

Issue 20

Iowa Newspaper Association Bulletin

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CALENDAR of EVENTS

WEBINARS

Self-Care for Journalists Thursday, June 11

About Seven-in-Ten U.S. Adults Say They Need to Take Breaks From COVID-19 News

61% give equal attention to national and local coronavirus news

BY AMY MITCHELL, J. BAXTER OLIPHANT & ELISA SHEARER

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

mericans continue to pay close attention to news about the coronavirus outbreak both nationally and locally. In doing so, they rely on a broad mix of media, government and other providers of news, according to a new Pew Research Center survey conducted April 20-26, 2020, of 10,139 U.S. adults who are part of the Center's American Trends Panel.

But the continuous news churn has had an impact. A majority of Americans say they need to take breaks from it, many say it makes them feel worse emotionally and half say they find it difficult to sift through what is true and what is not, according to the survey, which is a part of the Election News Pathways project.

About nine-in-ten Americans (87%) are following coronavirus news fairly or very closely, a figure roughly on par with surveys conducted in March. In getting this news, more than half the public (56%) says national news outlets are a major source, and nearly as many (51%) say this of public health organizations and officials.

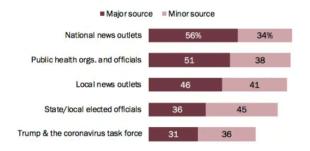
Local news outlets are a major source of COVID-19 news for 46% of the public, while 36% say state and local elected officials are a major source for them. About three-in-ten U.S. adults (31%) say President Donald Trump and the White House coronavirus task force are a major source of news about the outbreak.

Americans are focusing attention on both national and local news related to the pandemic. About six-in-ten (61%) say they pay about equal attention to news at both levels, while 23% tune in more to state and local news on the outbreak and 15% follow national news on the topic more.

But it can be difficult to stay focused on this lifedisrupting crisis. About seven-in-ten Americans (71%) say they need to take breaks from news about the coronavirus, and 43% say the news leaves them feeling worse emotionally. Half of Americans say they find it difficult to determine

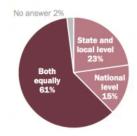
Public health officials play large role alongside national news orgs. as a source of coronavirus news

% of U.S. adults who say ____ is/are a major or minor source for news about the coronavirus outbreak



Americans drawn to both the local and national elements of the coronavirus outbreak

% of U.S. adults who say they pay more attention to news about the coronavirus outbreak at the ...



Note: Top five major sources asked about shown. See topline for all sources asked. Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 20-26, 2020.

"About Seven-in-Ten U.S. Adults Say They Need to Take Breaks From COVID-19 News"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

what is true and not true about the outbreak, while 49% say they find that task easy. And close to two-thirds of adults (64%) say they have seen at least some news and information about the coronavirus that seemed completely made up.

Within the rapid flow of news and information has been a stream of claims about COVID-19 – some with spotty evidence, some closer to speculation and still others deemed by experts to be actively dangerous. The survey asked about six of these purported treatments or causes to get a sense of how widely they had reached across the

BREAK - cont. on page 5



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If you're interested in getting more information on uploading your paper to NewzGroup, please contact Judy Mowery at jmowery@inanews.com.

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Covering COVID-19: SciLine's director on avoiding the overreach

RICK WEISS,

DIRECTOR, SCILINE

hether we went to journalism school or worked our way up through a series of hardnosed editors, we all were taught that the job is to tell people the news so they can react to those facts as they will — not to tell them how to feel about it.



As I read the news about COVID-19, though, I too often find

myself cringing — not because the news is so bad, though of course it is, but because I see examples of journalists perhaps a little too caught up in the excitement of the moment.

The situation around the world is breathtakingly bad, but that doesn't mean descriptions of it should be breathless. Yet I keep finding myself being told that I should be alarmed (because the situation is "alarming"). I should brace myself not just for an increase but for a "surge." I should join the masses of people who are not just seeking or asking but rather "pleading" for help.

Journalism has risen heroically to cover what's turning out to be a once-in-a-century news story. Reporters are working day and night to educate and inform the public and to hold decision-makers' feet to the fire — sometimes at significant risk to their own health. But just as doctors tell us that one reason people get so sick from viruses is that our immune system overreacts to infection with a so-called cytokine cascade, it's worth considering that some aspects of journalism's robust response may be exacerbating the COVID-19 pandemic's damage.

Here are five elements of today's journalistic cytokine cascade:

OVERUSE OF INFLAMMATORY LANGUAGE

A recent front-page Sunday New York Times story about COVID-19 had the words "looming," "alarm," "crisis," "crushing," "fearing" and "ravaged" all in the first six sentences, and climaxed with a gory image of a coronavirus patient getting what was described as emergency dialysis "through a vein in the neck."

Egads!

Except, it turns out the neck vein is often used for dialysis.

Individually, dramatic word spikes and images may be small, but they add up to a national and even global gestalt of despair and even panic, which can have a real impact on, for example, compliance with important public health directives.

TOO MUCH EMPHASIS ON OUTLIERS

When a few people started demonstrating against

stay-at-home orders a few weeks ago, it was the kind of story that I and my newsroom colleagues used to jokingly refer to as "too good to check." With no evidence that these gatherings of as few as a dozen individuals represented anything but a sliver of public opinion (a sliver we've since learned has been largely bankrolled by a handful of very wealthy business people), the stories and photos flowed.

Compare that to actual polling data indicating that not just then, but still to this day, significant majorities of Americans favor continued stay-at-home restrictions. Shouldn't that be the story, with mention of protesters a few paragraphs in, instead of the reverse?

TOO MUCH TRUST IN GENERIC EXPERTISE

It's understandable that in the rush of multiple deadlines per day, reporters will take whatever source they can get as long as there is some kind of scientific or medical credential after their name. It's also understandable that some scientists would like to share their thoughts on matters outside their core area of expertise. But that's how we end up with silicon valley data geeks making wrongheaded epidemiological predictions, and discredited scientists spreading conspiracy theories about COVID-19. It's hard to find deeply knowledgeable sources, but they are worth seeking out. It's always worth taking the few minutes to look at a scientists' most recent credentials and publications.

And as a wise reporter once told me, it doesn't matter if your source is a Nobel laureate—the simplest and also most important question a reporter can and must ask any source who says anything substantive is: "How do you know that?"

TOO MUCH CASE COUNTING, NOT ENOUGH ACCOUNTABILITY

Science will of course be essential to winning the battle against COVID-19, but it's not the whole story. Science tells us, for example, that if we totally lock the country down, we can reduce coronavirus deaths to near zero. But science can't tell us how to balance that with the reality that a total and forever lockdown makes life less worth living.

How our leaders resolve that conflict will reveal nothing less than the value that we as a society place on human lives when we have to pay for those lives with our personal freedom. And, importantly, not just any lives, but certain lives in particular, given the unfair impacts COVID-19 is having on racial minorities, the poor, the elderly and the incarcerated.

That story — of who gains as the nation reopens and who loses, and whether America takes this opportunity to rethink the longstanding structural and societal disparities that COVID-19 has so glaringly revealed — is, in a way, the crowning story of this pandemic, and the one that

SCILINE - cont. on page 8

How Silicon Valley's congressman saved our Iowa newspaper

DOUGLAS BURNS,

CARROLL TIMES HERALD

Before our forks settled in the generous heaps of mashed potatoes or cut the tenderloins at a dinner in Jefferson to fete tech's audacious arrival in this rural Iowa reach, I knew we had a forceful friend in California Congressman Ro Khanna.



Douglas Burns

We were gathered in Jefferson to recognize Accenture's development

of a software-development branch in the rural county seat of Greene County. I've covered politics for 25 years and as a newspaper owner in Carroll and Jefferson have served on five regional economic-development boards. So I found myself next to the congressman at the December 2018 dinner.

We got right into it. Here's the big question of the political hour — and it frames the way this congressman from California's Silicon Valley sees the lane for his service in Washington, D.C., and growing interaction with rural America.

Khanna knows many rural Americans, sweeps of folks in the countryside of Iowa, are angry over real and perceived losses to their ways of life.

Recent elections, as Khanna is well aware, have seen that discontent manifest in anti-immigrant language or votes and vitriol hurled against political figures tied to the urban elite.

Should rural Iowans feel this angry, is it earned and real, and if so, where should it be directed?

"Well, they should feel angry because the governing elite of this country have let them down," Khanna said in that 40-minute interview. "We have had a digital revolution that began in the 1990s and accelerated now. You have had concentration of economic success in places like my district, Silicon Valley, or Boston or Austin, and you have had a large part of the country left out. And their talent has been left out."

Rural Americans served in wars and farmed and mined coal and built the manufacturing base, and increasingly, there is little, if any, role for them in the new economy, one in which wealth is scooped and segregated to the coasts.

Ro Khanna's mission: bring the software revolution to places like Jefferson, Iowa, or Kentucky or West Virginia. And deliver other careers to Knoxville and Carroll, places Khanna now knows well.

It's a matchless remedy to the over-brewed rural-urban divide, one that is diminishing the nation.

Khanna is tireless in this endeavor. He peppers us with early-morning texts to check on life and business here and sends emails to college presidents and tech executives and local development leaders to boost tech training and careers in rural towns. Just days ago, amid the pandemic, he urged young people, on a video call with Des Moines Area Community College Carroll

Campus Provost Joel Lundstrom and others, to pursue a computer-languages course of study that could lead them to the Accenture's modern branch in Jefferson, with high-paying careers, more so when you factor the low cost of living here in rural Iowa.

The Carroll Times Herald has chronicled Khanna's estimable contributions to our economy.

From a personal perspective, Khanna and I began to interact as our newspaper, in my family for three generations, with a 90-year history of ownership, faced existential challenges amid the increasing grip of Facebook and Amazon on small-town Iowa's economy and culture of communication.

We still had fight. But we were increasingly despairing. I was one of the angry rural people, a Carroll-raised kid who'd spurned city life and come back home 24 years ago from Northwestern University and Washington's Capitol Hill to help build a small newspaper, to fight for economic development, to join others in tying our rural communities in west-central Iowa in a common, future-minded cause to improve and diversify.

Yes, we'd seen many successes, but failure of our family business loomed like my own shadow in the twilight.

Ro Khanna saw me, and he saw rural America. And he saw our struggle to join the modern economy. He saw the stakes involved.

"This is a forward-looking answer to Donald Trump. I mean, Donald Trump's whole message is 'I'm going to bring your jobs back. I'm going to bring your pay back. I'm going to bring your dignity back. You've been left out.' ... Our message has to be that we are going to bring more jobs, more possibilities, more opportunity to communities left out than they've ever had before," Khanna said of his plan on rural careers and growth in a February Vanity Fair magazine story. "No person should be forced to leave their hometown to get a goodpaying job. A community's biggest export shouldn't be their kids. So we're going to rebuild and revitalize these communities to bring them the opportunities of the technology revolution. And people get that. They intuitively get that the economy is changing; they intuitively get that just bashing up on China or bashing up on immigrants isn't going to ultimately provide more economic opportunity for their kids."

In that same exhaustively reported Vanity Fair story, the writer, Abigail Tracy, quoted my own assessment of the urgency of Congressman Khanna's work to bring tech careers to rural America:

"I would say the future of the country is riding on this, [not] rural America and urban America preaching back and forth at each other about whether you should use gendered pronouns or how many guns you should be able to own," Vanity Fair quoted me as saying. "Those are arguments that are going to continue to divide. What we're doing is literally potentially preventing a civil war, because this wealth inequality just can't stand and it

CONGRESSMAN - cont. on page 6

Tell Congress to support stimulus bill with SBA waiver for news

News Media Alliance urges industry professionals to contact their representatives to Support the Local News and Emergency Information Act of 2020

ast week, a bipartisan bill, the Local News and Emergency Information Act of 2020, was introduced in the House and Senate that offers legislative text around a Small Business Administration (SBA) affiliation waiver that would allow more news publishers to apply for SBA loans under the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP). The bill was introduced by Senators Maria Cantwell (D-WA), John Boozman (R-AR), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Joni Ernst (R-IA) and Chuck Schumer (D-NY) in the Senate, and Chairman David Cicilline (D-RI) and Ranking Member Jim Sensenbrenner (R-WI) in the House. The affiliation waiver would allow news publishers to apply for PPP loans as individual, independent entities, despite ownership by companies with other small news publishers or nonnews businesses, allowing more publishers to qualify for the vital loans. The bill includes language that would

restrict these funds to be used by the parent-owner of the newspaper-borrower.

The Alliance applauds the Senators and Representatives for their leadership in gathering bipartisan support for this SBA affiliation waiver for news publishers and looks forward to more news publishers being eligible to apply for these loans, which will allow them to continue bringing critical news and information to their local communities.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Please ask your Member of Congress to co-sponsor the Local News and Emergency Information Act of 2020 – your Senator's contact information can be found here http://email.newsmediaalliance.org/Please continue to run editorials about the importance of relief for local news during the pandemic, including allowing news publishers to benefit from emergency aid funneled through the CARES Act. Visit http://email.newsmediaalliance.org/c/1W3nXgjaqnFAjCMTkinpTmx7UY for suggested talking points for an editorial.

NNA Issue Brief

The Department of Treasury and Small Business Administration released the form that borrowers must complete for loan forgiveness under the Paycheck Protection Program on Friday.

More explanation for this process is expected. The form, however, answers some of the questions

that publishers have had, such as the scope of utilities payments that will be allowable.

The form is here:

https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/3245-0407-SBA-Form-3508-PPP-Forgiveness-Application.pdf

If you have questions contact Tonda Rush at tonda@nna.org

BREAK - cont. from page 1

United States. Of the six, Americans were most likely to be familiar with the claim that use of the anti-malaria drug hydroxychloroquine could be useful in treating the virus: 44% have heard a lot about this.

Three-in-ten U.S. adults have heard a lot about the use of plasma transfusions from recovered patients as a treatment. Fewer have heard a lot about vitamin C as a prevention (15%). In the survey, only 3% said they had heard a lot about the widely discredited claim that drinking a form of diluted bleach sometimes called "miracle mineral solution" is a way to treat current cases. (The majority of the survey was completed before Trump's comments about using disinfectants to treat the virus on April 23.)

More broadly, 59% of Americans say at-home treatments for serious cases of the coronavirus are not too or not at all effective; 38% say they are somewhat or very effective.

Americans did express a fair amount of knowledge about some of the basic elements of one of the first actions taken by the federal government to help limit damage from the economic downturn: the CARES Act, signed into law by President Trump on March 27. About nine-in-ten (91%) know the bill includes \$1,200

for many American adults, about half (51%) identify the amount of money with the aid package as either \$2 trillion or \$2.5 trillion and nearly two-thirds (64%) know it increased unemployment benefits.

Still, there is confusion about what else might and might not be in the fast-moving legislation. While 52% know the bill does not include federal aid for undocumented immigrants, another 40% aren't sure and 7% think it does. Few Americans (8%) incorrectly say the bill included pay raises for members of Congress, but 54% say they are not sure. Most U.S. adults (56%) also say they are unsure whether the bill placed restrictions on aid to businesses owned by Trump, which it does.

These findings are a part of Pew Research Center's yearlong Election News Pathways project. You can find all the data from this report in the Pathways data tool, analyze it alongside other data points and even download the entire dataset. Read this article online by visiting <a href="https://www.journalism.org/2020/04/29/about-seven-in-ten-u-s-adults-say-they-need-to-take-breaks-from-covid-19-news/?utm_source=API+Need+to+Know+newsletter&utm_campaign=11da07dca6-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_05_19_11_55&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_e3bf78af04-11da07dca6-45817461.

DON'T MISS OUT ON OUR PUBLISHERS' IDEA EXCHANGE!

The INA will provide an opportunity for publishers to share ideas and challenges they are experiencing during these uncertain times on a Zoom call on Thursday, May 28th at noon.

Join Zoom Meeting: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86094834071

Meeting ID: 860 9483 4071 | **Password:** 49255

Contact Susan Patterson Plank at spattersonplank@inanews.com if you have questions.

CONGRESSMAN - cont. from page 4

just won't stay up. We can't have only a select number of winners in a select number of places where people are just sort of succeeding by geographic accident like that. That's just not going to hold the country together. This isn't a charitable arm of big tech. This makes sense for big tech, too, because there's a lot of talent here."

Through the last two years, Ro Khanna visited Carroll twice, and he connected our newspaper with Silicon Valley innovators. Khanna inspired us to launch a digital marketing company, Mercury Boost, to capture revenue beyond our web and print ads. He put us, and our friends at the neighboring, Denison-based Spanishlanguage La Prensa, in the room with key people from tech companies — most notably the Facebook Journalism Project.

Soon we were in Facebook's Accelerator program for newspapers — the Carroll Times Herald and La Prensa, small family-owned operations in rural Iowa, sitting aside leaders from the Los Angeles Times, Toronto Globe and Mail, Salt Lake Tribune, and newspapers from Memphis and New Orleans and Tampa and Philadelphia, among others

Combined the Carroll Times Herald and La Prensa received a \$75,000 grant to pursue more digital subscriptions and to construct the Western Iowa Journalism Foundation, a non-profit organization involving Carroll, Jefferson, Denison, Storm Lake and Harlan. We are well into that development.

Moreover, Facebook awarded the Times Herald and La Prensa an additional \$85,000 in grant money to keep our newspapers alive and churning out vital publichealth stories during the coronavirus pandemic. That's a \$160,000 lift from Facebook to La Prensa and The Times Herald, with \$35,000 for La Prensa and the remaining funds being used to boost Carroll digital subscriptions and create the non-profit organization that will support

multiple western Iowa newspapers.

"We see The Carroll Times Herald and La Prensa as standard bearers for other community-focused newspapers across America," said David Grant, Accelerator program manager for the Facebook Journalism Project. "We hope that the Times Herald's success in the Accelerator can be replicated at small news organizations across the country. There's a future for high-quality journalism in western Iowa that won't look like the last 90 years — but this is a team that can build the next 90."

We also received immeasurable assistance from our coach in the accelerator, Ryan Tuck, a North Carolinabased consultant and adviser and a lecturer at the University of North Carolina who holds master's and law degrees and has consulted in a variety of capacities in addition to working with McClatchy's newsrooms, Bloomberg News and The New York Times. His guidance has been invaluable throughout this process.

Our newspapers were only in the room with the Facebook opportunity because Congressman Ro Khanna made me believe rural Iowa belonged there, right along with brand-name urban communications giants.

He's bringing this same rural-in-the-rooms-whereit-happens advocacy to other industries, from tech to biomanufacturing.

It's often said in the halls of Capitol Hill that there are Washington friends, and there are friends.

Ro Khanna is both to this newspaper.

Our newspaper is alive to cover Ro's fight for rural America, and indeed America itself, and for that, we are both humbled and inspired.

Visit https://www.carrollspaper.com/news/business/how-silicon-valley-s-congressman-saved-our-iowa-newspaper/article_fe8333b8-9a10-11ea-ab4f-6f2dfdda547d.html to read this article online.

Reminder to all newspapers: If you change the number of days per week that you print please let the INA know by notifying media@cnaads.com.

Please keep in mind that the lowa Code section 618.3 provides for very specific guidelines for the definition of a newspaper for the purpose of public notifications. The first of which is that a newspaper of general circulation must have published at least once a week for at least 50 weeks per year within the area. The code does not address how many pages the newspaper must be. It does provide that at least 25% of the newspaper's total column space in more than one half of its issues during any 12-month period should be news versus advertising.

FREE MEMBER EXCHANGE

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Please call today--Edward Anderson, Broker--National

Media Associates--417-338-6397 or email: brokered1@

gmail.com

Client looking to purchase a small weekly lowa newspaper. Sellers contact Dave Tapp of News Brokerage of Iowa, dtappnewsbrokerageofiowa@gmail. com, 319-350-2770.

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· Self-Care for Journalists

MEMBER EXCHANGE - cont. from page 5

group features a strong staff with a centralized graphics department. Perfect add-on for a current group, or great opportunity for a hands-on owner. All inquiries to any property are strictly confidential. For more information contact: Ryan Harvey, Broker, Scenic Trail Media Brokers, LLC, at 515-689-1151 or by email at scenictrailmediabrokers@gmail.com

View and submit ads on the Internet at www.INAnews.com. Students and professionals may also submit their resumés for online viewing.

There is no charge for most of these ads. They are a free service to INA active (newspaper) members only. The name of the newspaper in the ad must be the same as published in the current INA Directory.

If you are trying to help an employee relocate, please send us the ad information on your letterhead, rather than having the employee write us. We will not run ads for persons living in a member's town without first clearing the ad with the publisher.

Please have copy to the INA office no later than noon on Monday. The INA will make the determination of whether an ad qualifies for free or paid publication. If payment for an ad is not enclosed with the ad, the INA will require payment in advance before the ad will be published.

Ads for products or services which could be marketed for a profit may be published for a fee of \$10 per insertion, paid in advance, with a 40-word maximum.

Recruitment (help wanted) ads for positions in states other than Iowa may be published for a fee of \$25 per insertion, with a 100-word maximum.

 $For \ more \ information, \ contact \ Cicely \ Gordon \ at \ cgordon@inanews.com.$

SCILINE - cont. from page 3

will demand perfect journalistic sobriety.

AND, COMING SOON: TOO MUCH OPTIMISM?

Prepare for some whiplash here, but coverage of the latest remdesivir clinical trial hints that journalism may be on the brink of making excitability miscalibrations in the other direction when it comes to drug and vaccine development.

Sure, it's good news that, on average, patients who took this drug got out of the hospital a few days earlier than those who didn't get it. But even a rudimentary look at the study's data shows that, contrary to much of the immediate reporting, there was no significant difference in death rates between those who did and did not get this drug. In fact, it may be that those who got the drug were more likely to die — this study couldn't answer that question.

Similarly, there are a lot of stories being written these days that talk about a vaccine being ready within 12 to 18 months — maybe even sooner. Officials have certainly expressed that hope, and it might come true. But scientists have been working on a vaccine against the virus that causes SARS — an extremely close relative to the virus that causes COVID-19 — for 20 years, without success.

That's a story.

Journalism will heavily influence where this pandemic takes American society. The path ahead is long. Let's pace ourselves and be our own toughest editors, so we can take pride years down the line about all we got right.

Rick Weiss is a former long-time Washington Post science reporter and is director of SciLine, a philanthropically supported free service for journalists and scientists based at the nonprofit American Association for the Advancement of Science. He can be reached at rweiss@aaas.org. SciLine (@RealSciLine) maintains a COVID-19 Resources page especially for journalists. Visit https://www.quillmag.com/2020/05/14/covering-covid-19-scilines-director-on-avoiding-the-overreach/ to read this article online.



Thursday, June 11 · 1-2 p.m.

Registration fee: FREE · Deadline: June 8

IN THIS WEBINAR...

Creating balance and maintaining your emotional and physical wellness is as important as ever for journalists. We will discuss some ideas on how to create that balance to best take care of yourself. We'll also discuss how to create a healthy work environment for employees.

THE PRESENTER...

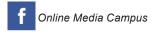
Tim Schmitt



Tim Schmitt has spent decades in various newsrooms — some print, and some broadcast. He was a sports reporter, news reporter, and then managing editor of his hometown paper, the Tonawanda News in New York, where he led an award-winning editorial page. He has worked as an editor, staffer and longtime contributor

with the Arizona Daily Sun, the Mesa Tribune, the Arizona Republic, the Buffalo Current, and the Niagara Falls Gazette, where he was executive sports editor over four dailies.

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YES! Sign me up for the Self-Care For Journalists webinar Thursday, June 11

Registration fee: free to Iowa Newspaper Association members

Find out more at www.onlinemediacampus.com or contact Erica Wipperling at 515-422-9052 or ewipperling@inanews.com.

Registration deadline: June 8

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RECEIPT OF REGISTRATION:

You will receive log-in instructions 48-hours prior to the webinar you've registered for. If you have questions, please contact Erica Wipperling at ewipperling@inanews.com or 515-422-9052.