

Closures, sanctions cause worry

As Minnesota group home residents struggle with a lack of staffing and closures, another curveball has been thrown at many residents and their families. In July the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) announced that it would revoke the license of St. Paul-based Bridges MN. State officials alleged “serious and repeated” health and safety violations, as well as maltreatment of residents.

The revocation was to go into effect July 12. Bridges MN, which has about 500 clients and more than 90 facilities statewide, appealed the state action. That in turn could trigger a long and complicated process with state officials, which could wind up in the hands of an administrative law judge.

The revocation was announced days after service providers picketed outside the governor’s mansion in St. Paul, to draw attention to the dire situation they face and plead for a special legislative session to address the wage disparities. More than 170 group homes across Minnesota have closed since last fall.

Staff shortages and low wages for direct care staff are to blame for the closings. The action in St. Paul was meant to a situation that has grown beyond the crisis stage.

Signs held outside of the governor’s mansion asked, “Where will I live?”

The closings this far represent more than 4 percent of the state’s group homes.

Direct care staff members are leaving due to the demands of the work, and the ability to make more money in other jobs. Group home operators struggle with state and federal reimbursements through Medicaid and Medicare, at about \$14 per hour. Not all operators are able to subsidize those wages.

A survey by the housing umbrella group ARRM indicated high burnout among workers, with 67 percent of those surveyed saying they plan to leave their jobs within a year.

It has become a vicious cycle. Disabled people who have lived in the community with services and supports have been forced into group homes when they couldn’t hire staff. Group homes that lack staff are forced to move residents to unfamiliar facilities, or send them to live with family.

The notion of several hundred more people without places to live is worrisome. The staffing issues overshadow the state’s sanctions against Bridges MN.

Bridges MN is based in St. Paul’s Midway area. It has about 500 clients and more than 90 facilities.

A revocation on the order of the Bridges MN action against home and community based service license is a rare move for DHS. But the situation is one of repeated violations and substantiated findings of maltreatment, continued non-compliance with state laws and rules, and continued non-compliance with a conditional license that has

GROUP HOMES To page 3



Tim Benjamin and Buddy, one of his faithful pets.

Benjamin was very dedicated to disability rights, journalism

Tim Benjamin will be remembered as someone dedicated to shining a light on issues affecting Minnesota’s disability community. He also championed the rights of people with disabilities. Benjamin, who worked at *Access Press* for more than two decades, died July 11. He was 69 and lived in Arden Hills.

His death saddened those who had followed his health challenges since 2019, and had cheered on his progress.

“Tim Benjamin was a real asset to the disability community,” said *Access Press* Board Chairman Joel Ulland. “He had an

ability to connect with everyone he met and use the power of the newspaper to make positive changes for people with disabilities. He will be missed.”

Fifth-generation Minnesotan Timothy Lee Benjamin was born April 22, 1953 in Minneapolis, to Fred and Phyllis Ann (Laughlin) Benjamin.

The Benjamin family moved to Arizona when he was very young. He attended parochial school as a youngster and Camelback High School in Phoenix. He had many memories of growing up in a

BENJAMIN To page 9

NEWS DIGEST



Fair Dining Guide
Page 6

Park was his vision
Page 2

Check polling places
Page 3

Homeless issues
Page 4

New crisis line
Page 8

He wrote a travel guide
Page 3



2022 Minnesota State Fair offers accommodations

Planning ahead can make the Minnesota State Fair a more enjoyable experience for people with disabilities and their family and friends. This year’s fair is August 25 to Labor Day, September 5.

Minnesota State Fair Accessibility Services offers many services for fairgoers with disabilities. Go to www.mnstatefair.org/general-info/accessibility-guide/ or email accessibility@mnstatefair.org. Phone number is 651-288-4448. The website provides much detailed information on Midway and Kidway rides, and other attractions.

A go-to spot for disabled fairgoers is Care & Assistance, which provides a number of accessibility services. Care & Assistance is located at 1338 Dan Patch Ave., across from West End Market. Hours are 8 a.m.-11 p.m.

Before you arrive

The Minnesota State Fair’s security program includes walk-through metal detectors at all entry gates. Bags, purses, coolers and packages will be subject to search at each of the fair’s entrances. Prohibited items include weapons, fireworks, alcoholic beverages, drones and bikes/skateboards/skates/hover boards. Other items may be refused at the discretion of fair management or police.

Leave home any pocket knives, scissors or similar small items that could be viewed as potentially dangerous. Downsize what is carried as much as possible.

Along with bringing devices such as



Midway and Kidway attractions offer accommodations.

fidgets and noise-canceling headphones, medications, sunscreen, hats and other things needed for a typical day, fairgoers need to remember to bring some patience. Staffing issues everywhere are likely to affect the fair, transportation to and from the fair and fair attractions themselves. Masks are not required but fairgoers

are encouraged to have a mask handy. Fairgoers may wear them if they feel more comfortable doing so, especially inside building.

Monitor public health advisories as they may change. People need to be mindful of their symptoms. Anyone testing positive

STATE FAIR To page 6

■ ■ ■ ■ EDITORIAL

More than 170 facilities closed

Group homes were our answer to institutions; what happens to us now?

Are we forgetting the past?
Minnesota long relied on a system of state institutions, referred to as state hospitals, to house people with an array of disabilities. Private and county facilities also provided housing for large groups of disabled people. Those of us of a certain age might remember when counties converted “poor farms” into smaller-scale institutions. Many people with disabilities wound up living in those settings.

These types of housing were far from ideal. Facilities were often old and in deteriorated condition. Staff shortages and poorly trained staff were common situations.

People were warehoused, plain and simple.

Deinstitutionalization in Minnesota began in the 1980s. It was a long and controversial process. Communities where state hospitals and private facilities were located objected to the loss of jobs. State officials quarreled as to what future living arrangements would be best. Questions were raised about where people would go when large facilities closed.

A key takeaway from the long fight to close institutions is this: People needed and still need safe place to live in their home communities. While not ideal for everyone, group homes have long been a viable option for many people.

Institutionalization kept people with disabilities out of their home communities and at times, away from proper care and support. Advocacy organizations and self-advocates made the case that unnecessary institutionalization is a civil rights violation and is discriminatory. It was a hard fight, played out before the Minnesota Legislature and in the courts. Closing all of the institutions took more than 25 years.

The Arc Minnesota’s Steve Larson, who is now retired, recalled the years of effort in an interview several years ago:

"It wasn't an easy task. It took a lot of time, it took a lot of effort, there were some meetings that weren't very fun but people worked through it and were able to proceed. (And) we did it. The biggest hurdle was the overall perception that people couldn't be served in the community....but once they learned and

we could change that perception, then things started to snowball."

As deinstitutionalization spooled out, Minnesota was seen as one of the most progressive states. Efforts here were held up as a national model.

Twenty-two years ago, Minnesota closed the Fergus Falls State Hospital. It was the last state hospital to close. At one point Minnesota had nine state hospitals for people with developmental disabilities alone.

A key takeaway from the long fight to close institutions is this: People needed and still need safe places to live in their home communities. While not ideal for everyone, group homes have long been a viable option for many people.

What made deinstitutionalization work was the creation of that network of group homes across the state. So did staffing that allowed people with disabilities to have their own homes, hold a job, go to school and participate in community life.

The threat to those options is ongoing and all too real. It is escalating.

■ ■ ■ ■ HISTORY NOTE

Islands of Peace park area is legacy of disabled veteran’s efforts

A Mississippi River park area between Fridley and Brooklyn Center is not only one of the Twin Cities region's first accessible park spaces, it is also a testament to the tenacity of a disabled veteran. The Islands of Peace Park includes accessible fixtures, trails, natural areas, camping and picnic spots, and fishing piers. It was not only designed to be wheelchair-accessible, it also was one of the first regional recreation areas to use Braille signage.

The Islands of Peace - Durnham Island, Chase Island and Gil Hodges Island – have a remarkable story.

“I watched the cars with their boats and campers going up north to get away for a while and find some cool spot to enjoy. This is fine for those people, but then I would come back to the cities and go [to] the vets’ hospital, soldiers’ home and the nursing homes. These people had no place to go and if they did, there is nobody to take them even for an hour or a day.”

That was the observation of Edward T. Wilmes, a disabled veteran living in Fridley in the early 1970s. His dream took flight 50 years ago this summer, with needed approvals.

Wilmes had baseball aspirations before he entered military service. An Indiana childhood friend was Gil Hodges, who was later first baseman for the Brooklyn Dodgers throughout the 1950s. Hodges was instrumental in the Dodgers’ World Series championships in 1955 and 1959, and played on the team for its first year in Los Angeles.



The Islands of Peace were the vision of a disabled veteran

Wilmes named one island after his ballplayer friend; the other two are named after pioneer land owners in that area.

The World War II U.S. Navy pharmacist’s mate saw action in Europe, including D-Day. Media accounts and old photos don’t make it clear as to what Wilmes’ disabilities were. Some news stories indicate that he was paraplegic due to war injuries. Photos show him walking with a cane.

Other news articles said that he had a heart condition. Later in life he developed severe arthritis and had knee and hip replacement surgery. He also went through treatment for alcoholism.

Wilmes grew up with a disabled mother and understood the need for a recreational space for people with disabilities, describing in one news article the family’s efforts to help her enjoy the outdoors.

He came to the Minnesota Veterans

Administration hospital for treatment of his war wounds and made his home with a Fridley family for a time. At one point he lived in a trailer on park property.

Wilmes would alternately shun the media or seek reporters out to tell the park’s story. He’d badger public officials for action on the park and then show up at their offices with baked treats.

The quest for Islands of Peace took key steps in 1972. The project had plenty of community support, but also encountered much red tape. Durnham Island was legally in Brooklyn Park and was once eyed as a future high-rise development site.

Considerable fundraising and volunteer work was needed to obtain land and make the park a success. It opened in 1973. Its visitors center opened a few years later.

Chase Island can be reached via walking bridge, but Durnham and Gil Hodges islands can only be reached by boat. Islands of Peace is now part of the Anoka County Riverfront Regional Park and the county’s parks system.

Wilmes died in 1985 and is buried at Fort Snelling National Cemetery. Markers commemorate him and all veterans at the park he cared so much about.

The History Note is a monthly column produced in cooperation with the Minnesota Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities. Past History Notes and other disability history may be found at www.mnddc.org



Website: accesspress.org
email: access@accesspress.org phone: 651-644-2133

Executive Director..... Holly Anderson
Editor..... Jane McClure
Development and Marketing Mary Graba
Web and Operations Manager..... Tricia Donovan
Board of Directors..... Mohamed Alfash, John Clark, Mark Daly, Brendan Downes,
..... Erica Fair, Shannah Mulvihill, Walt Seibert, Joel Ulland, Kay Willshire
Cartoonist..... Scott Adams
Production.....In-Fin Tuan

Co-Founder/Publisher Wm. A. Smith, Jr. (1990-96)
Co-Founder/Publisher/ Editor-in-Chief Charles F. Smith (1990-2001)
Editor-in-Chief/Executive Director Tim Benjamin (2001-2020)

EDITORIAL: Editorial submissions and news releases on topics of interest to persons with disabilities, or persons serving those with disabilities, are welcomed. We reserve the right to edit all submissions. Editorial material and advertising do not necessarily reflect the view of the editor/publisher of *Access Press*.

DEADLINE: 15th of each month.

CIRCULATION/DISTRIBUTION: Distributed the 1st of each month through more than 200 locations statewide. Approximately 750 copies are mailed to individuals, including political, business, institutional and civic leaders.

SUBSCRIPTION: Free and accessible to anyone in Minnesota, visit www.accesspress.org to subscribe.

ABOUT ACCESS PRESS: A monthly newspaper published for persons with disabilities by Access Press, Ltd.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Access Press, PO Box 40006, Industrial Station, St. Paul, MN 55104-8006.

INQUIRIES AND ADDRESS CHANGES should be directed to: Access Press, PO Box 40006, Industrial Station, St. Paul, MN 55104-8006; 651-644-2133; email: access@accesspress.org Website: accesspress.org

Minnesota voters must know where to go before casting primary ballots



Polling place volunteers can assist with voting.

Minnesota voters will be casting ballots for members of Congress, all state constitutional offices, state senators and representatives and many local officials. All Minnesotans will have primary elections on Tuesday, August 9.

Primary elections winnow the field of candidates prior to a general election. Some primaries are held as parties select a general election candidate. For nonpartisan offices, primaries narrow the field to a few candidates for November.

But don't head to that old familiar polling place without doing a quick check first. Minnesota earlier this year went through redistricting. Redistricting is a process that uses U.S. Census data to shape everything from city council wards to Congressional districts.

Residents of small communities may not see a change in where to vote or in which office to vote for at the local level. But larger communities likely had changes that put voters in a different ward or district than they were in for the previous election.

Congressional and state legislative district lines all had changes.

The quickest way to check on polling places and candidates on one's ballot is to go to the Minnesota Secretary of State's office website and look for the poll finder. It allows voters to find their polling places and other information, by zip code, county and address.

Candidate information is also posted there as soon as it becomes available. Minnesotans statewide will vote for candidates for statewide offices in a

primary. Local candidates will vary by location.

The information has been updated since statewide redistricting was completed this spring. Go to <https://pollfinder.sos.state.mn.us/> to find out where to vote.

Polling places can change with redistricting, with the move of district lines. Election officials like to avoid having polling places for one area that are outside of that area. They also hope to avoid combining polling places and dealing with overcrowding during busy elections.

Polling places can also be changed if a place no longer is available to host elections. One example is if a building is sold and used for a different purpose between elections. A church used for voting may close, for example, and have its building sold for a private use.

In some communities, public facilities long used to host polling places are no longer available for security reasons.

Not only is it important for people to find if a polling place has changed, that polling place also should be looked at with a careful eye to see how accessible it is. Despite the best efforts of local election officials, details can be missed.

Even a small lip on a doorway or doorway width can create a barrier. Learn more about polling place accessibility and how to report access problems at <https://www.sos.state.mn.us/elections-voting/election-day-voting/polling-place-accessibility/>

IN MEMORIAM

Chevrette worked on employment needs, and wrote a travel guide

Michael "Chevy" Chevrette loved his large circle of family and friends, travel and the Minnesota State Fair. Chevrette died in June in his hometown of Negaunee, Michigan, with family by his side. He was 60 and had lived in Fridley for many years.

Memorial services were held in July in Michigan and Minnesota.

Chevrette grew up in Michigan. He was active in sports at Negaunee High School before a 1979 diving accident resulted in a spinal cord injury. He completed high school in Negaunee and also attended Northern Michigan University.

He went to Courage Center in Golden Valley for rehabilitation. He also took a computer course at Multi-Resource Centers in Minneapolis. He married Jan Folden in 1987; the couple later divorced.

Chevrette worked for several years at Deluxe Corporation, as a computer programmer. He led the company's Corporate Diversity Council Communications Committee. He was also a member of the Employers' Network, which was committed to hiring people with disabilities, and served on other groups .

Deluxe helped support a Minnesota disability travel guide Chevrette researched and wrote, as did a Judd Jacobson grant award in 2000.

The guide outlined the accessibility



Michael "Chevy" Chevrette and one of his canine companions

of lodging facilities, restaurants, parks, theaters, museums, art galleries, historical sites and places throughout the state. It included information on a range of features essential to making such places fully accessible, such as accessible

parking spots, door widths, bathroom layouts, fire alarms and phones for people with hearing disabilities, Braille availability and other information.

The guide was inspired in 1999 when Chevrette was on his way to a restaurant in Minneapolis, and realized he didn't have good information on accommodations there.

"There was a need for an in-depth resource for people with all kinds of handicaps mobility, visual, and hearing impairments," said Chevrette in an interview.

The travel guide became a project of Access for All, an educational nonprofit organization Chevrette started to provide information on accessibility to persons with disabilities and older travelers.

He did interviews about disability travel and about the state fair. He wrote articles for *Access Press*, including one on attending every single day of the fair.

Chevrette also worked as a coordinator of what was Disability Linkage Line and is now Disability Hub. He worked for Goodwill/Easter Seals in employment, which was also a longtime volunteer focus of his. Yet another employer was Opportunity Partner, where he put his IT skills to work.

Chevrette was an active volunteer. He served on and chaired the *Access Press* Board and what is now the Minnesota Council on Disability. He was very

active with the Metropolitan Center for Independent Living. He served on the Big Brothers/Big Sisters board.

He was a mentor for elementary school-age children, and had a soft spot for children with disabilities.

He won several awards, including a national award from U.S. Sen. Bob Dole, the Jacobson award and the 1999 Phillips Award from Courage Center.

He enjoyed concerts and Gophers and Twins games.

Chevrette is survived by a sister, three brothers and their families, and many other relatives. His obituary in the *Negaunee Mining Journal* also paid tribute to the many personal care attendants who had made his life easier for the past 45 years.

When asked what he thought the biggest obstacle for people with disabilities is, Chevrette said, "There are a lot of barriers you have to break down. If you can get people to know you rather than your disability, you're breaking down the societal barrier of people's attitudes toward persons with disabilities. Your life at any time can be difficult or easy; it's a matter of how you adapt. You have to see the good in every situation."

GROUP HOMES

From page 1

been in place since 2020.

Aldrich Boarding Care Home, LLC, doing business as Bridges MN, provides services to individuals in 48 community residential services facilities, seven integrated community settings and in clients' or families' homes.

State documents indicate that Bridges MN was placed on conditional status in March 2020 after a 2019 licensing review. Violations included knowingly withholding relevant information from the DHS commissioner, denying access to records, failing to ensure the health, safety and rights of persons receiving services, and failing to comply with background study requirements.

Licensing reviews and complaint investigations over the past two years

revealed what DHS called "a pattern of non-compliance" with license terms and state rules and statutes.

Allegations detailed by DHS are shocking, including physical abuse, maltreatment and neglect of clients. Staffers at Forest Lake and Kimball facilities are alleged to have had sexual relationships with vulnerable adults. One person who was receiving home care was found in squalid conditions, and later died.

Bridges MN officials disagree with the findings, releasing a statement challenging the allegations. State law allows Bridges MN to continue providing services for people under its care during the appeal.

An appeal could take up to a year to be resolved.

COMPLEX REHAB AWARENESS WEEK

AUGUST 15-19



Your professional team -
providing custom rehab
mobility, bath chairs,
specialty beds, & supplies

651-287-3544

TWIN CITIES • MANKATO



FROM OUR COMMUNITY

Unsheltered people with disabilities have unique needs that must be met

by Lora Esse

The dilemma of unsheltered people living in encampments is widely known. Less known is how many unsheltered Minnesotans are people with disabilities. These encampment residents and the people who seek to support them face a series of difficult issues, especially in Minneapolis.

Volunteers working with unsheltered people in Minneapolis have seen that more and more of those with disabilities have very limited access to health care of all types. As Minneapolis aggressively evicts and displaces those living in encampments, people with disabilities face some of the greatest struggles.

City officials contend that encampments are illegal and people should go to shelters, But there’s a whole host of reasons why shelters don’t work for everyone. People may feel unsafe or preyed upon in shelters. Sleeping in

large rooms full of strangers can have triggering effects. Shelters may also lack a wide array of disability accommodations. Why not seek housing through various programs? Waiting lists for deeply affordable housing are very long – sometimes with waits as long as three years. It’s also all too easy for disabled people to get into housing and then be evicted and homeless again. Housing that is available may also be in suburban areas, away from needed services and supports, access to transit, and proximity to community and familiar places. Minneapolis has recently started a new policy, posting no trespassing signs without dates indicated. Officials used to give specific dates for encampment residents’ evictions. But as residents and community supporters defended the camps, Minneapolis switched the notice to “week of” rather than specific dates. In

a recent encampment clearance, four city blocks were cordoned off and about 150 law enforcement personnel sent in. This was at 6 a.m. Residents were given ten minutes to leave, with no places to go. They were not allowed to take their tents and belongings. No help was offered. In these situations unsheltered people with disabilities can all too easily lose needed medications, needed papers and devices they need to live their daily lives. Imagine being without life-saving prescriptions or even a cane. The displacements not only have immediate impacts, they also can affect health care over a longer term. One troubling issue is that volunteer street medics and harm reduction folks regularly visit camps to provide Narcan in the event of overdoses. They provide clean supplies, wound care and basic health care. Various organizations and volunteers prepare and deliver healthy,

hot meals. When people are constantly being displaced it’s difficult to find them. That makes it difficult if not impossible for volunteers to have consistent relationship with the people serving them. All of this makes hard lives much more challenging. Displacement makes it so much more difficult for anyone working to find or maintain a job, seek transitional or permanent housing, or maintain any kind of personal connections with others. Everyone needs stability to make their lives better. The daily struggle to survive becomes much harder with disability and displacement. Please talk to policymakers and remind them that many who live in encampments face additional barriers due to disability. Lora Esse is a St. Paul resident and encampment volunteer.

Loss of in-house captioning staff at U of M a cause for concern

The Interpreting/Captioning Unit (ICU) has been a nationally renowned unit in the University of Minnesota’s Disability Resource Center (DRC), representing an ideal model for accommodation service-provision in academia. After two decades of ensuring the presence of an in-house captioning team on the Twin Cities campus, DRC leadership has announced a concerning decision to lay off its entire team of unionized (AFSCME Local 3937) captionists in August. They will be replaced by external CART vendors/independent contractors. Staff captionists were told that none of the current or former users of captioning services had been consulted (nor would they be) and that the decision was not open for discussion. Leadership dismissed staff concerns—about the capacity of local agencies to support the large volume of campus needs—by explaining that remote services had become more abundant and less expensive during the pandemic. Remote captioning had been practical when most of the university was operating virtually. Each person had a microphone, spoke one at a time, and could mute themselves to keep

background noise to a minimum. It was ideal for clear audio. However, upon returning to in-person operations, remote captionists usually rely on a main speaker having a mic and/or the built-in laptop mic to pick up other voices - in rooms as small as an office or as large as a lecture hall. Speaker clarity is dependent on how close they are to the laptop and the amount of background noise. Additionally, someone captioning from out-of-state may lack context or familiarity with our local news, leaders, organizations, and the vast array of research and programs the university boasts. This is vital information for the accuracy of the captions provided and for understanding any words/names that a captionist did not quite hear. People in the room also lose a resource for making last minute adjustments for accessibility. An in-person captionist can be a supportive advocate for the person using services, allowing them to keep their disability status private if they wish. Presenters and organizers can approach captionists for quick questions regarding how to turn on captions for media and how to get accurately captioned media. These collaborative relationships formed in the field can accelerate positive

changes towards a more accessible, inclusive university culture. The greatest concern is that disabled folks are having this decision made for them. The choice is being removed to have a dedicated, community-oriented captionist in the room with all the speakers. Getting in-person services becomes a special request that is dependent on the limited capacity of local agencies. The choice of captioning that fits individual needs or to have verbatim transcription becomes only verbatim transcription. The captionists of the University of Minnesota love their work. Many are disabled and chose this career to continue providing services within their community. Please fight the injustice of the university claiming that “responsible spending” means canceling community-based services. Choice should remain with disabled folks. Sign our petition: <https://tinyurl.com/CaptioningPetitionUMN> This letter was written by the Captioning Team, Minneapolis Minnesota.

IN MEMORIAM Alvord was a valued Special Olympics teammate

Michelle Alvord was the embodiment of a Special Olympics Minnesota athlete – positive, strong and kind to everyone. She became a Special Olympics athlete in 1983 and competed in basketball, swimming, bocce, bowling, softball, floor hockey and track and field. She was also a Global Messenger and volunteered at various Special Olympics events. Alvord died this summer after a battle with cancer. She was 53 and lived in Minneapolis. She was raised in Minneapolis and most recently lived in a group home there. She was very involved in church activities, Wingspan Services and Opportunity Partners. She enjoyed her job at Arby’s and loved being around other people. Making the 2022 Special Olympics Team MN Half Court Basketball Team and having the chance to compete at the national level was a big accomplishment. She couldn’t wait to go to the games. But Alvord, who was diagnosed with liver cancer in early 2022, wasn’t able to make the trip to Orlando. Her cancer had progressed too much. Teammates wore wristbands with her name and jersey number at the games. Throughout USA Games, her half-court team members and the rest of Team Minnesota did everything they could to include her in the event from home. Coaches and fans spent time video chatting with her throughout the week, livestreaming her team’s basketball games and keeping her updated on everything they did in Orlando.

Afterward they and their coaches visited her to bring gifts and pins they had collected. Best of all, when the team won a gold medal, members made sure Alvord’s medal was shipped overnight to her. She is survived by a sister and her family, her guardian family and teammates. Services have been held. Memorials are preferred to Special Olympics Minnesota.

ACCESS PRESS

MINNESOTA'S DISABILITY
COMMUNITY NEWS SOURCE

Find us on
Facebook

[www.facebook.com/
accesspress](http://www.facebook.com/accesspress)

FOLLOW US ON
twitter

[www.twitter.com/
accesspress](http://www.twitter.com/accesspress)

**Changing our customers' lives,
one ramp at a time.**

"It is important that our clients who struggle with stairs are able to maintain their freedom, dependence and community ties."

- Low cost
- FREE home evaluations
- Rent or buy
- Installed in days

For your FREE estimate, call
800-649-5215
651-399-3075
Learn more at **amramp.com**

Gummies and chews are now available for medical cannabis patients

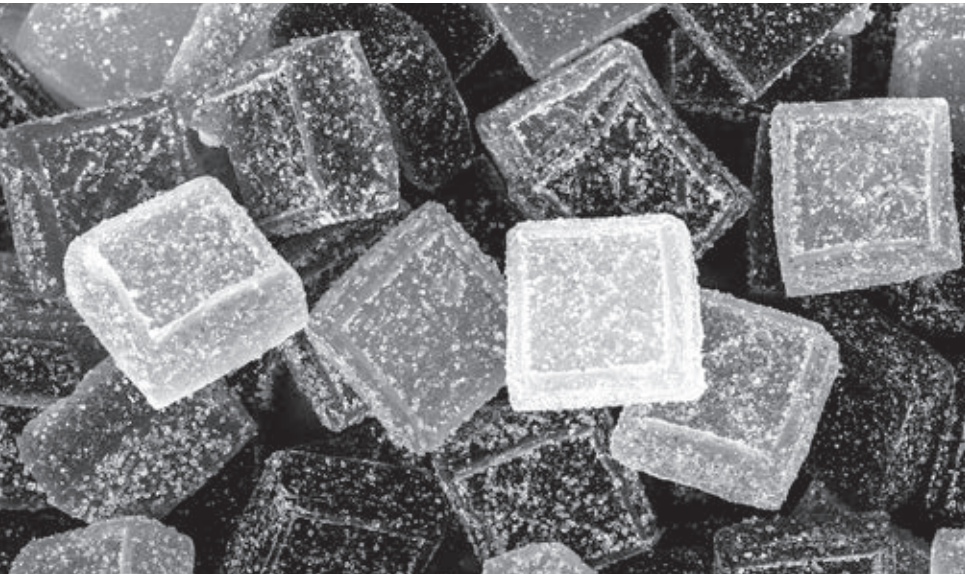
Patients registered in Minnesota’s Medical Cannabis Program will be eligible to buy gummies and chews from the state’s medical cannabis dispensaries starting August 1.

In preparation for the change, registered patients who are interested in these medical cannabis products can make an appointment for a consultation with a medical cannabis dispensary pharmacist to get pre-approved to buy gummies and chews by the start date.

“The state’s medical cannabis program continues to respond to the needs of patients, and gummies and chews may be useful options for those who may have difficulty swallowing pills or tablets, do not want to smoke medical cannabis, or don’t like the taste of other forms of medicine,” said Minnesota Commissioner of Health Jan Malcolm.

These medical cannabis gummies and chews are separate from the recently authorized hemp-derived edible cannabinoid products regulated by the Minnesota Board of Pharmacy. That program was approved this spring by the Minnesota Legislature.

Under the guidelines of the state’s



THC gummies are a popular product but can be in short supply.

medical cannabis program, consultations are required when a patient changes the type of medical cannabis they receive. Both medical cannabis manufacturers are currently scheduling consultations. Patients should visit their dispensary’s

website for details, such as Green Goods or RISE dispensaries.

Scheduling an appointment at a medical cannabis dispensary at a patient’s earliest convenience is strongly recommended.

The newest options for medical cannabis patients were approved last year during the Minnesota Department of Health’s annual petition and comment process to solicit public input on potential qualifying medical conditions and delivery methods for medicine for the Medical Cannabis Program. This year’s petition process accepted petitions through July 31. There is a detailed petitions process for adding qualifying medical conditions, delivery methods.

Patients must be accepted into the program, through a set process. To become a patient in the Medical Cannabis Program, a person has to be certified by a participating health care practitioner for at least one of 17 qualifying medical conditions. More information on the enrollment process is available on the Office of Medical Cannabis website.

Minnesota’s Medical Cannabis Program added dried flower as an option for patients 21 and older, effective March 1 this year. Enrollment in the program has steadily increased since the program was launched in 2015, according to the Minnesota Medical Cannabis Dashboard.

Record number of overdose deaths in state are cause for alarm

Minnesota public health officials reported a record number of overdose deaths in 2021, following an alarming pattern seen in many other states in recent years. According to a new report issued in July by the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), most overdose deaths in 2021 were associated with fentanyl, a powerful drug that continues to become more common across the country.

The 1,286 overdose deaths reported to MDH last year represented a 22 percent increase from the 2020 total. This averages more than three people dying every day from an overdose of any drug type. For the first time since 2014, there was a larger percentage increase in overdose deaths in Greater Minnesota (23 percent) than in the seven-county metropolitan area (20 percent).

“This increase in drug overdose deaths is alarming, but there are things we can do about it,” said Minnesota Commissioner of Health Jan Malcolm. “One important step is to expand programs that make it easier for people to access naloxone – a medication that can reverse overdoses and save lives.”

The 2021 data is preliminary and likely to change when finalized. The totals for seven-county and Greater Minnesota do not equal the statewide total because some deaths were missing county of residence.

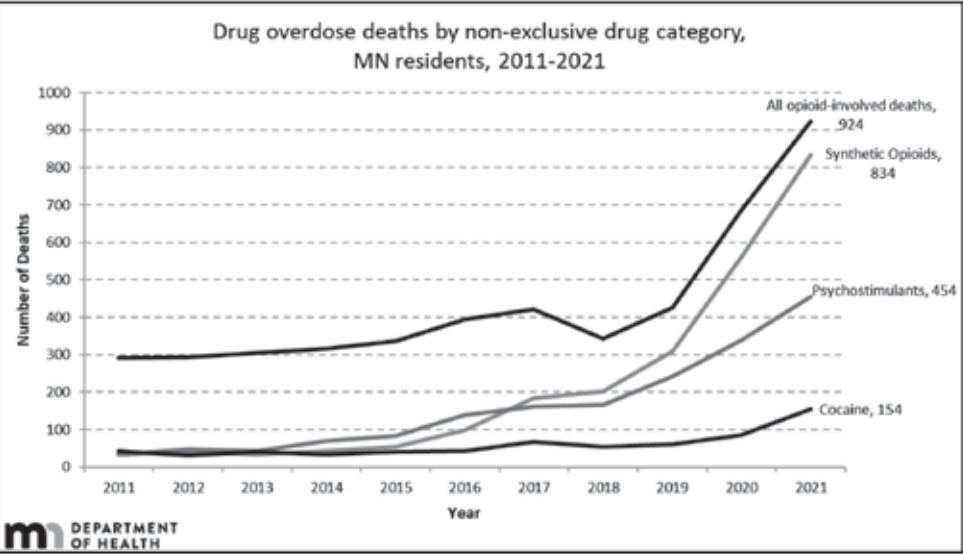
Preliminary data from 2021 showed a 35 percent increase in the total number of overdose deaths involving opioids since

2020 (an increase from 685 deaths in 2020 to 924 deaths in 2021). Drug overdoses from non-opioids also increased from 2020 to 2021, including a 34 percent increase in overdose deaths involving methamphetamine (338 in 2020 to 454 in 2021) and 81 percent increase from overdose deaths involving cocaine (85 in 2020 to 154 in 2021).

Many of the opioid overdose deaths involved synthetic opioids, including fentanyl. These deaths increased from 560 in 2020 to 834 in 2021. Through analysis of death certificates, MDH found that fentanyl was involved in 90 percent of all deaths involving opioids. Fentanyl is a highly potent synthetic opioid. A dose as small as three grains of rice can be lethal. Fentanyl is becoming more common in illicit drugs, even laced in other drugs like cocaine or methamphetamine.

The rise in fentanyl circulating in communities could be a contributing factor in the increase in overdose deaths. Resources like fentanyl test strips can help prevent overdose and are available through community partners and local public health agencies. The Naloxone Finder on the Know the Dangers website can help people locate naloxone, which can be picked up at any time and kept in case of an overdose.

Find links to further information, including the full report, at <https://www.health.state.mn.us/news/pressrel/2022/drugod071422.html>



Be part of our

Directory of Organizations

NEXT EDITION: OCT 2022

For more details, call

651-644-2133

ACCESS PRESS

MINNESOTA'S DISABILITY COMMUNITY NEWS SOURCE

Invest in pity free, disability journalism.

Make your tax-deductible gift today!

ACCESS PRESS

MINNESOTA'S DISABILITY COMMUNITY NEWS SOURCE

www.accesspress.org

TRELLIS MANAGEMENT MAY BE ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS

for our accessible waiting lists at the following affordable communities:

Albright Townhomes	Minneapolis	612-824-6665	1 BR
Cornerstone Creek Apartments (for developmentally disabled individuals)	Golden Valley	763-231-6250	1 & 2 BR
Diamond Hill Townhomes	Minneapolis	612-736-9341	2 & 3 BR
Elliot Park Apartments	Minneapolis	612-338-3106	2 BR
Franklin Lane Apartments	Anoka	763-427-7650	1 & 2 BR
Hanover Townhomes	St. Paul	651-292-8497	1 BR
Hilltop Manor	Eveleth	218-744-5169	1 BR
Hopkins Village Apartments	Hopkins	952-938-5787	1 & 2 BR
Lincoln Place Apartments	Mahtomedi	651-653-0640	2 BR
Olson Towne Homes	Minneapolis	612-377-9015	1 BR
Park Plaza Apartments	Minneapolis	612-377-3650	1 & 2 BR
Prairie Meadows	Eden Prairie	952-941-5544	2 & 3 BR
Raspberry Ridge	Hopkins	952-933-3260	1 BR
Slater Square Apartments	Minneapolis	612-340-1264	EFF & 1BR
Spirit on Lake	Minneapolis	612-724-3029	1 & 2 BR
Talmage Green	Minneapolis	612-623-0247	2 BR
Trinity Apartments	Minneapolis	612-721-2252	1 BR (sr)
Unity Place	Brooklyn Center	763-560-7563	2 BR
Vadnais Highlands	Vadnais Heights	651-653-0640	3 BR
Visitation Place	St. Paul	651-647-2550	1, 2, 3 BR
Willow Apartments	Little Falls	320-632-0980	1 BR
Woodland Court Apartments	Park Rapids	888-332-9312	1 BR

HOUSING FOR VETERANS AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS

Veteran's East Apartments	Minneapolis	612-208-1712	EFF
Veteran's & Community Housing	Minneapolis	612-333-0027	EFF

We may be accepting applications for our large number of mobility impaired accessible units. Please call us for more information.

Trying new foods is part of the fun at the Minnesota State Fair



Blue Barn's Breakfast Gnocci



Hideaway's All Quacked Up



Mancini's Celebration on a Stick

Trying new foods and seek out familiar favorites is part of the fun at the Minnesota State Fair. Every year *Access Press* works with fair staff to provide an accessible dining guide for fairgoers. It defines access as physical access. The following food and beverage concessions offer:

- Seating areas accessible by curb cuts
- Hard and sturdy floor surfaces
- Tables a guest can pull up to in a wheelchair or scooter. Or a chair can be moved to make room for a wheelchair or scooter

The list doesn't include open-air stands where food and drink are purchased, and then carried away. One change from past years is that longtime vendor Rainbow Ice Cream has closed. It was the second-oldest vendor at the fair, following the 125-year-old Hamline Church Dining Hall.

One newcomer is Elephant Ears. Here is the guide:

- **Andy's Grille:** South side of Carnes Avenue between Chambers and Nelson streets
- **Ball Park Cafe:** East side of Underwood Street between Carnes and Dan Patch avenues
- **Blue Barn:** At West End Market, south of the History & Heritage Center (limited general seating picnic tables)
- **Blue Moon Dine-In Theater:** Northeast corner of Carnes and Chambers
- **Butcher Boys London Broil:** North side of Dan Patch between Nelson and

Underwood

- **Cafe Caribe:** South side of Carnes between Chambers and Nelson
- **Charcoal Hut:** East side of Judson Avenue between Under-wood and Cooper streets, next to the International Bazaar
- **Chicago Dogs:** In The garden on the corner of Dan Patch and Underwood
- **Coasters:** On the southeast corner of Carnes and Liggett streets
- **Danielson's & Daughters Onion Rings:** Between Underwood and Cooper, outside the south side of the Food Building, shares seating in a plaza area
- **Dino's Gyros:** On the north side of Carnes between Nelson and Underwood
- **Elephant Ears:** Between Underwood and Cooper streets, outside the south side of the Food Building. The vendor shares seating with the vendors located in this plaza area between the Food Building and the Agriculture Horticulture Building.
- **El Sol Mexican Foods:** East side of Underwood, outside the southwest corner of the Food Building, shares seating in a plaza area
- **Farmers Union Coffee Shop:** On the north side of Dan Patch between Cooper and Cosgrove streets
- **Food Building:** Route 66 Roadhouse Chicken; Mario's; Sonny's Fair Food; Granny's Caramel Apple Sundaes; Peters Hot Dogs; Fish & Chips Seafood Shoppe. The vendors are near shared indoor tables by the northwest entrance to the Food

Building.

- **French Creperie:** North side of Carnes Avenue between Nelson and Underwood
- **French Meadow Bakery & Café:** North side of Carnes between Nelson and Underwood
- **Fresh-Squeezed Lemonade, Fruit Smoothies, Orange Treet:** Between Underwood and Cooper, outside the south side of the Food Building, shares seating in a plaza area
- **Frontier Bar:** South side of Carnes between Liggett and Chambers
- **Gass Station Grill:** West side of Cooper, outside the southeast corner of the Food Building, shares seating in a plaza area
- **Giggles' Campfire Grill:** Southeast corner of Cooper and Lee streets at the North Woods
- **Hamline Church Dining Hall:** North side of Dan Patch between Underwood and Cooper. When arriving, ask for seating to be saved for diners in wheelchairs.
- **The Hangar:** Northeast corner of Murphy Avenue and Underwood.
- **Isabel Burke's Olde Tyme Taffy:** Between Cooper and Underwood, outside the southeast corner of the Food Building, shares seating in a plaza area
- **Italian Junction:** South side of Dan Patch between Nelson and Underwood
- **JJ Vescio's:** East side of Chambers and south of the Grandstand
- **Key Lime Pie Bar:** West side of

Cooper, between the Food Building and the Agriculture Horticulture Building, shares seating in a plaza area

- **LuLu's Public House:** At West End Market, south of the Schilling Amphitheater (Most accessible seating is on the second level, via elevator)
- **Mancini's al Fresco:** North side of Carnes between Nelson and Underwood
- **Mighty Midway food concessions Leimon's Pizzeria; Sugar Shack; Pat's Place; The Donut Family; Westmoreland Concessions** share a seating area
- **Mexican Hat:** East of Chambers Street, south of the Grandstand
- **Minnesota Wine Country:** West side of Underwood between Carnes and Judson
- **O'Gara's at the Fair:** Southwest corner of Dan Patch and Cosgrove
- **The Peg:** Outside on the southeast side of the Agriculture Horticulture Building
- **Patio Grill:** East side of Nelson between Carnes and Judson, next to KARE 11
- **RC's BBQ:** North side of West Dan Patch between Liggett and Chambers
- **Ragin Cajun:** In the garden on the corner of Dan Patch and Underwood
- **Salem Lutheran Church:** North side of Randall Avenue south of the Progress Center
- **Shanghaied Henri's:** At International Bazaar, north wall
- **Tejas Express:** In the Garden on the corner of Dan Patch and Underwood

STATE FAIR

From page 1

or presumptively positive within the 14 days of attending the fair should stay home. Anyone experiencing COVID-19 symptoms or who has been in direct contact with or in the immediate vicinity of any person who is confirmed or suspected of being infected with COVID-19 should stay home.

Make sure phones, chairs and other devices are fully charged before arriving at the fairgrounds.

Change in hours

Fairgrounds hours and admission will

change slightly, with admission starting at 7 a.m. and ending at 9 p.m. every day except Labor Day. On Labor Day the gates close at 7 p.m.

The fairgrounds will be open 7 a.m. and close at 11 p.m. every day except Labor Day. On the final day, the grounds close at 9 p.m.

Hours for specific buildings and services vary. Check <https://www.mnstatefair.org/general-info/hours-of-operation/>

Tickets for admission on the fairgrounds are for sale online. Check admission prices at <https://www.mnstatefair.org/tickets/admission-tickets/> Information is also online for other tickets for fair attractions such as rides and concerts.

Service animals

Service dogs are permitted on the fairgrounds. Service dogs are dogs that have been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for a person with a disability. Dogs whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as service animals under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

During the 12 days of the Minnesota State Fair, pets are not allowed on the fairgrounds, with the exception of service dogs or animals approved as part of an exhibition.

Getting to the fair

Plan ahead as accessible parking spaces at the fair fill up quickly early each day. The fair has parking spaces designated for vehicles with a valid disability certificate available on a first-come basis. The cost is \$17. Check the fair website to learn more about how to reach this parking. <https://www.mnstatefair.org/parking/vehicle/>

A free park-ride lot with free wheelchair-

accessible bus service is offered for people with disabilities and their companions. The lot, open to those with a disability certificate or license plate, is on the north side of the Oscar Johnson Arena at 1039 De Courcy Circle. It is south of the fairgrounds near Snelling Avenue and Energy Park Drive. Buses run continuously to the fair from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily (7 p.m. on Labor Day). Return trips from the fair to the parking lot are available 8 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. (9:30 p.m. on Labor Day).

Passengers are dropped off and picked up at the Loop Gate 9 on Como Avenue on the south end of the fairgrounds.

Not all buses at remote lots have lifts for passengers who use chairs and scooters, or who have mobility issues. As of *Access Press* deadline, the parking lot schedule hadn't been announced. It will be posted at <https://www.metrotransit.org/> or <https://www.mnstatefair.org/transportation/metro-transit/>

Keep in mind that lot locations may change year to year and may not be

STATE FAIR To page 7



Service dogs and their people do demonstrations at the fair.

MCI L

METROPOLITAN CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

• Responsive PCA Choice Services

• Independent Living Services

• ADA Information & Referral

• COVID Community Coordination

• Transitional and Housing Services

Contact us today!
651-646-8342 www.mcil-mn.org
530 North Robert St, Saint Paul MN 55101

Live your most independent life, follow your path!

STATE FAIR

From page 6

available every day during the fair.’

Taking Metro Mobility? This requires planning ahead. Metro Mobility drops off and picks up passengers at two locations on the fairgrounds: At the Loop Gate 9 on Como Avenue; and at the North Gate 2.

Rideshare services Uber and Lyft drop off and pick up passengers at two locations on the fairgrounds: At the east Como parking lot, south of Como Avenue and west of Snelling Avenue (guests enter at Gate 7); and at the North Gate 2.

Taxis drop off and pick up passengers at the Loop Gate 9 on Como Avenue.

On-site accommodations

HomeTown Mobility rents wheelchairs and electric scooters from five sites within the main entrance gates to the State Fairgrounds. Advance rental reservations accepted before the fair by contacting HomeTown Mobility directly. Reserving in advance as mobility devices can be spoken for quickly. For pricing and contact information, go to <https://www.mnstatefair.org/general-info/accessibility-guide/>

Bariatric seating

Bariatric chairs and seating are designed to be wider than the standard waiting room or medical office chair, and capable of supporting up to 500 pounds of evenly distributed weight. Such chairs are built to provide increased postural support and comfort to patients with a bariatric condition.

Bariatric chairs may be available upon request with at least 24 hours’ advance notice at some seating areas throughout the fairgrounds (including the Grandstand), based on availability. To inquire about bariatric seating, contact accessibility@mnstatefair.org or 651-288-4448.

Other services

Large-print daily schedules and fairgrounds maps are available at any information booth.

New open captioning and more

What’s new in 2022 for people with disabilities? Open captioning is offered for guests who are deaf or have difficulty hearing, at select free performances. No reservations are required. A monitor displaying the captioning will be positioned near the stage.

The History On-A-Schtick shows are presented by the Minnesota Historical Society. Shows are located at the Schell’s Stage, Schilling Amphitheater. Captioned shows are 10 a.m., Saturday, August 27; Sunday, August 28; Wednesday, August 31 and Thursday, September 1.

Here is an overview of other accommodations at attractions:

Audio description services are offered for guests who are blind or have low vision will be offered at these free shows, no reservations required. Headsets for audio description can be picked up from the audio describer, who will be located near the stage prior to the show.

The History On-A-Schtick shows with audio description are 11 a.m. Saturday, August 27; Sunday, August 28; Wednesday, August 31 and Thursday, September 1.

The Timberworks Lumberjack Show at The North Woods stage offer audio



Friends enjoy gathering at the fair.

description at 2 p.m. Saturday, August 27; Sunday, August 28; Wednesday, August 31 and Thursday, September 1

Looking for time to sit with children and relax? Remember to check out Braille books at Alphabet Forest. Alphabet Forest is an oasis of fun games and activities to inspire young readers to build vocabulary, learn about letters and explore the wonderful world of reading and writing. The on-site library includes several children’s books in Braille.

ASL interpreting services

The fair offers daily American Sign Language (ASL) interpreting services provided by teams of certified, novice and student interpreters.

Interpreters are scheduled between the hours of 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. August 25 – September 5. Special requests for interpreter services will be scheduled depending on availability and should be directed to accessibility@mnstatefair.org, 651-288-4448 or the Guest Relations office at Visitors Plaza.

ASL interpretation is offered daily at six free scheduled shows throughout the fairgrounds. Performances and demonstrations are subject to change:

Milking Demonstration, located at the Moo Booth stage outside the Cattle Barn. 10 a.m. daily. <https://www.mnstatefair.org/location/moo-booth/>

Fish Pond Talk, located at the DNR Fish Pond. 10:45 a.m. daily. <https://www.mnstatefair.org/location/dnr-building-and-park/>

Timberworks Lumberjack Show, located at The North Woods stage. Noon daily. <https://www.mnstatefair.org/schedule/timberworks-lumberjack-show/>

Thank A Farmer Magic Show, located at the Christensen Farms Stage. 1 p.m. daily. <https://www.mnstatefair.org/booths-and-showcases/thank-a-farmer-magic-show/>

Harvesting Honey, located in the Agriculture Horticulture Building. 2 p.m. daily. <https://www.mnstatefair.org/location/agriculture-horticulture-building/>

Renewing the Countryside Cooking Demonstration, with different topics daily,

located at the Sustainability Stage in Eco Experience. 3 p.m. daily. <https://www.mnstatefair.org/location/eco-experience/>

ASL interpretation will also be provided for select programs Monday, August 29 during Mental Health Awareness programs at Dan Patch Park, and Monday, September 5 at Hmong Minnesota Day at Dan Patch Park

ASL interpreting is also available for concerts at the Grandstand and Leinie Lodge Bandshell upon request. Requests should be made at least 14 days prior to the concert. (A separate concert ticket is required for Grandstand shows; shows at the Leinie Lodge Bandshell are included in fair admission.) Contact accessibility@mnstatefair.org or 651-288-4448 to request ASL interpreting.

Take a sensory break

For visitors with sensory processing disabilities, the fair can be too much at times. One welcomed new feature is the Fraser Sensory building, which is in its second year. It is specially created for fair guests of all ages with sensory-processing challenges who be overwhelmed. It is located on the west side of Cosgrove Street, south of the Home Improvement Building. It is open daily 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., closing at 8 p.m. on Labor Day)

The sensory space is staffed by Fraser-trained sensory support volunteers, who can help individuals regulate with tools and techniques such as weighted blankets and shoulder wraps, calming music, floor cushions, an exercise ball and fidget toys. People with sensory difficulties are welcome to use the space to regulate.

The Fraser Sensory Building will also feature games, giveaways, educational resources, special guests and information about employment opportunities.

Tips for visiting the fair with sensory sensitivities – including when to visit, things to do, what to bring and a social narrative – can be found in the Accessibility Guide on the State Fair website at <https://www.mnstatefair.org/general-info/accessibility-guide/>.

Minnesota Council on Disability booth

Several disability service organizations have their own booths, many in the Education Building. The Minnesota Council on Disability will have one of the larger booths there. Many organizations partner with the council at the booth and provide free information on disability groups and services.

A schedule will be posted, of when fairgoers can meet representatives from partner disability organizations, state commissioners, elected officials, guest entertainment and an accommodations schedule. Contact the council about accommodations to visit the booth at www.disability.state.mn.us/

If you were in charge of the Minnesota Olmstead Plan, what would you change?

Let us know - take the 2022 Olmstead Plan Satisfaction Survey today!



Scan the QR code to take the survey





Where experiences & adventures are open to individuals of all abilities



True Friends provides life-changing experiences to children and adults with disabilities through a variety of programs at five Minnesota locations.

Programs

- Camp
- Travel
- Horse Therapy
- Team Building
- Respite
- Retreat Centers

Locations


- Camp Courage**
Maple Lake, MN
- Camp Eden Wood**
Eden Prairie, MN
- Camp Friendship**
Annandale, MN
- Camp Courage North**
Lake George, MN



www.truefriends.org | 952.852.0101 | info@truefriends.org

“I have complex health issues, but I’m getting help to clear the obstacles. My diagnosis doesn’t get in the way of living my best life.”

Your best life, your way.

Whether facing an immediate concern or planning for the future, the experts at the Hub have years of experience helping people with disabilities, and the people who support them. A free resource for all Minnesotans. We serve all languages.  Follow us on Facebook!

1-866-333-2466
disabilityhubmn.org





REGIONAL NEWS



988 can provide help

Starting July 16, people facing a mental health crisis can dial 988 to connect to support. It is part of a nationwide effort to transition the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline to a phone number people can more easily remember and access in times of crisis. The shift also includes an online chat feature and new texting option.

The new 988 dialing code will serve as a universal entry point to reach a trained crisis counselor who can help regardless of where they live. Anyone can dial or text 988 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to reach crisis support or to use an online chat feature to connect with crisis support. People can also dial 988 if they are worried about a loved one who may need crisis support.

“Supporting mental health is a critical public health need, and one of the best ways we can do that is to make it as easy as possible for people to get the help they need when they need it,” Minnesota Commissioner of Health Jan Malcolm said. “Our hope is that 988 can be an easier way for people experiencing mental health crises to get support quickly.”

The Lifeline 10-digit number, 1-800-273-TALK (8255), will continue to be available and will route people to the same resources. People should call 911 if they suspect drug overdose or need immediate medical help.

Suicide is a serious and growing public health concern across the United States and in Minnesota. The number of suicide deaths and the suicide rate in Minnesota has increased consistently for 20 years. MDH data shows:



- From 2016 through 2020, there were more than 10,000 hospital visits for self-harm injuries (i.e., suicide attempts) in Minnesota, and those were mostly among people ages 10-24, predominantly females.
 - Each year about 75-80 percent of suicide deaths are among males.
 - Each year about 50 percent of suicide deaths are the result of a firearm injury. Suicide usually represents 70-80 percent of all firearm deaths.
- To reach the Veterans Crisis Line, dial 988 and press 1. Calls will route to the same trained Veterans Crisis Line responders. The Veterans Crisis Line will still be available by chat (VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat) and text (838255)

(Source: Minnesota Department of Health)

at them that they have a condition, and that ends up resulting in tragic outcomes ... it can oftentimes result in death, lawsuits and a lack of trust in our organizations," said Janeé Harteau, CEO and president of Vitals and retired Minneapolis police chief.

The integration of Vitals at MSP will be in full effect in mid-July. A first-tier subscription costs \$2.99 per month, and is waiver-billable for those in need of financial assistance.

(Source: Pioneer Press)

Specialized unit announced

Dakota County officials plan to build a specialized health unit at the county jail dedicated to improving the mental health and medical care that inmates receive. The facility's staff would treat physical and mental health issues, as well as substance use disorders. The goal would be to reduce the number of inmate hospital visits, provide a more therapeutic environment and establish a single place where everyone needing care could be treated.

“These aren’t just inmates — we talk patients, patient-centered care,” said Pat Enderlein, commander of the detention services division at the Sheriff’s Office.

“This is absolutely needed. We’re not providing the level of service we feel we could be.”

Studies by the county and an outside consultant over the past two years have confirmed the need for the unit, Dakota County officials said. About 25 percent of inmates have serious health issues that require treatment while at the 263-bed jail in Hastings.

The County Board has approved spending \$675,000 to design plans for the unit and has set aside \$5 million for its construction.

The total price tag, however, will be \$12 million to \$14 million, so the county is seeking additional funding, including from the state.

If all goes as planned, the unit would open in late 2024.

The jail has seen a sharp increase in the past few years in the number of inmates with mental health concerns, Enderlein said.

The jail has a medical unit, but inmates with mental health issues are often sent to the intake area, he said, placed in a single or group holding cell or a padded cell. That area was only intended as a “brief stop” before inmates head to the general housing unit but hospitals are often at capacity,

In 2021, the Dakota County jail recorded 275 inmates on suicide watch, 503 on watch for substance withdrawal, 265 on medical watches and 739 on “character watches” — meaning someone needs observation.

(Source: Star Tribune)

Renovations planned at airports

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) will be awarding millions of dollars to Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport (MSP) as part of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act that was passed last year. The terminal rehabilitation project will include needed accessibility improvements.

Three other projects are planned in Greater Minnesota.

The Biden administration announced that almost \$1 billion in funds will be used by dozens of airports across the United States to make needed upgrades.

MSP will be given a total of \$21.3 million in funds, which will be used to add five new boarding bridges and one relocated bridge, replace electrical substations which serve areas of the baggage system, and make improvements to the north security checkpoint and airport police area.

For travelers with disabilities, the funding will help pay for modified walkways, ramps and slopes to meet requirements by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

According to the White House, the grant awarded to MSP is one of 73 grants which will help provide greater access to people with disabilities.

The Fillmore County Airport in Preston was awarded \$950,000 to replace the existing facility, which federal officials say is in poor condition and doesn’t meet ADA requirements. The airport was built in the 1980s. The Fillmore County Airport grant is among 47 awards which have an element that will improve airport access to historically disadvantaged populations and rural airports.

The Bemidji Regional Airport was awarded \$95,000 to reconfigure and expand the security screening area. The Glencoe Municipal Airport was awarded \$712,500 to build a new General Aviation terminal to meet ADA requirements, among other improvements.

(Source: Federal Aviation Administration)

Counties drop medical provider

MENd Correctional Care contracts with dozens of counties in Minnesota and other Midwestern states to provide health care for people incarcerated in jails. But months after a state board suspended the license of a doctor whose company has been under scrutiny for its role in the deaths of people held in jails, several Minnesota counties have taken steps to find a new jail medical provider.

One reason counties are seeking change is to be able to provide improved mental health services to people who are jailed.

About a dozen counties including Anoka, Beltrami, Clay, Crow Wing,

Clearwater, Mille Lacs, Morrison, Olmsted, Sherburne, St. Louis and Wright have changed providers or are exploring other options. St. Louis County could make a change later this year. Lack of medical staff and a need for expanded service are among reasons for change

The Sartell-based company has faced allegations of failing to provide adequate care to inmates, including a man who died in 2018 in the Beltrami County jail after his pleas for help were ignored by jail and medical staff and a man who died by suicide in 2107 in the Sherburne County Jail. The latter death resulted in a lawsuit and settlement.

The Minnesota Board of Medical Practice in January found that Dr. Todd Leonard, MENd's owner, demonstrated a willful or careless disregard for a patient's health, welfare or safety in the Beltrami County case.

According to the state medical board's findings, MENd hired a new corporate medical director in early 2021, and Leonard's role in the company was limited to president and CEO.

(Source: Minnesota Public Radio)

Stearns County launches program

Stearns County law enforcement agencies are the latest in Minnesota to launch a program to alert first responders when they could be helping people who have difficulty with communication. The stickers also provide quick information about disabilities and chronic health conditions.

Many other Minnesota cities and counties already have the program.

The new program, launched by the Stearns County Sheriff’s Office and Police Chiefs Association, makes color-coded stickers available for placement on front doors and windows to inform all first responders of peoples’ disabilities right away.

Stickers are available to signal the presence of people with autism, brain injuries, PTSD; people with diabetes; people affected by Alzheimer’s or dementia; and people who are deaf or hard of hearing. The goal is for police, fire and emergency medical services to be prepared to alter their response techniques.

The stickers are free and available at the sheriff’s office in St. Cloud and all police agencies within Stearns County. Stickers can also be obtained at some public events.

(Source: Stearns County)

Vitals app is added

The Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport is working with Vitals, a company pioneering accessibility technology and

tools. The partnership will make medical information available to nearby first responders at the airport via the Vitals app.

MSP is the first airport in the country to partner with Vitals and take part in their mission to make airports safer and more accessible for travelers with visible and invisible medical conditions or disabilities. Vitals was founded in partnership with the Autism Society of Minnesota in 2017, and has since then become a certified autism resource.

The app allows caregivers and self-advocates with disabilities and medical conditions to upload useful information for first responders -- such as behavior triggers, de-escalation techniques and allergies -- in the event of an emergency. When within 80 feet of a traveler with the Vitals Bluetooth fob or app, first responders are notified and granted access to the information provided by the user.

"With the Vitals app, we give our officers critical information to assist them in providing appropriate service and care to community members," said Craig Wilson, deputy chief of the airport police department. "It helps our officers establish more sense of trust and safety for all individuals at the airport, which is our top priority."

When it comes to travelers with disabilities, "you can't tell just by looking

Make the news!

Receiving an award? Joining a board?
Moving to new space? Winning a race?
Filling a top post? Send us your “boast”!

Marking a key date?
Please don’t be late!

Access Press welcomes submissions for the People and Places pages. Submissions are due by the 15th of each month.

Questions?
Call 651-644-2133
or email
access@accesspress.org





Tim points out a confusing sign in Berkeley

TIM BENJAMIN

From page 1

large and lively family.

As a young man he developed what became a lifelong love of fast cars and Harley Davidson motorcycles, describing himself as a “motorhead.”

After his school days Benjamin worked as a sheet metal machinist, in what he assumed would be his lifelong career.

He came back to Minnesota as a young man. During the summer of 1974, Benjamin sustained a spinal cord injury in a diving accident and began life as a quadriplegic.

The story of how he met *Access Press* founding editor Charlie Smith Jr. and became involved in the newspaper and public affairs is one of serendipity. The Benjamin family banked at the same bank where Charlie Smith’s father, Bill Smith, was vice president. Bill Smith and Fred Benjamin became good friends as their sons shared the same life experiences with spinal cord injuries.

The sons met in 1975 while both were in rehabilitation at the University of Minnesota. In a 2002 *Access Press* interview, Benjamin recalled thinking of Charlie Smith as “the veteran” and the fellow who seemed to know everything about “how this disability thing worked.”

The two were activists together for a time, before Benjamin took a 15-year break from advocacy to focus on rehabilitation and education. In the mid-1980s he attended St. Paul College to study computers, also going to Courage Center for further training.

In 1996 Benjamin began his studies at Metropolitan State University, initially focusing on technical writing. At one point he won honors for poetry writing. “Not exactly technical writing,” he said.

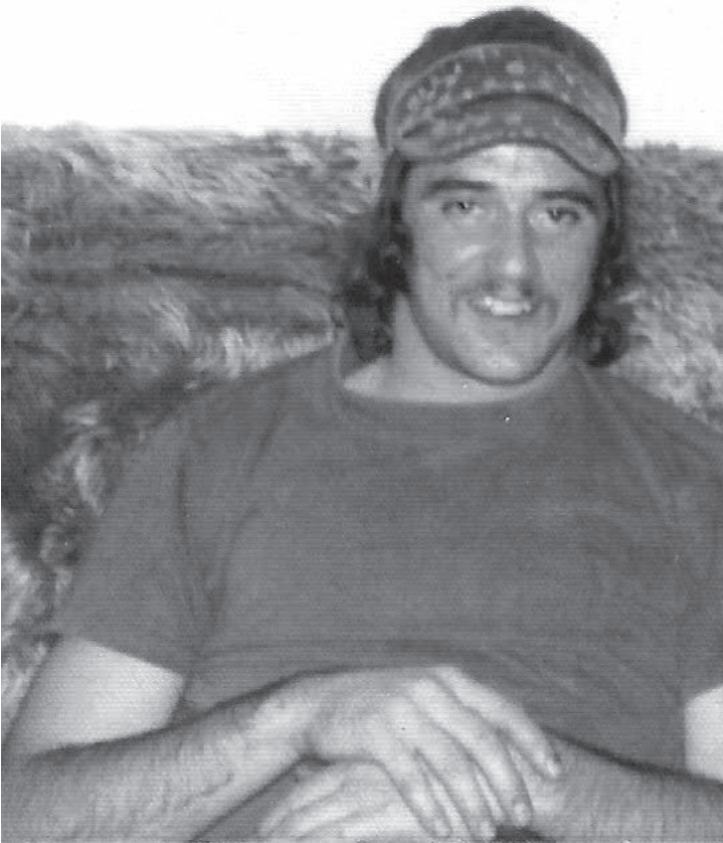
After realizing that his real interest was in social science and government, Benjamin moved into the social science program. He would earn a degree in that field, with a minor in philosophy. Among those who urged him to finish his degree was his friend Smith.

In the mid-1990s Benjamin decided to get active in disability community issues again. He made a fateful call to “the veteran,” who was editing *Access Press*. Smith and Benjamin began going to meetings of the Minnesota Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (MNCCD).

Benjamin became editor of *Access Press* in spring 2001, taking over from founding editor/publisher Charlie Smith Jr. Benjamin had worked with Smith at the newspaper part-time while Smith was ill with cancer, starting in 2000 with advertising sales. He transitioned into the executive director/editor role with the help of Jeff Nygaard. One joke he and Nygaard shared was WWCD or “what would Charlie do?”

For the next 19 years, Benjamin served as executive director and editor of *Access Press*, Minnesota’s disability community newspaper. He was a fixture at the state capitol and rallies, and followed countless issues.

One of his favorite projects was producing *The Real Story* in 2013, with friend and documentarian Jerry Smith. It gives an overview of news media coverage of disability. At the premiere he had to cut off noted TV journalist and panelist Don



Tim in 1974

Shelby, whose comments went on for too long.

Benjamin slyly noted that years before, in a magazine story about highest and lowest-paid Twin Cities journalist, Shelby was highest-paid and the *Access Press* job was lowest paid.

He wrote about 250 columns for *Access Press* and worked on many news articles. Employment for people with disabilities was a huge focus. So was the personal care attendant crisis.

“He really believed in the idea of disability-focused journalism,” said Editor Jane McClure. “He felt strongly about our coverage of issues through a disability lens. He really disliked ‘pity journalism’ and the kind of mainstream media stories that hold up people with disabilities as superhuman.”

Benjamin used his own situation to highlight the growing direct care crisis, years before it was covered by other news media, said McClure. “He used his own life to shed light on the disability experience.”

He partially retired in 2020, stepping back to write a column and do consulting work.

“Tim Benjamin loved *Access Press* and he worked tirelessly to produce a monthly newspaper that is respected and valued by the disability community,” said Kay Willshire, a longtime friend and *Access Press* board member. “Tim made sure *Access Press* told the stories about how people lobbied, demanded and won equitable accessibility in housing, education, employment, entertainment and health care.”

Benjamin served on many groups including the St. Paul Mayor’s Committee on People with Disabilities, the Qwest Consumer Advisory Panel, the Mixed Blood Theater board, Access for All and the AXIS Healthcare Advisory boards. He served as the chairperson of the Metropolitan Center

for Independent Living.

Benjamin was active in the Minnesota Consortium of Citizens with Disabilities (MNCCD) and was a member of the Minnesota Business Leadership Network, an employer organization with a commitment to hiring people with disabilities.

The Arc Minnesota, United Cerebral Palsy, Mixed Blood and Minnesota Council on Disability are among the groups that honored Benjamin and *Access Press* with awards for journalism.

In 2008 he received the Courage Center Phillips Award. In 2010 he traveled to Chicago to accept the Skip Kruse Memorial Return to Work Award in August in from the Social Security Administration, for the newspaper’s work in making people in the community aware of SSA programs and opportunities to work

Benjamin also very much enjoyed meeting and mentoring younger people with disabilities, especially self-advocates



Tim receiving the Phillips Award.



Tim greets guests at the Charlie Smith Award banquet.



Tim and the late Rick Cardenas are at left in this photo from an ADAPT protest.

who were just getting their start. He urged everyone with disabilities and urging them to share their stories as a way to encourage systems change.

He is survived by his wife and love of his life Lynda Milne. They were workmates when he attended Camelback High and she attended Xavier College Prep in Phoenix. He was a cook and she was a waitress at the now-gone Googy’s Coffee Shop in East Camelback. They reconnected via email and were together for 26 years.

He is also survived by two sisters, two brothers and their families, and his faithful dog Buddy. An obituary and online tributes are at <https://www.washburn-mcreavy.com/obituaries/Timothy-Benjamin-2/#!/Obituary>. Online tributes will also be on the Access Press web page, at www.accesspress.org

Services were held in late July. Memorials are preferred to *Access Press* and Minnesota Brain Injury Alliance.

Reach our valued readers!

Contact Mary Graba
Advertising Manager
651-644-2133 ext 2
mary@accesspress.org

ACCESS PRESS
MINNESOTA'S DISABILITY COMMUNITY NEWS SOURCE

Kent Fordyce

KENT'S ACCOUNTING SERVICE, LLC

612-889-2959

fordyce6@aol.com

Fax: 952-472-1458

6371 Bartlett Blvd Mound, MN 55364

Certified ProAdvisor 2022 | 2005-2021



RADIO TALKING BOOK

Books added, program changes

Radio Ralking Book continues to record new books while airing rebroadcasts. The goal is to build a backlog buffer of materials.

Minor program changes have been announced. The 38-minute Style program aired at 10:20 a.m. Sat has has been replaced by 10,000 Tales, news from Greater Minnesota. 10,000 Tales’ former 58-minute slot, 7 a.m. Sun, has been replaced by a new program, Harper’s, readings from *Harper’s Magazine*.

Chautauqua*

Monday – Friday 6 a.m.

The Dawn of Everything, nonfiction by David Graeber & David Wengrow, 2021. A dramatically new understanding of human history, challenging our most fundamental assumptions about social evolution and revealing new possibilities for human emancipation. Read by John Potts. 25 broadcasts; begins Mon, Aug. 1.

Past is Prologue*

Monday – Friday 11 a.m.

The Greeks, nonfiction by Roderick Beaton, 2021. A sweeping history of the Greeks and their contributions to civilization, from the Bronze Age to today. Read by Stevie Ray. 21 broadcasts; begins Wed, Aug. 3.

Bookworm*

Monday – Friday 12 p.m.

The Lincoln Highway. fiction by Amor Towles, 2021. Four boys set out to travel the country in search of a fresh start: Emmett and Billy want to find their mother who left them when they were young, and Duchess and Woolly are on the hunt for a stashed wad of cash. Each of these young men is chasing his dreams, but their pasts are never far behind. Read by John Holden. 20 broadcasts; begins Tue, Aug. 2.

The Seed Keeper, fiction by Diane Wilson, 2021. A haunting novel spanning several generations, our story follows a Dakota family’s struggle to preserve their way of life, and their sacrifices to protect what matters most. Read by Cintra Godfrey. 13 broadcasts; begins Tue, Aug. 30.

The Writer’s Voice*

Monday – Friday 1 p.m.

The Passenger, nonfiction by Chaney Kwak, 2021. In March 2019, the Viking Sky cruise ship was struck by a bomb cyclone in the North Atlantic. This is the suspenseful, harrowing, funny, touching story by one passenger who contemplated death aboard that ship. Read by Philip Lowry. Four broadcasts; begins Mon, Aug. 29.

Choice Reading*

Monday – Friday 2 p.m.

Matrix, fiction by Lauren Groff, 2021. Seventeen-year-old Marie de France is sent to England to be the new prioress of an impoverished abbey and finds focus and love in collective life with her singular and mercurial sisters. Read by Pat Muir. 10 broadcasts; begins Mon, Aug. 1.

A Phở Love Story, fiction by Loan Le, 2021. Two Vietnamese American teens fall in love and must navigate their newfound relationship amid their families’ age-old feud about their competing, neighboring restaurants. Read by Carol McPherson. 13 broadcasts; begins Mon, Aug. 15.

Afternoon Report*

Monday – Friday 4 p.m.

Perversion of Justice, nonfiction by Julie K. Brown, 2021. Dauntless journalist Julie K. Brown recounts her uncompromising and risky investigation of Jeffrey Epstein’s underage sex trafficking operation, and the explosive reporting for the *Miami Herald* that finally brought him to justice while exposing the powerful people and broken system that protected him. Read by Jim Tarbox. 15 broadcasts; begins Mon, Aug. 1. – S

The Steal, nonfiction by Mark Bowden & Matthew Teague, 2022. A week-by-week, state-by-state account of the effort to overturn the 2020 presidential election, written by veteran journalists. Read by Jim Gregorich. 9 broadcasts; begins Mon, Aug. 22.

Night Journey*

Monday – Friday 7 p.m.

The Morning Star, fiction by Karl Ove

Knausgaard, 2021. A mysterious celestial body appears in the late-August sky, accompanied by Biblical omens, hallucinations, and increasingly uncanny events in the natural world. Tracing the lives of nine interconnected characters, our story sets these enigmatic phenomena against the minutiae of everyday life. Read by Don Lee. 24 broadcasts; begins Tue, Aug. 2. – L

Off the Shelf*

Monday – Friday 8 p.m.

The Sweetness of Water, fiction by Nathan Harris, 2021. George Walker grieves his son Caleb who he believes was killed in the Civil War. George meets up with two young brothers who had been enslaved at the house next door. The three start a peanut farm, until Caleb returns. Read by Therese Murray. 13 broadcasts; begins Mon, Aug. 8. – L, V

Tell Me an Ending, fiction by Jo Harkin, 2022. Across the world, thousands of people are shocked by a notification that they once chose to have a memory removed. Now they are being given an opportunity to get that memory back—but what are the consequences for contending with what they tried to forget? Read by Dan Sadoff. 16 broadcasts; begins Thu, Aug. 25. – L, S, G

Potpourri*

Monday – Friday 9 p.m.

Listening In: Radio and the American Imagination (re-broadcast), nonfiction by Susan Douglas, 2004. Few inventions evoke such nostalgia, such deeply personal and vivid memories as radio. “Listening In” traces the history of how radio culture and content have kneaded and expanded the American psyche. Read by Marylyn Burridge. 23 broadcasts; begins Wed, Aug. 3.

Good Night Owl*

Monday – Friday 10 p.m

The Furies (rebroadcast), fiction by Katie Lowe, 2019. The story of a girl trying to fit in, whose obsessive new friends and desperation to belong leads her to places she’d never imagined dark, dangerous,

All times listed are Central Standard Time.

Abbreviations

V – violent content R – racial epithets
L – strong language S – sexual situation G – gory descriptions

and possibly even violent. Read by Carol McPherson. 13 broadcasts; begins Mon, Aug. 1. – L

Before She Knew Him (rebroadcast), fiction by Peter Swanson, 2019. A chilling tale of a young suburban wife with a history of psychological instability whose fears about her new neighbor could lead them both to murder. Read by Therese Murray. 10 broadcasts; begins Thu, Aug. 18. – V

RTB After Hours

Monday – Friday 11 p.m.

Wild Rain, fiction by Beverly Jenkins, 2021. A fearless female rancher forges her own path in the wake of the Civil War and becomes involved with a reporter from out east. Read by Karen Ray. 9 broadcasts; began Mon, Aug. 1. – S

The Death of Jane Lawrence, fiction by Caitlin Starling, 2021. Set in a dark-mirror version of post-war England, this gothic horror story assembles, then upends, every expectation set in place by similar genre pieces. Read by Brenda Powell. 16 broadcasts; began Mon, Aug. 15. – V, S

Weekend Program Books

Your Personal World, 1 p.m. Sat,

presents *Good Anxiety* by Dr. Wendy Suzuki, read by Beverly Burchett.

For the Younger Set, 11 a.m. Sat,

presents *The Mighty Dynamo* by Kieran Crowley, read by Pat Muir, followed by Pony by R. J. Palacio, read by John Schmidt.

Poetic Reflections, noon Sun, presents *God of Nothingness* by Mark Wunderlich, read by Mary Knatterud, followed by frank: sonnets by Diane Seuss, read by Jim Ahrens.

The Great North, 4 p.m. Sun, presents *Minnesota’s Geologist* by Sue Leaf, read by Tony Lopez.

Thanks to ALL OF YOU
for supporting *Access Press*

BENEFACTOR (\$1000 & up)

J Martin Carlson
Janice Chevrette

In memory of Rick Cardenas

Handi Medical
Lynda Milne

Walter J. Seibert

In memory of Rick Cardenas

Tamarack Habilitation Tech, Inc.
Kay Willshire

GOLD (\$500–\$999)

Benjamin Family
In memory of James J. Benjamin
Mel and Gloria Duncan
Brandon Miller

Shannah Mulvihill
Debra J. Shriver
Joel Ulland
Just Comfort

SILVER (\$150–\$499)

Jeff and Anita Bangsberg
Alexandra and William
Bartolic III
Yoshiko Dart
Dean Doering
Stephen C. Grams
Robert Paul Gregory
Anne Henry
Pamela Hochrein
Kim Keprios
Steven Kuntz
Sandi Lane
Steve Larson

Susan Lasoff
Rick Macpherson
Jim & Lisa Michaels
Manley Olson
Joanne Rademacher
Carrie Salberg
Jon Skaalen
John G. Smith
Cindy Tarshish
Colleen Wieck
Advocating Change
Together

BRONZE (\$75–\$149)

Holly Anderson
Tim Benjamin
Gretchen Bratvold
Leo and Sue Bulger
Steven F Burrill
Gerald Caruso
John Clark
Richard Cloud
Dawn Doering
Craig J Dunn
Lee Ann Erickson
Claudia Fuglie
Vicki Gerrits
Jim Gerlich
Burl Gilyard
Marjorie Goldberg
Ann Griffith
Sharon A. Haas & Nicholas J. Faber
Terry Hagenah
Hammer Residences, Inc.
Hammer Travel
Dale Janiszkeski
Cindy Johns–Giesen
Barb Kane
Megan Keyser
Kent Fordyce/Kent's
Accounting Services
Gregory Lais & Patricia Thurber
Charlie Lakin

Ronna Sue Linroth
Shelley Madore
John Marty
Dorthey McCoy
Thomas J. McCoy
Gene Martinez
Christopher J. Meyer
Cindy Musselman
Scott Neamy
Eric S Nelson
Lynn Noren
Annette M. Pantel
Mark Payette
Donn Poll
Julie Quarve–Peterson
Kelly Rathcke
Ann C. Roscoe
Stephanie Schwartz
Walter J. Seibert, in memory
of Rick Cardenas
Ed Stracke
Michelle Swanson
Kathy Thurston
Katheryn Ware

FRIEND (\$50–\$74)

Nora Beall
Dena Belisle
Nora Aileen Beall
Tom Clark
Lawrence Dunham
Steve & Jo Ann Erbes
Nancy Eustis
Mary Fogarty
Thomas Fogarty
Luther Granquist &
Anita Schermer

Michael Gude
Martha Hage
Marjorie Huebner
Catherine J. Hunter
Margot Imdieke &
Stuart W. Cross
Margaret M. Knutson
Mark Knutson
Greg Lais
Sandra Lane
Mark McAlister

William Overby
Caroline Portoghese
Ann Roscoe
John Smith
Susan Snyder
Joan Willshire
Richard Ziton

SUPPORT ACCESS PRESS*

☐ Friend \$50+

☐ Bronze \$75+

☐ Silver \$150+

☐ Gold \$500+

☐ Benefactor \$1000

DATE: _____

AMT. ENCLOSED \$ _____

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

PHONE _____

EMAIL _____

Mail your sponsorship to:

Access Press, LTD. PO Box 40006, Industrial Station,
St. Paul, MN 55104–5485

ACCESS
PRESS

MINNESOTA’S DISABILITY
COMMUNITY NEWS SOURCE

651–644–2133

access@accesspress.org

Cowchella is coming

The second annual disability literary and music festival is 4:30- 8 p.m. Thu, Aug. 4 at Springboard for the Arts, 262 University Ave. W, St. Paul. The Cow Tipping Press event features four new neurodiverse Cow Tipping books, live readings by more than 20 authors with intellectual/developmental disabilities, music by DJ Sci Fi and a secret headliner band, a disability arts organization fair, and more. The free event is indoors and outdoors. It is wheelchair accessible, with ASL interpretation, quiet areas and water provided.

More book readings are planned this summer, through the neurodiverse author reading and event series. FFI: <https://cowtippingpress.org/>

Open Flow Forum

The Artists with Disabilities Alliance meets via Zoom 7-9 p.m. the first Thu of the month. Upcoming dates Thu Aug 4 and Sept. 1. Virtually join artists with disabilities and supporters to share visual art, writing, music, theater and artistic efforts or disability concerns. Facilitators are Tara Innmon, Kip Shane and Springboard for the Arts. The gatherings are fully accessible. Anyone needing special accommodations should contact Andy Sturdevant at host organization Springboard for the Arts. Funding is available for access needs. FFI: 651-294-0907, resources@springboardforthearts.org

Minnesota Fringe Festival

Almost 1,000 artists will participate in the annual Minnesota Fringe Festival, Aug. 4-14. Ticket prices vary. Enjoy one show or a multi-show pass. The 29th Annual Minnesota Fringe Festival will host 595 live performances in 11 days, and is anticipated



Make a Date with Made in the Shade

Almost 1,000 artists will participate in the annual Minnesota Fringe Festival, Aug. 4-14. TFor 31 years, the Made in the Shade Walk, Run and Roll has helped disability service organizations raise money and awareness. The event is a non-competitive fundraiser, which helps Episcopal Group Homes, Homeward Bound, PAI, Partnership Resources Inc., Phoenix Residence, TSE and Wingspan Life Resources.

The 2022 event is 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Sat., Sept. 17 at Thomas Beach, Bde Maka Ska, 3700 Thomas Ave., Mpls. People can participate in-person or virtually. The event starts with a program, then the walk, and then a celebration for all. Enjoy music, food and fun with friends from the disability community/

Register solo or as a team to raise funds. Register through a participating organization, all of which are being featured in Facebook. FFI: <https://www.facebook.com/madeintheshade5k/>

to fill more than 35,000 seats at 11 locations around Mpls. It is the first fringe after a three-year hiatus. Fringe-managed theaters are conveniently grouped in two hubs and easily accessed through public transportation, including free Metro Transit rides Friday-

Sunday using a download from the Fringe website venue pages. FFI: <https://www.minnesotafringe.org/>

Improv Night

Want to get onstage and share a sense of

OPPORTUNITIES

Forum

Attend CIL forums

The Minnesota Statewide Independent Living Council (MNSILC) is a federally mandated council of community volunteers appointed by the governor. The council works collaboratively with the Centers for Independent Living (CILs) and coordinates activities with other entities in the state that provide services similar or complementary to independent living services. MNSCIL hosts two virtual forums Tue, Aug. 2 to seek public input on what its focus should be going forward for the next three years. Each format will include a brief introduction as to what MNSILC is and what it does; instructions for participation, courtesy expectations and the basic agenda; a series of questions input is sought on and open time to hear additional issues. Please request the zoom link and needed accommodations in advance. FFI: 612-518-1497; MNSILC1215@gmail.com

Conference

PACER's Annual Symposium

The PACER Annual Symposium is 8 a.m.-3 p.m. Tue, Aug. 16 at Minneapolis Convention Center. Registration is required and space is limited, \$40 registration fee Includes lunch. The symposium is designed to enhance awareness and identify strategies for responding to mental health and learning disabilities in children and young adults, from the perspective of teachers and parents. Keynote speaker Anne Gearity, who has a mental health practice in Minneapolis, is an assistant professor at the University of Minnesota, and consults with many school districts, will speak on restoring students' well-being after COVID, and the benefits and challenges of being at school. It also features a variety of workshops, breakout sessions, and speakers. CEU clock hours are available. FFI: PACER, 952-838-9000, 800-537-2237, www.pacer.org

Info & Assistance

Online mental health support

NAMI Minnesota (National Alliance on Mental Illness) offers a variety of free online peer support groups for adults and young adults living with a mental illness, their families, friends, spouses/partners, as well as parents of children and teens. Led by trained peer facilitators, the support groups help individuals and families learn coping skills and find strength through sharing their experiences. The groups are specifically for those individuals suggested by the group's title. For example, Family Support Group is only for family members and NAMI Connection is

only for those who live with a mental illness and are over 18 years old, etc. Find a complete listing of group meetings and how to join in by going to namimn.org and clicking on "Support Groups." FFI: <https://namimn.org/support/nami-minnesota-support-groups/>.

Classes offered online

NAMI Minnesota (National Alliance on Mental Illness) has set up a wide variety of free and in-person online mental health classes. Choices include Hope for Recovery, Transitions, Ending the Silence, Understanding Early Episode Psychosis for Families, In Our Own Voice, Family to Family, Positive Psychology, Creating Caring Communities, smoking cessation, a suicide prevention class called QPR – Question, Persuade and Refer, a special QPR class for Agricultural Communities and many more.

The classes are designed for family members and caregivers, persons living with a mental illness, service providers, and also the general public. Find a complete listing of these classes and how to join in by going to namimn.org and clicking on "Classes" or go straight to <https://namimn.org/education-public-awareness/classes/scheduled/>.

Children, youth and families

Parent Leadership Training

PACER Center seeks applicants for parent leader training, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Fri, Aug. 5 and Sat, Aug. 6. Learn about the influence of parent leadership in the history of special education, and build capacity to advocate for improved supports and services for children with disabilities and their families with the power of personal experience, Learn about parent leadership opportunities in Minnesota from the school district to the state level. Set personal goals and develop a Parent Leadership Action Plan and network with other Minnesota parents of children with disabilities. The training is free. Applicants must be available to actively participate in the entire training and be the parent of child or young adult with a disability who is 5 – 20 years old and currently receiving special education services on an IEP in Minnesota. Apply by Fri, July 15. FFI: PACER, 952-838-9000, 800-537-2237, www.pacer.org

PACER workshops sampling

PACER Center offers many useful free or low-cost workshops and other resources for families of children with any disabilities. Workshops are online and livestreamed at this time. Advance registration is required for all workshops. At least 48 hours' notice is needed for interpretation. Check out website and link to the newsletter of statewide workshops that allows participants to pick and



HandsOn Twin Cities wants you

Looking for a way to give back? HandsOn Twin Cities lists dozens of volunteer opportunities, including accessibility information. The nonprofit is 102 years old and is the oldest volunteer center of its kind in the United States.

Volunteer opportunities are updated regularly. Hands-on opportunities allow for people to connect directly with organizations that interest them including disability service organizations. It is easy to create a volunteer profile, sign up for a newsletter and receive weekly opportunities via email.

Other opportunities are pro bono, or skills-based volunteerism. This is the donation of professional services (i.e., technology, human resources, marketing, strategy, legal) benefiting organizations working to improve society. Grow your network, sharpen your skills, and provide benefit to the community that might not otherwise be available. Search the Volunteer Opportunities Database for local pro bono volunteer projects from one-hour virtual consultations to robust in-person projects. <https://www.handsontwincities.org/volunteers>

choose sessions designed for their needs.

Tech for Teens Club : LEGO Stop-Motion Videos is 10 a.m.-11:30 a.m. Sat, Aug. 13. Using just a mobile phone and LEGO brand toys, learn how to create stop-motion style videos to share with family and friends. Learn the techniques to create smooth animation using the Stop Motion Studio app (iPhone & Android). Then create your own stories and bring characters to life! Requirements: one mobile device with camera (iOS or Android), Stop Motion Studio app installed, and the students choice of movable figures or objects such as LEGO brand toys.

Understanding Special Education : Part 1 - IDEA: The Big Picture is 6:30-7:30 p.m. Tue, Aug. 16. Prepare for back to school with a three-part workshop series. Participants will gain an overall understanding of special education, its purpose, and the process. At the end of the presentation, participants will understand the big picture of special education, the steps in the process, and how to go about obtaining an educational evaluation.

Video Game Accessibility is 2-3:15 p.m.

humor? A free improv night for people with disabilities is offered at Gutter's Comedy Club at Southdale Center, Edina. Just show up and give it a try. The next event is 7-8:30 p.m. Tue, Aug. 9. FFI: trincarl07@gmail.com

Woofaroo is coming

Save the date for the Can Do Canines Woofaroo 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sat, Sept. 24. A fundraising walk starts at 10 a.m. Music, dog-centric vendors and much more are planned for well-behaved dogs and their people. Money raised allows the nonprofit train and place more assistance dogs with people who need them. Registration for the walk is underway. The event is held at the Can Do Canines campus, 9440 Science Center Drive, New Hope. FFI: <https://candowoofaroo2022.causevox.com/>

The next Can Do Canines open house is 6-8 p.m. Thu, Aug. 4 at the New Hope campus. Potential clients, volunteers, or anyone who might be interested in supporting the organization is invited to attend to learn how an assistance dog changes the life of a person with a disability. Assistance dog demonstrations and puppy raiser talks are planned. FFI: www.candocanines.org

Less to Enjoy!

The Enjoy listings are for arts events as well as banquets and fundraisers for disability services organizations. Schedules may be subject to change. Some venues still may have mask and vaccine requirements. Please FFI: check with a venue or organization before making plans. See what is available through the Minnesota Access Alliance and its calendar, at <https://mnaccess.org/>

CLASSIFIEDS

FOR RENT

METES & BOUNDS MANAGEMENT

Company manages the following Section 8 properties in Minnesota:

- Boardwalk Wayzata 952-473-0502
- Dewey Place/The Pines Foley 320-968-7791
- Highwood Homes Prior Lake 952-447-6961
- Greenwood Wadena 218-631-2575
- Mission Oaks Plymouth 763-559-5770

FIND YOUR NEW HOME WITH AT HOME APARTMENTS. Call 651-224-1234 or visit

Rustic Creek Two Harbors 218-595-1018
Todd 27 Long Prairie 320-732-6154
Town Square East Grand Forks 218-773-3631
Victory Duluth 218-722-2629
Income and rent restrictions apply Metes & Bounds is an equal housing opportunity housing company

AtHomeApartments.com for an apartment or town home Equal Opportunity Housing

Classified rates: \$20 (first 12 words); \$1/word beyond 12.

Email classified to access@accesspress.org

Deadline: 20th of each month. We will email total cost of classified ad.



We Know Self-Directed Care

"It's your people that make MRCI-CDS good. The people that I have had contact with and work with, I appreciate very much."
– Kathy W. | Client Representative | St Paul, MN

Whether you are a participant or their family, case manager, support planner, provider or agency, our responsive staff has the knowledge and expertise to guide you through the complexities of self-directed care.

ACCEPTING IMMEDIATE INTAKES
Call: 800-829-7110 or Visit: MRCICDS.ORG



Financial Management Service (FMS) | PCA Choice
245D Licensed | Community First Services and Supports (CFSS)



Accessible Space, Inc.

Call 800-466-7722
TTY/TDD 800-627-3529

Accessible, Affordable Housing

- For adults with qualifying disabilities.
- Over 50 barrier-free apartment communities & homes throughout the Metropolitan Area, Greater Minnesota and the Midwest.
- Locations also available in many other states. Income limits apply.
- **Immediate openings in Hibbing, Willmar and Hibbing, Minnesota**

Affordable Senior Apartments

- For qualifying senior households age 62 or better.
- Metro & Greater MN locations available. Income limits apply.
- Accessible apartments, available for seniors in these locations.
- **Immediate openings in Worthington and Albert Lea, Minnesota**

Housing with Care*

- 24-hour Assisted Living Services
- Independent Living Services
- Resident Community Setting (Adult Foster Care)
- Eligibility for or selection of ASI services is not required to qualify for housing. ASI services are not available in all locations.

Services openings. Call Today!





www.accessiblespace.org





We are the health plan that treats you with respect and dignity.

UCare has health plans for everyone.

Medicaid | Individual & Family | Medicare

Call 1-866-323-1327 | TTY 1-800-688-2534
No English 1-800-203-7225 | Visit ucare.org/access



people powered health plans