Be a good neighbor this winter: **SALT SMART!**

By Grace Barcelow, KNA Environmental Committee

Did you know that one teaspoon of salt pollutes five gallons of water FOREVER? When de-icing salt (a.k.a. chloride) enters bodies of water, there is no easy way to remove it. Salt applied to driveways and sidewalks during the winter season is one of the top contributing sources to chloride pollution in our lakes, rivers and streams.

Salt use has been on the rise since the 1950s, leading to waters becoming increasingly salty. Chloride levels have become so high that many creeks and lakes are now considered unhealthy and have been added to Minnesota's impaired waters list for chloride pollution.

Too much salt can lead to costly damages and environmental consequences! Chloride harms plants and animals, contaminates drinking water, damages buildings, and corrodes vehicles, roads and bridges.

We all want to prioritize safety, but it is critical to understand that more salt does not always mean less ice or safer conditions.

Luckily, there are actions we can take to help improve water quality and keep our neighbors safe this winter.

## **How to manage snow and ice this winter:**

1. Shovel as soon as possible after a snowstorm to prevent ice buildup;
2. Add an ice scraper to your toolbox. These are often more effective than salt when ice has built up on sidewalks and driveways;
3. Read the label on your de-icer to make sure it will work in the current weather conditions. At low temperatures, typically colder than 15 degrees F, regular road salt will not melt ice;
4. Use sand or grit for traction when temperatures are too cold for salt to work;
5. Use salt sparingly. Try to scatter salt grains three inches apart. This will melt ice faster than salt that is too close together.

For more information, and any questions please contact KNA Board Member and Hennepin County Conservation Specialist, Grace Barcelow, at [grace.barcelow@hennepin.us](mailto:grace.barcelow@hennepin.us).

## **Energy Efficiency Case Study**

By Steve Caster, KNA Environmental Committee

We are lucky to live in Kenny where the houses are old, well-constructed, and have nice architectural features. These homes, built between 1920 and the early 1950s, often don't meet today's requirements for energy efficiency, however.



We had an energy audit performed by Xcel Energy and found that we needed to insulate three areas — the rim joists in our basement and crawl space, the attic, and our walls. Our attic had only six inches of insulation, while the exterior walls had just one inch of insulation in a 3.5-inch space. After the audit, we insulated the attic to 40 inches and the

wall cavities to 3.5 inches, greatly reducing air flow.

The City of Minneapolis and CenterPoint Energy will reimburse insulation costs up to the actual cost in some cases, making this a very cost-effective home project. The wall insulation can also be blown in from the outside so interior walls are not damaged.

We experienced air flow reductions, as measured by a blower door test, of 30% through the insulation process alone. We've noticed cooling savings this summer as well, and while I can't say I'm looking forward to winter and cold weather, we are expecting much lower heating bills as well.

### **Smaller projects you can do:**

- Use LED bulbs in your lights;
- Use a smart thermostat to control heating and cooling;
- Change your furnace filter regularly;
- Caulk around windows and doors to seal gaps to reduce air flow;
- Use weather stripping to seal doors and windows where air might be leaking;
- Install foam seals on your light switches and outlets on exterior-facing walls (hardware stores sell the seals already cut to size).

These smaller projects are easy, do-it-yourself projects and will make your house more energy efficient and comfortable.

## Public safety resources are at your fingertips

By Kim Rosenfield, KNA Crime and Safety Committee

As the seasons change, the KNA Crime and Safety Committee wants to remind our neighbors that the city offers a wide array of resources to keep you, your loved ones, and your community safe this winter. Do you:

- **Need to report a broken streetlight?** See a neighborhood safety issue that is not an emergency? Call 311 for a variety of issues, from reporting graffiti or long grass, to finding out where to vote, to reporting a stray dog, and a whole lot more, 311 agents are ready to help. Call weekdays from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. and a 311 agent will assist you!
- **Need to request an accident or police record?** The city gives you easy access to accident reports through their Open City Portal on the Office of the City Clerk page at [www.minneapolismn.gov/resident-services/public-safety/police-public-safety/police-reports-and-data-requests/accident-reports/accident-report-request-form/](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/resident-services/public-safety/police-public-safety/police-reports-and-data-requests/accident-reports/accident-report-request-form/).
- **Want to check how safe the neighborhood is?** The City of Minneapolis runs a Crime Map Dashboard with up-to-date, accurate data on the state of public safety in our area at [www.minneapolismn.gov/resident-services/public-safety/police-public-safety/crime-maps-dashboards/crime-locations-map](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/resident-services/public-safety/police-public-safety/crime-maps-dashboards/crime-locations-map).
- **Want to learn more about what the city is doing to prevent crime in our area?** The 5th Precinct has a dedicated Crime Prevention Specialist. Contact Faith Randel at [Faith.Randal@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:Faith.Randal@minneapolismn.gov) for current trends and prevention tips and resources

## KNA Security Rebates will continue in 2025

Since the beginning of 2024, the Kenny Neighborhood Association has awarded 12 security rebates of an estimated \$3000 to Kenny neighbors. These rebates go to help fund home security projects like installing security lights, installing deadbolts, and purchasing home security alarms.

The KNA board awards four rebates to applicants every quarter. All residential properties in the Kenny neighborhood, including renters and homeowners, are eligible to apply for a one-time security rebate of \$250.

Interested in applying? Visit the KNA website at [www.kennyneighborhood.org](http://www.kennyneighborhood.org) to learn more!

Neighborhood Update continued from page 5

## Holiday Lights are Back

KNA is once again teaming up with the Armatage Neighborhood Association for a holiday lights decoration tour! Enjoy the sights and sounds of both neighborhoods as you embark on this self-guided tour. It's perfect for all ages and will run from 5-8 p.m. every night from December 9 to December 18.

If you plan to decorate for the holiday season, register using this QR code.

Register by December 6 to be included in this year's tour map. Tour maps (both PDF and Google Map) will be posted on the neighborhood websites before the tour starts.

Visitors will then vote for their favorites and the top vote-getters will receive gift cards.

Visitors are asked to be respectful of neighbors during their adventures and minimize the time cars idle if you drive.



## Fire & Ice Skating Party

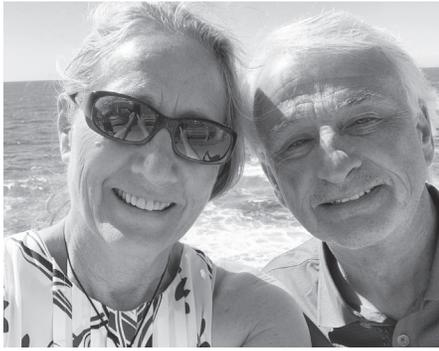
Join us for the annual Fire & Ice Skating Party on January 25! The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board hosts the event, and KNA serves popcorn and hot chocolate.

Enjoy a night with your family, friends, and neighbors skating at Kenny Park or keeping warm around the bonfire.

This free event is open to all and no registration is needed.

## Donate to Kenny today!





## Word on the Street

Pat and Brenda asked:

*What are your plans for the fall season?*



### Tully, Marie, and Poppy Jordan

Our family is enjoying Kenny Park and looking at all the Halloween decorations in our neighborhood.



### Jason and Poppy Hofsess with Leni

We're looking at Halloween decorations in the neighborhood. It's especially fun to see the newer decorations for the great holidays. We enjoy walking Leni around the neighborhood.



### Tony and Sarah Meysenberg

We are walking in nice weather and enjoying fall colors. We bike around Kenny, and will buy pumpkins to make jack-o'-lanterns. And voting!



### Jalisa, Zoey and DeAnne

We love playing soccer in the neighborhood, walking and taking hikes with our dog, hiking at Wood Lake, and visiting the Minnesota Zoo pumpkin wall.

# Who's in the 'Hood

By Jasmine Avent

Kenny Community School has a familiar face in the principal's office this year. **Meet Dr. Jessica Busse, principal of Kenny Community School.** It's a homecoming for Busse: she previously worked at the school and is fondly remembered by students, staff, and parents.

Since taking over in August, Principal Busse has hit the ground running.

"The first month was about learning everything that I could possibly learn about Kenny: about the kids, about the test scores, about the school. Talking to every staff member about what they liked, what they didn't like, concerns... and getting to know them as individuals too," she says.

She found that Kenny is a high-performing school with a solid infrastructure, but Dr. Busse is daring to go further.

"We started diving in deeper," she says. "Where are we not succeeding? One of the areas, which is true across the nation and in Minnesota - we have a huge achievement gap here. So, we started looking at our students of color, looking at their test scores and proficiency rates compared to our White students, and asking why? We were intentional about naming that as a school improvement goal. We are making it a focus of all conversations."

Her approach to closing that achievement gap is multi-directional. "It's different for every kid. Overall, I would say it's about belief. Sometimes it's about the child believing that they can. Sometimes it's about the adults believing that they



can. Where are our hearts? So much of learning is about heart," she says. For Principal Busse, the journey to improvement for families of color at Kenny starts with an acknowledgement of an exclusionary past, and a commitment to change. She believes it is a journey that needs to include parents and caregivers.

"Having the parents realize that they're part of the team is so important," she says. "Some of that is historical. How do we start and find avenues to create positive thoughts about education?"

Principal Busse says community building among staff, students, and the school community will lead the way. "You have to go slow to go fast. That's building relationships. That's taking the time to just be human with people. It's important that I'm in the garden every afternoon, even if nobody talks to me," she says. "It's important that they see my face every day after school, that I make it into classrooms every day."

She shares her life with her husband of eight years, Arthur, and two boys, Killian (7) and Everett (5).

With any big responsibility comes some amount of pressure. Busse says that some of the pressure she experiences involves the fear around school transformation and what that may look like for Kenny Community School. She is optimistic about the new Fours daycare program for four- and five-year-olds that operates inside the school.

"I look at schools as a community hub. Girl Scouts are meeting here; we have night programs. We should be the hub of all activity in the neighborhood," she says.

Dr. Busse comes to us from Southwest High School, where she was an assistant principal. She intends to draw from that experience at Kenny.

Principal Busse is excited to merge her passion for education with the love and pride that already shines in the Kenny neighborhood. She believes that fun is part of the equation for the success of any school.

"The people who are leading have to have fun," she says. "If they aren't having fun, then the kids aren't going to have fun. If the kids aren't having fun, then the parents aren't going to have fun. It is so awesome to be at Kenny. You can't really beat Kenny School."

If you see Dr. Busse in the Kenny Garden or hanging around, be sure to say hello!

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## NOMINATE A NEIGHBOR!

If you have a wonderful neighbor, please let us know.

[info@kennyneighborhood.org](mailto:info@kennyneighborhood.org)  
or call: 612-392-4477



# Kenny Park News

By Brian Hall

Recreation Supervisor at Armatage/Kenny

## Kenny Park Recreation Center

1328 W. 58th St.,  
Minneapolis, MN 55419  
612-370-4901

### RECREATION SUPERVISOR

Brian Hall  
Office 612-370-4785  
bhall@minneapolisparcs.org

### SCHOOL BUILDING HOURS

Monday-Friday 3-9 p.m. and  
Saturday Noon-5 p.m.

### SCHOOL RELEASE DAYS HOURS

Monday-Friday Noon-9 p.m.

### Welcome to fall, neighbors!

We are well into school year and fall program activities. Kenny Park is popular with many neighbors, and it is great to see people out and about walking and using the playgrounds and ball fields.

### Fall Sports

We had 575 kids participating in soccer, flag football, and volleyball this year. Volleyball started practice October 14 with games in late October through mid-March. We had 103 volunteer coaches, and we are very thankful for them, as teams would not exist without them.

We still need volleyball coaches as of mid-October. A 15u girls' team may not happen because there's no coach. We also only have one coach per team for the other three teams we have. If interested, please contact [kenny@minneapolisparcs.org](mailto:kenny@minneapolisparcs.org) for more information or details about coaching any sport.

### 2025 Winter Programming

**New in 2025: Gentle Adult Yoga** at Kenny Park on Wednesdays at 7 p.m. and Saturdays at 10 a.m. Our yoga instructor Liane Olson has started this program from scratch and it's becoming very popular.

We do need more little kiddos for our **Preschool Kids program** with our longstanding program with Ann Horn. It's for preschool students ages 3 to 5 who are potty trained. If your child is about to turn three, you can still join in. Contact us at Kenny Park for more information. The program runs Monday-Thursday from 9 a.m. to noon. We are flexible with monthly payments.

We hope winter will be gentle yet cold enough to keep our **ice rink** open. We were only open four days last year with safe ice conditions for skating. The Fire and Ice event turned into Fire and No Ice last year. The goal is to flood the field and be ready for winter school break and run through Presidents' Day in February. Donations of ice skates are encouraged, as we have a limited supply available.



You can register for skating lessons at Armatage, but we could also start a program at Kenny if we have instructors. Like any program, we need good folks to run them.

People can rent the Multi-Use Room at Kenny Park for events, gatherings, or birthday parties if you don't want to get your house dirty. Contact us at [kenny@minneapolisparcs.org](mailto:kenny@minneapolisparcs.org) for availability.

Thank you so much for reading this and I hope you enjoy the park. If you have any ideas for programming, please reach out to us at [kenny@minneapolisparcs.org](mailto:kenny@minneapolisparcs.org) or call us at 612.370.4901.

## Find the Kenny Neighborhood on Facebook and Instagram!

Find and follow us to keep updated on all things Kenny. You can also reshare content and help us reach even more neighbors. We're also looking for volunteers from the neighborhood who can share photos from around Kenny while they're out for a walk, at park activities and more.

**EMAIL US AT [info@kennyneighborhood.org](mailto:info@kennyneighborhood.org) or sign up at [bit.ly/knavolunteers](https://bit.ly/knavolunteers)**



# New opportunity to help Grass Lake thrive

By Steve Paquin

Grass Lake is a hidden gem in the Kenny neighborhood, cherished by dog walkers, bird watchers, cross-country skiers, and exercise enthusiasts alike. While the land around the lake falls under the purview of the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board and its Forestry Department, the resources of those organizations are stretched thin. As a result, much routine maintenance of the Grass Lake paths and plants is coordinated by Kenny residents who live near the lake. (Most notably, Paul and Kathrynne Baumtrog have been tireless in their efforts to keep the southeastern paths in excellent condition. Thank you!)

KNA is looking into creating a program to assist Grass Lake neighbors on an organizational level. Tentatively called Friends of Grass Lake, KNA will ask neighbors how we can provide resources and people to lighten their load not only on buckthorn removal, but also important projects such as trail maintenance, installation and maintenance of wood duck houses, trash pickup, native plantings, and any other needs identified by the group.

## Join the Fight Against Buckthorn

Neighbors are planning a November 9 “buckthorn bust.” All Kenny neighbors are invited to volunteer at this or other “busts” coming up. Watch Nextdoor and KNA’s Facebook and Instagram pages for details.

You may have read about the invasive menace of buckthorn in previous issues of this newsletter. Once sold by nurseries as a decorative hedge, buckthorn has been on the Minnesota Department of Agriculture’s “Restricted Noxious Weed List” since 2001. Unfortunately, it is choking off much of the plant diversity around Grass Lake. Thriving in almost any condition — from shade to full sun, drought to poor soil — buckthorn creates a dense underlayer beneath trees, smothering native plants by depriving them of light, moisture, and nutrients. Buckthorn is easy to spot in late fall because it has purple-black berries and remains green long after other plants have changed color and dropped their leaves.

Buckthorn infestation is widespread throughout the city, and the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board encourages residents to manage the plant through volunteer-coordinated buckthorn busts.



Removing buckthorn is not a one-time solution: it requires ongoing effort. The plant is well established, tough, and persistent; so only consistent action will allow us to restore the native biodiversity of Grass Lake. Please consider spending an afternoon with us to help control this invasive threat.

Can’t make it to a buckthorn bust? No problem: you’ll have plenty of opportunities to volunteer. Upcoming projects include refurbishing wood duck houses over the winter. KNA is excited to support neighbors to care for this beautiful urban wetland. Together, we can make a lasting difference.

# KENNY

## NEIGHBORHOOD

Kenny Neighborhood Association

P.O. Box 19593  
 Minneapolis, MN 55419  
 Message Line: 612-392-4477  
 info@kennyneighborhood.org  
 www.kennyneighborhood.org

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612-824-5620

## Jeff Machacek, CRS

612-925-8277

jmachacek@cbburnet.com

Selling homes in the Kenny neighborhood  
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 Over 1,200 homes sold!