



◀ **Taste:** U-pick strawberry season has arrived. **E8**

Be Well: Exercise caution returning to the gym. **E9**

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VARIETY



A masked Pierre the Voyageur greets visitors in Two Harbors, Minn.

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Inside James Brown's world

Edina author writes about his "wild fantasy" years working with the Godfather of Soul.

By JON BREM • jon.brem@startribune.com

A couple of days after submitting his letter of resignation, Alan Leeds had to finally face his ex-boss — James Brown, the Godfather of Soul — who was standing outside a private jet.

"He said, 'Mr. Leeds, you're making a big mistake,'" Leeds remembered. "At one point, I almost started to cry. He sensed it and he said, 'There's a lot of man in you, but I see there's still some boy. You'll come to your senses. Maybe we're not done.'"

The Edina music maven shares that story and many others in his entertaining and insightful new book, "There Was a Time: James Brown, the Chitlin' Circuit, and Me."

The book is both a history and a memoir, a splendidly seamless blend of life with Soul Brother No. 1 and Leeds' own story as a DJ, publicist, advance man, tour director and Grammy-winning historian for Brown.

Written in an engagingly conversational fashion, the book chronicles the first act of Leeds' five-decade career behind the scenes in the music business. His later acts involved Prince, Kiss, D'Angelo, Barry White and many others.

In fact, all those other acts got in the way of Leeds finishing this Brown book, which he began writing in 1980.

"This became kind of a running gag with my mother and my wife: Are you ever gonna finish that book?" said Leeds.

Ethically, he didn't think he should be writing a book about his ex-boss while he was working for Prince, Maxwell or any other big star. He didn't want to be known as a tell-all type. Finally, after coordinating comedian Chris Rock's tour in 2018, Leeds retired from the road and focused on writing about his "wildly unpredictable fantasy" with Brown.

See **BROWN** on E4 ▶

STAYING SAFE ON YOUR SUMMER VACATION

By KERRI WESTENBERG • kerri.westenberg@startribune.com

On the cusp of the official start of summer, people wonder if they should even take a vacation this year.

For many, the answer is a cautious yes.

They are tired of staying at home, even in the face of a pandemic. States including Minnesota are easing restrictions put in place to slow the spread of COVID-19. A growing chorus of experts tells us that being outdoors is relatively safe because fresh air can diffuse and disarm the coronavirus. And despite the Centers for Disease Control's advice to stay home and Gov. Tim Walz's latest executive order that says Minnesotans

are "strongly discouraged to engage in unnecessary travel," the lure of lake and woods is too strong to ignore. For families with squirming children, whose summers have traditionally been marked by treasured annual escapes, taking a vacation can feel almost, well, necessary.

Resorts are fielding some cancellations, especially from people who are over 65 or who have underlying conditions such as asthma or obesity that put them at greater risk of serious illness from COVID-19. But they are also buoyed by fresh reservations. Ludlow's Island Resort on Lake Vermilion is hosting people who had planned fishing trips to Canada, where

See **VACATION** on E5 ▶

Inside: What health experts say about safety • Travel rules state by state • The new packing list • **E5**



Photo provided

James Brown and Alan Leeds leave the Pittsburgh Civic Center after a concert in 1971. Leeds worked for the Godfather of Soul for many years, starting in 1969.

UNCROWDED BEAUTY

SEE BACK PAGE

Theodore Roosevelt National Park — North Unit

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TRAVEL



Pehrson Lodge Resort in Cook, Minn., on Lake Vermilion, has added sanitation stations throughout the resort and remote check-in and check-out.

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Staying safe on summer vacation

◀ **VACATION** from El the border is closed to nonessential travel. Madden's Resort, near Brainerd, is receiving twice the number of calls it got last year at this time. East Silent Lake Resort, near Detroit Lakes, Minn., will welcome people who have canceled flying vacations. "They want to stay close to home, and they want to be able to drive," said Andy Leonard, one of the family members who own and run the Otter Tail County resort.

Minnesotans want their fix of summer fun. Making sure they can get that while staying healthy requires a little unusual preparation by both resorts and vacationers. The result of these special precautions? The classic summer vacation may look a bit less classic this year.

Safety measures at play

Vacationers will see masks, social distancing and protective barriers at resorts, said John Edman, director of Explore Minnesota. Some resorts are eliminating game rooms. Some are asking guests to bring their own bedding, he said.

Yes, lounge chairs will face the lake, but a new amenity will likely share space on the beach: a sanitizing station that sunbathers can use to wipe down shared seating and water toys.

Helpers will whisk luggage to your room or cabin as always, but their smiles will hide behind masks.

Lodges with their stockpiles of board games and puzzles could be closed and restaurant operations reduced to carryout as resorts try to limit interaction between guests, as is the case right now at East Silent Lake Resort.

At the mom-and-pop resort, the daily children's activity will no longer bring a heap of youngsters to one table. Instead, families will be invited to participate and sit at their own tables. The resort will still offer pontoon boat rides and evening s'mores, but it will

likely offer them more frequently so each event will draw fewer people.

Madden's five restaurants are opening, but to-go options will be available all summer.

At Ludlow's, ozone machines hum inside public spaces, including a store where guests can grab items like ice cream sandwiches and hot dogs. The machines circulate air, running it through virus-killing ultraviolet rays. The store has always worked on the honor system, with guests noting purchases in a book. This spring, owner Mark Ludlow changed the setup. Now each cabin has a dedicated booklet and pen. He placed the booklets outside the door on the breezeway to limit people's time indoors.

Sanitizing stations at Ludlow's are nearly as numerous as cabins; there are 22 of them scattered around the property among its 24 cabins. The boat that picks up guests at the parking lot to motor them to the island will now carry only one group at a time and be wiped down between trips.

At nearby Pehrson Lodge Resort on Lake Vermilion, the fitness center will be open to one family at a time, the lodge will be open at 25% capacity, and goods from the gift store and tackle shop can be delivered to the cabins.

Behind the scenes cleaning

Less visible to visitors will be the cleaning precautions that have become a key component of this summer season for resort owners.

Mark Ludlow struggled to find the kinds of cleaning supplies that are approved by the CDC to kill viruses and in large enough quantities to service the resort. After striking out with other businesses, he turned to some regulars for help. One guest who comes each year sells products to veterinary clinics and supplied Ludlow's with a hydrogen peroxide cleanser

called Rejuvenate. Through another regular who works in the automotive industry, he tapped into a product called GClean: G200Q, which can be sprayed on porous items like bedding and nonporous items like kitchen counters.

East Silent Lake Resort has hired more workers for this summer; the sole job of some will be to roam the grounds and sanitize amenities such as Jet Skis and kayaks.

An uptick in camping

Some travelers, wary of indoor spaces during the pandemic, are heading to campgrounds, using tents for shelter. Campgrounds of America's special report on camping and COVID notes that one-third of leisure travelers are now interested in giving camping a try. Among the reasons are a desire to spend time outdoors and the ability to social-distance.

Minnesota's state parks began a phased reopening on June 1, with many offering camper cabins and campsites. For instance, the main campground at Gooseberry Falls State Park, near Two Harbors, is open, though some sites are unavailable to create more space. Shower buildings are also open. Group campsites will remain closed through at least July 1.

Whether heading to the woods or a resort, vacationers should bring and wear masks in public spaces and stay at least 6 feet away from people outside the family — to keep themselves and anyone working at a resort or park healthy.

The measures are simple and easy enough to employ when you're sitting by the beach, hiking through the woods or fishing from a boat.

"It's a very different summer in Minnesota," Edman said.

But vacation can still be special.

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WHAT HEALTH EXPERTS SAY

Summer vacation can seem suspect at a time when the coronavirus is circulating and as many as 40% of transmission may come from those bearing no symptoms. To help with trip planning, we checked in with two infectious disease specialists: Dr. Michael Osterholm of the University of Minnesota and Dr. Frank Rhame with Allina Health.

Both say the key to staying virus-free, vacation or not, is to minimize contact and stay 6 feet from those outside your family.

"Distancing is the No. 1 means of reducing risk," Osterholm said.

Rhame said that knowing how the virus is transmitted should guide people's choices about all kinds of activities. Touch is the least worrisome, though we need to wash hands after encounters with high-touch surfaces like door handles, he said. The virus travels in small droplets, and even gentle speakers "spew out an order of 1,000 droplets per second." The droplets evaporate "pretty quickly," but can hover around, especially where there is little airflow. The big droplets, which also can contain virus, fall to the earth, usually within 6 feet.

Two key factors play a role in infection: the dose that is in the air and how long a person breathes it in, Osterholm said.

"If people don't get closer than 6 feet and have the decency to wear a mask, it's probably OK," said Rhame, who noted that mask wearing is more for the safety of nearby people than the person wearing the mask.

In the end, safety is largely about with whom you vacation.

Osterholm said. "If you are with your family unit, and you limit exposure to the outside world, that's the key."

Is a lodge room less safe than a

cabin? Either is fine, provided air is flowing. Rhame said that in a cabin or a lodge room, "I'd be opening windows when I arrive." He frowned on elevators, where fine droplets from a passenger who got off minutes earlier could be lurking.

Can I go swimming in a pool or to the beach? Swimming is a problem because you can't use a mask. In the splashing fun of a pool, maintaining distance could be a challenge. Beaches could be easier.

Is camping safe? "If you are camping with a group or at a centralized recreation area with 30 other people, then your chance [of getting the virus] is much higher than if you are just out and about in a campground with your family," Osterholm said.

If we all take a coronavirus test and are negative, can I travel with friends? "Testing is not helpful" in such a situation, Osterholm said. People who have a small but building amount of virus may test negative and only several days later — say, when you're all in a rental home together — start shedding the virus. Also, in Minnesota the tests are given almost exclusively to people who are ill or who have attended recent demonstrations.

Drive or fly? Here, opinions diverge. "Driving is by far the best," said Osterholm, who advises people to make quick rest stops, avoid lines and be careful pumping gas. Rhame notes that half of the air in planes comes from the outside and the rest passes through filters. "Airplanes are actually pretty safe once you get on them. It's getting to them that you have to worry about." Nearby passengers can also be cause for concern. But there is no navigating rest stops, hotels and meals.

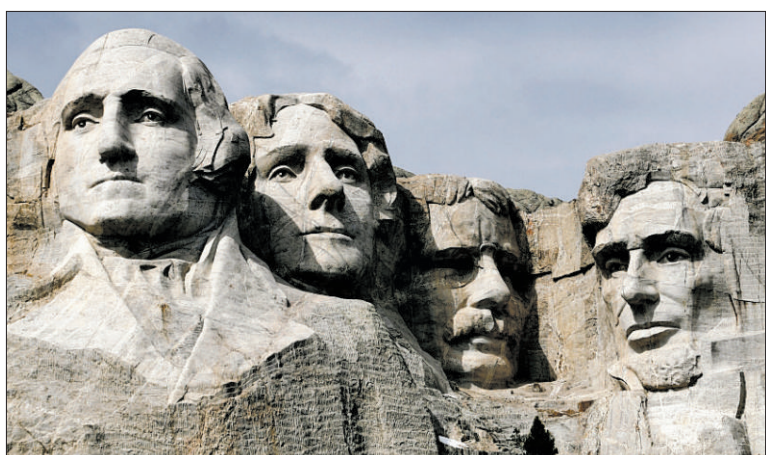
KERRI WESTENBERG

WHAT TO BRING ON VACATION THIS YEAR

- **Masks** for everyone.
- **Laundry detergent** for cleaning the masks.
- **Hand sanitizer** with at least 60% alcohol.
- **Tissues** for encounters with high-touch surfaces like doors.
- **Bleach-based or hydrogen peroxide cleaners** to rid surfaces of virus.

- Consider purchasing an **annual state park permit** before you head out. Many visitor centers and ranger stations are closed.
- A cooler with **snacks for the drive** and many of the foods you'll need at your destination.
- A **thermometer**, just in case.

K.W.



Associated Press

Mount Rushmore will be open to tourists this summer, including a ticketed Independence Day weekend fireworks display.

TRAVEL RULES ACROSS OUR BORDERS

Canada: All nonessential travel between the U.S. and Canada is restricted until at least June 22. Canada has begun admitting immediate family members of citizens or permanent residents; all visitors must quarantine for 14 days.

Iowa: Restaurants, campgrounds, museums, casinos and outdoor venues were allowed to open on Friday with social distancing and hygiene measures. Check with individual businesses or attractions for restrictions before visiting. Indoor performance venues, indoor playgrounds and welcome centers remain closed.

North Dakota: Restaurant dining and gatherings are permitted. Anyone traveling to the state from another country or who has been in contact with a positive COVID-19 case is required to quarantine for 14 days. Theodore Roosevelt National Park is open, but its campgrounds and visitor centers are closed.

South Dakota: Restaurant dining and gatherings are permitted. Most of the north unit of Badlands National Park is open; the south unit is closed. At select tribal-land highway checkpoints, travelers must fill out a health questionnaire. Non-

essential visits to tribal lands by nonresidents are restricted.

Wisconsin: The state Supreme Court struck down the stay-at-home order on May 13, allowing restaurants and bars to open. This moved any travel restrictions to the county or local level. For example, Eau Claire County restricts gatherings to 10 people indoors and 20 people outdoors. Milwaukee County is "reopening with restrictions." Some Wisconsin Dells water parks are reopening with restrictions. Check the county and local websites for your destination.

SIMON PETER GROEBNER