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The Staff at AccessNorth hopes you had a wonderful Thanksgiving Holiday!

The Holiday Season is officially upon us. Holidays can be filled with happiness and joy. They can provide us with opportunities to spend time with loved ones, eat good food and celebrate. But, holidays can also be the source of increased stress and anxiety. This newsletter will include some tips to help us all get through the holidays. I hope everyone has a chance to relax and enjoy the season.

The winter groups are in full swing in all of the offices. Please check the website or call the office nearest you if you want more information. Groups at Access North can be a wonderful opportunity to get out of the house and meet new people. Please keep us in mind if you're feeling cooped up this winter.

Happy Holidays!

**Roberta Cich
Executive Director**

We would like to welcome John Ulrich, our new Independent Living Specialist in Hibbing

John grew up in Hibbing, MN and graduated from Hibbing High School. He is a graduate of the College of St. Scholastica with a BA in Behavioral Arts and Sciences, concentrations in psychology, business management, communication and history.



John started at AccessNorth CILNM as a part-time maintenance person in August of 2012. We are very glad to have added him to our staff of IL Specialists! He brings a passion for working in the human services field. "I enjoy coming to work each day, knowing that the majority of my work will be spent helping others help themselves. I grew up with a father who has several disabilities." says John.

John's hobbies include turning wrenches on motorcycles and classic cars/hot rods, cruising with my car club, riding motorcycle with friends, hunting and working out. Much of his free time is spent working at his family's used car dealership. He belongs to the Mesabi Masonic Lodge 255, AADD Shrine, Minnesota Street Rod Association and the Squires Car Club of Hibbing.

We would like to welcome John to our staff and we look forward to working with him. If you are someone with a disability who needs assistance with the skills to live independently, you can contact John at julrich@accessnorth.net or call him at 262-6675.

Adaptive Spring Grip Bowling Ball

The unique handle of this bowling ball allows the bowler to grasp the ball without the usual finger hold grip. Simply put your fingers under the handle, roll the ball & the handle retracts completely flush to the ball when released. Please contact us if you would like to check this out of our Assistive Technology Lending Library. You can call us at (800) 390-3681 or email us at info@accessnorth.net.



Tips for Handling Holiday Stress

The holidays can be a happy, joyous time - and can also be a big source of many forms of stress! If you experience holiday stress or anxiety, here are some tips to help you get through the season...

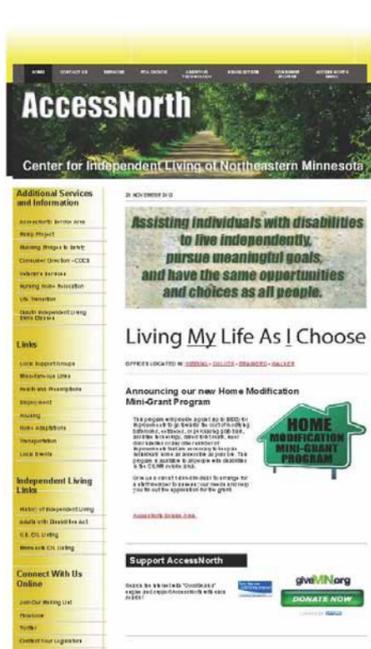
- When your to-do list is longer than Santa's beard - you may need to eliminate some of the unnecessary items or events.
- Get enough sleep: Studies show how sleep deprivation can affect your mood and health.
- Exercise: It may be tough to find the time, but it's a great mood booster! Better yet if you can get outside!
- Plan ahead: rushing and hurrying will only add stress and make you in a bad mood.
- Make time for fun: Going to a movie, playing games while the family is all around, going out for coffee with a friend can all be much more fun around the holidays and relieve some stress.
- Avoid holiday overeating: the guilt associated with overeating can add stress and anxiety.
- Don't be a perfectionist: So what if the presents aren't wrapped perfectly or you have a few dozen less cookies than you planned!?
- Choose to not let little things affect you: So what if the dish you made was a little overcooked. It's OK.
- Be aware of your triggers - and plan ahead: limit your time to be exposed to them, whether it be eating, a family member or any other trigger that affects you.
- And lastly, reach out: If you are feeling depressed, anxious or lonely, call a friend or loved one, go to a community or religious event or something else that can lift your spirits.

The Mayo clinic [website](#) has many more tips on coping....

Browse over to our new webpage ...

We are in the process of redesigning and updating our [website](#) to make it even more informative and easy to use. Please take a moment to check it out - more page redesigns and information to come!

If there is something you would like to see included on our site, please [email](#) us to let us know!



www.accessnorth.net

Online Gift-Giving Ideas

A few resources if you're looking for that special something for a loved one with a disability.

www.ableplay.org One of the nation's leading authorities on toys and play for children with disabilities.

www.iltsource.com Adaptive toys that are fun, age-appropriate, and promote learning and problem-solving.

www.buckandbuck.com Specializes in adaptive clothing, especially senior-friendly clothing that promotes independence and ease of wearing for seniors with mobility and mental disabilities.

www.special-clothes.com Adult and children's clothing with special features such as Velcro closures, G-tube access openings, bib fronts, etc. that are designed to be inconspicuous. Not the easiest website to navigate, but if you are looking for something specific, they might just have it.

www.wheelsoffun.com Where the wheelchair is a thing of beauty and unique personality. It's a very fun site!

www.pajamagram.com For those who spend a good deal of time in bed for health reasons. Shop bedding, books, teas, coffees, chocolates and many other items handy while resting in bed. "The gift of relaxation" for anybody.

www.couragecards.org Features holiday cards made by talented artists with disabilities. Beautiful work!

www.diestco.com Makes a variety of products for people who use wheelchairs, scooters and walkers, including canopies, lap trays, cup holders, etc.

www.saratoga-intl.com Offers exercise machines for people with disabilities that are designed and built by people with disabilities.

AccessNorth does not endorse any of these sites, however we offer these up as resources.



Recipe of the Month - Pepperoni Dip

A quick dip for unexpected holiday guests!

- 1 can cream of celery soup
- 6 oz. pepperoni, chopped
- 8 oz. cream cheese, softened & cubed

Combine all ingredients in slow cooker. Cover and cook on low 1 to 2 hours. You may also bake for 15 minutes at 350 degrees in a medium baking dish. Serve with crackers, bagels, chips or bread.



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