



Today's Minnesota Headlines

Eric Black to succeed Peter McDermott, who is retiring as MDI's president and CEO

GRAND RAPIDS HERALD: Local nonprofit manufacturer MDI today announced that President and CEO Peter McDermott will retire on April 1. Taking over the position will be Eric Black, a global business development and integrated marketing leader who spent 23 years at Cargill before entering his current role at Univar Solutions as global director of marketing and technical sales. MDI is a nonprofit corrugated plastic manufacturer and assembly service provider headquartered in Minneapolis with locations in Hibbing, Grand Rapids and Cohasset, with the goal of providing employment for people with disabilities.

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Target announces \$500 employee bonuses after busy holidays

MINNEAPOLIS STAR TRIBUNE: Bonuses of \$500 will be given to hourly employees in stores, distribution centers and at the company's Minneapolis headquarters and field-based offices. Store directors, executive team leaders and salaried distribution center leaders will receive a bonus ranging from \$1,000 to \$2,000, according to a company blog post Monday morning. The one-time bonuses add up to a \$200 million investment from the company.

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Increasing amount of office spaces going unused in Minneapolis, St. Paul

KSTP: An increasing amount of office space is going unused in both Minneapolis and St. Paul, according a new report. Newmark, a global commercial real estate advisory firm, released data for the fourth quarter of 2020, showing office space in the Twin Cities market rising to 11.9% vacancy. That is an increase from 11.2% one year ago.

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Stauber bill would prevent president from barring mining on federal land

DULUTH NEWS TRIBUNE: U.S. Rep. Pete Stauber, R-Hermantown, introduced a bill Monday that would prevent President Joe Biden, or any future president, from banning mining on federal land where it's already allowed.

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In Minnesota, a growing interest in reviving the local butcher shop

MPR: That interest in local food stretched the capacity of small meat processing operations that were busy even before the pandemic. Months later, what was at first a quick pivot to local sourcing has held fast. "We're hearing from processors that are fully booked up for 2021 already, and well booked into 2022, and even further," said Nicole Neeser, who leads the Minnesota Department of Agriculture's dairy and meat inspection program. "And so we're really seeing that demand be sustained."

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Minnesota seniors get 24 hours to sign up for vaccine lottery

MINNEAPOLIS STAR TRIBUNE: Minnesota is switching to a random lottery this week to schedule senior citizens for limited COVID-19 vaccinations — giving them a 24-hour sign-up window rather than a madcap free-for-all.

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Minnesota identifies nation’s first ‘Brazil variant’ COVID case

ST. PAUL PIONEER PRESS: The Brazilian variant is believed to be more contagious than earlier versions of the coronavirus, but it is unclear if it causes more serious illness. The state public health laboratory detected the new variant in a specimen from a Twin Cities resident who recently traveled to Brazil.

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Walz unveils 'sweeping' education plan, but Republicans say there's no substance

WEST CENTRAL TRIBUNE: As lawmakers prepare to negotiate a multi-billion dollar state budget and navigate the pandemic-era deficit, Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz is pushing for “sweeping” public education reform to address the pandemic’s impact on students, as well as long-standing disparities in public education.

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DMC, city projects seeking greater workforce diversity

ROCHESTER POST BULLETIN: Women and minority hires related to Destination Medical Center projects have exceeded goals in three of four categories in the first four years measured. The 6 percent workforce goal for women in construction has been the sole elusive target, with a documented workforce participation rate of 3.6 percent.

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Opinion/Editorial

Broadband funding a vital issue for Legislature

MANKATO FREE PRESS: Legislators and the governor have difficult and complex spending decisions to make as they set the state budget amid the realities of the pandemic. But improving broadband internet access should remain very high on the list as they make those decisions.

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Economist's View: Prioritize vaccinations to jumpstart the economy

DULUTH NEWS TRIBUNE: The incoming administration's focus should be on getting the economy going again by vaccinating people. Minnesota has been a particular laggard here. Among Midwestern states, we currently rank dead last for the share of our supply used, according to Bloomberg. Gov. Tim Walz doesn't have President Donald Trump to blame anymore. Biden aims to have 100 million vaccines administered by the 100th day of his administration, and we all can hope he succeeds.

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Around the Nation

Biden more bullish on vaccines, open to 1.5M daily shot goal

ASSOCIATED PRESS: President Joe Biden on Monday appeared to boost his goal for coronavirus vaccinations in his first 100 days in office, suggesting the nation could soon be injecting 1.5 million shots on an average per day.

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Help with vaccination push comes from unexpected businesses

NEW YORK TIMES: “We are not a health care company,” Kevin Johnson, the chief executive of Starbucks, said at a news conference announcing the partnership on Monday, “but Starbucks does operate 33,000 stores at scale, serving 100 million customers a week. And we have a world-class team of human-centered-design engineers who are working under the direction of the state, and health care providers like Swedish, Kaiser Permanente and others.”

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Around the World

IMF: Vaccines will power 5.5% global economic growth in 2021

ASSOCIATED PRESS: After sinking 3.5% in 2020, the worst year since World War II, the global economy will grow 5.5% this year, the 190-country lending organization predicted. The new figure for 2021 is an upgrade from the 5.2% expansion the IMF forecast in October and would mark the fastest year of global growth since the 2010 snapback from the financial crisis.

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EU to create private-public bio-defence preparedness plan

REUTERS: The European Union will seek to create a bio-defence preparedness programme in the form of a public-private partnership, to prepare against the next big health crisis, the head of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen said.

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The Economy

Saved stimulus checks expected to help spur economic recovery

WALL STREET JOURNAL: Americans saved \$1.4 trillion in the first three quarters of 2020, or about twice as much as in the same period of the prior year, according to analysis by Berenberg Economics. That amount is equivalent to nearly 10% of 2019 household spending, estimates Berenberg's chief economist, Holger Schmieding.

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U.S. Treasury yields fall, dollar firms on stimulus worries

REUTERS: U.S. Treasury yields hovered close to three-week lows while stock markets were mixed on Tuesday as concerns about potential roadblocks to new U.S. President Joe Biden's planned \$1.9 trillion stimulus weighed on investor sentiment.

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In Human Resources Now

How to design a digital-change experience that sticks

HR EXECUTIVE: Whatever changes you made, whatever transformation work you initiated as you reacted to multiple crises—and even if you'd previously made significant gains to elevate, modernize and reposition HR to better support the business and meet the needs of the workforce—your work will be wasted without a digital mandate for 2021 to both secure your foundation and to serve as a guiding North Star for continued transformation.

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9 Trends That Will Shape Work in 2021 and Beyond

SHRM: It's fair to say that 2020 rocked many organizations and business models, upending priorities and plans as business leaders scrambled to navigate a rapidly changing environment. For many organizations this included responding to the social justice movements, shifting to a full-time remote staff, determining how best to support employees' wellbeing, managing a hybrid workforce and now addressing legal concerns around the Covid-19 vaccine.

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651.292.4650
mail@mnchamber.com
400 Robert Street North, Suite 1500
St. Paul, MN 55101

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