

# Northeaster

July 21, 2021

Northeast Minneapolis | St. Anthony | Columbia Heights | Hilltop

Vol. 43, No. 14



## Coyotes just part of the scene

by Karen Kraco

Some Sullivan Drive residents first thought the canine that was frequenting the path and yards bordering on Sullivan Lake Park in Columbia Heights this spring was a wolf, since they started seeing it regularly around the time wolves escaped from the Wildlife Science Center in Chisago County, said homeowner Barbara Babekuhl.

Babekuhl said she figured out it likely was a coyote, not a wolf, and judging from its behavior, she thought that it probably had a den in the grove of trees in a corner of their complex of townhouses. She and neighbors would see the animal on the path as early in the evening as 9 p.m., when people were still out walking, and often at night, when she and husband Dave Scouton were sometimes alerted by the pacing of their miniature Goldendoodle, Porkchop, who would catch the coyote's scent through the screen on their upper-level porch.

In late May, as a young puppy, Porkchop needed to be let out just about every hour. Scouton was often a little wary, keeping an eye out for the coyote, which, he said moved very fast, "like a magician." He said he didn't have "any reservations" about the animal until the night the coyote came bounding toward him and Porkchop, who was and always is on a lead. Scouton dragged the then-oblivious pup into the house, and when he came back out to scare the coyote, the "magician" had disappeared.

### Coyote encounters

"Hazing" an animal that approaches or stands its ground in the presence of humans is the right thing to do, says Scott Noland, Forest Lake area wildlife manager with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR). You don't need an air horn or a water sprinkler, he says, although those certainly can help. He recommends "just being loud and tall," and to not run away, because the running away triggers the predator-prey response. "Keep eye contact, make yourself big, yell, and back away slowly." It's the same thing that you should do with an off-leash domestic dog that's following or threatening you, he said.

Although some people unnerved by the presence of a wild animal might be eager to have it removed, Noland said trapping and removal can backfire with coyotes. If it's one that travels in a pack, removing an alpha animal — the leaders and the only ones that will mate — can result in increased fecundity among the remaining coyotes. Other individuals will "backfill" a void left by the missing predator, according

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## Things you don't see every day

Left, a Minneapolis Public Works employee guided the placement of a new fire hydrant at the corner of 28th Avenue and Garfield Street NE. A supervisor at the site said water mains were placed in the area in 1920, and the old cast iron hydrant was probably manufactured in 1918. It had begun leaking underground. (Photo by Cynthia Sowden)

Right, at B.F. Nelson Park, Nathan Bristow sprayed mist toward a holographic camera as he tested a drone designed to study aerosol and particle transport. Bristow, a postdoctoral researcher, said that the set-up is a "prototype of a prototype" created in the lab of mechanical engineering professor Jiarong Hong at the University of Minnesota's St. Anthony Falls Laboratory. They are developing a low-cost, general-purpose tool that could be used to study phenomena such as crop spray drift or dust patterns. (Photo by Karen Kraco)

## Businesses, homeless seek common ground

by Cynthia Sowden

The tension was palpable as the little parlor at Fletcher's Ice Cream, 1509 Marshall Street NE, filled up with members of the Sheridan business community and people from a homeless encampment on 13th Street NE. They were all there to talk with Third Ward Council Member Steve Fletcher ("No relation to the business," he quipped) about the encampment and public safety.

Although the July 15 meeting was one of Fletcher's scheduled meet-and-greets, recent activities in and around the homeless encampment took center stage in the conversation. If Fletcher had other topics to talk about, they were swept off the table while people on both sides aired their grievances and talked about how to handle problems in the community.

A July 10 fire at the encampment had set the community on edge. Rich Waryan, owner of Minnesota Organ Service, sent the Northeaster a video clip from a surveillance camera that showed a thick cloud of black smoke rising from the encampment; excited voices can be heard in the background.

On July 14, business owners near the encampment found bullet holes in a work van and dock truck.

Waryan fired off an email to city and park officials. "The small business owners and residents in the neighborhood surrounding the Sheridan Veteran's Memorial homeless encampment have had enough," he wrote. "There have been overdoses, fires, discarded drug paraphernalia, used condoms, piles of vomit, excessive trash, human feces and many other major concerns and hazards to public health and safety surrounding this encampment."

He said the owners of Bunny's Bar & Grill NE had experienced financial losses because patrons were accosted by panhandlers on the restaurant's deck. Contacted the next day, Bunny's co-owner Gary Rackner added that the use of the building's restrooms for towel bathing and drug use has also been an issue. "We want to have empathy for homeless people but we don't want it affecting us. There's got to be better ways if people want help, to get them help," Rackner said.

Sculptor Nicholas Legeros was unable to attend the meeting, but sent copies of a letter addressed to Fletcher. He wrote, "The new \$1.5 million park goes unused. In the past month three stolen cars have been left in front of my building. I watched the Park Department bring eleven vehicles

to the site to remove two dump truck loads of trash from the banks of the Mississippi that the homeless saw fit to discard." He concluded, "Remove the encampment."

Other Sheridan citizens sought to calm the rhetoric. Amity Foster often bikes past the encampment. "People in the encampment have social and safety needs, too. What can we do to support people living there?" she asked.

Anna Pasic, a volunteer who works with people at the camp, said, "Removal is dehumanizing."

Bob Chouinard, who owns Big Event Productions, said, "We have been here since 1996. This is our home. We try to do what we can; we bring food [to the encampment]. Why can't we do something to help? I don't need bullets coming at me." He suggested helping one person or group per week get back on their feet.

Leaders from the encampment were not shy about speaking up. Dean, the father of twin 7-year-old girls, said, "We're trying to get a home together. People come and take pictures of us and record videos. We don't want to be memorialized. There are some bad apples in our neighborhood, but everyone in the camp is not bad. Ev-

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# In Business

## Fire at NE Hive

The NE Hive building at 916 26th Avenue NE (across the street from Walgreens), which advertised “unique office spaces,” caught fire the morning of July 11. Dan Turpening, whose accordion shop is on 16th and Central, was “snoozing after working late” the night before and awakened to the smell of smoke. “I thought someone was burning tires,” he said.

The five-office building was constructed in 1927. Building owner Jacob Stewart said in an email, “I’m glad to report that there were no injuries and everything of extreme importance has been accounted for. The cause is still being investigated and the amount of damage is to be determined. I am waiting for more information but from what I can see, the damage was localized to a small section of the warehouse.” He added, “The Minneapolis Fire Department arrived and went to work insanely fast, the tour de force they displayed was incredible, and I am beyond grateful for their hard work.”

Stewart operated his business, Traveling Photobooth, out of the building, but the party business dried up during the pandemic. In September 2020, he opened a pet cremation business in the building; in April 2021, his appeal to the Minneapolis Planning Commission that a pet crematorium is similar to a crematory for human remains was denied, because crematories are allowed only next to cemeteries, according to Minneapolis zoning codes. By law, pet remains must be disposed of within 12 hours of death. Stewart said he could not comment on the action because the situation is still in dispute.



The sign at Kramarczuk Sausage Company, 215 E. Hennepin, got a retouch July 10 the old-fashioned way – by hand. (Photo by Cynthia Sowden) Fire at 916 26th. (Photo provided by Dan Turpening)

## Dandy Horse closing

Dandy Horse Bicycle Repair at 207 E. Hennepin is closing. They stopped taking repair orders July 18 and are conducting a clearance sale of bicycle accessories. According to their website, their last day of operation will be July 24.

## Spyhouse joins

### FairWave Collective

Spyhouse Coffee Roasters has joined FairWave, a collective of leading local coffee brands operating together to “drive world-class coffee, bakery, and culinary experiences in their communities,” according to a press release. The Spyhouse Roasting Facility in Northeast Minneapolis will continue to produce fresh-roasted coffee. Spyhouse will continue as a Minneapolis based company, led by President Kevin Wencel, who brings over 20 years of food and beverage expertise. Wencel’s focus at Spyhouse is on operational strategy and business growth.

## Woster leaves Latté Da

Michelle Woster, managing director of Theater Latté Da, is leaving the company July 31. Her position will be filled temporarily by Jean



# Encampment’s fate uncertain

## 1 ◀ COMMON GROUND

Everybody wants to live good and have a nice life. You think people really want to live this way?”

His thoughts were echoed by a woman who said she’d been homeless for 14 months. “I worked as a substitute teacher in St. Paul, and for the TSA before that,” she said. “I just went through a divorce. I don’t want to live like this,” she sobbed. The woman next to her gave her a hug and said, “That fire scared me half to death.”

Derrick, also known as “Phoenix,” said he came from a well-to-do family, but “took my own steps.” He said people in the camp have values and morals. He called the camp self-governing. When asked about the trash at the site, he said, “We try to keep it nice. We asked the city for a dumpster.”

Fletcher said eviction just pushes the homeless to another neighborhood. “There has to be a process,” he said. He mentioned that the city had just received \$12 million in Recovery Act money that will be put toward transitional housing. He also mentioned a women-only shelter coming to Ward 3, a hotel conversion in the Marcy-Holmes neighborhood, that’s coming soon. “We need to have options for people,” he said.

Waryan asked if the homeless could “look out” for area businesses at night. Another business owner suggested calling the police if they observed any wrongdoing, which brought a chorus of “No! Never call the police!”

Dean said, “We need to communicate with each other,” which prompted volunteer Jennifer Hotovec Haug, an unofficial liaison for the encampment, to ask for the emails of business owners to keep the dialogue going.

Ultimately, the fate of the encampment may be determined by outside forces. There are concerns that the July 10 fire may have left some health risks in the area. And Xcel Energy will soon need to do some work on its transformers near the encampment. Fletcher said he did not know the timeline.

Hartmann, the theater’s former senior director of finance and operations.

Woster, who has led the organization since 2018, has overseen growth in the theater’s donor and subscriber base. Artistic director Peter Rothstein said Woster’s leadership “helped the organization continue to stay on-mission during the pandemic, funding new works and virtual performances, and still emerging in a position of financial and organizational strength.”

Theater Latté Da starts its 24th season this fall with Rothstein as artistic director and Denise Prosek as musical director.

## Northeast thanks donors

Bill Lloyd and seven anonymous folk have contributed to the Northeast since mid-May, helping keep the page count up. One, a St. Anthony Village resident said: “Enjoy reading the Northeast. Lots of news, ads, activities, etc. Northeast = Interesting - good neighborhood! There’s a handy form on page 8 or an online option if you’re inclined to chip in.

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