



One Way Kenny Residents Can Help the Ukrainian People

BY STEVE PAQUIN

Spring 2022 Newsletter
Comments, questions, ideas?
Call Kenny Neighborhood
Association at 612-392-4477

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Stephen Vitvitsky was not surprised when Vladimir Putin ordered a full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022. While most of his Kenny neighbors were stunned at the magnitude of the assault, thinking “What is Putin’s end game?” and “How does he think he can get away with this?” Stephen understood it as the next salvo, a continuation of centuries of Russian imperialism. As a second-generation Ukrainian American who is deeply linked to his heritage and closely involved in the Minnesota Ukrainian community, Stephen understood that he needed to take action to fight back and help preserve his homeland and culture.

So he and his family set about raising funds and awareness to help repel the Russian offensive and rebuild Ukraine’s battered cities and countryside. That involves work through a local Ukrainian American organization, organizing events, engaging local media and fundraising, which includes the sale of yard signs and buttons to their Southwest Minneapolis neighbors.

Donations and Civic Engagement are Critical

Stephen and his family are working with the Minnesota Ukrainian-American community crisis response team. In the early days of the war, the organization built a website, www.standwithukrainemn.com, to serve as a resource hub for fellow Minnesotans who want to know how they can help Ukraine. It’s focused on two primary initiatives - fundraising and civic engagement.

Fundraising through the website supports medical aid and humanitarian aid, including protective gear and communications equipment for Ukrainian first responders, and even sourcing ambulances to evacuate the wounded from front lines and besieged cities. “Unfortunately, it’s a reminder of the brutality of the war that one of the most urgent needs we continue to try to fulfill is tourniquets,” Stephen explains. “In the future we’ll integrate more refugee assistance provisions but the most urgent and critical needs are still in the areas of active fighting. There’s a page on the website that details how funds have been apportioned - our goal is to be fully transparent so that folks can see how donations are being used. We are volunteer-run so 100% of donations and proceeds go directly to Ukrainians in need.” (Note: Stand with Ukraine MN is sponsored fiscally by the Ukrainian American Community Center in NE Minneapolis, which is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit so contributions are tax deductible.)

Stephen believes that “besides donating, the number one thing Minnesotans can do to help Ukraine today would be call your U.S. representative, our two senators, and the White House to ask them to give Ukraine the support they



Stephen’s family joins him in fundraising at Settergrens.

Cover Story continues on page 4.

KENNY NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

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

KNA BOARD 2021-2022

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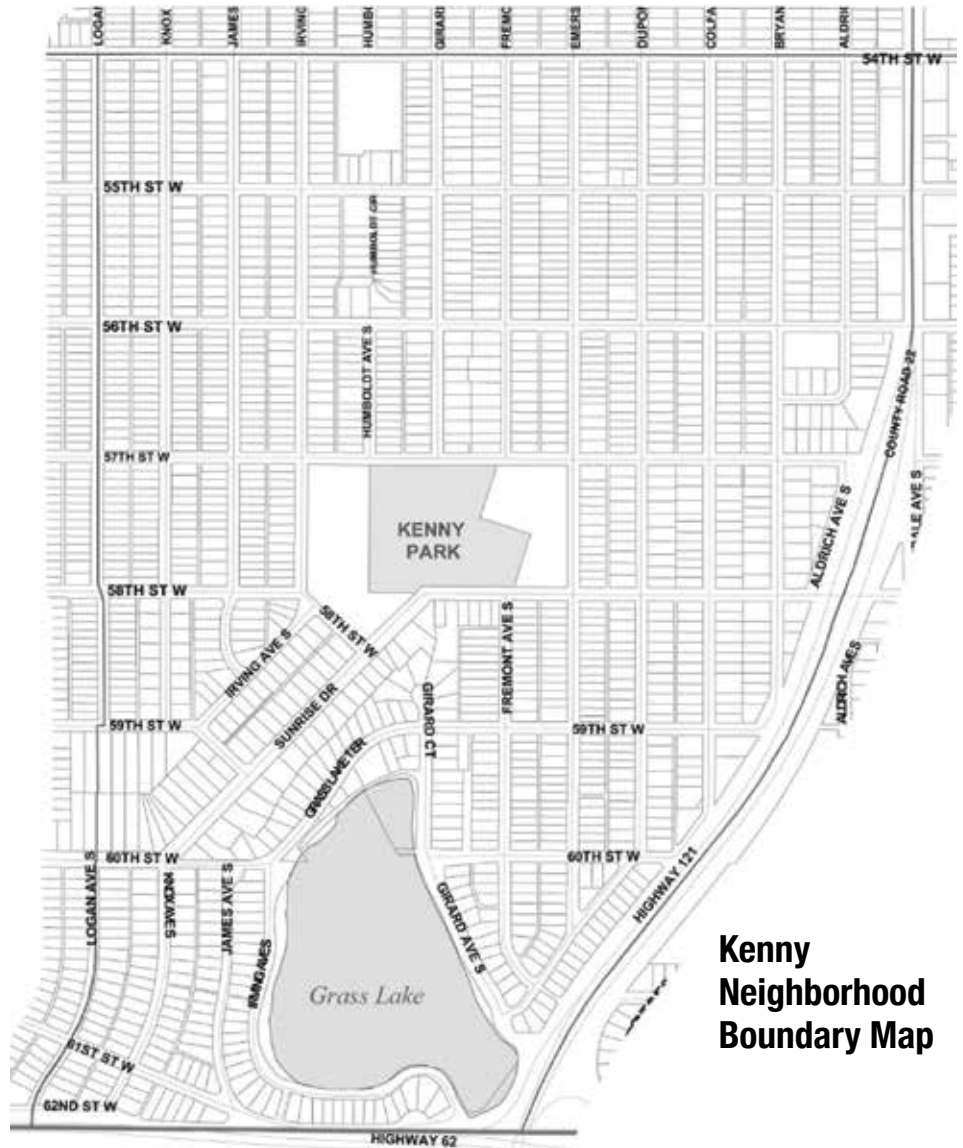
KNA Coordinator

Lauren Anderson

All KNA meetings and events are accessible. Requests for accommodations are welcome. Please make requests at least 10 days in advance by calling 612-392-4477 or writing to info@kennyneighborhood.org.

Meetings are held at 7 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month. During the pandemic, meetings are held virtually. Contact us at : info@kennyneighborhood.org for the meeting link:

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



Kenny Neighborhood Boundary Map

Newsletter Team

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To place an ad, please call Lauren Anderson at 612-392-4477.



Letter from the Chair

By Carol Martinson
Kenny Neighborhood Association Chairperson

Spring – What a Lovely Concept

I am hoping that by the time this news-letter graces your mailbox we will have spring weather to enjoy! It seems that the cool and windy weather just has not wanted to let go. Or maybe it is just my lack of patience and wanting to return to ‘normal.’

But there is hope: we have new and regular events scheduled for the upcoming months and have had wonderful responses from our survey that will help guide KNA into the future. Thank you!

One of the more intriguing survey suggestions coming from one of our neighbors is the idea of a statue of Sister Elizabeth Kenny, who is our neighborhood park’s namesake. I love this idea! But also know that it will take fundraising and maneuvering through park and city regulations to accomplish it. If you are interested in this idea, please let us know.

Other KNA news

We now have a Diversity and Inclusion Board Member position description and selection to guide this work. Board member Chris Henjum has accepted this role. See the sidebar for the full description of this role. As always, input and assistance on this and other initiatives are welcome.

KNA Staff Coordinator Lauren Anderson has decided to step down from this role due to family medical issues. My most sincere thanks to Lauren for the work she has done these last several months. She will help with transition until we are able to find a candidate to fill the position. If you are interested, please reach out via email at info@kennyneighborhood.org or call 612-392-4477.

Volunteer opportunities abound

- Event planning and participation – new ideas are welcome, and volunteers to support events are always needed.
- Environmental Working Group
- Crime & Safety Working Group
- Community Building and Engagement

• Block Leaders

Information on meeting dates and times are on KNA’s website at kennyneighborhood.org or by phone at 612-392-4477.

Have a wonderful spring and summer! I’m looking forward to seeing you around the ‘hood.’

Kenny Neighborhood Association Diversity and Inclusion Board Member

Diversity and Inclusion Board Member (D&I Board Member): Helps ensure that programming and decision-making are inclusive and holistic, that events and other programming include diverse speakers, and that the Kenny Neighborhood Association (KNA) regularly collaborates, communicates, and partners with diverse groups.

gender, physical abilities, sexual orientation, gender identity/ expression, socio-economic status, religious/spiritual values, and national origin.

- The D&I Board Member will proactively reach out and include a broad array of the residents from the aforementioned groups in decision-making whenever possible.

Diversity-Friendly Practices

Some of the suggestions below may seem obvious or commonplace, but taken together and done with conscious intention, they can make our neighborhood and KNA more welcoming for all. The D&I Board Member is responsible for:

Considering Diversity in Events

- The position will be deliberate about discussing event subjects that hold appeal for a diverse audience. The position will strive for diversity among those speaking at neighborhood events and meetings.

Inclusion Wherever Possible

- What inclusion means: Understanding and valuing the characteristics and beliefs of people from a wide range of communities and encouraging their participation. These communities include but are not limited to people of different ethnic and racial backgrounds,

Encouraging Recruiting and Engagement

- This position will take the time to focus on residents who are interested in the neighborhood and its future, who are from diverse backgrounds or under-represented populations.

Cover Story continued from page 1.

have been asking for so they can defend themselves from the Russian assault.”

Stephen understands that a distributed system of government, large non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and smaller community groups can create a support network to help Ukrainians survive and repel the months-old invasion. “Obviously we can’t provide weapons, but the mid-size and small-size activations are additive. By working directly with Ukrainian activists and small community support groups, we can help deliver targeted aid exactly where it’s needed, quickly. Government has its role, NGO’s have theirs, and so do individuals who contribute and fundraise to support Ukrainian people and community groups directly.”

It’s a Family Affair

In addition to promoting the efforts of Stand with Ukraine MN, Stephen enlisted the assistance of his wife and

“People are now seeing Ukraine for what it is,” Stephen says. “Courageous, compassionate and free. They’re giving us all a master class in what it means to fight for freedom and be an active democracy in the truest sense.”

two young children to raise funds in Southwest Minneapolis. They are selling fundraising yard signs and buttons door-to-door, and recently set up a table generously provided outside Settergren Hardware for greater visibility and efficiency. They also hope to sell signs and buttons at other local business and farmers’ markets as the war effort will undoubtedly be a long one. “It’s an opportunity for the kids to be engaged in something that’s important and urgent, and it’s part of our family’s heritage.

It’s a good example for them of the importance of civic engagement in a way that’s relevant to our family.”

If you’d like to buy a \$5 Stand with Ukraine MN button, or a yard sign for a donation of \$20 or more, please contact Stephen directly at stephen@standwithukrainemn.com. All proceeds go directly to helping Ukraine.

Stephen is acutely aware that his 7-year-old son Danilo is at an age where he is curious about the horrors occurring in Ukraine, but as parents, the Vitvitskys are cautious about his level of exposure.

“We don’t want the kids watching coverage of the war on TV because we don’t want them seeing the imagery of Russia’s brutality,” Stephen explains. “But we do talk openly with them about the fact that innocent civilians are being bombed and shot, and that people including children are being killed. Danilo is definitely aware of the severity of the situation. I think it’s important to help him understand because it’s happening now, and it’s an attempt to destroy our culture and our people.”

It’s clear that for the Vitvitsky family, the horrors of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine are more personal than simple revulsion at the actions of a dominant Russian military trying to overwhelm its less-powerful neighbor. The family, like many Ukrainians, has a long history with Russian hegemony. Stephen’s four grandparents were born and raised in Western Ukraine, which during

Cover Story continues on page 6.





Neighborhood Update

By Lauren Anderson
Kenny Neighborhood Coordinator

Get Ready for Neighborhood Events

The KNA has three great Spring and Summer events coming up!
Learn more below and join us for fun evenings for everyone.

New Neighbor & Renter Gathering Thursday, May 26, 6-7:30 p.m.

Meet Kenny renters and new(ish) neighbors at Kenny Park! Hosted by the KNA Board, this is a great way to get more connected in our community. If you rent or have moved to the neighborhood in the last three years, you're encouraged to come meet one another, eat some food, and get to know the Kenny Neighborhood Association. To make sure we have enough food, please RSVP by emailing us at info@kennyneighborhood.org or calling (612) 392-4477.

Why just for new neighbors and renters? COVID-19 has made it more challenging for those who are new to the neighborhood to get to know one another and make connections. This year, we're also focused on reaching our neighbors who rent. We hope you stop by!

Ice Cream Social Thursday, June 23, 6:30-8 p.m.

Come to Kenny Park for the annual Ice Cream Social! Enjoy free Sebastian Joe's ice cream and a fabulous concert from the Crosstown Community Band. Several flavors plus a GF/DF option will be provided. Many thanks to City Church for their sponsorship of this event. As always, they are a fantastic community partner in the neighborhood.

In case of rain, we'll share messages at www.kennyneighborhood.org and on social media the day of the event. We hope you can make it to one of our favorite events of the year!

Kenny Festival Thursday, July 21, 6-8 p.m.

Come to Kenny Park for our annual mid-summer get-together! Grab pizza

from Red Wagon, which will be on site during the event, and then swing by the KNA table for a free sweet treat. Sir Sydney Soapington, the Baron of Bubble; and Lady Rainbow of Balloon will be back this year to delight neighbors with artistic bubbles and special balloon creations. Enjoy music, tables, and activities in the park to celebrate summer and this wonderful neighborhood.

Did you know Minneapolis streetcars came all the way to 56th and Bryant? We didn't either!

Kenny neighbor Megan O'Reilly has some serious skills when it comes to combing through our local historical online archives. HUGE thanks to Megan for reaching out to the KNA and sharing the following fantastic photos and captions of our own Kenny streetcar!

Streetcar coming down the 5500 block of Bryant Avenue (1948). Photo provided by Minnesota Digital Library.

Streetcar continues on page 6.



Cover Story continued from page 4.

World War II was ceded to the Soviets along with the division of Poland, then overrun by Nazi Germany before being reoccupied by the Soviets as they drove the Germans back, overtaking all of Ukraine.

Stephen's grandfather fought in the Ukrainian insurgency against both the Germans and the Soviets, but eventually all of Stephen's grandparents fled West and wound up in displaced-persons camps in Austria. His dad's parents made it to the U.S. not long thereafter, but his mom's parents had to spend a few years in Venezuela before being allowed to enter the U.S. They all settled in the Detroit community of Hamtramck when his parents were small children. Later to become high school sweethearts, they relocated to New York City for college and settled across the river in New Jersey.

Despite the fact that his parents grew up in America, Stephen was raised in a home that placed a strong emphasis on its Ukrainian heritage. "My parents and grandparents only spoke Ukrainian to me and to my brother," Stephen remembers. "I learned English in pre-school, and all the way until I graduated from high school I received extra education on Saturdays about Ukrainian history, culture and language."

"A clear and full understanding of Ukraine and its predicaments have been a challenge to explain to people for much of my life," Stephen says, "but it's become less so following Russia's most-recent invasion and subsequent genocidal campaign against Ukrainians. The need to pass on and to preserve our Ukrainian culture in the face of attempts to wipe it out are now self-evident for most folks."

For this reason, Stephen speaks regularly to his kids in Ukrainian, and while they are still learning to speak fluently themselves, they understand what he's saying.

"When we are selling yard signs, Danilo understands it's not just something his

dad told him to do, it's his chance to contribute to preserving his heritage. Freedom isn't free, and Ukrainians have lived this adage for centuries. People are now seeing Ukraine for what it is," Stephen says. "Courageous, compassionate and free. They're giving us all a master class in what it means to fight for freedom and be an active democracy in the truest sense."

Look for Stephen Vitvitsky and his family selling buttons and signs at local stores and farmers' markets, and visit www.standwithukrainemn.com and donate if you are able. Stephen would like to extend thanks to Settergren Hardware and to his Kenny neighbors for their ongoing generosity.

If you'd like to buy a \$5 Stand with Ukraine MN button, or a yard sign for a donation of \$20 or more, please contact Stephen directly at stephen@standwithukrainemn.com. All proceeds go directly to helping Ukraine.



Streetcar continued from page 5.



A hay wagon and the Bryant Avenue streetcar meet on the corner of 56th. Published December 27, 1942. Provided by Hennepin County Library.



Bryant Avenue streetcar at the 56th Street stop (1950 - 1953). Photo provided by Minnesota Digital Library.

Love to look at old photos? Check these resources out:
<http://kna.link/1d>

The Next Step for Kenny Pollinator Gardens

BY VICKI OLSON



Barb and Sarah with neighborhood volunteers

Some of the goals are to:

- Create showy areas around the southeast Kenny sign and the sign by the school entrance (perfect for those beginning of the school year pictures!)
- Grow taller plants at the southeast corner of the pollinator garden so they are visible to students inside the school.
- Focus on cleaning up the rain garden in the middle of the grounds
- Create a garden solution for the high-traffic areas at the Kenny entrance
- Add colorful shade plants at the outdoor classroom rock seating area.

Neighborhood volunteers met on April 23 for a kickoff to the new season of managing the gardens along the east side of the Kenny Community School. Many had helped last year with the massive effort to clean out overgrown gardens and replant the gardens on either end of the front of the school.

10 or so gardens for maintenance. The plan is for each team to expand upon the original vision as members work with “their” garden.

“It’s about getting kids to enjoy nature”

—Barb Huibregtse

The kickoff ended with Sara Staab, Kenny volunteer coordinator, and Gwen Kastner, a Kenny student and our youngest volunteer who attended with her mother, Thecla Kaster, planting pansies to freshen up the container gardens.

This work was initiated by students and parents and is funded by a partnership between Kenny School and the Kenny Neighborhood Association with expertise provided by local master gardeners. One of the students involved, Maya Adams, who participated in the presentation requesting support from KNA, was back for a second year. Maya said that she was excited to continue her involvement “to see what it looks like in the end and see all the flowers!”

Barb Huibregtse, a Kenny resident and member of the Hennepin County Master Gardener volunteer program, walked the group through the work that occurred last year and volunteers’ thoughts for developing the gardens this year.

Sarah Staab is now the volunteer coordinator, as Teri Fischer passed the baton, and the vision is to have teams of volunteers “own” a section of one of the

Pollinator Gardens continues on page 9.



Sarah with Gwen and her mother.

Volunteers are still needed!
If interested, contact
Sarah Staab at sarah.m.staab@gmail.com.

Kenny Annual Meeting Thank You

BY LAUREN ANDERSON

Thanks to everyone who joined the Kenny Online Annual Meeting on Thursday, April 21! We had a great, informative event that included time with Minneapolis Council Vice President Linea Palmisano, Hennepin County Commissioner Marion Greene; and State Representative Emma Greenman, who will represent Kenny in 2023 when redistricting takes effect.

Board Chair Carol Martinson shared the process for the Kenny Online Board Election, which happened at www.kennyneighborhood.org April 22–28. Huge thanks to everyone who registered to run for the KNA Board this spring!

Annual Meeting attendees also got a sneak peek at preliminary community survey results (see the article in this edition for more details).

Our keynote speaker, Angela Antony of the Minneapolis Office of Emergency Management, shared many helpful tips for individual households and for community-wide resilience during emergencies, including:

- Stay informed by opting into emergency cell phone notifications, having a handy weather app that sends notifications in case of severe weather events, and signing up for city news and alerts at www.minneapolisismn.gov.
- Have a written plan for an emergency that includes how you'll stay informed, how to shelter in place if needed, and where to go if you need to evacuate. The website www.do1thing.com is a great resource to help build your plan.
- Have a three-day kit with chargers, masks, sanitizers, water, food, medications, a battery-operated radio, a flashlight with spare batteries, and anything else your household

members need (diapers, pet supplies, etc.). You can visit www.ready.gov for sample lists and more resources.

Angela emphasized that the best way to build a safe community is to know your neighbors and your surroundings and we couldn't agree more. Our connections to one another can help us

navigate potential emergency situations, especially if we know who on our block can help and who might need more support.

The talk closed with this fabulous quote that sure fits Kenny: "May where you live be better because of you. Good neighbors make great neighborhoods."

Please Welcome Our Newest KNA Board Member, Elected in April Online Voting



Jacqueline Ann Moes

Jacqueline is overjoyed to be a member of the Kenny Neighborhood since 2007. She has grown to love her neighbors, the schools, and our local recreational areas.

While she does not have children of her own, she is passionate about making sure our adults (especially seniors) and children stay safe. With a bit more time to give, she decided that she wants to take on a more active role right here in the neighborhood.

Jacqueline is concerned about safety, preservation, and is ready to be an advocate for positive change and a voice for our community.

And congratulations to re-elected KNA Board members Bruce Anderson, Barb Brady, Carol Martinson, and Nick Winter! We are so grateful for their continued service to the neighborhood.



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Kenny Students Learn About Pollinators



- Open flowers
- A place to land
- An attractive smell
- Bright colors to get the attention of pollinators.

The session ends with a fun game where students pretend they are pollinators and gather nectar and pollen as they fly from flower to flower.



Master gardeners consult with gardeners but are also involved in teaching pollinator classes.

Master gardeners visited Kenny Community School in May to teach second- and third-graders about pollinators and their importance to our food chain and environment.

The program is interactive and geared to children. The goal is to help them understand the important role that bees, bats, butterflies, beetles, and other pollinators play in helping disperse pollen so that plants can make seeds and create new plants that give us food and help the environment.

The students learn that the flowers that pollinators love have special characteristics:

- Navigation guides (markings to help direct the pollinators to the flower's nectar)

BE INSPIRED!

Attend the Hennepin County Master Gardener Learning Garden tour on July 9, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. rain or shine.

Explore 10 gardens in South Minneapolis, including Richfield. Our own Kenny Pollinator Garden is one of the gardens featured!

The cost is \$15 in advance, \$20 day of tour, children under 12 get in free with a paying adult.

For tickets, visit LIVE Learning Garden Tour 2022 – Hennepin County Master Gardeners (hennepinmastergardeners.org)

Time is running out to share your thoughts about the future of Kenny

Take the neighborhood survey and enter a drawing for a gift card

BY BARB BRADY

The 2022 KNA Neighborhood Survey has drawn a large number of responses, but we need as many as possible to get an accurate measure of residents' priorities.

As of mid April, about 13% of residents had responded to the survey, which is at bit.ly/2022kennysurvey. While that's a good response rate, we'd like to hear from many more neighbors, especially renters, in order to get a complete picture of our neighborhood.

As an extra incentive to respond, you'll be entered in a drawing for a \$100 gift card!

We'll have a full run-down of the results later this summer, but here are some preliminary findings:

Kenny residents like living here: More than 45% of respondents have lived here more than 10 years, 21% between six and 10 years, and fewer than 14% have lived here two years or fewer.

Key reasons that people live in Kenny

- Proximity to parks and lakes.....76%
- Appearance of the neighborhood48%
- Recreational opportunities38%
- Walking and biking opportunities ...67%
- Friendly neighbors69%
- Safe place to live65%
- Close to shopping, goods and services59%
- Quality Schools42%

Communications: Kenny residents are most likely to get their updates and information about upcoming activities from the paper and e-newsletters issued by KNA. 89% receive and read this newsletter.

Public safety: Residents feel that safety has remained consistent over the past two to three years (50%), 33% of the residents feel that their safety has declined, and only 8% feel that it is a safer place to live.

Block Leaders: One of the survey's primary goals is to evaluate the level of residents' familiarity with the Block Leader program and if they know who their block leader is. Based on the results, we are fairly split on awareness of block leaders and the program. This is something that we really want to work on improving.

Environment: The residents of Kenny are a very ecologically and environmentally focused group of people. There was a large number of people who want to get more involved with projects for environmental sustainability, especially related to sustainable gardens and lawns, cleaning gutters and streets of leaves, reducing package waste and reducing carbon consumption. We also had 48% of our residents who said that they planned to participate in the April 23 Kenny Earth Day project.

Community Engagement: We asked if residents would like to get more involved by supporting our committees and there was a very positive response. The most popular committees that people were interested in volunteering for were:

- Environment..... 40%
- Event planning or other neighborhood engagement 35%
- Garden club 26%
- Traffic Calming and Safety (potential new committee)..... 25%
- New member welcoming 22%

Regional Leaders: Other neighborhood associations have created a system of volunteer regional leaders who are responsible for a several-block area. The KNA Board is considering a similar program and we wanted to hear what our residents thought about this. There was a significant level of interest in the type of program and the initial focus:

- New resident welcoming and introductions..... 68%
- Help find volunteers who can help our neighbors with household tasks and errands like snow removal and grocery shopping..... 60%
- Interfacing with local residents, their block leaders, and KNA committees and the board..... 55%

Should the board decide to move forward with this program, we will ask the community for individual volunteers, so please let us know if you are interested.



Visit bit.ly/2022kennysurvey to take the survey or scan the QR code to take it on your mobile device.

Two CenterPoint Projects Slated for Kenny

BY BARB BRADY

You'll see CenterPoint Energy trucks and employees in Kenny through this fall as they work on two major projects.

CenterPoint is replacing gas mains on Lyndale Avenue and moving residential gas meters to the outside of houses in our neighborhood.

Crews have already started the Lyndale Avenue gas main project, which runs between 54th and 61st Streets. They will replace two natural gas mains, connect service lines to the first main, move inside meters outside, and restore disturbed areas. There will be lane shifts, parking restrictions, and a sidewalk closure from 56th to 58th Streets West.

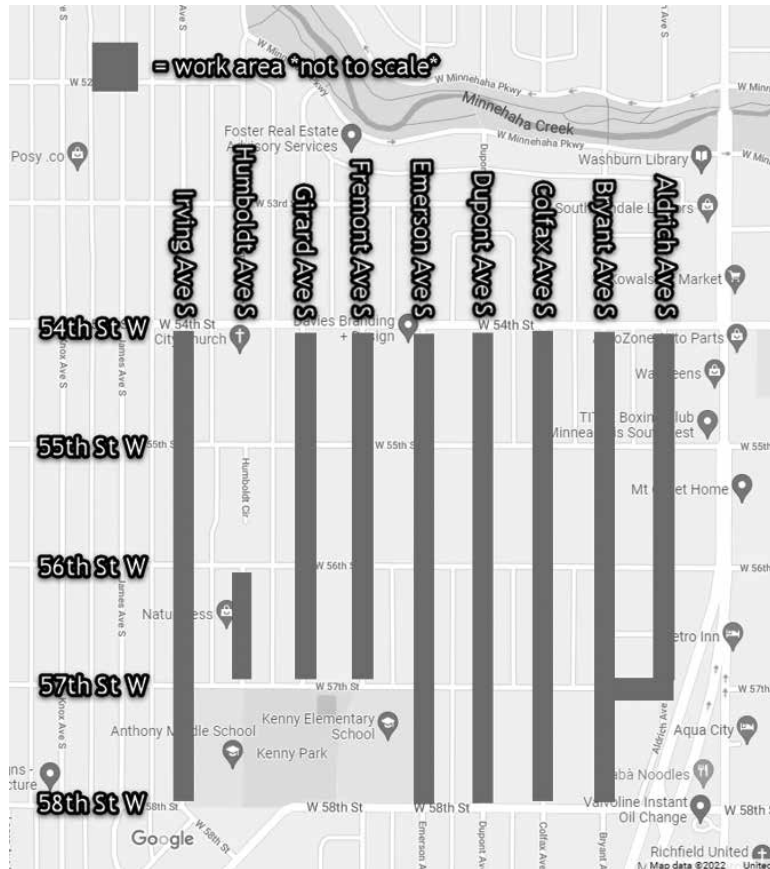
CenterPoint spokesperson Ross Corson says the mains are old and it's time to replace them.

"We now use modern material and construction methods," he says. CenterPoint is also one of the first in the country to use a new technology to avoid gas emissions into the air when the mains are opened up.

"When we inspect or repair a main, gas used to be vented into the atmosphere – which is a greenhouse gas," Corson says. "In order to reduce emissions, when we do projects like this, we use ZEVAC – Zero Emission Vacuum and Compressor, which acts like a vacuum cleaner. It moves gas to a pipe instead of into the air."

CenterPoint will also move gas meters from the inside to the outside of 550 residences from Aldrich to Irving between 54th and 58th Streets.

Residents will receive postcards in the mail 10 days to two weeks ahead of time if their meters are on the replacement list. Representatives will then contact residents to make appointments to move meters and possibly replace service lines



from the house to the gas main under the street. Inside homes, technicians will follow safety protocols that include wearing masks and relighting pilot lights when they are finished.

The projects are part of CenterPoint's plan to comply with Minnesota Office of Pipeline Safety requirements.

"It's easier to maintain meters on the outside of a building," Corson says. "We don't have to go into a customer's home. The project is also a safety measure. In the event of an emergency, technicians can turn off meters from the outside."

Corson says CenterPoint is beginning to use a new type of gas meter that is much smaller and lighter than current meters. Not only are the new meters made in Minnesota, they also have additional safety functions.

Customers will not be charged for the work.

This year's projects are part of CenterPoint's ongoing safety and improvement projects throughout the system.

"We want to keep the system as reliable and safe as possible so customers get the gas they need and rely on," he says.

You can find more information and updates about the meter move project at <http://kna.link/1f>

Information about the Lyndale Avenue project is at <http://kna.link/1h>

Lyndale Avenue project updates are available here: <http://kna.link/1j>

Word on the Street



Pat and Brenda asked:

“ Now that spring is here what are your plans for your house/home, yard and the neighborhood? ”



Sally

We are new to the neighborhood and doing some major yard projects. We are redoing the yard, adding a vegetable garden on the side of the house and planting fruit trees for color.



Matthew, Julia and Harriet

We put in a new tree in the front yard. We are starting the vegetable garden and using earth boxes that are partially self-watering. We are ready to get the outdoor furniture out for spring.



Peter

We are new to the Kenny neighborhood and just finished a home remodel. We are in the process of reseeding the grass area in front with pollinator clover. In the back the plan is to plant bee friendly tall grasses.



Ron, Christine, Elizabeth and Javier

Planting early season vegetables. Watching the bird migration of swans, loons, warblers, and eagles on Grass Lake.

Who's in the 'Hood

Adventures await around the world and in Kenny

BY JASMINE AVENT

As we head into our heavily coveted summer months in Kenny, many of us may be looking forward to spending more time outdoors. For some of us, however, it will be a chance to reconnect with both the outdoors and friends on our block we consider family.

Meet Heather Axtman, our neighbor on 59th and Emerson. Heather is a marketing professional who specializes in e-commerce and building digital communities for her customers with SAP Concur. Heather builds communities professionally and has made it a cornerstone of her life outside of work as well.

For Heather, a neighborhood is much more than the houses on your street or where your block is located. For Heather, a neighborhood is a community where a group of people can live, grow, and share together.

"Emerson Avenue South is my village. I truly feel like my neighbors are my family," she says. She believes that it plays a key role in her and her partner Dewayne's way of life. "We make connections with community-building in mind."

The couple met in 2008 and made a pact to see every continent together. They were able to check six continents off their list before raising a family took center stage. The last on the list, Antarctica, is a trip they will make, but maybe this time with their four children, Zara (7), Tahlia (5), Kai (4), and Shadi (18 month) in tow.

"Adventure and being culturally aware and inclusive is a huge guiding principle for us," she explains when recalling the family trip to Honduras over Christmas. "We are always up for the next adventure."



Although she has traveled far, she loves the adventures that await her family right in Kenny.

"Everything we need to have a good time is right outside our door," she says. One way she loves to explore is through meeting new people and building deeper relationships with her neighbors, who have become extensions of her family. "One thing that is really special about our block is that your neighbors are your best friends. We have a mom group message and use it every day. You need flour? Sugar? A hug? A listening ear? All of it."

She goes on to say that the people in Kenny are uniquely kind. "I think we've lost that [kindness] as a country, but I think we have that in Kenny. We always talk about it taking a village [to raise a child], but a lot of times you don't have that village. In Kenny, I have that village."

Parenting is a big part of Heather's world, and she feels that her neighbors have played a role in helping her be the parent she wants to be.

"We like to do big first-birthday celebrations, and my neighbors have been there for all four," Heather says. "They have become the kids' 'aunts' and 'uncles.'" She goes on to say that the neighborhood has been a pillar for her since she moved here eight years ago. "People really show up for you. The people in this neighborhood will support you in your highest of highs and lowest of lows. It's not just hot air."

As the temperatures heat up and summer re-emerges, Heather says that making this neighborhood a community is up to all of us.

"People are friendly and eager to make connections. Get active, follow KNA, make sure you participate; don't stay in your bubble," she urges newcomers to Kenny.

This summer, Heather is most looking forward to Friday night cookouts, potlucks, and informal gatherings. "I'm looking forward to being outside and hugging my neighbors."

If you see Heather around, be sure and say hello!

Kenny Park News

Kenny Park Recreation Center
1328 West 58th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55419
612-370-4901

The recreation center remains open for programming and public rentals; and the fields are ready for summer sports! We've been busy hosting preschool, outdoor programs, and youth sports leagues this Spring. Modified public building hours are posted and subject to change. For the latest program listings, please visit <http://kna.link/Y>. For more information on MPRB's COVID response, visit <http://kna.link/15>.

Here's what's available this year:

Adult Pickleball Leagues for Beginners and Intermediate players. Beginners should be new to the sport, while Intermediates should be rated 2-4 on a 1-5 scale. Please only register one player from your team. Ages 18+ will play at Kenny Park on Tuesdays and Wednesdays throughout the Spring, Summer, and Fall. For more information or to register please visit <http://kna.link/Z>.

Preschool KIDS focuses on the importance of social interactions and social skills for preschool-age children, with emphasis on sharing, working together, taking turns, problem solving, listening, and following multi-step directions. We will also include academic curriculum into our day, such as working on letters, numbers,

Recreation Supervisor — Jordan Nelson
Office: 612-370-4785
JNelson@minneapolisparcs.org

Modified 2022 operating hours

School year hours:

(Sept 7, 2021-June 10, 2022):

Monday through Friday 3-9 p.m. and
Saturdays noon-6 p.m.

colors, and shapes; and incorporating a weekly concept such as "I can do it," "Marvelous Me," opposites, sorting, and seasons. Join our qualified, wonderful instructor, Ann Horn, in making friends and fun memories. Classes are Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to noon at Kenny Park, Sept 12-Dec 16.

Adult Yoga is a fun, flowing class that combines sequences from various styles of yoga to give your body the breath work and movement it needs. This fitness-style yoga class includes both ab-focused yoga poses and alternative muscle-toning moves. Please wear comfortable clothing and bring a yoga mat. We'll meet outside when weather permits. Mondays, June 13-Aug 8, 7-8 p.m., \$75/series.

KidCreate Studio is an art studio just for kids! Your child will create fridge-worthy masterpieces, learn art concepts,

and experiment with many different art materials. We have a variety of hour-long and week-long classes and camps planned for the entire summer. Programming is for ages 1.5-13. Please check out the complete listing online at <http://kna.link/Q>. Themes include Paw Patrol, Dinosaurs, Minecraft, Tye Dye, Glitter & Glow, Canvas & Clay and more! Programs are at Kenny and Armatage Parks.

Summer Sports Registration for Armatage and Kenny Parks opened in mid-April for baseball, softball, and track. Most teams are at capacity but contact us at Armatage Park for more information at 612.370.4912.

Fall Sports Registration for Armatage and Kenny Parks SAVE THE DATE. Registration opens July 6 at noon for youth flag football, soccer and volleyball.

To register for flag football visit <http://kna.link/Q>. Soccer and volleyball are through Kenny Park and Armatage Activities Council (KPAC/ACC) at kennyarmatagesports.com. If you have any questions or have trouble registering, contact Armatage Park at 612.370.4912 for more information. We offer teams for kindergarten through 12th grade.



Spring is for music!
Come play in the band!
All ages/levels welcome

It's YOUR community band

www.crosstowncommunityband.org

KNA Partners with Southwest Voices

BY BARB BRADY



A new online news service for Southwest Minneapolis is taking a novel approach to journalism: readers tell the news outlet what stories to cover, instead of editors deciding what to cover.

Southwest Voices launched last October, using community input about what residents need and want.

“Instead of sitting in a room saying what news is, Southwest Voices empowers people to drive the news about their neighborhoods and city,” says Southwest Voices Co-Founder Charlie Rybak. “Especially in this moment, resident should tell their own stories instead of having others telling it to them. That’s our core principle. We want to find places to engage with people – you tell us what to do, what’s happening, instead of us deciding what the story should be.”

Southwest Voices is online at www.southwestvoices.news and you can subscribe to its daily newsletter. It covers everything Southwest Minneapolis, including arts, culture, education, government, local events, issues, ideas, businesses, entertainment, and more. Southwest Voices started partly to fill the void left by the closure of the Southwest Journal weekly newspaper.

“We believe residents need something to keep them connected,” says Rybak. “We’re trying to do something good and replicate the best of the Southwest Journal. We want people to feel they’re moving in the same direction in the same boat and grabbing an oar when they can.”

Southwest Voices is reaching out to residents by visiting each neighborhood and talking to people. The outlet is also starting reader-generated neighborhood guides containing “insider” information about each neighborhood, such as businesses, parks, and favorite activities.

“Cities are so complicated and we’re saying that we won’t agree on everything, but let’s sit down, talk about it, and explore what the community needs,” says Rybak. “There’s a type of politics that does pitched battle, but when you’re all neighbors it doesn’t work like that. We’re creating spaces where people can

talk and explore things and figure it out together.”

Southwest Voices content is free and depends on memberships. There are various levels of membership that help support and expand its work. You can become a member at <https://kna.link/1p> or make a one-time donation.

Kenny is one of many neighborhood associations partnering with Southwest Voices. In exchange for promoting the site, KNA will receive 8.3% of the gross membership fees that come from Kenny residents.

“We use readers as assignment editors – people suggest what to cover,” according to Rybak. “We can’t cover everything, but we try to cover as much as we can. We love to hear from people. Tell us your problems, what you love, what you see on the street that you can’t figure out. We want to hear from everyone.”

KORE

KORE (Kenny Organizing for Racial Equity) was formed after George Floyd’s murder to encourage Kenny residents to discuss, learn and act on issues about race. Our 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.

Check out our activities You can attend regularly or drop in when it fits into your schedule.

- **Kenny Talking Circle** Held on the 3rd Sundays of the month from 4:00-5:00 pm. In decent weather, it will be held behind City Church on 54th Street and Humboldt (bring a lawn chair). If the weather doesn’t cooperate the Zoom link - <https://zoom.us/j/5174064893>
- **Kenny Book Club** Meets the first Saturday of every month from 8:15 a.m.-9:45 a.m. behind City Church. For more information and the zoom link, email Janet at JLDahlem@stkate.edu
- KORE website: <http://kna.link/1r>
- Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/KOREmpls>
- Email contact: kennyforracialequity@gmail.com



KENNY NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

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

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Kenny Garden Club

Contact Bridget Rau at
bridgetrandyrau@gmail.com or Ann Davenport at
afdavenport@gmail.com to get involved.

Kenny Board Members Needed

Make a difference in your neighborhood's future by joining the Kenny Board. It's a great way to meet your neighbors and be part of the community. For further information, please call KNA at 612-392-4477 or send an email to info@kennyneighborhood.org.

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