Growing Vegetables While Growing Connections in Our Community

By Suzie Danielson

When Suzie Lillyblad and her boyfriend Eric Larson bought their Kingfield home seven years ago, it was raspberries that sealed the deal. “I had lived up north in the woods for years, and though I was ready to move back to the city, I couldn’t give up that connection to the land. The house had a tiny kitchen, but a huge backyard, no garage or alley. And in the end, the raspberry patch sold me on the house.” Suzie got hooked on the experience of growing her own food. “I love going out to see what is ready in the garden, then making something to eat from whatever we have in the fridge. I have gotten more and more interested in knowing where food comes from, and ways we can grow food locally.”

Last year Suzie and Eric helped launch the Pleasant Community Garden, Kingfield’s first community garden located in a vacant lot owned and adjacent to the Center for Performing Arts. “Initially I was looking for more space to garden, with more sun, but I also wanted to get to know the neighbors, and community gardening seemed like a great way to do that.” Eric led the construction of the raised beds last year, and the construction of a three-bin compost enclosure this year. “He is a great builder, all-around good egg-handymen, who gives up a lot of his precious time for the promise of tomatoes.” Suzie says with a smile. This year Suzie has taken on the challenging volunteer role of Coordinator for the Pleasant Community Garden. “I am still stunned at what we were able to do last year. It was really amazing, and I feel lucky to have been a part of it from the ground up. I’m trying to learn more about community gardening, especially the community aspect. I hope that the Pleasant Garden can become more of a meeting place, where people can have classes on vermiculture, harvesting, preparing and preserving the food we grow. I want it to be a tool for education for all of us. We have to keep working on how we can do this better, and how we can make the most of it.”

There are 17 plots in the Pleasant Garden with more than 20 gardeners, plus a handful of volunteers who don’t have plots but who help out with the common areas, pick up donated plants, or put together the Kingfield Gardens Walking Tour that supports Kingfield Community Gardens.

Suzie is encouraged by what has happened so far this year. “The first group workday this year was beautiful. Most of the gardeners were there, doing different things, talking the load on tasks, chatting and getting to know one another. So much got done! It was great to see everyone coming together to get something done.” She notes that the Pleasant gardeners are also trying out informal social gatherings in the garden as another way to connect with one another this year.

There is a lot going on in Suzie’s life, some of it difficult. “I didn’t even know what one was ten years ago, anyone can.” She makes her potato-leek soup. It’s one of the things she can keep down. Suzie laughs when she remembers that the first time she made it she used both choy, because at that time she didn’t really know what a leek was. “If I can figure out how to grow a leek when I didn’t even know what one was ten years ago, anyone can.” She hopes that the Pleasant Community Gardens will help more neighbors learn about, grow, and find joy in local food. She sums it up by saying, “We’re all in this together!”

Glorious rainbow, but not until a couple of nights after the celebration of the Greenway had ended.
Greetings, Kingfield neighbors. Thank you for making Kingfield a great neighborhood! Since 2003 I have lived on the 5700 block of Blaisdell with my wife and two daughters. We have formed strong bonds with those who live near us, as many Kingfield residents have. These connections are the heart and soul of the neighborhood. As the newly elected President of KFNA, I want to build upon these connections and the work of many past and present volunteers while reaching out to more people. Kingfield has a lot to be excited about. National Night Out (NNO) is Tuesday, August 2. Kingfield typically has one of the highest NNO participation rates. The KFNA Board will continue its tradition of visiting gathering places. A big ice cream party will be held for everyone on the lawn of the Center for Performing Arts.

The Legacy of Dr. King at MLK Park

On May 18, 2011, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board approved the Phase I improvement recommendations presented by the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Legacy Committee. These recommendations were developed through community meetings and include:

- That the “Wings of Freedom Memorial Sculpture” (“Freedom Form #2” sculpture) honoring Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King be moved to its original site, visible from Nicollet Avenue with landscaping and plaque.
- To clean and restore “Freedom Form #2” with a new foundation for the sculpture.
- To replace or add signage throughout the park to consistently use the revised name: Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Park.
- To establish the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Legacy Advisory Committee as a permanent group, to provide oversight and recommendations to the Park Board for the implementation of these recommendations, and to help raise the necessary additional funding for the Board’s goal of the complete plan. The Board will honor Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King’s legacy at the Park.

The Board of Commissioners approved $32,500 in the 2011 annual budget for improvements or programming at Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Park that would best honor the legacy of Dr. King. Phase I improvements will be the top priority for this funding. Over the next couple of months, the work of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Legacy Advisory Committee will include planning for an August 28 event and the relocation of the Freedom Form #2 sculpture.

To get involved, please contact Jennifer Ringold at 612-230-6464 or jringold@minnesotastateparks.org. The next meeting is on July 14 at 6:30 pm, at MLK Park.

The Lees, an African-American family, stayed in their home at 4600 Columbus Avenue despite intense pressure to move and several nights of terrorizing harassment from thousands of angry protesters outside their house in July 1931. Join together on July 16 to commemorate the Lees and their allies, and pledge to never again treat neighbors as mobs and racist bullies. Let’s show our children ways to be a welcoming community, as we learn from the past.

LEE FAMILY COMMEMORATIVE EVENT

July 16, 2011

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EVENT SCHEDULE: SATURDAY, JULY 16, 2011
- Assembly at 6:45 PM, Field School playground, 4645 4th Avenue South.
- Begin solemn procession east along 46th Street to the street in front of 4600 Columbus Avenue; gather for story and dedication of the spot where a permanent plaque and commemorative sculpture will be placed.
- Continue walking east along 46th Street to McRae Park (east side of Chicag Avenue) for closing remarks.
- Total walking distance is six short blocks from Field to McRae.

Please attend, and spread the word! If you are on Facebook, invite others to the event. Just search for “Lee family,” or look for July 16 events on Facebook. For more information, email info@july16event.org or visit www.july16event.org. You can also call event chair Jim Bush at 612-598-8941, or publicist-co-creator Betty Tisel, 612-824-5520.

CPaS Hits the Streets with a Traveling Block Party

KFNA’s Crime Prevention and Safety Committee (CPaS) decided to get out and have a little more fun this summer. They have transformed their monthly meetings into traveling outdoor, stand-up gatherings, held in different corners of Kingfield, bringing together kids and adults, neighbors and cops. A few days ahead, committee members and local block leaders knock on doors to invite residents from the surrounding blocks. Then the committee shows up on the appointed evening with a tent & banner, information to share, and a cooler full of freezer pops. They set up on the boulevard, and the fun begins!

The May kick-off was held at 36th & 1st Ave. Lt. Kelly gave a crime update, encouraged resident participation, took questions, and introduced the two other officers in attendance. Before and after the meeting, Lt. Kelly and the other officers talked with people individually about their concerns or questions. The KFNA board member who was hosting led some fun kids’ activities! As they say, a good time was had by all!

In June, the CPaS “Party” was on 46th & 1st Ave. The next one will be: Tuesday, July 19, 6:30 pm, 38th & Nicollet

Watch the eNews and website for future locations!

WANNA HAVE SOME FUN?

Get in on the ground floor of a New KFNA Community Events Committee!

At their June meeting, the KFNA Board approved a new committee to be focused solely on creating and planning community events! Come meet with interested board members and other neighbors to discuss the goals and activities of this new group, which might include working on existing events and brainstorming new events.

As with all KFNA committees, participation in this group is open to all residents, property owners, and business owners. Regular meeting times will be established once neighbors express interest in participating. The first organizing meeting for the Community Events Committee will be held on Wednesday, August 3, 7 PM, at MLK Park.

Questions? Contact info@kingfield.org or 612-823-5980.

KINGFIELD NEWS

If you are interested in writing, editing, designing, or taking photographs for the Kingfield News, call KPNA at 612-823-5980 or email at info@kingfield.org.

Visit www.kingfield.org and sign up for once-per-week informational, text-based, always local eNews. This is a free service, and guaranteed not to overburden your inbox! Just enter your email address into the sign up box on the left-hand side of the web page to stay in touch on things happening in Kingfield, or email sarah@kingfield.org and put “add me to the eNews” in the memo line and we will do it for you!
Building Bridges to Reconnect Our Communities Divided by Race, Time, and 35W

When dialogue about a proposed dog park at Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Park highlighted a racial divide in our community, a group of residents started Building Bridges. The new project—led by residents both East and West of 35W—was started with the hope of bridging this racial divide. The specific mission of Building Bridges is to understand how race and racism impact our communities, and to forge stronger relationships and understandings between neighbors of diverse races, cultures, and ages.

A number of projects are being initiated by the Building Bridges Core Team, and your involvement is welcomed. Other groups are actively working on projects that serve the goals of Building Bridges. More projects, and specifics of how Building Bridges is supportive of these efforts, as well as the Lee Family Memorial Event (see page 2). Building Bridges has representatives from Central, Bryant, Kingfield, Regina and Northrop neighborhoods.

Building Bridges Projects Include:

• October community event as part of One Minneapolis, One Read, of The Grace of Silence by Michele Norris – planning meeting July 11, 8 a.m. Anodyne. Based on the inspiration of Building Bridges, Minneapolis is sponsoring a city-wide read and related events for The Grace of Silence in October 2011. The Grace of Silence is a memoir by Ms. Norris, who grew up in Minneapolis, that describes the revealing of painful race-based secrets withheld from her by her parents. Interested in helping plan an event relating to the community read of this book? RSVP to attend this initial planning meeting, or indicate your interest in being involved in future conversations to Sarah Limes-Robinson of KFNA, sarah@kingfield.org or 612.823.5980.

• Enhancing the 40th Street Pedestrian Bridge as a gateway between Kingfield and Bryant Neighborhoods. KFNA is directing grant funding they received toward the 40th Street gateway on the Kingfield side of the bridge, including in Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Park. The project will include both murals and enhanced maintenance of green space. Interested in updates, helping to review project plans, or community outreach? Please contact Sarah Limes-Robinson of KFNA, sarah@kingfield.org or 612.823.5980.

• One of Building Bridges’ action steps is the collection and preservation of stories with the goal to learn about our community’s history within the context of race. We plan to host a Community Scrapbook event, where people can share photographs, memorabilia, and stories. Our plan is to share these stories and reflections on race in our community on an interactive website for Building Bridges. Please contact Sarah Limes-Robinson of KFNA, sarah@kingfield.org or 612.823.5980 and she will put you in touch with the person loading the Community Scrapbook project.

Stay up to date on Building Bridges activities by searching “Bridges” on the inspiration of Building Bridges, Minneapolis is directing grant funding they received toward the 40th Street gateway on the Kingfield side of the bridge, including in Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Park. The project will include both murals and enhanced maintenance of green space. Interested in updates, helping to review project plans, or community outreach? Please contact Sarah Limes-Robinson of KFNA, sarah@kingfield.org or 612.823.5980.

New Bike Lanes Coming to Bliedalsd and 1st Avenue

The bike lane project on 1st and Bliedalsd Avenues received a $150,000 federal grant in 2007 from Bike Walk Twin Cities (known as the Non-Motorized Transportation Pilot Program). This grant is part of a larger collection of “Bicycle Operations” projects around Minneapolis that are improving approximately 20 miles of streets for bicyclists, making them safer and more comfortable for bicycling.

The entire project runs from 15th Street in Loring Park to 10th Street (and includes LaSalle Avenue between 15th Street and Franklin Avenue), and will include a southbound bike lane on Bliedalsd Avenue and a northbound bike lane on 1st Avenue.

Public Works began working with neighborhood groups in 2009 to come up with a design that could be agreed upon by all parties. A public meeting was held on March 17, 2010. A summary of all public feedback received is at www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/bicycles/1stBliedalsdFeedbackSummary.pdf.

The possibility of parking removal on 1st Avenue between 35th and 40th Street was an area of intense exploration. The Final Public Works recommendation, which is what will be implemented, was to make no changes to the current parking situation and instead remove one lane in this section and replace it with a bike lane. Similar to how this second travel lane currently serves as a parking area on Sundays or Saturday/Sunday, the future bike lane will continue to serve as a parking area during the same days.

Construction began in mid-June and should be mostly complete by mid-July. An opening celebration is being planned for late summer or early fall.

Kingfield Softball was born!

Kingfield Softball is a free, co-ed adult drop in weekly softball game—Thursdays 7-8:30 PM at Martin Luther King Park, diamond #3. Show up earlier to warm up. BYOHE2OYAL4ENBAUMS.

DODGEBALL BECOMES SOFTBALL — AND NEIGHBORS PLAY FOR FUN AND FRIENDSHIP

A handful of Kingfield residents played dodgeball together through the park system at MLK the past few years. After a year off from icing our shoulders after matches, we were called out of “retirement” this spring to represent our beloved neighborhood in the 1st Southwest Neighborhood Dodgball Tournament. We recruited some new blood to form The Royal Tenenbaums (a coy take on Wes Anderson’s film, The Royal Tenenbaums, and our crown jewel of a hood.)

After defeating East Harriet and successfully bringing the championship trophy home (now proudly sitting in the window of Four Gates at 4238 Nicolle), we sat over beers at The Lowbrow pondering our next quest. I had long wanted another softball team after years of playing, so with the help of KFNA we approached Brian Cornell at MLK Park, and Kingfield Softball was born!

Softball is THE sport of summer for adults. Where else can you live out your fantasy and pretend to be on the Twins (or maybe this season, you’d rather be on the Brewers)? We play for fun, so all skill levels are welcome. As one of our regular players David Peterson stated, “I think it’s fair to say that the players on the Tenenbaums are probably like many other people in Kingfield, really seem eager to meet their neighbors and participate in the community. I don’t mean to sound too comy, but playing these casual games of dodgeball or softball are the kinds of things that make a place feel like home.

It’s pretty difficult to put together a spontaneous pick-up ball game with many park diamonds being reserved and the sheer number of people you need to field a couple teams, so we’ve done the hard part for you! Now you just need to dust off your glove and show up. Teams will be different each week depending on who’s there. We’ll have fun team names and a group photo after each game, which we’ll post to our Facebook group. Please join the group Kingfield Softball on Facebook. We’ll have invites to our events and fun chatter, and maybe some trash talk. Follow @jefed21 (Jeff Kamin) on Twitter for more info.

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MAKE AN AWESOME MONSTER — and other wierd polymer clayworkshops!

Diane’s Yarn Bombers

MY LIFE AS A YARN BOMBER

I am always intrigued by a community art project. When I heard about yarn bombing, a couple of things came to mind. I could use my leftover yarn from forgotten knitting projects, and it would be an opportunity to do something kind of crazy. The prep for the project was cutting 9-foot sections of yarn in a variety of colors by the side of the tennis bubble. On this hottest day of the year, it was hard to keep hydrated. I really didn’t have an idea how the project would evolve until Friday night at about 9:30.

We met at the bridge and he mapped out our pattern. We traced out, tying the yarn from one side of the pedestrian bridge and going along the edge. Even the rain didn’t stop us. People came and went, friends of the artist, neighbors, and bikers and walkers stopped to talk. It was hard to tell what it would look like in the daylight. I lasted until 11:30, and many others stayed on.

The project was almost complete at 7:00 the next morning when I walked over with my dog. It was an array of colors that caught your eye, and I hope it was enjoyed by many as they biked on the completed bike path.

— Lee Watkins

PHOTO BY THOMAS ATKINS, MINNEAPOLIS PHOTO COMPANY

Jeff Kamin
**It’s Summer, So Get Up and Move!**

Bike Walk Twin Cities is going to be out and about in the Kingfield area this summer! Through the Bike Walk Move campaign (www.bikewalkmove.org), Bike Walk Twin Cities is working to increase neighborhood connectivity, bicycling/walking knowledge and infrastructure, and to inspire long-term mode shift in the area.

On May 31st, BWTC staff and Kingfield residents gathered to talk about issues and perceptions surrounding mode shift — why and how people are currently bicycling and walking in Kingfield, and what would help new folks get started. We identified several key opportunities where neighborhood residents can be involved.

- **1st/Blaisdell Bikeway Opening Celebration:** We’re looking for folks to help plan festivities and get the word out about this new infrastructure project that provides dedicated space for cyclists and creates a direct N-S route for cyclists to key destinations. Contact Mackenzie Turner at the City of Minneapolis at Mackenzie.Turner@ci.minneapolis.mn.us for more information, or 612-824-0724, ext. 202.

- **For general information about the Bike Walk Move campaign, contact Amber at amberc@tlcminnesota.org or 651-780-1416.**

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**National Night Out is Tuesday, August 2, 2011**

When you register your event, you will get free Mystery Point Passes for Nickelodeon Universe at the Mall of America. Registering early is a great way to get the word out about this new infrastructure in providing localized knowledge and infrastructure, and to inspire long-term mode shift in the area. Bike Walk Twin Cities (www.bikewalkmove.org), Bike Walk Twin Cities is working to increase neighborhood connectivity, bicycling/walking knowledge and infrastructure, and to inspire long-term mode shift in the area.

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**Calendar of Events**

- **Kingfield Neighborhood Association**
  - Thursday, July 28
    - Community Garden Opening Party!
      - All neighbors welcome
      - 3754 Pleasant Ave., at the corner of 38th & Nicollet
      - Free event
      - Come to a Garden Party!

- **Kingfield News**
  - Summer 2011
  - www.kingfield.org
  - a quarterly publication

- **National Night Out**
  - Tuesday, August 2, 2011
  - See you at National Night Out registration, ideas, resources and more information available at www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/nno/mailing.asp

- **Renters**
  - Maximum Loan: $20,000
  - Interest: 3% repaid over five years
  - Applications reviewed on a first come/first served basis beginning August 15.

- **Sherman Social**
  - Thursday, July 28
    - Host: Rainier Station
    - Time: 6-8 PM

- **Sur职e to a Garden Party!**
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