University pulls the plug on jobs program

by Jane McClure

A jobs creation program, which was poised to launch this summer, faces an uncertain future with the loss of its proposed space. Highland Popcorn was set to announce a partnership with University of St. Thomas in St. Paul to use part of a campus building for its program.

But after working with UST officials since fall 2019, Highland Popcorn was informed in late February that the business relationship was terminated. Efforts to have UST officials reconsider or meet with Highland Popcorn supporters have been turned down. Supporters now must look for another space.

The space Highland Popcorn planned to use is in the Binz Refectory, in the far southwest corner of the campus. Binz was a major campus events center for many years before a new student center was built on the north campus. UST issued a brief statement about the canceled agreement.

"The university thinks very highly of Highland Popcorn’s mission and had multiple conversations with the organization about options for potential spaces. Ultimately, St. Thomas determined it did not have the resources on the St. Paul campus to adequately support Highland Popcorn’s needs, and we notified the organization we could not proceed with an agreement," said Andy Ybarra, associate vice president of public relations and communications.

Highland resident Shamus O’Meara has been efforts to launch Highland Popcorn. He called the decision to pull the plug on the venture “devastating.” Highland Popcorn had already faced delays due to the COVID-19 pandemic and turnover of UST staff. But O’Meara had signed the latest agreement for the space in late February. The most recent agreement had the venture starting June 1. O’Meara was to meet with St. Thomas officials March 1 to discuss the plans. But a February 25 email from Pamela Peterson, associate vice president for auxiliary services, quashed the plan.

“I am reaching out to you today to let you know that after much discussion this week with key leaders at the university, a decision has been made to no longer move forward with a license agreement with Highland Popcorn,” Peterson said. “In part, many of the university’s priorities have shifted from where we were more than a year plus ago when conversations regarding this potential license agreement first started. Revised strategic priorities we now have in place, ongoing staffing issues, space needs and budget challenges have guided the decision to no longer move forward with this agreement.”

Peterson went on to say that she understands the “disappointment” Highland Popcorn supporters face, but that the license agreement is no longer viable.

O’Meara, whose young adult son Conor has autism, was shocked by the decision. “This is an unbelievable situation,” he said. “No other college or business would do this to its partners especially after two years of...”

Disability Services Day rally a time to call for workforce help

Many people with disabilities lack job opportunities and have had their housing upended because of Minnesota’s dire worker shortage. As the first bill deadline of the 2022 Minnesota Legislature passed March 25, Minnesotans with disabilities, their service providers and allies were hoping that their needs will be addressed and not left behind as the session continued.

More than 1,000 people from around the state and of local disability service organizations recently took part in the rally for legislative support during this year’s Disability Services Day March 8. The rally, led by the advocacy groups ARRM and MOHR, was again held virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Interest was so strong, the virtual meeting hit capacity, moving some participants to watch on Facebook.

People from around the state waved signs and cheered speakers as they watched the rally. It’s estimated that more than 3,500 people around the state are on waiting lists for services.

Much focus was on legislation championed by the Best Life Alliance to raise wages and benefits for care providers, said Sara Grafstrom, director of state and federal policy for ARRM. The need is for compensation to be addressed long-term, making changes to waiver and rate reimbursement systems.

"Without change we’ll be back here talking about this year after year," Grafstrom said.

ARRM and MOHR are calling for immediate wage relief, to help one-time with worker retention bonuses, assistance with workers’ child care costs and assistance with scholarships and training costs. Disability service organizations that had to close or limit services when the pandemic began are now unable to hire replacement staff or bring back existing workers. Employment, day service and housing programs have long waiting lists of people wanting to work, go to activities or have a place to live. But their isn’t enough staff to provide needed supports. What has been described as a workforce crisis is now referred to as “catastrophe.”

ARRM leader Sue Schetle and MOHR leader Julie Johnson emphasized the need for everyone to share their stories with state lawmakers. Lawmakers in turn said the recent gains made would...
The notion of people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities living inclusively in their community is an idea decades ago. Many people lived in large facilities, often far from their neighbors, family, friends and familiar communities. That began to change in the 1980s as deinstitutionalization occurred. The book 30 Years of Community Living released recently by the Administration on Disability (AID) provides an interesting overview of the past three decades of change. The digital book, which is available at https://www.acl.gov/30-years-community-living, outlines the shift from institutionalization and inclusion of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The book is written in accessible language and is part of the ICI at the University of Massachusetts-Boston and the University of Colorado at the Anschutz Medical Campus.

About 7.3 million people in the U.S. have intellectual and/or developmental disabilities, even though relatively few people with such disabilities are children. People with developmental disabilities may have difficulties with practical skills such as dressing or shopping, social skills such as making and keeping friends and keeping others from hurting them, and skills such as reading and doing math. Intellectual disabilities are found before, during, and after birth, and may be caused by substances, or lack of oxygen, which can affect development of the brain before, during, and after birth. Intellectual disabilities are found before, during, and after birth, and may be caused by substances, or lack of oxygen, which can affect development of the brain before, during, and after birth.

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It could mean having a job or no job at all, and being able to apply for employment more easily. Not having to travel for a job interview or leave one’s community to take a job would be a godsend for many in our community. The pandemic has shown us that many people can work remotely. Improved internet access would mean participating in one’s community or having decisions made for us and not with us. For many people with disabilities in rural areas, being about to have a video chat with a health care professional or counselor is much easier than driving long distances for care. Telehealth increasingly came to the forefront during the pandemic, and helped many people have access to healthcare that they would otherwise have gone without. It needs to stay there as a key health care option. A presentation before a Minnesota House subcommittee last year outlined the stark disparities in internet access. About 88.5 percent of Minnesota households have access to high-speed broadband internet service, defined as at least 100 Mbps download and 20 Mbps upload speeds. That percentage drops to 75 percent in Greater Minnesota. A county-by-county look showed five places with very poor internet access. Approximately 240,000 households statewide lack speedy access to the internet. Officials with the state’s Department of Employment and Economic Development’s Office of Broadband Development pointed out that extended improved service to many of these households causes challenges. Many of the affected households are in sparsely populated areas, which in turn requires extensive infrastructure investment. It’s estimated that achieving complete state broadband coverage has a cost that would top $1.3 billion.

Recently announced federal funding may be one answer. Another is in the Border-to-Border Broadband Development Grant Program, which state lawmakers set up in 2014. This program is to be used for grants to fund a middle- and last-mile infrastructure for high-speed broadband in underserved and un-served areas. A $70 million allocation is expected to be available in 2022. Grants can pay up to 50 percent of the cost, but that it could leave impoverished communities struggling for matching dollars. Gov. Tim Walz has proposed $170 million to be targeted extending broadband access in underserved areas in the state, as part of his supplemental budget. Bills for $120 million are pending in the House and Senate. Options exist for improved internet access including cable, digital subscriber line (DSL), connections, fixed wireless connections with antennas, mobile cellular and satellite service. All of these technologies have varying degrees of reach and underserved areas isn’t economically viable for rural communities, when serving a small number of people. Broadband appears to be the best option. Local elected officials have compared the broadband situation of that of the 1930s, when the movement for rural electrification brought power to homes and farms still using candlelight and other antiquated measures. The lack of access serves as a reminder that many people take into account the needs of Minnesotans with disabilities when looking at broadband. For rural electrification brought power to homes and farms still using candlelight and other antiquated measures, the lack of broadband serves as a reminder that many people take into account the needs of Minnesotans with disabilities when looking at broadband. We appreciate when Greater Minnesota lawmakers point out that actual speeds delivered to customers are often slower than the speeds that the providers advertise, and that they have questioned the state maps of areas considered “underserved” or “unserved.” For those of us with disabilities, having access to reliable internet service should be the same as having any other utility service. It should be as unnecessary as any of actual service along with service improvements, so that there is truly high-speed for all.

The March column shared an overview of the Minnesota Residential Information Systems Project (RISP) which is funded by the Department of Employment and Economic Development. The book is written in accessible language and is part of the ICI at the University of Massachusetts-Boston and the University of Colorado at the Anschutz Medical Campus.

30 Years of Community Living outlines many trends over the past three decades. One is on where one people live and/or work. The trend is toward participation in their communities. However, those with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities living in the community quadrupled. However, those with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities living in the community quadrupled. However, those with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities living in the community quadrupled. However, those with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities living in the community quadrupled.
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not have happened without the disability community rallies in recent years. But the fight is far from over.

One of many needs is to focus on the disability waiver system, said Rep. Jessica Hanson (DFL-Burnsville). She urged advocates to keep telling state lawmakers and the public of their plight. “I do this work as a means to amplify your voice… We know it’s tough out here.”

SF 2773 and HF 3100 would provide long-term solutions, including adjustments to the Minnesota’s Disability Waiver Rate System (DWRS.) Changes would allow for use of up-to-date economic data when the state sets reimbursement rates. Used by disability service providers to pay staff and provide services, the current rate system has been criticized for falling behind. SF 2908 and HF 3208 are the short-term solutions, outlining ways address staffing shortages of direct support professionals. The one-time retention payments for staff have support, as do the ideas for child care cost relief and education incentives.

Lawmakers cautioned advocates that they may again find themselves waiting until session’s end for their issues to be addressed. But with a state surplus of $9.25 billion, several said the time to address the workforce issues is now.

“The state is flush but individual Minnesotans are not,” said Sen John Hoffman (DFL-Champlain). He urged advocates to continue to argue that some of the surplus should be used to cover staffing needs.

Access Press legislative coverage is by Edina Jane McClure.

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Page 2

PARALYMPICS
From page 1

performance lower limb prosthetic
implants used for sport applications and other similar activities.

Schultz created the Moto Knee and Voice Start. Not only is he a Paralympian and X-Games athlete, he is also a professional snowmobiler.

He lost his leg above his knee in the 2008 after sustaining an injury while racing. Although now competing in Beijing games, there were 26 athletes from 11 countries using BioDapt products at the games. Minnesota’s team was a mix of veterans like Schultz and Aaron Pike, and three newcomers. Sydney Peterson of Lake Elmo was a last-minute addition to the U.S. team. Her first Paralympics were a success, as she brought home three medals, including gold in the 4x4-kilometer mixed relay in the cross-country competition.

The U.S. relay team included seventeen-time Beijing medalist Okana Masters, Dan Croonen and Jake Adicoff. They were guided by Sam Wood. The relay event had a team of men and women in the sitting, standing and visually impaired categories.

Peterson, 20, also won a silver medal in the standing 15km classic and a bronze medal in the standing cross-country sprint. She finished sixth in middle-distance.

Peterson is a member of the Nordic ski team at St. Lawrence University. She lives with dystonia and reflex sympathetic dystrophy, which cause pain and severe muscle contractions. She has limited mobility in her left leg and arm, and skis with a single pole. A brace inside her left boot holds her leg in position.

Another team member with Minnesota ties was Pike. He competed in both Paralympics. Pike, 35, competed in biathlon and cross-country skiing. He finished eighth in the sprint biathlon, ninth in individual biathlon, 10th in sprint cross-country, 12th in cross-country distance-cross-country and 15th in middle-distance biathlon.

Pike has also competed in the Summer Paralympics and is a well-known wheelchair racer. Pike has won many competitions over the years.

Oyuna Uranchimeg, 48, of Burnsville was the lead for the U.S. mixed-gender wheelchair curling team. The team finished in fifth place. Uranchimeg can do a veteran curler with several titles to her credit. This was her first Paralympics.

Rounding out the Minnesota delegation was cross-country skier Max Nelson of Grand. The 18-year-old is legally blind and he finished ninth in the open relay, 13th in the middle-distance race and 14th in the sprint. He was in his first Paralympics.

BioDapt a success story

BioDapt was created after Schultz’s snowmobile racing injury. “I wanted to get back to doing the activities I love (mainly motocross and snowmobile racing), but I soon found out there was nothing that would really allow me to ride the way I did before my amputation,” he said.

“With my knowledge and experience of fabrication, the experience of tuning suspension on my race equipment and my unwillingness to compromise I set out to create what I needed. After nearly two years of development I have come up with a knee unit that is versatile enough to handle many different action sports and has helped me win multiple ESPN X Games medals in the adaptive motocross and snowmobile events. In my many years of racing as a professional I’ve learned it takes a few key components to be successful: support from the people around you, a whole lot of determination and the right tools for the job,” Schultz started the company in 2010. BioDapt’s goal is to manufacture high-quality and versatile components that allow amputees to participate in sports and activities, according to the company website. The equipment can be, and is, used by competitive adaptive athletes at the highest level of competition as well as the average person who just wants to get out and be active doing the sports and activities they enjoy.

He is still the driving force behind the company and equipment development. He personally uses his Moto Knee and

VF2 Foot on a daily basis as he trains motocross, snowmobile and snowboarding at the highest levels of adaptive sports. He has won gold and silver at the Paralympics and has won several X Games medals in motocross, snowmobile and snowboard) and a Gold and Silver Medalist from the 2018 Paralympic Winter Games in snowboarding.

Learn more about Schultz and his story at www.monstermikeschultz.com.

Learn more about the U.S. Paralympics team and the many competitions at https://www.teamusa.org/beijing-2022-paralympic-games.
Deaf, deafblind, hard of hearing seek standards

by Sonny Nowakowski

The drive is on to pass HF3144, which calls for sign language interpreters and transliterators board and licensure established. The bill was referred to the House Health Finance and Policy Committee earlier this session. We were delighted to learn that Committee’s Chair Rep. Tina Liebling (DFL - Rochester) told Rep. Brian Daniel (Republican) that she would not have the bill heard in her committee. She personally had several concerns with the bill. However, she felt that it was not made the case that this requires licensure. She asked why could this not be accomplished through statewide registration, as set forth in Minnesota Statutes 214.001, subdivision 3. (In this case, it would be referred to the Board of Medical Practice.

Below is our response to her:
The deaf, deafblind, and hard of hearing communities are a marginalized group. Many complete or leave school behind from their peers in reading, writing and other subjects. They experience high unemployment, underemployment or are no longer seeking work. A person with a disability often has other health or mental challenges, resulting in regular visits to a medical provider/professional. In addition to being a marginalized group, they are a vulnerable population where they are in a position whereas they do not secure their own accommodations. As they seek to advocate, there is no mandate for someone to advocate for them.

Schwartzkopf led life of service

Schwartzkopf, a leader in Minnesota’s disability community for many years, will be remembered at a private memorial service June 17 in Poughkeepsie, New York, Boca Raton, Florida and Rochester over the years. He was one of the 14 year. She was 63.

The deaf, deafblind, and hard of hearing communities statewide. This is an important bill addressing the safety of the deaf, deafblind, and hard of hearing communities statewide.

With utmost confidence with my son being deaf, my involvement in their communities; this is an important bill addressing the safety of the deaf, deafblind, and hard of hearing communities statewide.

In Memoriam

Schwartzkopf led life of service

David "Dave" Schwartzkopf, a leader in Minnesota’s disability community for many years, will be remembered at a private memorial service June 17 in Poughkeepsie, New York, Boca Raton, Florida and Rochester over the years. He was one of the 14 year. She was 63.

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In Memoriam
Health impacts of air pollution disproportionately impact community

Two new brief reports released by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) and Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) highlight that pollution, continuing to pose a threat to public health in the Twin Cities and regional cities of Minnesota, is impacting communities with high levels of air pollution disproportionately on communities with more residents who are low-income, child, elderly, people of color, or people with a disability.

The reports, Life and Breath: Metro and Life and Breath: Greater Minnesota, examine how air pollution affected health in 2015, the most recent year for which data has been analyzed, across the seven-county metropolitan area, and in three greater Minnesota regional centers: Duluth, Rochester, and St. Cloud.

The report builds on previous research and clearly shows that reducing air pollution is part of state policy. An estimated 21,000 deaths from air pollution were more prevalent than deaths from accidents, which make up 6 percent of all deaths. The findings are consistent with previous reports, demonstrating that air quality poses significant public health threats despite overall improvements in air quality. Between 2008 and 2015, for example, fine particles (PM2.5) pollution improved by about 30 percent and ozone pollution improved by nearly 10 percent in the Twin Cities metropolitan area.

In all of the cities studied, the report found communities facing discrimination, barriers to access to care, and structural racism, generally had the highest estimated rates of air pollution-related death and disease. These structural inequities, along with other social and economic stressors, lead to higher levels of heart and lung disease that make residents in marginalized communities more susceptible to the effects of poor air quality. For example, for every 10 parts per billion increase in PM2.5, the largest percentage of residents of color had more than five times the rate of asthma emergency room visits related to air pollution compared to areas with more white residents.

“Health impacts of air pollution fall harder on some communities within our cities than others, particularly those residents who are disproportionately affected by pollution.”

While Minnesota’s air quality has improved over the past decade, and meets federal standards, even low and moderate levels of pollution play a role in premature deaths and hospitalizations across the state.

The report also shows:
• In the Twin Cities metro, air pollution played a role in 10 percent of all deaths (about 1,600 people) along with nearly 500 hospitalizations across the state.
• 9 percent of all deaths in Duluth.
• 10 percent of all deaths in Rochester.
• 8 percent of all deaths in St. Cloud.
• Among all studied cities, pollution-related deaths were more prevalent than deaths from accidents, which make up 6 percent of all deaths.

“Reducing air pollution is part of state policy. An estimated 21,000 deaths from air pollution were more prevalent than deaths from accidents, which make up 6 percent of all deaths.”

The report shows that folks who have continuous health insurance coverage for more than a year are less likely to seek regular and preventative care and have their medical needs met. Unfortunately, many people who shop on their own through Medicaid can lose it during the year due to monthly fluctuations in income. One way to help solve this problem is to push someone over the income threshold for a single month, costing them and their families their health care.

This Medicaid is a diverse coalition of nonpartisan organizations from across Minnesota partnering to strengthen Medicaid. These organizations advocate for all Minnesotans and work to ensure our accessible waiting lists at the following affordable communities:

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<th>Community</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
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<tr>
<td>Cornerstone Creek Apartments</td>
<td>612-624-4665</td>
<td>1 &amp; 2 BR</td>
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<tr>
<td>Golden Valley</td>
<td>763-231-6250</td>
<td>1 &amp; 2 BR</td>
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<tr>
<td>diamond Hill Management</td>
<td>612-736-9341</td>
<td>2 &amp; 3 BR</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elliot Park Apartments</td>
<td>612-638-3100</td>
<td>2 BR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanover Townhomes</td>
<td>651-292-8497</td>
<td>1 BR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hilltop Manor</td>
<td>952-938-5787</td>
<td>1 &amp; 2 BR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln Place Apartments</td>
<td>612-377-0650</td>
<td>1 &amp; 2 BR</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prairie Meadows</td>
<td>612-736-9341</td>
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<tr>
<td>Raspberry Ridge</td>
<td>651-933-3260</td>
<td>2 &amp; 3 BR</td>
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<td>Silver Lake Park</td>
<td>612-340-1264</td>
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<td>Stillwater</td>
<td>612-623-0247</td>
<td>2 &amp; 3 BR</td>
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<td>Triplet Apartments</td>
<td>612-732-7232</td>
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<td>Visitation Place</td>
<td>612-647-0470</td>
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<tr>
<td>Willow Apartments</td>
<td>612-632-0890</td>
<td>1 BR</td>
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<tr>
<td>Woodland Court Apartments</td>
<td>608-321-5310</td>
<td>1 &amp; 2 BR</td>
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www.naminn.org

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Street name is changed

Community leaders celebrated the official renaming of Dight Avenue to Cheatham Avenue in south Minneapolis to honor the legacy of John Cheatham, who became the first Black fire captain with the Minneapolis Fire Department in 1889. He is believed to be the city’s first Black firefighter.

Cheatham, who was born enslaved in 1855, worked out of Fire Station 24 until his retirement in 1889. The station is about two blocks from the newly renamed street. Cheatham Avenue runs from 34th Street East to 41st Street East in south Minneapolis. The old namesake of the street was Charles Fremont Dight, a physician and Minneapolis alderman who founded the Minnesota Eugenics Society in 1923. He was also aFiller supporter. His beliefs that people of color and people with disabilities were inferior were called out recently.

City Council Member Andrew Johnson worked with community members on an application to rename street and they ultimately voted Cheatham as someone worthy of having the honor.

“We owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to Captain John Cheatham and his fellow Black firefighters who so courageously stepped up to serve and protect the residents of our community, despite the unwinding racism and oppression they faced,” Johnson said.

“Seeing John Cheatham’s name raised high serves not just as a reminder of his legacy, but also his example, which is one for all of us to aspire to,” Johnson said.

“Cheatham Avenue is about two blocks from the newly named street. Cheatham Avenue serves as the border for St. James AME church, founded in 1860. It is the oldest Black institution in our state,” said LaJune Lange, a retired Hennepin County District Judge. “The dishonor has been removed by renaming the street after a man who dedicated his life to serving all the residents of Minneapolis in their time of need.”

(Source: City of Minneapolis)

More group homes have closed

The closing of its 55 group homes, leaving families to struggle to accommodate their loved ones. Other providers such as Bear Creek Services say they haven’t been able to compete with the economy and worker what they’re worth.

“We’re working people to death. And so we really need is for us to at least be able to compete with the economy,” Kirkpatrick said.

Bear Creek Services says they haven’t been able to compete with other employers here and need a contract language to ensure each school district added behavioral intervention specialists and social workers in 2020. But the needs of students are even more acute after two years of pandemic-fueled quarantines, distance learning and sporadic in-person instruction.

“We all know kids’ lives are really struggling,” he said.

(Source: Star Tribune)

New trackchairs unveiled

By early summer, a few Minnesota state parks will offer a means for disabled visitors to move through trail landscapes in ways they maybe never thought possible.

Five parks will have an Action Trackchair for use. The chairs are part-all-terrain vehicle, part beefed-up electric wheelchair, and designed with tank-like treads to navigate rugged terrain if necessary.

A pilot project by the Department of Natural Resources, the wheelchairs are located at Camden (Lund), Crow Wing (Brainerd), Maplewood (Pelicano Rapids) and Myre-Big Island (near Albert Lea) state parks. A fifth chair will be placed soon, and all should be available by early summer, said Jamie McBride, a DNR parks and trails consultant. The specialized chairs are made by Action Manufacturing in Marshall and cost $14,500 apiece.

Plans to get the chairs in some Minnesota parks, mostly in the past two years, were pushed by advocacy groups and state lawmakers. MNDIS said sustainability was top of mind when deciding which parks received chairs. Some criteria included trail lengths and their condition, the staff’s capacity to manage use of the Trackchairs, the presence of rare plants and invasive species, and physical barriers.

He said that park infrastructure didn’t change to accommodate chairs, although Maplewood was selected because of some trail improvements suited to a Trackchair, including access to the park’s highest point, Hallaway Hill, known for its vistas.

Each park will have at least one suggested trail for the chairs. McBride said each park also will manage its own reservation system, and the chairs are free to use. To date, all state parks allow power-driven and manual mobility aids provided they comply with state regulations.

McBride said the DNR will evaluate the demand for the chairs and users’ experiences after a year and will decide whether to expand to more parks. Money from the state’s parks and recreation fund helped pay for four of the chairs. A fifth was donated.

“This is a pilot program and a lot of things have yet to be put in place around it,” McBride said.

Bill Stumpman, who manages outdoor projects for Action Manufacturing, said the joystick-controlled chairs are used on public lands in 16 states. (Source: Star Tribune)

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Longtime director stepping down

The end of an era is coming at central Minnesota disability services provider WACOSA as Executive Director Steve Howard is retiring on September 30. Howard's career has spanned 36 years in the human services field, with the last 14 years spent as WACOSA's executive director. Under his leadership, WACOSA experienced a 68 percent increase in financial growth and a 44 percent increase in the number of people the organization serves annually (pre-COVID).

"It has been an absolute privilege working with Steve during my time with the WACOSA Board of Directors," said Jon Archer, WACOSA board chair. "He is an incredible advocate for individuals of all abilities, and his strong leadership and creative vision has shaped WACOSA into the healthy and vibrant organization it is today. I am thankful for the countless contributions Steve has made to both WACOSA and the field of human services, and I am excited as we look to the next chapter for the Organization."

During retirement Howard plans to spend more time fishing competitively in the coming years, continuing consulting work and taking his wife and best friend, Patricia, with him on future travels. A retirement celebration will be held prior to Steve's departure.

WACOSA's Board of Directors is engaged in the process of succession planning with Howard leaving. More information will be forthcoming in the upcoming months as this process develops.

WACOSA is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that works for adults with disabilities, building a circle of support that empowers individuals to develop skills, explore and pursue employment, and foster community connections from graduation through retirement.

Four are named to nonprofit’s board

Opportunity Partners, a Twin Cities disability services nonprofit, has announced that Milton Dodd, Julie Sjordal, Brett White and Katie Mattis Sarver are the newest members of its board of directors.

Milton Dodd serves as sales director with talent and consulting firm Salo and brings over 20 years of experience in coaching, business development, and team leadership. Dodd's career includes leadership roles with Trust Edge Leadership Institute, General Works and Lifetouch National Schools Studio.

Julie Sjordal is chief executive officer of St. David’s Center for Child and Family Development, a nonprofit providing autism treatment, pediatric therapy, mental health services, early childhood education and home support services. She has dedicated her career to children, families and adult with disabilities, serving as a teacher, social service provider and leader in the field.

Brett White is vice president of finance for General Mills’ North America Retail segment. In this role, he is responsible for all financial operations of General Mills’ largest operating segment. Before joining General Mills in 2005, he held leadership positions at Kraft PDDO, Pillsbury and Maple Leaf Foods in both Canada and the United Kingdom.

Katie Mattis Sarver is Bell Bank's first community development officer and focuses on building and growing the bank’s relationships with community, business and nonprofit leaders. Prior to joining Bell Bank, she served as an executive member of the community.

University of Minnesota, Minneapolis President is Karrie Shorgen, professor and director, Kansas University Center on Developmental Disabilities (AADID). AADID is the oldest and largest membership organization concerned with intellectual and developmental disabilities. It is a community of researchers, educators, clinicians, practitioners, and policy makers from around the world.
Radio Talking Book Radio Talking Book is not just for listeners with visual disabilities. It can be an asset for people whose disabilities limit hand movements, making it difficult to read a book.

Enjoy programming anywhere and anytime on a handheld mobile device, such as iOS or Android. Download the Minnesota Radio Talking Book app for a convenient way to tune in wherever and whenever.

Books broadcast on the Minnesota Radio Talking Book Network are available through the Minnesota Braille and Talking Book Library in Faribault. The catalog is available at mnlib.org, click on the “Search the Library Services” option. Find the Minnesota Braille and Talking Book Library at 800-722-0550, Mon.-Fri., 9 am – 4 pm CST for details.

Persons living outside of Minnesota may obtain copies of books via an inter-library loan by contacting their home state’s library service. Call 651-539-1424. Postal mail can be sent to Minnesota Access Press, 106.7 FM in St. Paul. Listeners outside Minnesota or the United States may hear Disability and Progress stream Mondays – Fridays, 6 a.m. to 10 p.m., and Saturdays, 6 a.m. to 11 p.m. on Radio Talking Book.

Opportunity Partners’ annual gala is at 5:30 p.m. Wed, April 6. – V, L

For more information, contact Roberta Kitlinski at 651-539-1423 or roberta.kitlinski@state.mn.us to learn more.

Use an app to hear programs
Radio Talking Book is seeking volunteers to record books and access channels for broadcast. This is a fun and rewarding volunteer opportunity. Contact Roberta Kitlinski at 651-539-1423 or roberta.kitlinski@state.mn.us to learn more.

To find more information about Minnesota Radio Talking Book Network events go to the Facebook site, Minnesota Radio Talking Book. Audio information about the daily book listings is also on the National Federation for the Blind (NFB) Newsline, register for free at nfbnewsline.org. Call 651-539-1424 for NFB Newsline.

The NFB-NEWLINE service provides access to more than 2,500 nonprint books and newspapers, plus information on COVID-19 in the “Breaking News” section of the service. Visit https://mnssb.org/nfb-newline.

Listen to the Minnesota Radio Talking Book Service for the Blind at mn.gov/deed/sbdonate.

Listen to RTB’s live or archived programs at www.mnssb.org/radio.

Chautauqua*

Monday – Friday 6 a.m.

The Body: A Guide for Occupants, narrated by Bill Gates. Writer and researcher Bill Bryson turns his inquisitive mind and humorous perspective to the wonderful, weird, and wondrous human body. By Yvelin Lynfeld, 22 broadcasts; begins Tue, April 5.

Past is Prologue

Monday and Tuesday 11 a.m.

Accidental Presidents, nonfiction by Jared Cohen. Hear the stories of the transitions of eight U.S. vice presidents who took on the presidency after the deaths of their presidents. By Roger Sheldon. 22 broadcasts; begins Mon, April 4.

Bookworm*

Monday – Friday noon

Awakening of a Metamorphosis, nonfiction by Jonathan Miles. A man who became paraplegic years ago suddenly arises from his wheelchair! Is it a miracle or a mistake? Read by Pat Mur. 17 broadcasts; begins Wed, April 6.

The Writer’s Voice*

Monday – Friday 1 p.m.

Agatha Christie, nonfiction by Laura Thompson. The life of the beloved mystery writer is reviewed in terms of her early years, her relationships, and the secrecy surrounding her participation in a murder. By Isla Hey. 9 broadcasts; begins Tue, April 5.

Choice Reading*

Monday – Friday 2 p.m.

The Dutch House, fiction by Ann Patchett, 2019. Two young children are left to fend for themselves in a luxurious mansion, after their distempered mother absconds. Read by Myrna S. Delano. 8 broadcasts; begins Mon, April 4.

The Department of Sensitives Crimes, fiction by Alexander McCullum Smith. Malmo, Sweden’s Sensitives Crimes Department handles the most peculiar cases. Read by Myrna S. Delano. 8 broadcasts; begins Wed, April 6.

Afternoon Report*

Monday – Friday 4 p.m.


Night Journey*

Monday – Friday 7 p.m.

James Holmes Jonson by Michael G. 2014. A small Wisconsin town celebrates the end of World War II, the son of a veteran is named class president and the man demanding the dog’s death is the likely killer. Read by Neil Bright. Eight broadcasts; begins Tue, April 5 – V.

Off the Shelf*

Monday – Friday 8 p.m.

Flower Towards the Sun, fiction by Marcia R. 2017. Two women fall in love during the Korean War and with a nearby dormant volcano threatens to reawaken. By Scott McKinney. Nine broadcasts; begins Mon, April 18. – L, S

RTB After Hours*

Monday – Friday 10 p.m.

The Book of M, nonfiction by David Rosenfelt, 2014. As a small Wisconsin town takes on the presidency upon the deaths of four U.S. presidents, a detective adopts a dog that is a key to the puzzle. By David Rosenfelt. 20 broadcasts; begins Mon, April 4.

Radio Talking Book is an award-winning radio show that is produced by and for people with disabilities. Shows are now available on Facebook page at Disability Radio. They work with Conor’s Corner by Conor O’Meara can be contacted at 651-538-1423 or Conor.Omeara@opportunity.org.

Conor’s Corner

Contact Conor by Conor O’Meara can be heard at 10 a.m. Mon., replayed 8 a.m. Sat. at 94.1 or WPNF.org. Frogtown Community Radio show airs every other Saturday from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. on WFTM 880 AM. You can also listen on Spotify and Mixcloud. Find the radio station at www.wftm.org.

HoodWave Disability Radio

Tuesdays. Check the above schedule and in person. Visit www.interactcenter.org for more information.

For more information, contact Roberta Kitlinski at 651-539-1423 or roberta.kitlinski@state.mn.us to learn more.

Opportunity Partners’ annual gala is at 5:30 p.m. Wed, April 6. Corey is an in-person event with a free livestream for those who wish to watch virtually. This virtual event will be held before the Opportunity Partners-Koch Campus, 5500 Opportunity Court, Minnesota.

The gala starts with a keynote by Does this mean that Janice Made features 35 drawings and paintings from her extensive archive. The show is part of a larger exhibition of Janice’s works that is on view in the gallery is open by appointment. All gallery visitors are asked to wear masks. Email gallery@interactcenter.org for details.

For the Younger Set, 11 a.m. Sun, presents Love Songs and Other Lies by David Rosenfelt, narrated by Bradley Powell, followed by The Muppets as told by Tara Wilson Redd.

Poetic Reflections, noon Sun, presents A Poet’s Life by Stephen Crane, read by Scott McKinney followed by The Poetry of William Sieghart, read by Scott McKinney.

The Great North, 4 p.m., Sun, presents Wild and Rare by Rand Regn Arvidson, read by Andrea Bell.

For easier access, download the app to a smartphone and hear shows on demand. On your phone, tap on “Accessibility and Preferences” and select “Enable accessibility services.”

For questions and suggestions, or call 651-538-1423. Email disabilityandprogress@jsmamijame.com with questions and suggestions, or call the program at 651-538-1444. Postal mail can be sent to Opportunity Partners, 106.7 FM in St. Paul. Minnesota.

Read by Andrea Bell.

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Tournament is back, champions crowned in adapted hockey

Minnesota State High School League’s Adapted Floor Hockey Tournament returned after a two-year hiatus on Saturday, March 19, 2022, at Bloomington High School. The traditional power house Dakota United captured another championship on the ice in the third period. The first two periods were held in the north and south Dakota United respectively. The teams expected to be a back-and-forth game with plenty of shots and strong defense. The match began with the first two periods tied until the north Dakota United player scored a victory in the third period.

The winning team was Dakota United, Kuday Robinson, Tr Van Otten and Cadence Atwater, Brainerd; Mark Babcock, Heavenly Wings, Brainerd; and Alex Avunj Sherwood, Hopkins/Monday-Westonka, Anoka

The second place finish was Rochester and Liban Farah, St. Paul Humboldt. The match started off with a bang, scoring a goal in the first period. The second period was held in the south and north Dakota United respectively. The teams expected to be a back-and-forth game with plenty of shots and strong defense. The match began with the first two periods tied until the south Dakota United player scored a victory in the third period. The winning team was Rochester United, Kuday Robinson, Tr Van Otten and Cadence Atwater, Brainerd; Mark Babcock, Heavenly Wings, Brainerd; and Alex Avunj Sherwood, Hopkins/Monday-Westonka, Anoka

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