

Focus on FRNNG

By Nate Lansing, board president



Hello, Field Regina Northrop neighbors, and happy 2023! For FRNNG, 2022 was a year in transition.

In September, the community elected

an entirely new board of directors. This new board has been working to help the organization adapt to the recent reduction in funding from the City of Minneapolis. Here are some of the actions the board has taken:

- Digging deep into our accounting to identify current expenses
- Reducing expenses by nearly 90%
- Creating a 2023 budget
- Identifying programs that have the most potential impact on the community
- Examining our current bylaws and policies and procedures

In 2022, FRNNG also accomplished some fun stuff, too:

- Held the 2nd Annual Minnehaha Creek Duck Race
- Produced Close to Home newsletter
- Distributed Low-Interest Home Improvement Loans
- Updated the website with monthly meeting minutes, financial information and past Close to Home issues
- Distributed tiny libraries to neighbors and community members

We're excited about getting FRNNG back to serving our community. But we need your help. On the back page of this newsletter, and on the website, you'll find a survey to help the board determine where FRNNG should be focusing its efforts and funding in the next couple of years. Please take some time to fill it out so that we can ensure the organization is delivering what you want our neighborhoods to be and do.

In May, FRNNG will be holding elections for new board members at the annual meeting. Check the website and watch the newsletter for information on open positions and how to get involved. Neighbors are welcome at all board meetings.

Who's who on the board

In September, Field Regina Northrop neighbors elected a board of directors. Its mission is to ensure the organization serves the needs of the neighborhood and to promote financial stability. Read more about these neighborhood volunteers at www.frnng.org.

President: Nate Lansing
Vice president: Dan Rauchman
Secretary: Lindsey Feiner
Treasurer: Karen Date
Field rep: Rachel Sporer
Regina rep: Colleen Stockmann
North Northrop rep: (open)
South Northrop rep: Connor Blacksher

At-large members:
Cathy Anhut
Charlie Anhut
Christina Brill
Steve Date
Wyatt Fertig
Patty Miller

New year, lots of changes

With the new year, Field Regina Northrop Neighborhood Group ushered in changes, both big and small.

- **New office.** McCrae Park now provides a storage area for supplies, records and equipment, as well as a mail drop.
- **New mailing address.** 906 E. 47th St., Minneapolis, MN 55407
- **New phone number.** Call FRNNG at 612-208-6004
- **Updated website.** Find calendars, financials, board minutes, photos, stories and much more at www.frnng.org.
- **Social media.** Follow FRNNG on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

Families flocked to McCrae Park for the Fire & Ice event Jan. 20. From smores to facepainting to broomball, winter fun was had by all.



25 years of braids, beauty, community and connection

By Patricia Miller

Ever since she was a little girl, Zerfie Ferede has been braiding hair. Box braids, Brandy braids, cornrows, twists, knots — all kinds of braids. For the majority of her career, she's been braiding hair to create beauty, community and connection at The Braid Factory on the corner of 46th and Chicago.

The Braid Factory, which opened 25 years ago, was the first braiding salon in Minnesota. Zerfie began as a stylist, then 12 years ago, she bought the salon, which attracts clients not only from the neighborhood, but from across the Twin Cities. Blacks, whites, Asians, men and women are drawn to the shop for the high-quality work and camaraderie. Clients who came in as children are now bringing their own children or grandchildren.

While braids have been an integral part of African culture for thousands of years, the style has been banned and discriminated against throughout history. With the Black Power Movement of the '60s and '70s, braiding experienced a surge of popularity as Black women began embracing more natural hairstyles.

"Braiding is our African culture, it's our thing," says Zerfie, who came to the U.S. from Ethiopia. She recalls attending cosmetology school and ending up teaching the braiding classes. She continues to teach braiding to her stylists, making sure they've mastered the skills and styles before serving clients.

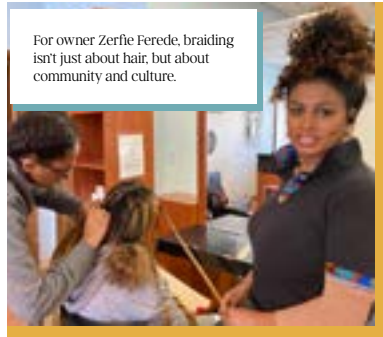
Those styles are constantly changing. Zerfie says right now, box braids are most popular for women, while men opt for dreadlocks. Emerging styles include crochets and ever-more-creative twists.

Braiding has soared in popularity, not only because of the styles, but also because it doesn't use hair-damaging chemicals. And once hair is braided, it's a timesaver. "You can just get up in the morning and go," Zerfie says.

But the process of braiding can be time-consuming, sometimes taking six or more hours. As a result, the salon becomes a place of connection. News and stories are shared, advice is given and friendships forged.

"We talk a lot, woman to woman," Zerfie says.

On a busy weekend, there may be six stylists working with clients, chatting, connecting and building community, just as they have been for over 25 years.



Updates from our City Council members

Ward 8

- **Ward 8 Community Benevolence Fund** is accepting applications. The Fund will award grants to eligible businesses, community organizations and 501(c)(3) groups serving the community near 38th and Chicago and/or encouraging the success and growth of Black citizens and community harmony.
- **Minneapolis seeks partnerships** for community-led programs through



Andrea Jenkins,
City Council president

- the Partnership Engagement Fund. Individuals, organizations and groups can apply for funding for small-scale, meaningful projects to make communities more socially connected, healthy and safe.
- **Homes wanted for pets**, adoption fees waived. Minneapolis Animal Care and Control is asking for the public's help in finding homes or foster homes for its adoptable animals.

McCrae Park: A FRNNG gathering spot for fun, exercise and events

McCrae Park is more than 50 city acres of something for everyone, tucked right into where Northrop meets Regina and Field. In 2022, the park was given a facelift not only outside but inside, as well, so residents don't have to wait until it warms up to start enjoying the changes.

Hockey rink

Minneapolis' most popular winter park activity, ice skating, is now even safer and more fun on the resurfaced hockey rink. With lights and plenty of space, residents can gather friends for a game of broomball or just skating.

Indoor games

Soon, through a partnership with Field Regina Northrop Neighborhood Group, the recreation center will be more than a place to come in out of the cold, but also to challenge friends to a game of air hockey or ping pong.

Pickleball courts

The resurfaced hockey rink is also home to brand-new pickleball courts. During park business hours, there's no cost to using equipment, so park visitors can try out a new pastime with no financial commitment.

Playground

Perhaps the most exciting improvement is the new playground, which was renovated in August 2022, replacing a playground that was more than 15 years

old. Kids now have a spacious and colorful new space to enjoy the outdoors.

Recreation center refresh

Residents won't have to miss the TV room or game table this summer because a new HVAC system is part of the renovation plan, making the recreation center a great place to cool off during office hours. New LED lights and wall paint are the final two updates planned for early this year, so by Spring we'll see this more than 75-year-old park looking better than ever.

Stop in!

Aside from the renovations, the best part about McCrae is the passionate staff who are eager to meet the community. They host a diverse array of drop-in programs so be sure to stop by, call the office, or visit the McCrae Park site on minneapolisparcs.org where you will find park hours and more.



Call for volunteers

Join other neighbors in making FRNNG an even better place to live. Check www.frnng.org for opportunities. Coming in April: Earth Day.

Ward 11

- **Minneapolis superintendent search.** The MPS school board has launched a search for its next superintendent. Target start date is July 1.
- **Just Deeds Project.** This initiative gives Minneapolis homeowners the chance to learn about and discharge the racial covenants recorded on their properties and reclaim their homes as equitable spaces.



Emily Koski,
City Council member

- **Protection from utilities being shut off;** help with utility costs. Minnesota has three ways to protect people from utility shutoffs during the winter: The Cold Weather Rule, Low-Income Energy Assistance Programs and The Gas Affordability Program.

See complete updates from Andrea and Emily at www.frnng.org.

News from the 5th District

The Field, Regina and Northrop neighborhoods fall into Minneapolis' 5th park district, which has been represented by Commissioner Steffanie Musich since 2014. Each month, Steffanie emails a newsletter to keep constituents informed of the activities, issues, job opportunities and events associated with the Minneapolis Park Board. She also posts frequent updates on Facebook.

Some highlights from December include:

- Opportunities to become a certified lifeguard (free to residents age 17 and under).
- Updates on the status of lake ice. Lake rink maintenance has been a challenge this year.
- Job opportunity on the park board horticulture team.

To stay in touch with Steffanie Musich, connect with her on Facebook or subscribe to her newsletter at tinyurl.com/5n79w8h7.



Mark Your Calendar

- 2023 Duck Race.
May 6! Sign up on the website to help with planning or at the event.
- Mason's Pancake Breakfast, May 7.
All proceeds go to Field playground equipment fund. See details online.

Field/Regina Northrop
Neighborhood Group
1620 E. 46th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55407



We need your ideas!

So that we can help provide the programs, events and activities most valued by FRRNG residents, we need to hear from you. Please take a few minutes to fill out this survey. Use the QR code or find it at www.frrng.org.

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