Rideshare companies will remain

One closely watched issue for the 2024 Minnesota Legislature is that of how transportation network companies (TNC) drivers are compensated. State lawmakers passed a measure to increase driver pay, as part of a massive omnibus bill.

Gov. Tim Walz signed the measure May 24, after vetoing TNC legislation in 2023. It takes effect in December. The changes don’t apply to drivers on delivery platforms, such as DoorDash or UberEats.

The changes provide an array of protections for drivers and riders. But changes in state law also could bring higher fares.

The controversy over rideshare services and wages caused consternation for people with disabilities who use rideshare services. It also shone a brighter spotlight on the problems some disabled riders face with TNCs.

Many rideshare vehicles aren’t accessible to people who use wheelchairs or scooters, or who have mobility issues. In other cases, drivers have refused to accommodate riders who use service animals. Those issues were in the mix in the 2024 session, especially the need to provide more accessible vehicles. But they were addressed to the satisfaction of many disability advocates, who still want and need accessible options.

Ideas brought forward during the session included incentives to help drivers purchase accessible vehicles, as there are questions as to whether or not that would be done voluntarily. As the session’s end neared, a proposal was introduced to provide $2 million from the state’s workforce development fund. It would have created a vehicle loan program for drivers, at 0 percent interest. Loanes would have been available at $15,000 for regular vehicles and $20,000 for wheelchair-accessible vehicles. Eligibility requirements were in place for drivers seeking loans. That didn’t pass.

The Minnesota Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (MNCCD) hopes to bring accessibility measures back in 2025. Still, the new law is expected to resolve a debate that has gone on for many months at the state and local levels. But it accelerated a conflict between state leaders and the Minneapolis City Council. That council passed its own wage requirements for many months at the state and Senate chambers before the gaels fell at the midnight May 19 constitutional deadline.

What generated the most angst was a 1,430-page bill that was a melding of nine deadlines. That included needed accessibility. That includes needed accessibility.

Despite a chaotic session end; many gains are celebrated

It was win some and wait until 2025 for the disability community, as the Minnesota Legislature’s 2024 session came to a tumultuous end. Chaos erupted in the House and Senate chambers before the gaels fell at the midnight May 19 constitutional deadline.

What generated the most angst was a 1,430-page bill that was a melding of nine separate bills. Republicans loudly decried the tactic of introducing such a lengthy bill so late in the session, shouting “Follow the rules!” and “Tyranny!” and even chainting “U-S-A!”

Disability advocates and organization staffers were still poring through legislation as May came to an end. The time crunch at session’s end didn’t allow for detailed overviews of the bills as they were voted on. Still, some losses were all too clear. A bonding bill didn’t pass, meaning a wide range of infrastructure improvements must wait. That includes needed accessibility.

He draws on experiences with autism for performances

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He draws on experiences with autism for performances

by Jan Wilmus

Anxiety, restlessness, being a superpower and feeling free and unchained are some of the emotions St. Paul actor Michael Wolfe experiences while waiting for a bus.

Wolfe, who identifies as a Black, queer performer with autism, will share the feelings he goes through on a daily basis at a performance June 2 at the Parkway Theater, 4844 Chicago Ave. S., Minneapolis.

‘Thresholds: Art, Science and Neurodiversity’ will offer two short films and a live performance featuring Wolfe. Neuroscientist Guadalupe Astorga will talk about her research on the neurodiversity of visual perception. Both Wolfe and Astorga will share insights about their unique processes.

The event is being presented by Beth Graczyk Productions (BGP). Graczyk is the director.

Wolfe said he has wanted to have a career in movies and television since he was a child. His inspiration was Batman films. “The one starring Michael Keaton, as well as other movies, sparked my interest in acting,” he said.

Wolfe also said that he has been singing his entire life. “When I was a kid I would sing to myself all the time,” he said. “It would often annoy others around me. I was very introverted and kept to myself. But then I joined the choir in high school and began to take singing more seriously. I thought maybe I could have a career in the entertainment industry, when no one wanted to work with someone on the spectrum. It was kind of a curve ball thrown to me.”

Michael Wolfe’s latest performance draws on his waits for the bus.

Michael Wolfe's latest performance draws on his waits for the bus.

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Key retirements coming

Happy birthday, Dowling!

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PERFORMANCE To page 13

RIDESHARE To page 3
Don’t pass us by when it comes to the drive-through service issue

St. Paul is the latest city to consider revisions to its drive-through services regulations. Our May issue featured a story about the proposal. A public hearing before the St. Paul Planning Commission is set for June 7 at the St. City Hall/Ramsey County Courthouse. The Planning Commission’s recommendations go to the City Council for a final public hearing and vote this summer.

We appreciate that St. Paul in recent years has had very challenging issues with drive-through services. One was a Starbucks drive-through service that tied up a very busy intersection. Long traffic back-ups and a blocked sidewalk and bike lane presented problems. Off-duty police officers had to direct traffic during business times.

The business earned the nickname “Carbucks.” Its Snelling-Marshall intersection was nicknamed “Snarlhall” in honor of snarled traffic. That drive-through has been removed.

Another business with drive-through challenges is a Taco Bell in the Midway area. That fast-food restaurant typically has long lines of cars at meal times and at bar closing time. It’s been a huge disruption for neighbors and Snelling traffic. The business was able to retain its drive-through service.

We appreciate that St. Paul has considered a more nuanced approach to how it regulates drive-through services. In its initial recommendations, city officials didn’t propose banning new drive-through services outright as other cities have done. But now city officials are considering just that.

On Tuesday, June 13, the St. Paul Planning Commission is expected to have a final public hearing and vote on the proposal.

We at Access Press have a firm plea for St. Paul city officials: Don’t forget us. We are pedestrians with disabilities who need safety. We are also consumers who need access to goods and services. Losing that access makes it harder for us to stay in our communities.

Minneapolis’ Dowling Elementary in May celebrated the school’s centennial with an open house event. Many alumni and current students gathered to reflect on their unique experiences at the south Minneapolis school.

Dowling is one of the Upper Midwest’s oldest public schools for students with physical disabilities. It is named for Michael Dowling. Dowling is a member of the Access Press History Note.

Author Luther Granquist told Dowling’s story in a 2015 article, describing his remarkable ability from a young boy on his own to respected statesman.

The 1880 census report for Wergeland Township in Yellow Medicine County gave 14-year-old Mike Dowling’s occupation as “herding cattle.” Although he was listed with the Isaac Anderson family who farmed just northeast of the town of Porter. Dowling worked for himself, as he had done since his mother died when he was 10.

At that time, Dowling moved with his father from Massachusetts to St. Louis and Chicago. Then on his own he went to work as a cook in a lumber camp in Wisconsin, on steamboats between St. Paul and St. Louis, as a water carrier on a farm in Cottage Grove and as a “kid cowboy” on a ranch in Wyoming.

During the summer of 1880, he collected a herd of more than 500 head of cattle from farmers in the Canby area by agreeing to care for them on the open range and to deliver them back to their owners on October 15 for $5 a head. He did so successfully despite a sleet and snow storm that struck on October 14 and killed cattle in other herds in the area. Dowling was not so lucky on December 4, 1880. He hitched a ride with two farmers on the back of a lumber wagon to go from Canby to the farm where he kept his pony. They encountered a sudden blizzard, and the horses veered into a plowed field. Dowling was thrown from the wagon, which continued on in the howling storm.

After the blizzard cleared the next morning, Dowling struggled to a farm house on frozen legs and with frozen arms. Sixteen days later three doctors amputated both of his legs and one arm.

Three years later he convinced the Yellow Medicine County commissioners that they should provide him two terms at Carlton College rather than pay a local farmer $2 per week to take care of him. That investment paid off.

The youthful cook, cowboy and cattle herder became a school teacher, a school superintendent, a member of the Minnesota Legislature, a newspaper publisher and the president of a bank. In 1921 he spearheaded a successful effort by Rotarians to add “crippled children” to the law providing state aid to school districts which choose to serve children with disabilities.

Dowling also had a shy sense of humor. One day, when checking into a hotel, he sought help removing his prosthetics. His joke about help to remove his head sent a young houseboy into fits of laughter.

Dowling School proudly bears his name.

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.mndc.org.

We at Access Press have a firm plea for St. Paul city officials: Don’t forget us. We are pedestrians with disabilities who need safety. We are also consumers who need access to goods and services. Losing that access makes it harder for us to stay in our communities.

Some neighborhood district councils are calling for a ban on any new drive-throughs. St. Paul officials are trying to get ahead of problems by allowing drive-throughs in some parts of the city. They have a more nuanced approach to how it regulates drive-through services.

One proposal on the table would ban new drive-through services in some parts of St. Paul. The proposal would allow such services in other areas. Existing drive-through services would be grandfathered in.

The downtown central business district, which is increasingly becoming more residential, is a place where new drive-through services would be banned outright. Areas zoned for traditional neighborhoods mixed use would have new drive-throughs limited to one.

A number of technical design changes are proposed to keep pedestrians safer. These changes would allow space for vehicles to line up or “stack” as they wait for service. That could deter the problem of vehicles backing up and blocking sidewalks.

We at Access Press have a firm plea for St. Paul city officials: Don’t forget us. We are pedestrians with disabilities who need safety. We are also consumers who need access to goods and services. Losing that access makes it harder for us to stay in our communities.
After 45 years’ service, Rise’s Noren announces upcoming retirement

The Arc Minnesota has announced that Andrea Zuber will be leaving her role as CEO effective June 30.

Over the past five years, Zuber has led the Arc Minnesota with vision and dedication, culminating in significant achievements and transformative initiatives. She supported the organization in implementing the merger of the Metropolitan Cerebral Palsy Association (MCPA) and the Minneapolis Association for Retarded Citizens (MARCR). She also spearheaded efforts to create the Minnesota Arc, now known as The Arc Minnesota, as a multi-state organization for organizations serving people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Zuber plans to stay involved with Rise in the future, such as with Rise’s strategic plan. She is looking forward to spending more time supporting her family and friends, including her mother, who is in her early 90s. She is also looking forward to giving back to the community and the disability community.

The Arc Minnesota has announced that Andrea Zuber is stepping down at end of June.
Never forget the human cost as the D-Day anniversary is marked

by Jane Larson

On June 6, 2024, we mark the 80th anniversary of the D-Day invasion in Europe. While we rightfully commemorate this milestone as the beginning of the liberation of Europe, we must never forget the toll of human suffering as the price paid for victory: not just those who lost their lives, 445 in the first 24 hours, but also those whose lives were changed forever. A vast community of people returned with disabilities, lifelong physical and mental challenges, a world that was no longer accessible to them.

As of 2023, the number of World War II veterans in the U.S. was estimated at 19,550 and few people living today remember the war. WWII began in 1939 when the Third Reich invaded Poland without any notice or provocation. Many did nothing, thinking the war wouldn’t last. It did.

The United States entered the war in December 1941, first after the attack on Pearl Harbor by Japan and then in Europe. We can’t forget because those who forget history are condemned to repeat it.

During WWII people with disabilities were targeted for what the Nazis called a euthanasia program that was separate from its racist and ethnic ‘eugenics’. Those with physical and mental disabilities were not spared. An act of assisted suicide called the ‘Mae West’ method, meant for those with terminal illnesses, was no less cruel. Valor and honor were not limited to the field of battle. People with disabilities who served in the war were honored for their contributions.

Moreover, as job expansion slowed down, people with disabilities often found themselves ‘last hired, first fired’. This led organizations like the American Federation of the Physically Handicapped and Blind Veterans Association to speak out for equal access to public transportation, education, and jobs. It made a few decades but resulted in the civil rights acts of the 1970s.

While researching this topic, I recently visited the Great Depression, WWII and the Post War Baby Boom. It includes the opportunity for visitors to board the fuselage of a C-47 where patrons experience a multi-sensory re-creation of a true and tragic combat jump story on D-Day. A veteran who is also a mental health professional introduced the program to our tour group. To say it was a

“Anyone can get a job with the right kind of help.”

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Adapted softball teams, team and solo bowlers competed for state titles

Spring sports are winding down for Minnesota prep athletes with disabilities, as the Minnesota State High School League held two tournaments in May. Adapted softball players competed at Chanhassen High School. Bowlers flocked to Bowlero in Brooklyn Park. Track and field athletes compete in June. In Minnesota’s prep adapted sports world, CI teams are for athletes with cognitive disabilities. PI competition is for physically disabled athletes. ASD athletes are on the autism spectrum.

In bowling singles, doubles and team championships were awarded in ASD, CI and PI divisions.

In the ASD Division, St. Michael-Albertville junior Ashley Arroyo Flores placed first in girls’ singles with a score of 486. Seniorchainsaw Sawa of Chisago Lakes was runner-up with 486 and Lake Crystal Wellcome Memorial seventh-grader John Paris placed third with a score of 490.

The Zimmerman duo of eighth-grader Jason Metress and junior Ciaran Hester of St. Michael-Albertville won the boys’ singles championship with a combined score of 891. The North High-School-St. Paul team of senior Zachary Ellefson and eighth-grader Leo Wies were the runners-up with a score of 890. Anoka-Hennepin seventh-grader Alex Allen was third with a score of 896.

Zimmerman won the CI team competition with a two-game score of 732. Scoring for the Thunder were seventh-grader Isaac Bart, eighth-grader Fynn Spitzmiller, sophomore Lucas Stoltman and junior Alex Moa. A second Zimmerman team placed second with a two-game score of 1,140. North Branch Area placed third with a score of 1,148.

In the PI Division, ninth-grader Rosaria Villafuerte of North High-School-St. Paul emerged as the state champion in the girls’ singles competition with a two-game score of 505. Stewartville junior Allie Peterson was second with a score of 477. Goodhue County sophomore Emily Tiedemann claimed third-place honors with a score of 410.

Cambridge-Iaanti ninth-grader Samuel Price captured the boys’ singles title with a score of 492. Mankato East eighth-grader Kenny Smith and Winona sophomore Alex Windley finished second and third, respectively. Smith had a score of 468 and Johnston finished at 473.

North High-St. Paul North placed third in the CI tournament, seventh-grader Isaac Barr, eighth-grader Leo Wies and ninth-grader Collin Wies were also in the tournament.

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Hawks take both crowns

The Dakota United Hawks won the crown in both adapted softball divisions for 2024. The CI team finished with a record of 10-1 and the PI squad came in with a perfect record of 10-0.

Both Hawks teams were runners-up in 2023.

In the CI division championship, Dakota United broke through against the three-time defending champions from Burnsville/Farmington/Lakeland. The Hawks defeated the Blazing Cats 5-4 to claim their first-ever CI crown.

Senior filmmaker Myles Johnson, junior catcher Henry Eisele and senior catcher Jeffrey Roga each had two hits for Dakota United. Junior outfielder Makai Smith accounted for the Hawks’ lone RBI. Senior filmmaker Riley Deutch had four hits in four at-bats for Burnsville/Farmington/Lakeland. He also scored one run and added one RBI.

The third place game was a high-scoring tilt. The New Prague Trojans topped Osseo 13-10. Junior infielder Tryston Seger scored four runs for New Prague. Senior pitcher Alec Singh and senior catcher Skyler Green noted two runs apiece for Osseo.

St. Cloud Area topped South Washington County, 8-6, for the consolation championship. Seventh-grader infielder Isaiah Kuchel and senior catcher Logan Anthony each had two runs for the winning Cush. South Washington County put up four runs in the fifth inning, including one from junior Logan Yannarelle. Yannarelle finished the game with a team-high two runs.

Other teams in the tournament were Chaska/Chanhassen and South Suburban. CI all-tournament team members are Peyton Chlebeck, South Washington County; Anderson, St. Cloud Area, Singh and Jake Dettemper, Osseo, Seger and Elliot Soukup, New Prague, Clarke Ruhland, Caden Roseth and JT Koczer, Burnsville/Farmington/Lakeland, and Kyle Jacobson, Osseo, Seger and Elliot Soukup, New Prague, Clarke Ruhland. The PI title game was close as Dakota United beat Robbinsdale/Hopkins/Mound Westonka 9-5. It was the Hawks’ second PI championships in a row over the Robbins and the third consecutive championship for Dakota United. The Hawks also won in 2006, 2008, 2016 and 2020.

Junior pitcher Cayden Needham and junior outfielder Reece Martin accounted for Dakota United’s two RBI. Martin also notched a double for the Hawks. Senior pitcher Jayda Johnson led Robbinsdale/Hopkins/Mound Westonka with four hits and three runs scored.

Rochester earned third-place honors, defeating the Minneapolis South Tigers 13-1.

Seventh-grader outfielder Sawyer Hanson and junior outfielder Braxton Smold three runs and two runs, respectively, for the Raiders. Senior filmmaker Jorge Rosas-Bravo, senior pitcher Nick Staloch and senior outfielder Eric Sawyer scored one run apiece for Minneapolis South.

The Osseo Orioles met the St. Paul Humboldt Hawks in the consolation final, with the Orioles coming away with a 1-2 victory. Osseo scored five runs in the third inning and pitcher Evan Butler finished the game with three runs. Anoka-Hennepin and South Suburban were also in the tournament.

PI all-tournament team members are McKenzie Green, St. Paul Humboldt, Bartlett, Osseo, Staloch and Russa-Bravo, Minneapolis South, Andrew Westerman and Small, Rochester, Jayda Johnson, Nick Johnson and Jose Leon Estrada, Robbinsdale/Hopkins/Mound Westonka and Amisha Etter, Needham and Martin, Dakota United.
Hoped-for capitol complex tunnel renovations face an uphill battle

by Michelle Griffiths

In the session, the Minnesota Legislature considered $8.5 million to renovate the pedestrian tunnel that connects the capitol and the State Office Building — which hosts the offices of the 134 members of the House and some widely used committee rooms — to make it compliant with the federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

The tunnel slope has a grade of more than 10 percent, which exceeds the ADA's permitted grade of 8 percent.

The Department of Administration's bond request cites the tunnel's steep slope, which makes traversing the Capitol campus virtually impossible for people with disabilities without a powered wheelchair, especially during the winter months.

This cost is on top of the $454 million Minnesota borrowed last year — before interest — to fund the State Office Building's new addition. The project was scheduled to be completed in time for the start of the 2027 legislative session.

The tunnel renovation would be part of the construction of a new 15-by-85 foot section adjacent to the existing tunnel. This new section will include an ADA-compliant slope and a new elevator that will assist pedestrians between the new ADA-compliant tunnel and the basement of the capitol building.

In 2021, lawmakers created an account to fund the renovation of the State Office Building, but the statutory language did not specify the portion of the project to be funded, so the tunnel renovation needs to be approved separately.

Majority Leader Jamie Long (DFL-Minneapolis), said it was "probably an oversight" for lawmakers to omit the tunnel from the State Office Building renovation.

Long said that his colleagues many times over the past had pushed for the pre-design of the project, and that it was needed to support the capitol for the Minnesota Council on Disability for the Minnesota State Senate. The current version of the ERA includes the results were mixed. Trevor Turner, who leads efforts at the capitol for more than a decade.

"I think we have a lot to be happy about," said Long.

Seventy-four, employer’s approval to allow disabled workers a lower wage. Most often used in a workshop setting, subminimum wage supports people with disabilities.

A task force recommendation is on the table to end the practice by August 1, with a phased approach implemented.

A measure passed the House but stalled in the Senate.

Since the 1980s, employers have been allowed to pay disabled workers a lower wage. Most often used in a workshop setting, subminimum wage supports people with disabilities.

A task force recommendation is on the table to end the practice by August 1, with a phased approach implemented.

A measure passed the House but stalled in the Senate.

The bill made progress in the House but not in the Senate. Versions of the bill have been at the capitol for more than a decade.

But there were accomplishments to celebrate. The Mental Health Network and NAMI (Minnesota) were pleased with the legislation initiatives approved. Go to https://www.mn.gov/ for more legislative initiatives to read a report on everything passed.

A huge focus for mental health advocates is to find more funding to cover the costs of care, to treat the state’s mental health crises.

For the Minnesota Consensus for Citizens with Disabilities (MNCCD), the results were mixed. Trevor Turner, who leads efforts at the capitol, said he was led by the capitol for the Minnesota Council on Disability and MNCCD, said work will start right away on 2022 legislative initiatives.

He said that despite the session’s chaotic end, those who worked on what was accomplished.

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Don’t FLiRT with the latest COVID-19 variants; learn and stay safe

by Jane McClure

A recent apartment move brought challenges as well as forgotten treasures. One of the latter was a high school yearbook from my mother’s hometown of Alexander, Iowa. The 1950 Bulldogs Yearbook detailed the antics of a hometown of Alexander, Iowa. The 1950 challenges as well as forgotten questions about a potential summer wave of illnesses?

"FLiRTs." And yes, the “i” is lowercase. As someone who lives with longFLiRT isn’t a reference to a friendly high school student, but is based on the technical names for the variants’ spike protein mutations. That’s where the FL and RT come from. It was easy enough to add an i and coin the name FLiRT.

This is our second special section of stories from our disability community members. Access Press has worked with Minnesota Department of Health for the past several months to raise awareness of COVID-19 and to emphasize the need for vaccines and safe practices. My hope as editor is that the information has been helpful. The back page of this special section includes what we hope are ongoing resources for readers to use. Those of us who live with disabilities are all too aware of what COVID-19 has done to our lives. Some have sustained permanent health conditions. Others have lost loved ones.

One more note about Alexander. Years ago my sisters and I had our polio vaccines in the old school gym there. Back then we didn’t question vaccines and the science behind them. It’s very disheartening to realize that vaccine rates are still all too low and that misinformation is still being spread. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that as of May 4, 22.5 percent of adults received an updated COVID-19 vaccine since September 14, 2023. I’m one of those adults who put off her vaccines due to busyness of work and getting ready to move, and I paid for that with several days of illness.

We people with disabilities are a much more susceptible population when it comes to illnesses. We need to take threats to our health seriously. Those who live and work with us and who care about us need to do the same.

Access Press thanks those who shared their COVID-19 stories with us. As we did with the April special section, we’re not using real names and changing a few other details to protect identities. Not using real names isn’t typical journalistic practice. It’s a step we don’t take lightly. We need to balance our practices with the need for our community members to have privacy.

It is not easy to share what are deeply personal stories. We at Access Press very much appreciate those who agreed to speak to me and share how COVID-19 affected them and their families. We also appreciate the many health care professionals and organizations we are able to gather from. We especially appreciate the Minnesota Department of Health for making this coverage possible. Stay healthy and stay safe.

Jane McClure

Skin rashes, swollen toes and fingers were cause for discomfort

I’m Bob, a 67 and a retired mechanic. My family and I live in the Duluth area. I still work part-time at a convenience store, stocking shelves, cleaning and doing other chores. I myself do not have any disabilities other than mild osteoarthritis in my back, knees and hands. However, my family and I care for our disabled granddaughter. Evie has Down syndrome so we have been very careful when any of us become sick. She is vulnerable to illness and doesn’t understand things like social distance.

I developed COVID-19 after a community event in 2023. I didn’t wear a mask and probably should have. Several other people also became ill. I’ll admit that I had not kept up with boosters and new vaccines. That was a mistake!

I stayed in a camper by our house until I tested negative. It was hard because Evie wanted to see me and didn’t understand what was going on. We talked through a window. She liked hugs but those were out of the question.

My doctor warned me about the illness and fatigue that are part of COVID-19, and prepared for any longer-term effects. What I didn’t expect was to have skin problems.

Days after I tested negative, I developed a painful skin rash. I had rashes and then chicken pox as a kid, along with my brothers and sisters. I’ll never forget my mother telling me not to scratch myself. The COVID rash reminded me of those days.

I went outside one day for some fresh air. Later that afternoon my face broke out in a rash. I then developed what are called "COVID toes." My toes and fingers blew up like balloons and had dark spots. It was hard for me to do anything with my hands for several days, and hard to walk.

Part of my story is to remind people who get sick to be ready for any skin problems, and to ask questions. Make sure you and those you love do not get sick!

Skin conditions have been tracked since early in the pandemic. What is called a Morbilliform rash is a symptom that appeared early in the pandemic. It can look like a case of measles. Other skin conditions that can develop include itchy, red skin welts and small blisters.

Canker sores in the mouth can also be associated with COVID-19, as are vesicles. Pseudo-chilblains or COVID toes and fingers can be very painful and can restrict movement.

Studies of the pandemic indicate that while these skin conditions and swollen digits are painful, cases of long-lasting impacts are rare. Many cases last for 10 days to a couple of weeks. More concerning can be what are known as vaso-occlusive lesions. These skin lesions are more often seen when people are hospitalized with moderate to severe cases of COVID-19.

The American Academy of Dermatology is one of many good resources for people with COVID-19 related skin conditions. Learn more at https://www.aad.org/public/diseases/coronavirus/covid-toes

CHECK FOR VACCINE APPOINTMENTS

Visit Vaccines.gov

Search for appointments by vaccine type: Pfizer, Moderna or Novavax vaccine. Contact your primary health care provider or a local pharmacy.

MY COVID STORY: BOB
Disruptions in routine, loss of friends were struggles for young student

Jack is 12. This story is told by Susan, his mother. Their family lives in Anoka County. Jack is on the autism spectrum. Attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and depression are among his other life challenges. We have other children but none with disabilities. Jack’s diagnosis has been a learning experience for us. Jack has always had an individualized education program or IEP. That has been helpful for us but nothing prepared us for the pandemic. Our entire family has had COVID-19 twice. While Jack did not have the worst symptoms, he didn’t like to get sick. He dislikes wearing masks and very grudgingly gets his vaccines and boosters. When the pandemic started more than four years ago, Jack was in third grade. He was doing OK until we went to full-time online learning. That was extremely hard for him. He missed his friends, his teachers and especially the paraprofessionals at his school. He didn’t like sitting in front of a monitor and felt as if he was too close to others. He remarked more than once that he didn’t like being in other people’s faces. Everyone was happy when we went back to in-person learning. However, we were worried that Jack had fallen behind. We’d had changes at our school with staffing and that also caused issues, as did the fact that some of Jack’s friends were at other schools. He was not ready for so many changes. Losing that familiar place was a big, big deal. Middle school has been hard because . . . well, middle school is hard. Kids are often mean and bully Jack.

We tried home schooling for a time but Jack missed the ability to learn and socialize with other children. He would also question why his sisters and brothers were going to school and he was staying home. We ended up switching schools within our school district before Jack moved on to middle school.

Her COVID-19 symptoms forced changes in choices of food and drink

I’m Corrine, an administrative assistant for a small company in the Mankato area. My COVID-19 story is not very pleasant. But it needs to be told. I live with mild symptoms of multiple sclerosis or MS. I was diagnosed when I was in my early 30s. My symptoms are managed with medication. I try to get enough exercise and take other steps to stay healthy. Because I was not considered to be at highest risk, I didn’t get vaccinated in the initial months of the pandemic. I made and wore my masks, cleaned very thoroughly, everything and was careful. I did most of my work from home. My boss is great, BTW!

I still came down with a very bad case of COVID-19 during the first year of the pandemic. It was two weeks of feeling as if a bad case of flu had hit me. Then my illness manifested into something else. My worst and most embarrassing health issue related to COVID-19 was several weeks of intermittent diarrhea. The cramps were some of the most painful I have ever had. The diarrhea brought on bloating, nausea and vomiting. I had to use adult diapers for much of that time. I had to go to treat my COVID-19 may have made my diarrhea worse. The stress of being sick didn’t help.

The biggest worry for me was dehydration, due to my compromised immune system. I drank so much water and juice, it wasn’t even funny. I was all but living in our home’s basement bathroom.

I’d never been one to drink sports drinks but those became part of my daily fluid intake. Gatorade became my friend. Sports drinks that contain electrolytes helped me maintain the balance of fluids in my body.

Have you heard of the BRAT diet? My doctor had me try that, to make stools more solid and counter the effects of the diarrhea. The acronym stands for (B) bananas, white (t) rice, (a) applesauce and (t) toast. While none of these are my favorite foods, eating them did help me a lot. The very hardest thing was to avoid caffeine and alcohol. I like morning coffee, and sometimes have a glass of wine with dinner. What was the hardest was to give up chocolate, green tea, sodas and foods that can cause gas. That was difficult as my family and I like a lot of vegetables. And I love chocolate. Over-the-counter medications only worked for me for a time. The diarrhea finally tapered off and I was able to resume normal life again.

Friends said, at least you lost weight. I dropped about 10 pounds when I was so sick. But I don’t recommend it as a weight loss measure.

My advice to others? Even if something is embarrassing, talk to your doctor and the staff and your clinic. Find out what you should do and follow those recommendations. If something doesn’t work, ask for other ideas.

Many good resources are online to help people who develop diarrhea while battling COVID-19. One comprehensive resource is the healthline.com website. Learn more at https://www.healthline.com/health/covid-diarrhea-color.
Depression struggles intensified with isolation, health fears

I’m Elaine and my mother is Betty. Betty would say that “a lady never reveals her age.” I’ll just say that Betty is in her late 80s. I am 62.

Betty has developed several disabilities over the years, including the loss of most of her vision. Not being able to see clearly has been a hardship for her. She loves Radio Talking Book and recorded books, but misses the routine of reading books and watching favorite TV shows.

Betty lives in an assisted living facility in southeastern Minnesota. I live about 10 miles away. It was hard for her to give up her home. It was a sad but necessary step. Betty is happy where she is now. She appreciates being directed to her meals and activities offered.

Betty is very careful about staying healthy, getting vaccines, masking up and keeping things clean. She has had COVID-19 twice. One case was mild. The other illness put her in the hospital for several days.

I was very afraid that in the early days of the pandemic, medical equipment and accommodations would be taken away from us to help others. It was made clear that was not the case.

Believe me, that was a huge relief.

Betty’s hospitalization was very difficult. We were frustrated by the hospital staff at first. Then we were able to talk to the hospital social worker. The social worker outlined Betty’s rights as a patient, and our rights as caregivers.

She directed us to the Minnesota Department of Health website, which had lots of useful information for me as a caregiver and for my mom as a patient. I’ll share details here:

If you are a caregiver, prepare a written emergency plan and make that available to everyone who needs it. Include every detail you can about the person in your care and their unique health needs. Be clear about which disabilities are present.

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It may not be obvious to everyone that Betty is almost blind so we needed to address that.

I had to give coaching up. I was substitute teaching and tutoring in 2020. My plan before the pandemic happened was to not teach full-time for a year, recharge mentally and then get back into the classroom. That didn’t go as planned.

Much of my work dried up. Financial problems added to my depression. What was hardest for me as a person living with depression and anxiety?

I missed friends and family, my church and couple of community service groups I belonged to. One group was already small and disbanded during the pandemic. My support system felt very far away.

Depression was paralyzing. It cost me a lot of time in 2020. My plan before the pandemic happened was to not teach full-time for a year, recharge mentally and then get back into the classroom. That didn’t go as planned.

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Do you have friends you just never see anymore because they continue to isolate for health reasons? That has happened to me. Losing those friendships is still hard.

My anxiety about illness and even dying consumed my thoughts sometimes. Going into a store to pick up groceries was nerve-wracking. My long-time therapist retired and I was on a waiting list for several months before finding someone else in the Twin Cities.

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STAY SAFE, MINNESOTA
Take steps to protect yourself & others from the COVID-19 virus

1. **Stay up to date on your COVID-19 vaccine, especially if you live with disabilities.**
   The vaccine will protect you against serious illness. Even if you were vaccinated in the past, you may still need the updated vaccine. The latest vaccine provides protection from the newer variants circulating in our communities right now.
   COVID-19 vaccines continue to be very good at preventing severe disease, hospitalization and death. Make sure you and your family are up to date on any COVID-19 vaccine doses you are recommended to get.

2. **Stay at home when you are sick.** Take care of yourself and those around you by staying home (away from others) if you have symptoms like a cough, sore throat, sneezing or fever.

3. **Take a COVID-19 test when needed.** It is important to get tested if you have symptoms or were in close contact with someone who has COVID-19. If you test positive and are at higher risk, medications are available. The medications are most effective within 5 days of when symptoms begin, which is why you should get tested.

4. **Frequently wash your hands and cover coughs** to keep germs from spreading.

5. **MDH works with communities to provide safe and free on-site COVID-19 vaccines.**
   Check for vaccine appointments using VACCINES.GOV or contact your primary health care provider or a local pharmacy.
   To locate a community vaccination event near you or if you have For questions related to COVID-19, call the MDH COVID-19 public hotline at 1-833-431-2053 Monday, Wednesday, Friday: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Tuesday, Thursday: 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.
   The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) works in partnership with communities to provide safe and free COVID-19 testing in areas with outbreaks, increasing cases or other barriers to access existing test sites. Walk in or schedule an appointment for a test at free community testing sites across Minnesota.

LEARN MORE AT https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/prevention.html
Anoka, federal council reaches agreement on renters' mental health

Anoka city officials have agreed not to disclose private medical information about renters with mental health issues and to pay $57,000 to the city from the federal government that the city discriminated against mentally ill residents in enforcing an anti-crime ordinance.

The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) May 22 announced its agreement with the city of Anoka, Minnesota, after an investigation showed illegal discrimination in enforcing a “crime-free” housing ordinance allowing the city to evict tenants for mental health issues rather than drugs or for causing a “physically offensive condition,” without further definition.

The DOJ also required the city to pay $175,000 to resolve a complaint that Anoka had suspended a landlord’s rental license because the landlord was found to receive tenants with mental health issues. The cases won’t go to court.

The agreement said the city denied wrongdoing and the allegations in the November letter and the lawsuit filed in November. However, the city desires to avoid any litigation, the agreement stated, adding that Anoka wanted to ensure that its policies comply with both the ADA and federal fair housing laws.

The city’s $250,000 payment will cover compensation for people the DOJ identifies as having been harmed by Anoka’s enforcement of its anti-crime ordinance.

The city will have 30 days to revise its anti-crime housing ordinance, which allows the Anoka to suspend a landlord’s rental license if there are more than four “nuisance” calls to an address in a year. A nuisance call involves “disorderly conduct” such as criminal activity, making false calls to police, and allowing a “physically offensive condition,” without further definition.

The city cannot treat mental health-related calls as an address nuisance calls, and it is required to notify both a renter and landlord whenever a call for another reason is deemed a nuisance call, giving them information about how to appeal.

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Metro Mobility subject at audit

Metro Mobility provided services to the Twin Cities region. But a federal audit found the agency was missing goals for timely pickups and drop-offs, and more than 5,000 denied ride requests. The audit will also recommend that the county improve customer service, long waits for buses, that don’t show up, and drop-offs that impede people’s medical appointments.

The audit recommended the county spend money on routes that make little sense, ride that were denied and drivers who were told they shouldn’t report problems.

Every time a ride is denied, and a pickup or drop-off is delayed, it “has a deeply calming, counterproductive effect on people’s lives,” said Sen. Scott Dibble (DFL-Minneapolis), who recently chaired a hearing on the service.

The state auditor recommended the state give Metro Mobility another year to look at its numbers, and to pay $175,000 to resolve a complaint that Anoka had suspended a landlord’s rental license because the landlord was found to receive tenants with mental health issues.

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Groundbreaking Partners in Policymaking program seeks applicants

Many Minnesotans with disabilities and their family members have taken advantage of the groundbreaking Partners in Policymaking program. The deadline to apply for the 2024-2025 class is July 12. This will be the 42nd class.

The program was created by the Minnesota Governor’s Council on Developmental Disabilities 37 years ago. It has been offered nationally and internationally. Through informative and interactive sessions, Partners classes provide leadership skills and the process of developing positive partnerships with elected officials and other policymakers who make decisions about the services that program participants and/or their families use.

Partners is considered to be accessible, informative and empowering. Since 1987, almost 1,200 self-advocates and parents have graduated in Minnesota. Applicants must meet set requirements. Requirements include a commitment to attend all eight sessions; an interest in learning and practicing new skills in a comfortable and safe environment, and a desire to build and strengthen a network of people from diverse backgrounds.

In May the Minnesota Governor’s Council on Developmental Disabilities (MNCDD) celebrated the graduation for Class 41 of its advocacy training course, Partners in Policymaking. The program teaches leadership and advocacy skills and the process of developing positive partnerships with elected officials and other policymakers who make decisions about disability supports and services. Thirty people were in the 2023-2024 graduating class. This year’s graduating class is a diversity from across the state, including parents of children with disabilities and adults with disabilities.

The Partners in Policymaking program continues to impact lives in so many positive ways,” said Colleen Wieck, executive director of the Governor’s Council on Developmental Disabilities. “Commencement isn’t the end of the educational journey, but rather the beginning of a lifetime of advocacy. "Commencement isn’t the end of the educational journey, but rather the beginning of a lifetime of advocacy. "

In this outstanding course, Partners graduates reflect on experiences and knowledge gained. As he grew older, he witnessed first-hand the changes in the ways people with disabilities were treated in society. While there has been progress, Reinardy believes more can be done. By participating in the program, his hope is to become a stronger advocate for himself and others. Reinardy is interested in making a positive change in transportation opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

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Many former refugees are helping to make Minnesota a better place for all.

REGIONAL NEWS

From page 11:

“This case really underscores how much we, as a society, ask of working parents. And, in turn, Lanie Zimney ailed so little of her employer,” Kwan said. “This case really shows when employers take simple accommodations in turn, Lanie Zimney asked so little of her employer,” Kwan said. “This case really shows when employers take simple accommodations for disabled workers.”

Worker training offered

There is an increasing need for health care workers in the United States, especially since many left the medical profession after the challenges of COVID-19. That has especially affected people with disabilities.

The International Institute of Minnesota In St. Paul is working to fill that need by providing certified nursing assistant (CNA) classes specifically for new Americans. The classes, according to program manager Julie Garner-Pringle, have been going since 1990. Garner-Pringle has worked with the program for the past 15 years. With a background in teaching, she taught English in Hungary and Egypt before coming to the institute to teach English to adults. Other support staff for the CNA program include English language teachers, and a nurse is responsible for teaching the program content.

Garner-Pringle said two tracks of the CNA training are taught: an intensive seven-week course and supportive eleven-week course. “We let the students know that the training will be like a full-time job,” she said. “The seven-week course is Monday-Thursday and the 11-week is Monday-Friday.”

Community members were invited to join the training online. The hearing was the latest procedures by health care providers seeking to limit or cut mental health services around the state.

In June 2021, the Minnesota Legislature passed legislation requiring a public notice and a public hearing before closure of a hospital or hospital campus, relocation of services or cessation in offering certain services.

(Source: Minnesota Department of Health)

Regional News

Inpatient services’ end

A public hearing was held in May on a request from Lakeview Health System ending inpatient mental health services. The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) held the public hearing on Lakeview Health System closing the inpatient psychiatric unit of its critical access hospital in St. Paul.

According to the submission filed by Lakeview Health System, the hospital will continue to provide outpatients mental health services to the community following closure of the inpatient unit.

“Continuing role was hosted by MDH’s Health Regulation Division to provide a forum for the community to discuss the changes in services and alternatives for Lakeview Health System patients.

Community members were invited to join the hearing online. The hearing was the latest of the procedures by health care providers seeking to limit or cut mental health services around the state. In June 2021, the Minnesota Legislature passed legislation requiring a public notice and a public hearing before closure of a hospital or hospital campus, relocation of services or cessation in offering certain services.

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Our holistic approach bridges career training for individuals with disabilities and specialized consulting services for businesses.

Our vision is to provide meaningful employment for people with disabilities.
**Chautauqua**
Monday – Friday 6 a.m.  

**Past is Prolog**  
Monday – Friday 11 a.m.  

**Bookworm**  
Monday – Friday 12 p.m.  

**The Writer’s Voice**  
Monday – Friday 1 p.m.  
At the Lake, nonfiction by Jim Landwehr. 2023. A memoir filled with humor, warmth, and reverence for life up North. Read by Jill Wolf. Seven broadcasts; begins Tue, June 11.

**Choice Reads**  
Monday – Friday 2 p.m.  

**Potpourri**  
Monday – Friday 9 a.m.  
The Country of the Blind, nonfiction by Andrew Leonardi. 2023. A lively, winning, and revelatory personal narrative of the author’s transition from sightedness to blindness and his quest to learn about blindness as a rich culture all its own. Read by Hollywood Sylvester. Twelve broadcasts; begins thu, June 20. – L

**Silver Screen**  
Monday – Friday 10 a.m.  
Acting Naturally, nonfiction by David Michaelis. 2023. A fascinating look at some of the cinema’s finest actors and how they approach their craft. Read by Andrea Bell. 10 broadcasts; begins Wed, June 1. – L, S

**Do Your Worst**  
Monday – Friday 10 p.m.  
The Romance Recipe (rebroadcast), fiction by Lisa Kleypas. 2007. A sweetly romantic story of two people who are forced to the ultimate extremes to save their marriage—each other. Read by Lawrence Jackson. 2022. A stirring consideration of love and relationships.

**Night Journey**  
Monday – Friday 7 p.m.  

**Off the Shelf**  
Monday – Friday 6 p.m.  
Brimmin Wood, fiction by Eleanor Carlton. 2023. A gripping psychological thriller of high drama and kaleidoscopic insight into what drives us to survive. Read by Jack Rossmann. 16 broadcasts; begins Mon, June 3. – L

**Off the Grid**  
Monday – Friday 1 p.m.  
The East Indian, fiction by Brinda Charry, 2023. A gripping psychological thriller of high drama and kaleidoscopic insight into what drives us to survive. Read by Jack Rossmann. 16 broadcasts; begins Mon, June 3. – L

**Mind Over Matter**  
Monday – Friday 10 p.m.  
Fairfax, fiction by Michael Cunningham, 2023. An exhilarating debut novel about the spectrally declined Redfern family, haunted by an ancient evil. Read by John Holden. 16 broadcasts; begins Mon, June 3. – L

**Shelter**  
Monday – Friday 9 p.m.  
The Great North, 4 p.m. Sun, 11 a.m. Mon. 2023. A beguiling romp of a novel, at once intimate and panoramic, about the adventures and misadventures of a 17th-century everyman. Read by Stuart Holland. 12 broadcasts; begins Mon, June 3.

**Screening Room**  
Monday – Friday 8 p.m.  

**The Duke’s Last Battle**  
Thursday 7 p.m.  
The Great Armada, nonfiction by John Holden. 16 broadcasts; begins Wed, June 1. – L, S

**Ancestor Call**  
Monday – Friday 10 a.m.  
The Making of a Modern, fiction by Michael Cunningham. 2023. An exhilarating debut novel about the spectrally declined Redfern family, haunted by an ancient evil. Read by John Holden. 16 broadcasts; begins Mon, June 3. – L

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**FOOTNOTE**  
**Silver ($150–$499)**

Jeff Bangs & Anita Berger  
Boucher  
Anne L. Henry  
Kim Kang  
Steve Kurtz  
Garrick Voiles  

Brandon Miller  
Jim Musselman  
Debra J. Shriver  
Robyn Wade  
Courage Kenny  

**BRONZE ($75–$149)**

Alicia Bartolucci  
Dena Bolatli  
Tim S. Benjamin  
Gretchen Bratvold  
John & Marilyn Clark  
David Clark  
Mark Daly  
Yoshiho S. Sart  
Anonymous  
Rosedale Eliza  
Joel Enders  
Lee Ann & Eric Dickson  
Kend Fordyce  

SILVER ($150–$499)

Robert Gregory  
Craig Dunn & Candy Hart  
Pat Hendrick  
Judy Hunt  
Rick & Susan MacPherson  
Brian Musselman  
Mary Olton  
Jenny Ormiston  
John Peterson  
Kate Reavey-Peterson  
Hillary and Stuart Rahn  
Randy Rogers  
Linda Wold  
Adanna & Mark Tempel  

Hammer Residences, Inc.

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**BENEFICIARY** ($1000 & up)

Janice Chevrete  
Jane Larson  
Ronna Linroth  
Brandon Miller  
Lynda Milne  
Ann and Larry Roscoe  
Walter Siebert  
Joel Ulund  
Kay Willshire  
Tamarack Habilitation Tech, Inc.

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**GOLD ($500–$999)**

Jesse Bethke-Gomez  
Dale Erickson  
Ellen J. Emanuel  
Dean Doering  
Margot Cross  
Jesse Bethke-Gomez  
Give Lively Foundation  
Paul Bauer & Pat Cretilli  
Mark Knutson  
Bertha J. Traylor  

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**SUPPORT ACCESS PRESS**

- **Friend $50+**  
- **Bronze $75+**  
- **Silver $150+**  
- **Gold $500+**  
- **Benefactor $1000+**
CNA certification. The institute offers hours training, but also supports those who want to volunteer. The difference a volunteer makes in the lives of long-term care residents is immeasurable. The greatest volunteer needs are in Alexandria, Breckenridge, Chatfield, Detroit Lakes, Dysart, Eveleth, Fergus Falls, Faribault, Grand Rapids, Hastings, International Falls, Luck, Madison-Grant, Mendota Heights, Owatonna, Red Wing, Silver Bay, Spring Valley, Two Harbors, Virginia, Wabasso, Waseca, Willmar, Winona and Worthington.

Anyone interested in becoming a volunteer can visit https://mnaccess.org/volunteer/ with more information. To contact the Office of Ombudsman for Long-Term Care in your county, visit https://mn.gov/oocl/contactus/. The office provides free, confidential advocacy services.

The Enjoy! listings are for arts events, fundraisers, banquets, fundraisers, walks and other fun events by and for disability services organizations. Schedules may be subject to change, so check with a venue or organization before making plans. Arrange for disability accommodations well in advance of any event.

Disability service organizations typically send e-news blasts and have social media. Both are ways to find out about events. The Minnesota Access Alliance (MNAAA) provides an Accessible Arts & Culture Calendar for artists who use accessibility accommodations such as audio description, captioning, ASL interpretation, sensory-friendly accommodations or disability-related resources.

For other accessibility resources or upcoming webinars presented by MNAAC, sign up for emails at https://mnaccess.org.

Making arts accessible
Several workshops in June will offer different ways of making the arts more accessible to people with disabilities. The workshops are offered by the Minnesota Association of Community Theatre with funding from the Metro Regional Arts Council. Workshops will be held on Saturdays by reservation. Locations, workshops, registration fees at https://mn-act.net/ FFI: Jon, 612-819-0349.

Resources to Enjoy!
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Volunteer
Speak for nursing home residents
Long-term care volunteers bring passion and purpose to their work in nursing facilities across Minnesota. With training and direction from the Office of the Ombudsman for Long-Term Care, volunteers champion the office’s mission to empower, educate and advocate for the residents of Minnesota’s long-term care services and supports.

Certified volunteers assisted paid regional ombudsmen in investigating and advocate for residents in nursing homes and assisted living settings. Residents are often unable, out of range or unable to advocate for themselves. With a resident’s consent, certified assisted regional ombudsmen responding to residents’ concerns through complaint investigations.

The Minnesota Access Alliance (MNAAC) is looking to recruit volunteers who are passionate about serving people in long-term care.

There are more than 1,000,000 Minnesota residents and assisted living facilities across Minnesota. Fewer than 50 of those facilities have a certified ombudsman volunteer. The difference a volunteer makes in the lives of long-term care residents is immeasurable. The greatest volunteer needs are in Alexandria, Breckenridge, Chatfield, Detroit Lakes, Dyessert, Eveleth, Fergus Falls, Faribault, Grand Rapids, Hastings, International Falls, Luck, Madison-Grant, Mendota Heights, Owatonna, Red Wing, Silver Bay, Spring Valley, Two Harbors, Virginia, Wabasso, Waseca, Willmar, Winona and Worthington.

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POST YOUR EVENTS ONLINE

Access Press is moving even more events listings online. There is a word limit and we require that those posting information include event costs as well as accommodations. Are ASL and AD available? Is there companion seating? A quiet room? Wheelchair accessible? 10-proposal accommodations are most useful for us. That kind of information can help someone decide whether or not to attend an event.

To post an event, go to www.accesspress.org. Click the resources tab at top right, and go to the post an event line. This is for Minnesota-focused, disability community events. It is not for business advertising for events that aren’t sponsored by a disability group or organization and that do not have a disability focused. Consider that a small web or print can also generate interest in an upcoming event.

For questions about ads, email ads@accesspress.org

Access Press reserves the right to reject events, if they do not meet our guidelines. Call the editor at 651-644-2131 ext. 1 or email jane@accesspress.org with questions events.

REGIONS NEWS
From page 13
CNA certification. The institute offers hours training, but also supports those who want to volunteer. The difference a volunteer makes in the lives of long-term care residents is immeasurable. The greatest volunteer needs are in Alexandria, Breckenridge, Chatfield, Detroit Lakes, Dyessert, Eveleth, Fergus Falls, Faribault, Grand Rapids, Hastings, International Falls, Luck, Madison-Grant, Mendota Heights, Owatonna, Red Wing, Silver Bay, Spring Valley, Two Harbors, Virginia, Wabasso, Waseca, Willmar, Winona and Worthington.

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Children and families
PACER workshops sampling PACER Center offers many useful free or low-cost workshops and other resources for families with children with any disabilities. Some in-person workshops are offered at PACER Center, at Greater Minnesota locations and also offered online. Other 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 PACER’s website and link to the newsletter of statewide workshops that provide participants to picture the sessions designed for their needs. Access Press only lists a sampling of the workshops offered. Working toward positive educational outcomes: Mental health and special education is noon-1 p.m. June 12. Online. The introductory workshop will provide parents and others with information to help them understand the special education process. One of the 10-10:30 a.m. Sat, June 15 at PACER Center. Learn how to create a 3D model using Tinkercad online software and about what resources are available for printing 3D models. FFI: PACER, 952-838-9000, 800-537-2237, www.pacer.org

The classes and online support groups are designed for family members and caregivers, persons living with a mental illness, service providers, and also the general public. Find a complete list of these classes and how to join in by going to namim.org and clicking on “Classes” FFI: namim.org

Info & Assistance
Many classes available
NAMI Minnesota (National Alliance on Mental Illness) has 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, Familyr 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. NAMI Minnesota’s Online Support Groups have moved to HeyPeers. HeyPeers provides a safe, easy to access environment even designed for online support group meetings.

The classes and online support groups are designed for family members and caregivers, persons living with a mental illness, service providers, and also the general public. Find a complete list of these classes and how to join in by going to namim.org and clicking on “Classes” FFI: namim.org

Classifieds
FOR RENT
METES & BOUNDS MANAGEMENT GROUP manages the following Section 8 & Section 42 (Tax Credit) properties in Minnesota. Income and rent restrictions apply.

Section 8
Boardwalk Wayzata 952-473-0502
Greenwood Wayzata 218-635-2755
Lindenhof Park New Ulm 507-354-5964
Rustic Creek Two Harbors 218-955-1018
Town Square East Grand Forks 701-330-4973
City of Gary 218-722-2629

Section 42 (Tax Credit)
Abbott Apartments Minneapolis 612-338-5588
Bergen Village Minneapolis 612-338-5588
Nature’s Edge Prior Lake 952-441-6691
Mission Oaks Plymouth 703-659-5770
Todd 27 Long Prairie 320-732-8754

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Accessible Space, Inc.
Call 800-466-7722
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Accessible, Affordable Housing
For adults with qualifying disabilities. Over 50 barrier-free apartment communities & homes throughout the Metropolitan Area, Greater Minnesota & throughout the Midwest. Locations also available in many other states. Income limits apply. Immediate openings in Hibbing, MN!

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

Housing with Care*
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* Independent Living Services
* Eligibility for or selection of ASI services is not required to qualify for housing. ASI services are not available in all locations.

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Access Press received a Community Engagement and Diverse Media Grant from the Minnesota Department of Health to provide information about Covid-19 and vaccinations to our readers and the community of people with disabilities. There will be many informational items we will share with you.