COVID deaths
State tops 10,000

In the past month, Minnesota’s active COVID-19 case numbers have been falling. In fact, they’re now below 100,000. As of Tuesday, active cases were down from more than 100,000 in mid-July jumped earlier this month. On Thursday, the Minnesota Department of Health reported 277 new COVID cases.

On a hopeful note, hospitalizations have fallen from more than 200 on Nov. 6 to 254 on Wednesday. That’s 100 fewer patients than a month ago.

Another sign of the pandemic receding is the number of new seven-day cases. Just 371 new cases were reported on Wednesday, according to the Minnesota Department of Health. That’s the lowest number to date for that reporting period.

On a positive note, the percentage of people testing positive for COVID-19 has been steadily falling. It dropped below 8 percent for the first time on Wednesday.

But the pandemic hasn’t ended. Officials say we must maintain our guard.

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Teddy Bear Toss for Charity

The Chisholm Area Chamber of Commerce and Rock Ridge High School’s Key Club are hosting a Teddy Bear Toss on Friday, Dec. 17, at Chisholm High School. The event will help raise funds for the Chisholm Community Music Association.

The Teddy Bear Toss is open to the public, with proceeds going to the Chisholm Community Music Association. The cost is $20 per vehicle, and there will be entry for a chance to win door prizes.

Tickets are available at chisholmchamber.org or at the door. Cost is good for one showing.

The drive-in movie will be "How the Grinch Stole Christmas" at 8 p.m.

The Key Club adviser for the event called the "Car- pool Christmas Cinema" plans to raise money for the Chisholm Elementary School seniors and funds for community events planned by the chamber.

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Indoor IROMA performances set to return

Shows at new venue to start March 25

The Iron Range Original Music Association will be back on the scene next year with a series of six "house concerts" set to return to the Mesabi Unitarian Universalist Church in Virginia. The series is called MUU "a wonder- ful acoustic space" that will help IROMA "live up to its local music scene in the area where the first concert takes place March 25.

The bands of IROMA have been relatively quiet as of late, after the 218Theater in Virginia closed in late 2020 and then COVID-19 hit in 2021.

"When the taphouse closed, that was their thing," Riffel said of the bands playing at their most reliable and treated venue for local original performances. "That was a big blow."

The pandemic further curtailed live, in-person performances in venues. "Being able to collaborate to community supported local music, it’s the shows that provide admittance to all six concert at the Mesabi UU, an IROMA news release. ‘Other groups across the U.S. have successfully used this model to support community music scenes, and based on the past, we’re looking forward to support the community or IROMA,’"