



Founded in 1911, we are a strong and vibrant community, dedicated to helping U of M women students achieve their academic goals. We forge lasting friendships by welcoming everyone, caring about each other, and exploring new ideas and places together.

November-December 2020 ~ No. 293

Conversation with a Woman Leader:

Fighting the Pandemic

Please join us Tuesday, November 10, at noon for our first-ever Conversation with a Woman Leader via Zoom and video. Our speaker is Kris Ehresmann, RN, MPH. She is an epidemiologist and the director of the Infectious Disease Epidemiology, Prevention and Control Division at the Minnesota Department of Health.

Ehresmann earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing at St. Olaf College and her Master's Degree in Public Health at the University of Minnesota, specializing in epidemiology. In addition, she has wide-ranging personal experiences that allow her to bring a wealth of knowledge and understanding to her role.



At the forefront of Minnesota's response to the current Covid-19 pandemic, Ehresmann oversees research and advises state leaders. She also has made multiple media appearances. But her expertise in infectious diseases goes far beyond the current pandemic and includes work on measles, SARS, drug-resistant tuberculosis, swine flu and others, locally and worldwide.

You will receive an email invitation shortly before the November 10 meeting giving you instructions for how to join us via Zoom.

Meeting at a Glance

**Conversation with
a Woman Leader
Tuesday, November 10
Noon**

Speaker

Kris Ehresmann, RN, MPH
Director of the Infectious
Disease Epidemiology, Preven-
tion and Control Division
Minnesota Department of
Health

Location

Via Zoom

Please check your email the week of November 1 for your invitation and a link to the meeting as well as a meeting ID and a passcode to enter the meeting.

President's Message:

Figuring out how to be together

When I was in graduate school, we spent a fair amount of time critiquing each other's theses. I remember a lot of talk back then about the passage to manhood and what that all meant. These days I am thinking about how I evolved from teenager to adult. What were the markers that loosened the negatives and empowered me to live a happy life?

When I was in 10th grade, we moved to a new town. School began before our home was sold, so I was sent to live with a single woman who lived in the new town. The adjustment was stressful. When my parents arrived, I got a puppy. That helped my transition as I adjusted to a new school, but it was slow going.

One day my brother gave me a 1951 Chevy. It had a primer paint job, gray, that had been applied with a brush. The starter was a push button on the dashboard just above the ashtray drawer. To the right of the starter was the choke, a cable knob one might pull out on a cold day to give the motor a bit more gas. But the best feature of the car was a third knob to pull, the sandbox. If you pulled that knob, it dropped sand in front of the rear tires if you needed to get going on a snowy patch.



President Georgia Heisserer in her beloved 1951 Chevy

My dad said if I could get it running, it was mine to keep. My older neighbor, who was an ace mechanic, was able to fix a plug for a mere 50 cents. I could hardly believe my luck. At the time, I took great pride in my sewing abilities, so I began reupholstering the panels of the two doors with a red and blue paisley print. I also had some big ideas for the paint job.

My mother had just bought herself a beautiful silver and gray Electrolux cylindrical vacuum cleaner and was thrilled with it. Do you remember those vacuums? The hose came out of one end, with debris collecting in a reusable bag that could be emptied on the opposite end. The directions clearly explained that if you transferred and

clamped the hose to the other end of the vacuum, you could adapt the vacuum to a spray painting device. Wow!

I proceeded to the hardware store on my bicycle, purchased a quart of fire engine red paint and announced my painting plans over dinner that evening. Barring the size of my mother's eyes as I explained the various ingenious uses available with her new vacuum, the script is vague in my current memory. What I do remember is how quickly my father responded. He told me he had a solution that did not involve my mother's treasured domestic tool.

It turned out the Detroit Lakes Community College was opening, and mine would be the very first car painted there. I returned that quart of fire engine red and, weeks later, we collected the most beautiful car I had ever imagined.

That car changed my life. I changed my own oil. I bought tires. Like my dog, it was a gift that kept on giving. Eventually, my girlfriends and I borrowed a camper and we struck out to a state park, stopping for lunch at one of our grandmother's homes along the way. Her 75-year-old grandmother was on a ladder scraping a second story window frame as we arrived! I thought, "Do old women do such things?" The park ranger had never witnessed girls camping. He asked if we were meeting boys there. Then he made sure at least one of us was 18. "Do young women camp for fun?"

Another time, with a cardboard sign in our back window announcing: WINNIPEG OR BUST, we headed for Canada. With the kind of trust our parents provided us, we accepted responsibility. We learned to set up borrowed tents, cook our own food and found our way around, using maps and common sense.

The world was not a frightening place, but a place to be explored and to share with friends, new and old. We certainly didn't need a car but being together in one form or another was mandatory. We had slumber parties, come as you are parties, birthday parties and, yes, clubs.

Here we are, the same girls, but older, you and I, during a pandemic, figuring out how to be together. Have we come full circle? We are still making friends, looking for adventure, learning new skills and proving ourselves capable. By now we have become more versatile than we were as children. We can arrange a yard visit with a neighbor or arrange a visit by phone or Zoom. One thing that we do know is that someone needs to take the initiative. You need to be intentional. Fun, friendships and activities need some forethought.

During this miserable Covid-19 pandemic, what is your plan to stay connected? Whatever it is, it will take some action by you. There are a lot of us out here and we need each other. Let me know what you come up with. It's going to be a long winter, and if there is one thing I learned when I was a kid, it's that we can have fun when we figure out how to be together.

— Georgia Heisserer

Fall Welcome and Scholarship Day enthusiasm bodes well for the future of our virtual gatherings

While few things beat the joy of actually getting together, the Fall Welcome and Scholarship Day gathering via Zoom was a successful event, with 54 women attending the meeting. Several scholarship recipients also joined us.

In addition to enjoying the premiere of new club videos, which we describe below, attendees heard brief remarks from President Georgia Heisserer, Scholarship Committee Chair Georgia Nygaard and Vice President of Scholarship Fundraising Marian Champlin.

“The virtual Fall Welcome and Scholarship Day was a huge success,” said member and former President Millie

Woodbury. “The club’s purpose to provide scholarships was heightened with the presence of numerous recipient videos — more than we’ve ever had when meeting in person.

“I enjoyed the short history of the UMWC—loved the photos — and the talks by our two Georgias and Marian clarified and enthusiastically promoted our purpose,” Woodbury said. “This program was time well spent.”

That’s exactly the kind of enthusiasm organizers hope to generate for upcoming virtual events. Please consider joining us.

Tapping into the power of video

One of the most important questions facing club leadership as they anticipated the UMWC 2020–2021 season was how to engage members and keep their enthusiasm and sense of purpose strong during the pandemic.

“Because we couldn’t get together physically, we needed a way to connect with members that would be the next best thing to being there,” said President Georgia Heisserer. “We especially wanted them to come away from the Fall Welcome and Scholarship Day meeting with the same great feeling they always got when they heard from our scholarship recipients.”

And so they made some videos.



Video producer Jeff Kaufer at work in his studio

The first, called *Making a Difference*, is a five-minute piece that captures the history and impact of the club and includes on-camera interviews with Heisserer and Vice President of Scholarship Fundraising Marian Champlin. It also prominently features Rosa Ruiz Mendez, a three-year scholarship recipient who is now a registered nurse at Children’s Hospital.

The rest of the videos, called *Meet the Recipients*, were filmed and submitted by scholarship recipients themselves, who used the opportunity to introduce themselves, talk about their field of study and thank donors.

Members had an opportunity to see all of the videos for the first time at the Scholarship Day gathering via Zoom in October.

“We loved the videos,” said Scholarship Committee Chair Georgia Nygaard. “And the best part is that members got to hear from 36 scholarship recipients, which is more than they usually meet,” Nygaard said.

Making an emotional connection is what video does best, according to member Nancy Kluver, who worked with video producer Jeff Kaufer in making the films. “One of our challenges was not being able to actually film the club in action because so many of our activities are happening virtually,” Kluver said. “But we were able to get Georgia Heisserer, Marian and Rosa in the studio, and we have a large collection of photographs that helped us tell the story.”

And, of course, video lives forever. If you missed the meeting or would like to view the videos again, the UMWC website includes links to [Making a Difference](#) and [Meet the Recipients](#). And here is the link to play [all the videos](#), one after the other, as they were viewed at the luncheon.

Newsletter Deadline is December 14

The deadline for the January-February newsletter is Monday, December 14, 2020. Please submit articles, information and photos to Nancy Kluver, newsletter editor, at Kluver.nancy@gmail.com.

Our holiday tradition continues

Although the pandemic is keeping us from gathering at Eastcliff this year for our annual Holiday Tea, we are delighted to announce that the toy drive for children hospitalized at the University Medical Center will continue.

Fred and Dorothy Waltz, along with Marian Champlin, have graciously offered their homes as drop-off locations for the gifts. They will be accepting gifts Tuesday, December 1, and Wednesday, December 2, between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m.

Marian lives in South Minneapolis at 5437 Elliot Avenue, one block east of Chicago Avenue and a half block south of 54th Street. If you are coming on 35W, go east from the Diamond Lake Road exit.

Fred and Dorothy live just west of Cleveland Avenue at 1666 Coffman Street in Falcon Heights, with the building entrance on Larpenteur Avenue. There is the first building west of the new Bell Museum on the Saint Paul campus. Be careful about the one-way signs in the parking lot!



In a reminder of happier times, Georgia Heisserer (left) and Dorothy Waltz posed with some of the toys at last year's Holiday Tea. Although we've cancelled the tea for 2020, the toy drive goes on, continuing a long tradition.

If you would like a printable map for either of these locations, please email Dorothy at waltz.ds@yahoo.com and she will email a PDF of the map.

If you are unable to deliver gifts on the designated days but still wish to donate, please contact Dorothy Waltz at 651-917-0930 or waltz.ds@yahoo.com. She will try to arrange a pick up for your gifts.

Financial gifts also are extremely welcome to support patient and family programming at the hospital as well as gifts and supplies for the Holiday Family Gift Giving. If it is easier for you to donate money, please write a check made out to UMC Holiday Benefit Gift and mail it to Dorothy Waltz, 1666 Coffman Street #313, Falcon Heights, MN 55108-1340.

Please help us share the holiday spirit with these families, who are truly grateful for our efforts as this diffi-

cult year comes to an end. Let's keep our holiday tradition strong!

Wondering what to buy?

Here is a list of popular and most-needed items. Please remember that they can only accept new, unwrapped toys, books, clothes and crafts in their original packaging, preferably in plastic bags directly from the store. They cannot accept used items.

Infants and toddlers: Rattles, light-up and sound toys, links and plastic rings, O-balls and infant kick-and-play crib toys.

Preschool and school-age patients: Thomas & Friends trains (die-cast style), Paw Patrol toys and Lego kits.

Teens: Lego kits, headphones, slippers and slipper socks, Burt's Bees kits and Minnesota sports team apparel.

Books: Baby board books, books with princess themes, books with superhero themes and the very latest in young adult fiction.



Fred Waltz (left) was greeted by Claire Stolee as he delivered toys to the University Medical Center.

Membership update

We have had one new member since the last newsletter. Roberta Shellenberger, a friend of Liz Grimmer, has joined our group. Welcome Roberta!

As the renewals have come in, we have had several directory changes. We have new addresses for Connie Strand, Margie Daniels, Marlys Giesecke and Joan Prairie. Maggie Hoover, Virginia Mahlum, Jo Ann Slifer and Bonnie Ulman have new phone numbers. Jane Lufkin and Jean Weissberg have changes in both their address and phone number. Kathy Ball, Harriet Johnson, Carrie MacNabb and Kathleen O'Brien have new email addresses.

For a current list of new members and their contact information and/or a list of directory changes, please contact Nancy Myers. Also, let Myers know if your contact information changes.

Section News



Special interest groups such as the Vagabonds are holding their meetings virtually via Zoom. On November 16, the group will hear from Veena Deo, who lived in York, England, as Director of the Hamline-in-York program. She will show the group York as a walled medieval city and capitol city for Romans, Vikings and Anglo-Saxons. She also will share her experiences visiting Ireland's Immigration Museum, Penistone Hill of the Brontë Sisters fame and more. If you are interested in the program, please contact Dorothy Waltz at 651-917-0903 or at waltz.ds@yahoo.com.

Consider trying something new

Although the pandemic is keeping us from getting together personally, many of our special interest sections are still meeting virtually. Our book clubs as well as the Vagabonds, Art, Nature and Movies are going strong — just to name a few.

The Movies group, for example, is meeting via Zoom and in November will share highlights of a favorite musical they have recently viewed. Chair Marcia Cheney also keeps in touch with members through email and recently sent several options to link to movies streaming through sources such as the Riverview Theater in south Minneapolis.

You didn't get a chance to sign up for a new activity in October at our virtual Fall Welcome and Scholarship Day gathering, but you can still join a new group. Your directory includes contact information for each of the section chairs. Get in touch with the section chair and try something new. We want to fill the coming season with fun and friends, even if it's only virtual.

Women's Health Issues postpones presentation

The Women's Health Issues section is postponing its November 6 presentation, entitled "Will You Walk with Me, Corrective Exercise," with Judy George from the Shoreview Y. Villa Park and the Roseville Library, where the group often meets, are unavailable because of the pandemic. Organizers hope to reschedule the meeting in the spring and will notify members if that is possible.



Members of the Nonfiction section enjoyed a socially distanced garden party at the home of Joy Chaput in September. The group discussed a book about Winston Churchill, with Chaput doing her best Churchill, complete with chocolate cigar. In fact, all participants read a famous Churchill quote and enjoyed their own chocolate cigar. "Members were so thrilled to be able to meet in a safe outdoor space and enjoy a wonderful lunch," said member Bonnie Marten.



Other members of Nonfiction attending the garden party were (from left) Elsa Carpenter, Joy Chaput, Nancy Bennett and Elizabeth Brady.



In September, Art section members visited Franconia Sculpture Park in Shafer, Minn., an outdoor park featuring a wide variety of unusual installations. Here Sharon Fields (left) and a friend examine a piece of art.

CLUB NEWS

University of Minnesota • McNamara Alumni Center
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1. Cut out or copy this form along with the accompanying address label.
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Thank you scholarship recipients!

A sincere thank you to all of our UMWC scholarship recipients for the special video presentations that you provided at our virtual Fall Welcome and Scholarship Day meeting. Wishing all of you a successful and enjoyable academic year of study.

— *The Scholarship Committee*

Memorial gifts

- For Ruth Jones by Jocelyn Kuo
- For Evelyn McDonald by Sue Gilbertson
- For Corwin Peterson by Marian and Keith Champlin
- For Bill Rathbun by Joan Rathbun
- For Peter J. Reed by Maggie Reed
- For Robert J. Roelofs, M.D., by Patricia Roelofs
- For Gladys Turnquist by Ardella Norenberg, UMWC
- For Janet Weiss, UMWC President 1997–1998, by the estate of Gerhard H. Weiss, from John M. Weiss, James D. Weiss and Susan E. Weiss Spencer
- For Joanne Westley by Diane Schweizer

Honoring gifts

- In honor of Lindsay and Kelly Buhl by Nancy Hanson
- In honor of Henry W. Jones III and Pamela Powers by Mary Glaeser
- In honor of Women Scholars by Karen Buggs

In this issue's UMWC Online Extra

In our latest Online Extra feature you will meet scholarship recipient Emma Faeflen, who came to the United States from Liberia at age nine. She has learned a lot about finding community and determining how to shape a promising future, no matter the odds.



You will find the story as an added feature to the online version of our newsletter.

Board of Directors Meets November 10

The UMWC board of directors will meet Tuesday, November 10, at 10 a.m. The board will conduct its meeting virtually via Zoom. If you would like to attend the meeting, please contact Connie Cundy to obtain the meeting ID and passcode necessary to get access to the meeting.

Living a better future

UMWC scholarship recipient Emma Faeflen, a University of Minnesota sophomore, came to the United States from Liberia at age nine. At 10, she moved to Minnesota.

Her parents emigrated from that war-torn country “for a better future for our family,” Faeflen said. “They had endured two civil wars and their aftermath.” Leaving Liberia in different years, they both arrived in the United States before Emma. When they sent for her, Faeflen initially lived in Philadelphia with her father and then permanently with her mother in Minnesota.

“I had an idealistic picture of America—a lot of expectations,” Faeflen said. “Some were met, some were too idealistic.”

For starters, although Liberians speak English, it’s not “American English,” she explained, so the language adjustment was difficult. “It was a culture shock, even though Liberia is heavily influenced by America.”

At school in particular, she “didn’t feel understood, but it got easier,” Faeflen said.

And then she soared.

She attended Excel Academy, a charter school, for two years, then St. Alphonsus Catholic School and finally Totino Grace High School, where she was a speech captain, a Girls’ State participant and a founding member of a school group called SOURCE, designed to “celebrate underrepresented children.” She held leadership positions on the yearbook staff and in art club and Indian culture club.

When it came to choosing a college, Faeflen said, “At first I wanted to go outstate. I thought the U was too close to home and that it would be my dream school if only it were in another state.” But she came to another realization as she started exploring colleges. “I’m a first generation student and no one tells you how expensive college really is,” she said. Once she was accepted into the University’s President’s Emerging Scholarship (PES) Program, the financial burden became somewhat easier, and now she wouldn’t want to be anywhere else.

“The U is a big place but once you find your community, it becomes small,” Faeflen said. “I really like it. I call myself the U recruiter.”

She’s found many friends through PES and is currently a PES mentor, working with freshmen. “I’ve always had a burning desire to help people,” Faeflen wrote in her UMWC scholarship application. “I aspire to leave a legacy of hope, to be a person who never gives up on people.” That ambition draws her to psychology and although she won’t officially declare a major until her junior year, she is leaning toward psychology, with a minor in African American studies, and hopes to eventually achieve a PhD. “I’m very

interested in how someone’s environment plays a role in shaping them,” she said. She also volunteers at the University YMCA because she “loves working with children.”

Her focus and drive may very well come from her mother, who is her hero. “She is resilient and headstrong,” Faeflen says. “She believes in herself, knows what she wants and gets it. She’s always questioning and never had a doubt in her mind that I would make it.”

The UMWC scholarship is especially welcome because the PES program extends only to freshmen and seniors. “When I learned I’d received the women’s club scholarship, I was so happy, so shocked,” Faeflen says. “I want members to know how grateful and thankful I am. It’s truly impactful—and I hope that someday I can pay it back.”

Echoing Faeflen’s mother, we have no doubt either that she will achieve her goal.



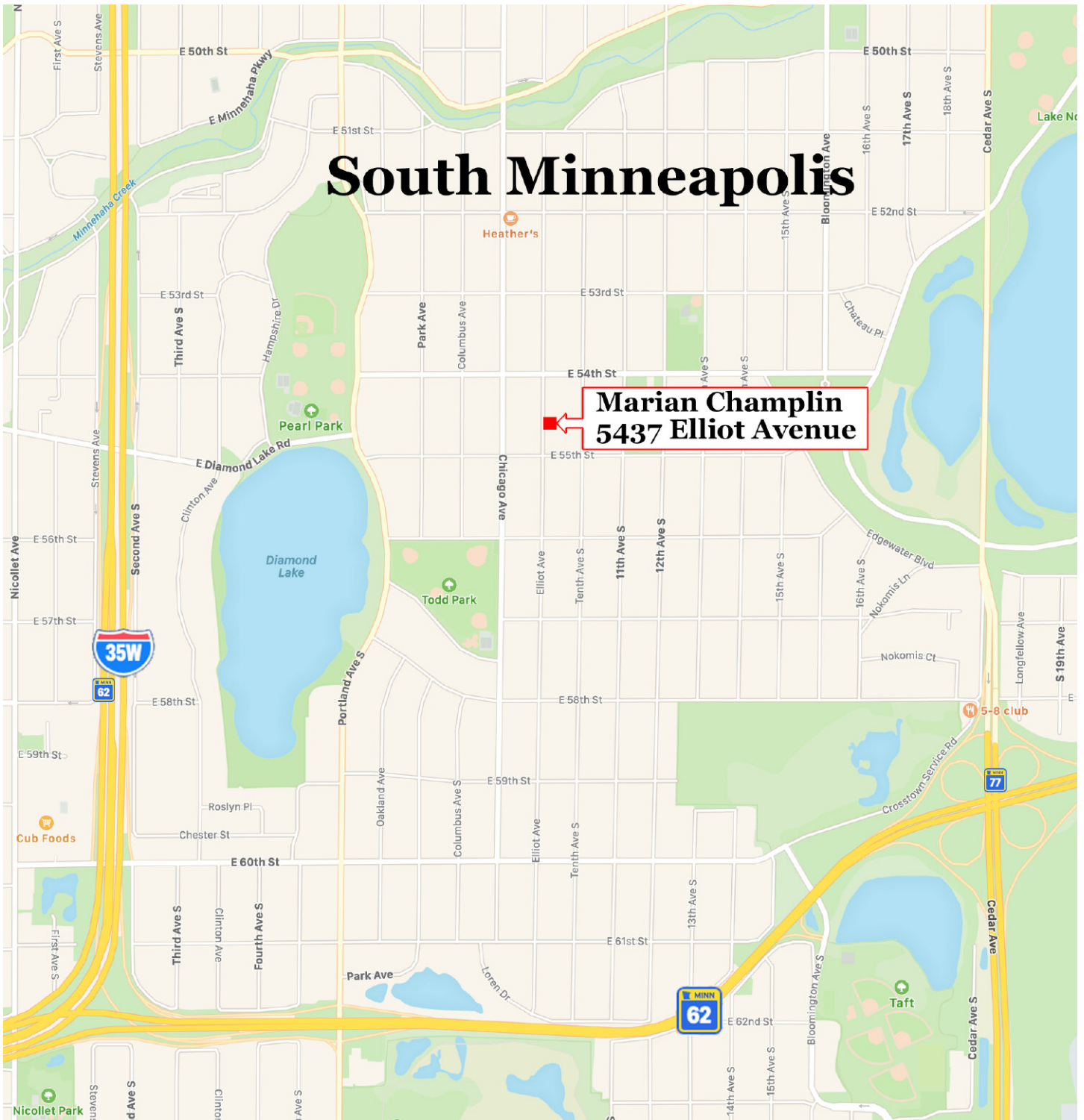
Map to the home of Marian Champlin

5437 Elliot Avenue

FOR HOLIDAY GIFT DROP-OFF

Tuesday, December 1 • Wednesday, December 2

10:00 A.M.–1:00 P.M.



Map to the home of Dorothy & Fred Waltz

1666 Coffman Street

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