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JANUARY 2025 | VOL. 7, NO. 1

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- Making mindful choices
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## A note to our readers

HRV is YOUR community paper written by readers like YOU who want to share upcoming events and happenings around our community. If you're a not-for-profit and want to share your story, send us an article. If you're a business and would like to advertise, give us a call. Are you an artist or know of one who might be the perfect fit for our cover? Have ideas we should consider? Contact us!

Thank you for your contributions to making Heart River Voice the VOICE of Stark County and beyond.

To get in touch, email us at [editor@heartrivervoiced.com](mailto:editor@heartrivervoiced.com).

**Kelley Jilek**  
*Publisher*

## On the cover

"Ice Houses" by Max Patzner. For more information about the artist, see page 5.

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Happy  
New Year  
from all of us  
at  
**Heart River**  
**VOICE**

## #BOOKWORM

## Winter Reading Program is on!

By Cindy Thronburg and Jade Praus

We had a lot of fun in December, with our Grinchmas and Old Fashioned Christmas Social, as well as many other fun programs. We're so happy you could join us!

January is a planning month for us here at the Dickinson Area Public Library, so that means all regular programs are paused. However, there are still lots of things for you to participate in this month, especially our Winter Reading Program!

Get ready to log all your winter reading with our Winter Reading Challenge on Beanstack! The program will start January 1st and end March 1st. As always, this program is free and open to all ages birth through adult. If you've participated before you already know how logging works and how easy it is. If you've never participated, logging is quick and simple thanks to Beanstack. All you need to do is log your minutes (or activities if you're between ages 0-5) to earn badges and tickets. The tickets can be allocated to the grand

prize(s) of your choosing. We will also have a coloring contest! Grand prizes and coloring contest winners will be announced on Friday, March 7th at our Cookies & Cocoa Party.

There is also a second reading challenge that you can participate in! From Jan. 1st to Jan. 31st, we are participating in "Be a Reading Machine," a Winter Reading Challenge sponsored by Beanstack and Baker & Taylor. You can log reading, activities, and more to earn badges in this special reading challenge and you can earn a Bingo! Thousands of other libraries and schools across the nation are joining in too, for a chance at winning cash prizes for their community. This challenge is open to all ages, but only for the month of January.

Starting January 2nd and ending February 3rd, we will have My Golden Valentine taking place. This program is all about making Valentine's Day a happy one for seniors in our area. Make your own card, buy an extra one, or just write a note to let them know they are thought of and matter. We will also have



*Winter*

# READING PROGRAM

JAN. 1ST - MARCH 1ST

**READ BOOKS AND WIN PRIZES!  
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a couple valentine card making stations so people of all ages can make cards. All cards we receive will be donated to local nursing homes and assisted living facilities in Dickinson.

If you want to stay in from the cold this month, get your materials digitally! We have lots of different platforms available for you to get e-books, e-audiobooks, and movies online. You can even access things like magazines and comics or graphic novels! To access these platforms, all you need is your library card number and a password, which is usually your last name all lowercase.

The first platform we have available is Libby. With Libby, you have access to thousands of e-books, audiobooks, magazines, and more! You can have 5 loans at a time checked out to you. If something is unavailable that you want, you can place a hold for it. The app is simple to use. You can even read things with your Kindle.

The second platform we have is hoopla. With this app, anything you find is available immediately... no holds necessary! You can check out 5 things per month. There are e-books, audiobooks, comics, music, movies and television. They also have BingePasses,

which let you borrow multiple things while only using one of your monthly checkouts. You can even download the hoopla app on your Roku to watch your movies on your TV.

We also have a newer option available to checkout movies digitally. Kanopy is a streaming service for movies, documentaries, classic cinema, independent films, and educational videos. Kanopy can be enjoyed on your TV, mobile phone, tablet, or online.

If you brave the cold, stop by and check out our new Experience Passes! Through partnerships with organizations across the state, the library is able to provide residents with educational and recreational opportunities to spend time together while saving money. Passes are for the Badlands Dinosaur Museum and the West River Community Center. These can be checked out for one week and grant free entry for one family into the facility. Use your library card to visit amazing places in North Dakota!

We hope to see you around this month! We do want to let you know that the library will be closed on Wednesday, January 1st for New Year's Day, and we will be closed on Monday, January 20th for Martin Luther King Jr. Day. ■



Happy New Year! 2025

*Susie Lefor, Broker Associate*  
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**COVER ARTIST**

**Max Patzner**

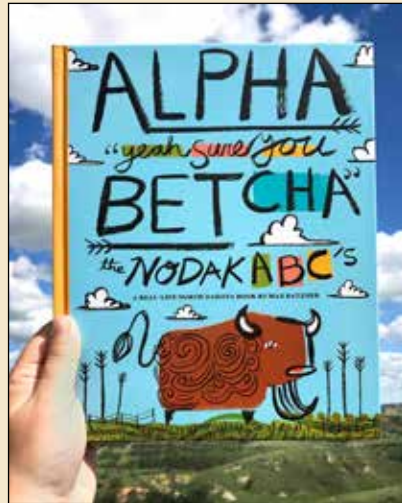


Max Patzner

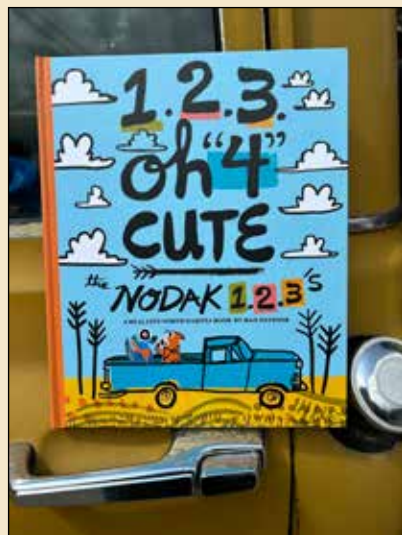
Max Patzner is a real-life North Dakota artist, writer and musician! Max's art is fun - His work is often exploding with color and whimsy, usually mixing folk art illustrations with pop art colors to explore and exaggerate his love for everything North Dakota and the wild Midwest. His illustrations are usually witty and playful - weird horses and birds in wheat fields, bison dancing in converse shoes or some neat cowboys and silly woolly mammoths... or sometimes just some fish and some colorful ice houses (see the cover of this issue!).



Max wears a lot of different hats to live his dream as a North Dakota artist - he creates GIANT murals (often of cute animals) - illustrations and designs for festivals, events, local businesses and nonprofits around the state - showing artworks at art galleries and the state capitol - creating art prints and merch



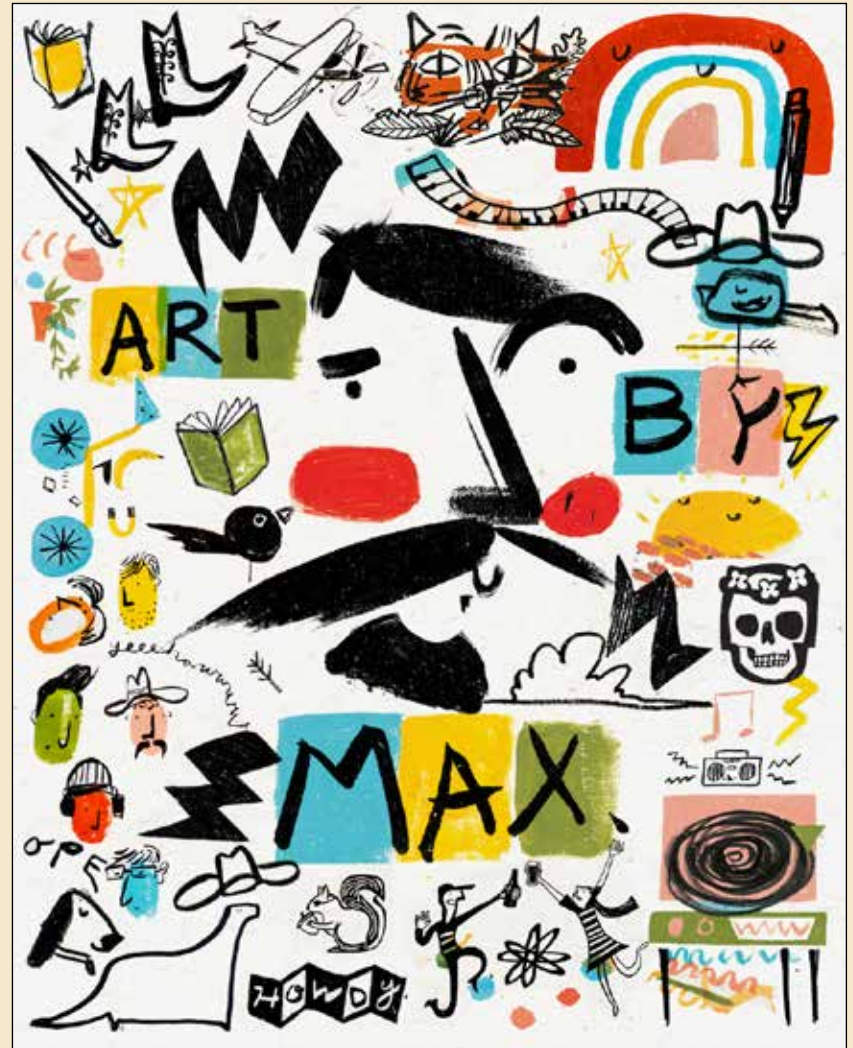
ALPHA "yeah sure you BETCHA" the NoDak ABC's



1.2.3. Oh "4" Cute the NoDak 123's

to sell at local shops - also being a musician in his band, Wild Hands - you might find him playing a hundred or so shows out in Medora - BUT - out of everything - you probably know Max from his witty North Dakota children's books!

You've probably seen this book - his love letter to North Dakota - "ALPHA 'yeah sure you BETCHA' - The NoDak ABC's." A is for Accordion, B



is for Buffalo, H is for Hotdish...K is for Knoephla Soup - U is for UFF DA - you get the idea. It's a book highlighting all of our quirky Nodakisms with some fun facts to go along. This book is all over the state and with its success, more books have followed. A book about animals and music - "WILD & The Animal Band" - a Medora ABC book AND his newest book, the sister book to the ABC's - "1.2.3. OH '4' CUTE: The NoDak 123's." 1 giant buffalo - 3 hay bales - 701 is the area code - 8,962 snow angels is our world record - infinite love

for tater tot hotdish ... lots and lots of Nodak numbers.

Max was born and raised in Minot, and that's still homebase for him, his wife and kiddo - but he's always been a champion for North Dakota and you can find his work all over the state... that's why he just calls himself "a North Dakota guy."

Follow along with his artist adventures around North Dakota at [art\\_by\\_max\\_nd](https://www.art_by_max_nd.com) on socials - AND you can buy his books and art on his online shop - [artbymaxnd.com](https://artbymaxnd.com) ■



Big Mural by Max

## COMMUNITY

# National Mentoring Month

National Mentoring Month is recognized yearly in January. The Best Friends Mentoring program celebrates this national month by thanking our volunteer mentors for the positive influence they have on the lives of the youth we serve. We also want to take the opportunity to talk about the impact of mentoring and to encourage you to remember those who have mentored you. Mentor National provides statistics that highlight the positive effects of mentoring:

- 75% of those who had a meaningful mentor say that person contributed significantly to their success late in life. Mentors support youth in many different areas of life. When it's not easy to do something, having that person in our corner to encourage us can make a world of difference. Reflect on the mentors that supported and encouraged you.

- 85% of young people with a mentor say this key relationship has helped them with issues related to school and their education. Mentoring is also about using real-life moments to be a role model and a teacher through listening and sharing experiences. Think of the mentors in your life, what lessons have they taught you?

- 60% of those under 40 years old are still drawing advice from their childhood mentors. Mentors make a lasting difference: the impact that mentors have

on youth's lives doesn't end at the end of the mentorship. Take a moment to remember the difference your mentor made in your life and what advice you still follow today.

This National Mentoring month, take a moment to consider the impact your mentor had on you and make sure to thank your mentor! We also encourage you to consider volunteering as a mentor

to make a difference in our community. We have over 10 youth on our waitlist for a mentor. Now is the time to get involved! If you aren't able to volunteer, please share the opportunity to be a mentor with your friends, family, neighbors, or coworkers. To become a mentor or to learn more about the role mentoring plays in our community, visit [www.bestfriendsnd.org](http://www.bestfriendsnd.org) or call us at 701-483-8615. ■



## COMMUNITY

# Beat the winter blues with the 6th Annual Winterfest

What started off as a small vendor event with some carnival games. Has now grown to a large-scale indoor family fun event. Now the event hosts several classes, carnival games, and local vendors.

With over 40 local vendors such as L'bri, Marbear Sweets, Muse Bakery, Paperpie, Just Lil Bit and so many more. There is a little something for everyone.

The event also welcomed some new classes such as a cake decorating class, puzzle palooza competition,

personal growth class, a couple art and decorating classes, and returning classes such as teddy bear party and fit for duty. You won't want to miss out on this family fun family event.

With beloved carnival activities such as bean bag toss, dart toss, ring toss, facepainting and more. You will want to make sure to get your discounted wristbands for the carnival games at Dickinson Convention and Visitors Bureau. Lastly, you will have an opportunity to give back when you bid on gift

baskets and gift cards donated from area local businesses to benefit this year's spotlight non profit The Beginnings Project ND.

Winter blues what's that? With The 6th Annual Winterfest, you will get to beat the cold and enjoy activities for the whole family without breaking the bank. For more information go to [www.winterfestnd.com](http://www.winterfestnd.com). Plan to attend Saturday, January 18th, 2025, from 9 am to 4 pm at Prairie Hills Mall. ■



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**CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

**Coffee with the Legislators returns for 2025**

The Dickinson Area Chamber of Commerce will again host Coffee with the Legislators at the Dickinson Area Public Library during the state's 2025 legislative session. Legislators from districts 36, 37 & 39 will join state officials at 10AM on the second and fourth Saturdays of January, February and March. Elected leaders will share updates during the first hour, and the second hour will be open for questions

and comments from the public, capped at three minutes each. The events will be moderated by Chamber Executive Director Carter Fong, and will be recorded by Consolidated to air on Channel 18. Guided by our Governmental Relations committee, the Chamber aims to build healthy working relationships between elected leaders and their constituents. ■



DICKINSON AREA CHAMBER  
COFFEE WITH THE LEGISLATORS

Saturday, January 11 – 10am  
Dickinson Area Public Library  
Updates from Districts 36, 37 & 39

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WHERE BUSINESS GOES TO GROW

EDUCATION

# DPS Foundation: Impact and goals for 2025



The Dickinson Public Schools (DPS) Foundation has been a driving force in fostering educational excellence and innovation within our schools. As we look ahead to 2025, the Foundation remains steadfast in supporting teachers, inspiring students, and engaging the community through meaningful initiatives.

**Increasing Support for Teachers**

The DPS Foundation recognizes that teachers are at the heart of student success.

In 2025, the Foundation will increase its focus on opportunities that allow educators to enrich education through new and existing programs. One example is establishing the Sponsorship Program to ensure educators have annual funding for recurring programs and events.

**Building Stronger Community Connections**

Collaboration with community members and local businesses will be key

to achieving the Foundation's 2025 goals. By forming strategic partnerships, the DPS Foundation aims to provide students with access to unique experiences and opportunities in every Dickinson public school. Look for more information about volunteering with the Foundation to advocate for long-term investments in education, ensuring that every student in Dickinson benefits from a network of support.

**Announcing the Mystery Theatre Fundraising Event**

Innovation is not limited to the classroom. In 2025, the DPS Foundation will revitalize its popular Mystery Dinner Theatre with some exciting changes. The Mystery Theatre Fundraiser event promises to continue the dinner theater legacy by combining intrigue,

entertainment, and community engagement, making it a highlight of the year. Proceeds will go directly toward funding educational programs and initiatives, ensuring continued support for our schools.

**A Vision for the Future**

The DPS Foundation's impact is measured not only in dollars but in the tangible improvements seen across Dickinson schools. By 2025, the Foundation aims to broaden its reach, deepen its partnerships, and expand its programs to ensure every teacher and student has the tools they need to succeed.

For more information or to get involved, visit <https://dickinsonpsf.org/> or follow us on social media. Let's make 2025 a year to remember for our schools and students! ■

## AN IMPACTFUL YEAR



**Our Mission:**  
Provide private, financial support to enrich the quality of education in the Dickinson Public Schools.



Thank you, DPS Foundation donors, for your support! Serving as Director these past 21 years has been a true honor. Working with the school district, staff, community partners, and donors has been a blessing. I retired on July 31, 2024, to enjoy more time with my grandkids. We're excited to welcome Paula Williams as our new Director! We know she'll do an amazing job!

*-- Karen Heid, Outgoing Director of Development*

Grant Program	\$67,481
Scholarships	\$4,300
Sponsorships	\$2,530
Teacher Support	\$41,517



## Mystery Theatre Fundraiser

February 13, 14 & 15, 2025

# NEW

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## COMMUNITY

# A hidden gem in your garden

By LeAnn Stasiowski

The mallow plant, belonging to the genus *Malva*, is a highly nutritious herbaceous plant that often goes unnoticed in many gardens. It is found throughout the United States and despite being considered a weed by many, mallow offers a plethora of benefits, from culinary uses to medicinal properties.

Mallow is an annual herbaceous plant with leaves, stalks, and seeds that are all edible. The seeds are particularly nutritious, containing 21% protein and 15.2% fat. Leaves and young seeds can be eaten raw or cooked, while mature seeds should be cooked like rice or grains.

**Leaves and shoots:** These can be harvested and eaten, offering a mild, nutty flavor. Young leaves and shoots are great in salads, while older leaves are best cooked in hot dishes or sautéed with onions.

**Fruits:** The ripening fruit pods, harvested in late summer, can be used much like capers.

**Roots:** Mallow roots can be used as

an egg white substitute due to their thickening properties. After boiling and simmering, the water can be whisked to create soft mounds for meringues.

**Herbal Tea:** Dried leaves and flowers can be used to make a soothing herbal tea.

Mallow is a powerhouse of nutrients and medicinal properties. It is high in calcium, magnesium, potassium, zinc, iron, selenium, sodium, iodine, vitamin B complex, vitamin A, and vitamin C. Here are some of its notable benefits:

**Anthelmintic:** Expels parasites.

**Antibacterial:** Fights bacteria.

**Anti-inflammatory:** Contains salicylic acid.

**Astringent:** Tightens and tones tissues.

**Demulcent:** Creates a protective film on mucous membranes.

**Diuretic:** Increases urine flow.

**Laxative:** Promotes bowel movements.

**Emollient:** Softens skin.

**Expectorant:** Removes excess mucus.

With its high vitamin and mineral content, mallow is a hidden gem that can enhance both your diet and health. While

most mallows within the *Malva* genus have edible leaves, careful identification is necessary to avoid confusion with non-edible species. ■



Common mallow flower (Photo by Jean.claude on Wikimedia Commons)

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## My Golden Valentine

*Valentine's for Seniors*

Help us share the love!

Make your own card, buy an extra one, or just write a note to let them know they are thought of and matter.

**January 2nd - February 3rd**

Drop your cards off at the library.  
We will deliver them!

*Make Valentine's Day special for seniors in our area.*

Don't have card making supplies?  
Stop by one of our card making stations in the library.

**Last day to turn in cards is Feb. 3rd**

We will deliver the cards to Dickinson area nursing homes and assisted living facilities.

WHERE BUSINESS GOES TO GROW

# Start-up Your Day with networking

Of all the people in the world, you are one of them...

That line was hammered home by my advisor in Grad School. Part of his intention in saying this was to get a chuckle, but there was also a much deeper meaning. The understanding that we all have unique talents we can share with the world and those in your community. A reminder that we do not do this thing called life alone.

Networking is crucial for the growth and sustainability of small businesses. By building meaningful connections, small business owners can access new opportunities, resources, and support systems that are essential for success. Effective networking can help overcome some of the challenges small businesses face.

The Start-up Your Day event is a monthly opportunity for local small business owners and other stakeholders



to connect and network. Each Start-Up Your Day event will have a guest speaker who will share their challenges and successes with others who understand the struggles and joys of running a business, followed by a short Q & A discussion.

One key value of networking for small businesses is the ability to generate new leads and referrals. Word of mouth recommendations from trusted contacts can provide new streams of potential clients or customers. Attending local business groups can expand your reach and help you find new opportunities not accessible through traditional marketing alone.

Networking also provides access to knowledge and expertise. Connecting with other small business owners and mentors can provide valuable insights on best practices and strategies for overcoming common challenges. These relationships can foster collaborative problem solving and reduce the sense of isolation that often comes with running a small business.

Networking helps build a supportive community. Sharing experiences, challenges, and successes with like-minded business owners can lead to encouragement, motivation, and resilience. This support network can be instrumental in helping small business owners navigate challenging times and celebrate milestones along the way.

In short, networking is a powerful tool for small businesses to increase visibility, gain insights, forge partnerships, and build a community that drives long term success.

Start-Up Your Day is held on the third Thursday of each month from 8:00 to 9:00 AM, at the Stark County Veterans



Pavilion. Complimentary coffee and pastries are provided to all attendees.

Don't miss out on these opportunities to network and grow your business! Join us at our upcoming Start-Up Your Day events for small business owners, where you'll connect with like-minded entrepreneurs, share ideas, and open the door to new collaborations and growth opportunities. We look forward to seeing you there! ■

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## FINANCIAL FOCUS®

# You can put more into your 401(k) this year

Once you retire, you'll likely need to draw on a variety of financial sources — and one of the most important ones may be your 401(k). And for 2025, you can put even more money into your plan than ever.

You can invest in your 401(k) in one of two ways, depending on your employer's plan. With a traditional 401(k), you contribute pre-tax dollars, which can lower your taxable income, and your money can grow tax deferred. If you have a Roth 401(k) option, you can contribute after-tax dollars, which aren't deductible, but your eventual withdrawals will be tax-free if you've had your account at least five years and you're at least 59½.

For either a traditional or Roth 401(k), as well as similar plans such as a 457(b) (for government employees) or a 403(b) (for educators and employees of some nonprofit groups), the contribution limit has increased by \$500 for 2025, to \$23,500. If you're 50 or older, you can contribute an additional \$7,500, for a total of \$31,000. And under the SECURE 2.0 legislation, if you are between 60 and 63, you have a higher catch-up contribution — \$11,250, instead of \$7,500, for a total of \$34,750.

If you can afford to contribute the

full amount to your 401(k) or similar plan, consider doing so. Of course, not everyone is in that position. If you're a younger worker, you may well have other financial obligations, such as paying off student loans. And even if you've been in the workforce for a while, you may be putting away money for other things — such as your children's education — as well as your own retirement. But even if you can't "max out" on your 401(k), try to contribute at least enough to earn your employer's matching contribution, if one is offered.

Regardless of how much you contribute to your 401(k), consider these suggestions on managing the money within your plan:

- Create a portfolio that fits your risk tolerance. Most 401(k) plans offer up to a dozen investment options, while some plans offer many more. You obviously want to increase your 401(k) balance as much as possible, but that doesn't necessarily mean putting all your 401(k) dollars into the most aggressive funds available. Instead, consider spreading your 401(k) contributions among a range of investments, which can help you lower your risk level while still giving you opportunities for long-

term growth. Everyone's risk tolerance is different, though, so you'll want to evaluate yours when constructing your 401(k) portfolio.

- Adjust your portfolio as needed. It's a good idea to review your 401(k)'s investment mix at least once a year to see if it's performing as you'd hoped. But be patient — one "down" year doesn't necessarily mean you must make changes. However, as you approach retirement, you may want to lower the risk level of your 401(k) by moving some of your dollars into more conservative vehicles. Still, even when you're retired

and have started drawing money from your 401(k), you might want to keep some growth potential in it to help you stay ahead of inflation.

By contributing what you can afford to your 401(k), and by carefully managing the investments within your plan, you can help maximize the value of this powerful retirement savings vehicle — and give yourself a key asset to help you enjoy your retirement years.

*This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor, Marlene Bradbury. Edward Jones, Member SIPC ■*

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## LESSONS IN BUSINESS

# Strategies for handling conflict and standing your ground

By Debora Dragseth, Ph.D

Frank is angry. "Jim thinks he knows everything," Frank says. "If I have an opinion and I am brave enough to express it, he seems to delight in trashing my opinion in front of everyone in the room. As if that isn't bad enough, last month I had a terrific idea that I let slip to him in a private conversation. Guess what? A memo appeared in my boss's email outlining my plan with Jim's name all over it."

Do you know anyone who fits this profile, either as the perpetrator or the victim? Unfortunately, know-it-alls and credit grabbers are common in workplaces today.

Fearful employees under stress may compete for credit and glory. Often the victims allow themselves to be taken advantage of by not exercising their rights and, therefore, become doormats. There are ways to transform this

dysfunctional system.

Conflict is normal and to be expected in the workplace. But the manner in which it is handled is critical.

For example, when you are angry and in a conflict such as Frank's, are you taking responsibility for your part of the conflict, or are you simply lashing out? As the victim, have you stated your position, or have you covered under the guise of politeness?

Effective strategies need to be applied for conflict to be constructive. Try exercising the following tactics when dealing with a bully:

- Be assertive. Know your right to express yourself, to own your own ideas, and to work in a congenial environment.
- "Unhook" from the bully. When he claims to know everything or throws negativity your way, simply say, "hm," and walk away. This frees you from the situation and leaves him to find a new

victim or change his communication. Frank should use this technique when Jim denigrates him.

- Use the "fogging" tactic. Agree with some portion of what the attacker has said (there is usually a speck of truth in any statement). For example, if he says, "Your idea will never work; it costs too much," acknowledge part of his statement. You might respond, "You're right, this idea will cost some money."

- Recognize your anger. After being victimized, you may be tempted to move into attack mode, which is how most "bullies" get their start.

- Give honest notice to the person who has offended you.

- Relate your anger to the specific behavior, not the person.

- Use facts, not judgments.

- State clearly what you want.

Additional techniques can be applied in any situation:

- Don't lay blame.

- Make "I" statements (I feel..., I am..., etc.), rather than third-party statements such as "You...", or "they..."

- Don't fight to win; instead, make your objective finding a workable solution.

- Be honest and direct.



- Stay on one subject. Avoid dredging up the past.

- Admit (even to yourself) that you are a contributor to the conflict situation.

By practicing these skills, you can transform workplace conflict into an opportunity for growth and collaboration. If, after trying these techniques, Jim is still not willing to work in a more positive manner, Frank needs to recognize this and maintain a boundary. For example, he should avoid disclosing information in confidence and instead express his ideas to a group or direct supervisor.

*Debora Dragseth, Ph.D., is the Baker Boy Professor of Leadership and the 2024 Dickinson State University Distinguished Professor of the Year. Her monthly column offers practical solutions to common workplace issues. ■*

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## KUDOS

## Jennie Ellerkamp



"Blessed are they who see beautiful things in humble places where other people see nothing."

~ Camille Pissarro

Jennie Ellerkamp is a woman whose life beautifully reflects her faith, family, and heart for others. As a wife to Matt and mother of five, Jennie embraces the daily joys and challenges of raising a family with gratitude and grace. Growing up on a Minnesota farm as one of ten siblings, she learned early on the value of hard work and the joy of caring for others. These lessons have shaped every role she has taken on, from being a nurse to her most cherished vocations as a wife and mother.

Deeply rooted in her Catholic faith, Jennie finds her identity as a child of God, a truth that guides her life and allows her to treat every day and every relationship as a gift. Even amidst challenges like Matt's four-year battle with a brain tumor, Jennie's perspective has remained steadfast: the hardships have deepened her understanding of what truly matters. She prioritizes time for what's important, nurturing her family and others with kindness, empathy, and an unwavering sense of purpose.

As a nurse with over a decade of experience in women's health, Jennie's



Jennie Ellerkamp

passion for caring extends beyond her family. In her latest role at Aspire Chiropractic, she brings a holistic approach to patient care, meeting people in their pain and walking alongside them with compassion. This position is not typical in chiropractor practice, and she's trailblazing the opportunity to bring holistic, patient-centered, and innovative care to our community.

Her newest endeavor, Pregnancy Fitness, combines her 10-year history in women's health and Aspire's mission to promote wellness. This 8-week course will offer education on fitness and nutrition, plus access to Jennie's expertise for a healthy pregnancy. It is designed to not only avoid issues like gestational diabetes but also build endurance ahead of labor and delivery and gain confidence by strengthening mind, body, and spirit.

Jennie is a genuine, kind-hearted listener who understands the profound worth of every person. She approaches life with humility, joy, and a deep sense of gratitude. Her life is a testament to the power of faith and the beauty of living with purpose. ■

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*Vision West ND, Dickinson*

*West River Health Services Foundation, Hettinger*

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## COMMUNITY

# Couple awarded Dickinson Legion Post 3's top awards

For the first time, a married couple has been awarded top awards for Dickinson American Legion Post 3. Commander Alan Fehr was selected by the Post membership for the Distinguished Service Award and Post Communications Officer Kris Fehr was voted the Post Legionnaire of the Year. Alan Fehr received the highest tribute to a Legionnaire. It recognizes one who has been a Legion member for at least 25 years and consistently exhibited continuing leadership and excellence in Legion programs and administration. Alan served for 32 years in the Army and Navy and worked for the Air Force. He works as a clinical psychologist and has been involved with many community organizations. Kris Fehr served nearly six years in the ND National Guard and, as Post Communications Officer, records minutes of meetings, manages the Facebook page and email list and is the Post's liaison with many community organizations.

Also recognized for their contributions in 2024 are Melinda Faulhaber, who provided invaluable service during the year; Betty Krug, who assisted in arranging special presentations of the Quilts of Valor in Dickinson; Mel Steiner for stepping up at short notice and outstanding contributions to the



Kris and Alan Fehr

Post; and Gary Ladbury, who for seven years has presented Liberty Camp, a one week patriotic program for homeschool students. Heart River Voice and KDIX Radio were recognized for their respective publication of Post events that inform the public about activities of the local American Legion Post.

Post 3 nominated local broadcasters Rod Kleinjan and Jim Dahl, both from KDIX Radio, to the ND Legion Baseball Hall of Fame for their longtime dedication to local play-by-play broadcast of American Legion Baseball. Rod has been covering the team for 40 years and Jim has been covering Dickinson Legion Baseball games for 20 years. ■

## THE ARTS

# Audition call: "Into the Woods" - Full cast needed

The Badlands Opera Project is thrilled to announce auditions for its upcoming production of Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine's acclaimed musical *Into the Woods*. We are equally thrilled to have local son Anthony Rohr returning to Dickinson to direct the show! See below for more information on the production and how to audition. Most roles will be compensated.

**Audition Date:** January 18th (or submit an audition recording by midnight the same day)

**Location:** Academy of Dance, 103 8th Ave W, Dickinson, ND (Use the west entrance)

**Callbacks:** None. Roles will be announced the following week.

**Rehearsals Begin:** Virtual cast meeting on January 27th; virtual music coaching sessions in February (dates TBD). In-person staging begins March 1st.

**Performance Dates:** March 28th, 29th, 30th

### AUDITION REQUIREMENTS:

**Music:** Prepare 16-32 bars of two songs in contrasting styles. Selections from *Into the Woods* are not required but will be accepted. You must provide your own accompaniment. A Bluetooth speaker will be available for pre-recorded tracks.



**Monologue:** A one-minute monologue of your choice.

**Headshot & Resume:** Bring a current headshot and resume to the audition.

**Cold Read:** Be prepared to read a passage from the script at the audition.

See our website ([badlandsopera.org](http://badlandsopera.org)) for available roles/role descriptions.

### HOW TO AUDITION:

To express your interest, please send your headshot and resume to [anthonyrohr@gmail.com](mailto:anthonyrohr@gmail.com). A link to schedule your audition slot will be provided upon receipt.

We look forward to seeing you at the audition! ■

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## VOICING SOME THOUGHTS

# Mentors

By Nancy Hoff

Think about who has influenced you in your life, and who you may have influenced. It happens all the time; we don't always realize it.

Vessels – that is what we all are. To carry a message of hope and example. I admired my husband early on because he wouldn't take credit for any good he did. He always said, "It's not me – I am just the vessel." He now tells me his vessel is cracked in the back – but I know better...I've seen God's hand in his work.

As a 4th grader, I was shy and felt inadequate. My teacher, Mrs. Bares, pulled out abilities SHE thought I had. One summer, we exchanged letters on events, farm work, simple things. I gained confidence from that simple act of kindness.

As an adult, I found the most wonderful sponsor in AlAnon. Her quiet guidance and wry sense of humor helped me through many a tough time.

At a low time, I felt unemployable, an accountant gave me a chance when no one else did. The office manager was a firm teacher who taught me on a DOS program (yes, I am that old), but it equipped me with skills, and we won each other's respect.

Another supervisor was a gracious lady whose example honed our work efforts – the Christmas quilt she made for each of us workers is a generous reminder of what can be accomplished when you believe in someone. And my director expected our

best, but also recognized our best.

My son had wonderful day care providers – his first provider took pictures of each child for Mother's Day adding a caption, "I love you Mommy, yes I do. No other mommy is special as you." For a working mom who felt so much guilt, she will never know how much this meant to me.

The second provider cared for several preschoolers. She provided so many imaginative activities that shaped who they are. Her brother was a police officer whose appearance at the day care sparked my son's interest in law enforcement. Her enthusiasm in treating her charges has spilled out, in turn, to how my son has approached his career.

My hubby is an old time, avid hunter who watches the wind, studies habits of game. A cousin has been coming to deer hunt with him annually since he was six. He is now a young man and has the soul of an old hunter; truly loves the hunt.

I was touched and surprised myself when I made a condolence visit to a young lady whose husband had been tragically killed in a car accident. When I appeared at the door, the widow grabbed my hand and led me inside to meet her mother saying, "This is the woman who encouraged me to go to college." I never knew I had done anything – other than listen and support her dream.

I need to remember that everyone, EVERYONE, needs validation. Sometimes all it takes is a smile, a word of encouragement, an "atta boy". I don't do it often enough.

Thank you to all my cheerleaders and guideposts, too numerous to mention here. You made a difference! ■



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## The German Mercantile Company, Part 4

By Bob Fuhrman

The installation of Jerome Berns as manager of the German Mercantile Company (GMC) in 1911 provided some stability after a run of three managers in two years. Berns and his wife Anna seem to have integrated into the community very quickly, living in a second floor flat in the GMC building, Mrs. Berns clerking for the store as well. And Berns was a bit of a good Samaritan too – in August 1911 Mr. & Mrs. Daniel Decker who lived about seven miles south of Dickinson were in town for some shopping. Mr. Decker was in their buggy in front of the GMC and Mrs. Decker was just seating herself when something spooked their horses. Taking fright, the team broke lose and ran away, upsetting the buggy. Mrs. Decker was badly bruised and her husband broke both bones in one of his forearms. With the horses upset and the buggy badly damaged, Mr. Berns provided the battered couple with a ride home in his Ford.

Two months later in October, the Press reported “Many Special Sales Open In Dickinson,” in which residents were “promised a rare treat in merchandise bargains during the coming two or three weeks” as the Knapp Variety Store, the German Mercantile Co., Levy Bros. and Schwartz & Singer’s South Side Cash Store all were set to close out their seasonal stocks. The GMC’s full-page advertisement for the sale listed clothing bargains for men, women and children as well as home goods and staples. Running from October 21 to November 4 the sale aimed to dispose of \$15,413.78 worth of merchandise with all stock discounted. An additional incentive was free freight on items needing shipment. “This is no scheme for a little extra noise to clean up our shop and shelf-worn

goods. It means to close out all of our merchandise at a price which none of you can afford to miss.”

Though the advertisement also mentioned the sale being at “the advice of our creditors, who are hard after us for their money (and) we must sell at any price, at cost or less, if necessary, to meet their demand,” the notion of this being a sale of desperation seems somewhat hollow. Certainly, no hints of eminent failure exist in Press reporting prior to the sale and no staff changes, which one might expect in desperate circumstances, show up after the sale, even though the movement of retail staff from one store to another (or to greener pastures outside of Dickinson) was very common in the paper’s Local News column in this era. No, it seems that the GMC, like its competitors, was simply trying to unload seasonal stock to make way for new product and using a little old-fashioned retail panic to fuel the sale.

Early 1912 saw numerous reports of activities and events in the GMC’s Hall, further demonstrating the establishment’s importance to South Siders – January 27 saw a masquerade ball; February 13 the ladies of St. Joseph’s Church gave a dance; the next evening-Valentine’s Day-the Press reported four parties and dances in Dickinson, the largest being at the GMC where “400 or 500 people were gathered” for a basket social and dance. Then in March, the front page of the Press trumpeted, “BIG MEETING OF GERMANS ENDORSE L. A. SIMPSON,” the story reporting that over 300 attended a meeting of the “Germans of Stark County” on Tuesday, March 5, which ran from 8 PM to 1 AM, it being noted that the meeting was “called especially for German speaking

THE DICKINSON PRESS, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 1909.

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**German Mercantile Company Advertisement Dickinson Press, October 21, 1911**

Continued, next page



Continued from page 16

<b>F A I R</b>	<p>The Sisters' fair is to be the event of the coming week and will rank in the first row in the line of social affairs this season.</p> <p>The Sisters' and their friends have arranged for a magnificent entertainment and have a line of fancy and practical goods that will please every person who attends the bazar at the German Mercantile hall on Sunday, Monday and Tuesday, November, 22-23-24.</p>
<p>Sisters' Fair advertisement, November 21, 1908 Dickinson Press</p>	

people regardless of political faith." Several candidates spoke at the meeting and straw polls (some close) were held with popular State Senator Simpson the only one endorsed by acclamation (he would retain his seat). It was also noted that Fred Maser, candidate for probate judge, addressed the crowd in their native tongue which was well received.

Though the Press' coverage of the GMC was sparse for the balance of 1912, notable among the events hosted at the GMC hall was the farewell luncheon held for Father Groetschel who ended his two-year pastorate at St. Joseph's, serenaded by the school band he had organized and by the girls' choir before leaving for a Winnipeg monastery. Also beginning to appear from time to time were notices of Jerome Berns singing at various functions including funerals, weddings and in at least two local plays (Berns also was a violinist and would become a member of the new Dickinson Symphony Orchestra formed in early 1917).

In April 1913 it was announced that a man by the name of Martin Schiller had purchased barbershop fixtures from L.P. Gagnon and installed them in the GMC building's corner room, along with a pool room. Schiller had recently been elected 6th Ward alderman (this was before the Commission form of government) and it was noted that "barbering is no new business for him." That same month the Press also noted that "J.W. Berns has put

in a general stock of merchandise in the German Mercantile Co. store which he is conducting for himself.

This last development signaled a major shift in the saga of the German Mercantile Company – a week after the item reporting Berns was conducting the store for himself, it was reported the GMC's case against those original stockholders who gave notes for the purchase of their shares and then reneged on the notes "was due for another whirl in the supreme court." Specifically, the case against John Wanner was heard at the Court's April term and the Court upheld a lower court ruling that Wanner's promissory note could not be

collected – for those who like legalese, we offer this from the North Dakota Supreme Court:

Appellant's answer admits the execution of the note, denies that it was given for a valuable consideration, and alleges that he made the note on the day of its date and delivered it, and in return therefor plaintiff delivered him 20 shares of its capital stock, and the form of the certificate is set out; that this was the only consideration for the note; that he was not a subscriber to the capital stock or to any stock of plaintiff corporation; that no part of said 20 shares were shares of stock owned or held by plaintiff from its surplus profits, or which had been

purchased by it from its surplus profits, and no part thereof was held, issued, or sold by plaintiff by the unanimous consent of all its stockholders in writing, or had been forfeited or sold by plaintiff for nonpayment of assessments; that the transfer of such stock to defendant, in return for said promissory note, is prohibited by the Constitution and statutes, and was unlawful and void; that on the 5th of December, 1908, he learned that the transaction was void and unlawful, and immediately tendered back to plaintiff the certificate of stock described, and demanded of plaintiff the return of the note sued upon; that plaintiff refused to accept the said certificate or to return the note...

With the promissory note issue laid to rest the GMC was sparsely mentioned in the Press for quite some time, the most notable item before 1914 being a report that Rosh Hashanah services were held in the GMC hall in October and attracted members of the Jewish faith "from as far west as Glendive, (and) from Richardton, Hebron, Flasher, New England and other places," this being the first of several mentions of such gatherings over the next few years.

Then, in February 1914, important news concerning the GMC came not from our local paper but from the Ward County Independent which carried a notice of cancelled corporations from North Dakota Secretary of State Thomas Hall. Included on the list of corporations "whose Certificates of Authority have been cancelled and the right to transact business thereby forfeited by reason of their failure to submit annual report in compliance with Chapter eleven, Section 4186 of the Revised Codes of 1905" was the German Mercantile Company. In terms of following the GMC through newspapers, this notice is somewhat shocking to us today as no hint of the GMC's demise had been broadcast or even hinted at via the Press, nor would the specific news about the cancellation ever find its way into this paper, though we will be unable to confirm if it ever appeared in the Press' local rival, the Recorder-Post, until such time as we can search that publication on microfilm at the North Dakota Heritage Center's Archives.

Next Month – Part 5 ■





## Rus Kiser and Ladybug

Few would guess that Rus Kiser grew up as a country boy. Raised on an 80-acre hobby farm just north of Oklahoma City, near the small town of Arcadia, his life was filled with rural southern charm and adventure. The farm was home to a collection of animals—sheep, cows, horses, pigs, and an impressive 3,000 show chickens. Nearby, his great-grandfather's land held a rich history. Acquired during the 1889 land run, the old property still had the original foundation and cellar, a place Rus would explore and imagine as his secret fort.

Rus's school life was equally unique. He attended elementary in Arcadia, where his grandfather served as the principal, and his mother taught at another institution. Each day he would arrive early, before his classmates were there, with his grandfather, often sitting in on teachers' meetings. In his small school, Rus was one of only a few white children in a community that was predominantly black and Native American. Arcadia, born from the history of sundown rules and segregation, held a vibrant culture of resilience and community, something Rus embraced from an early age.

After school, is where Rus's adventures began. His mother and grandfather would meet halfway between their respective schools to exchange cars, and Rus would head back to the farm with Grandpa. His days were filled with the freedom to explore and imagine. His range to do so grew significantly after he got his first horse.

At just five or six years old, he was given a red Welsh pony named Ladybug, a spirited little horse all his own. With Ladybug, Rus roamed the vast acres, exploring creeks, valleys, and cross timbers, his trusty Daisy BB gun always by his side. While his grandpa tended to the animals, his afternoons and early evenings were spent with Ladybug, fighting off the enemies in his fort or navigating the deep woods in search of the next great voyage.

One of his most vivid memories of Ladybug came one day in fourth grade. While out on a ride, something spooked her, and she threw him, sending him twenty feet down into a muddy creek. Rus was unharmed, but the event would be one of his last with Ladybug. As she grew older, Ladybug became more skittish, and his family, concerned for his safety, reluctantly decided to part with her.

Not long after, Rus moved to town, and his days of riding faded into memories. But the joy, adventure, and wide-open spaces of his early years remained with him—a young boy and his red pony, bound by freedom and the wild, open land of Oklahoma.

## My First Horse

By Dr. Holly Gruhlke



First horses are not only a good source of fun for their riders, but can also provide some really great life lessons. This type of education, learned in a pasture, on a prairie, or in an arena, can last forever, and serve as a mechanism for building grit and tenacity.



Holly and Butterscotch

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**COMMUNITY**

**Connect Medical Clinic:  
 At your cervix**



Ladies, let's talk about your cervix—a small but mighty organ that often doesn't get the spotlight it deserves. This donut-shaped gatekeeper sits at the base of the uterus, playing a pivotal role in everything from menstrual cycles to childbirth.

Here are some fascinating and helpful facts about the cervix:

**1. The Bouncer of the Body:** The cervix acts like a bouncer for your uterus. It decides what gets in (like sperm during ovulation) and keeps unwanted things out (like bacteria or infections).

**2. Cervical Mucus Magic:** Cervical mucus changes throughout the menstrual cycle. It becomes slippery and stretchy (like egg whites) during ovulation to help sperm swim toward an egg, but turns thick and sticky to block sperm at other times.

**3. Shape-Shifter:** During labor, the cervix dilates up to 10 centimeters to allow a baby to pass through, but most of the time, it's a tiny opening about the size of a pencil tip.

**4. Cervical Self-Cleaning:** The cervix helps the vagina stay clean by producing mucus that naturally flushes out bacteria and dead cells.

**5. Unique Fingerprint:** Every cervix has a unique texture and feel, much like a fingerprint. This is one reason why midwives and gynecologists can recognize changes in the cervix over time.

**6. A Silent Sentinel:** The cervix holds a baby in place during

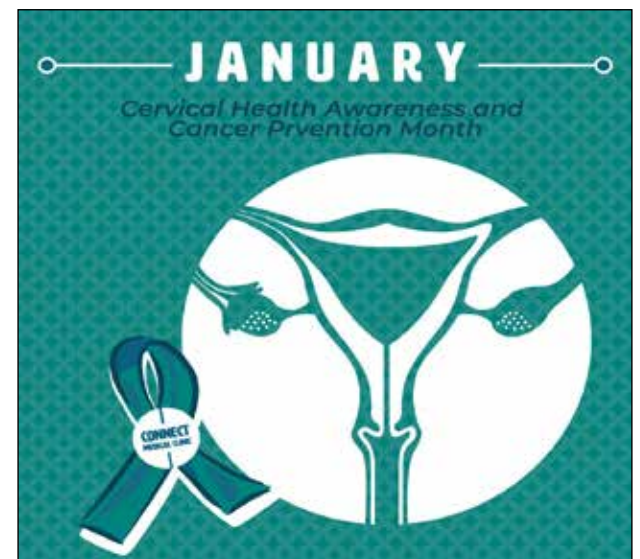
pregnancy and only "unlocks" when it's time for delivery, making it a key player in childbirth.

**7. Cervical Stamina:** The cervix can endure a lot! It's designed to stretch and recover after childbirth, often returning to its pre-pregnancy size and shape.

**8. Super Sniffer:** Cervical mucus is affected by your body's hormones and can even "choose" the healthiest sperm by creating a more navigable environment for them.

The cervix is fascinating and full of surprises, playing vital roles in your overall health and fertility! We invite you to show your cervix gratitude by making your Annual Wellness and PAP Exam Appointment with our providers, Dr. Arnold and Rachael Marshall, FNP-C, today!

January is Cervical Cancer Awareness and Cervical Health Month. Cervical Cancer is considered highly preventable; let our Medical Care Team help you Connect With Your Cervical Health! ■



## TOIVOA

## Drive

By Michelle Massie

Dear Readers,

I am excited to have the opportunity next month to work together with Woman Empowering Woman to pilot an educational support program for moms-to-be on postpartum depression, called ROSE. That being said, I have chosen an “oldie but goodie” on the messiness of motherhood, named “DRIVE”. Read on,

I remember it vividly. The friends and I planned a girl’s weekend, a few hours away. And, I was the first time, trying to keep it all together mom, who contemplated bringing baby or not. At the time, I pictured what this ladies’ weekend, would be. Unlimited amounts of coffee, diet soda, giggles, good food, and shopping.

I sat and pondered. I asked other friends and prayed. I even asked a mentor, (my friends mom) and I remember her advice, “if you chose to not bring him, then trust it- and leave all of him at home.”

The choice was made. I was going on a friend’s trip, wild and free- with no baby. The pros outweighed the cons. And, that is what I did. I laughed and giggled



and enjoyed life as a single woman for a night. It was everything I had wished for. Amazing dining with no child to bounce as I ate. I found some clearance clothes, for my postpartum trying to love body. It was a night that turned into an early morning, with deep, just-what-I-needed sisterhood talks.

Until we were on the way home. It was raining hard, and I was not driving. With a couple hours left of a drive, I called home. There I heard my husband’s, overwhelming voice- and a screaming baby in the background. He was done. My sweet baby was done. And I- well I was a couple hours from home.

I started to panic. The guilt, the shame, the sadness, the wanting to rescue my two men at home, filled my mind. My heart pounded as the rain pelted the windshield

of the slowly driving forward car. This feeling of “What kind of mom would leave her baby” shame, started eating me from the inside out.

A friend noticed that I had no blood in my face, and the wild and free self, was now poorly attempting to take deep breaths and think happy thoughts. I gently tried to whisper to her what was going on at home. I knew I couldn’t ruin the car’s mood of laughter and blaring REO Speedwagon.

I just knew that “it was time for me to fly” (like REO sings it) home. I knew that the car I was in, was no speedwagon- and I needed it to go, faster. I needed to drive. I needed to hold my sweet boy, and whisper to him that he was okay, and sometimes Dad’s get overwhelmed.

So, I offered to drive. The friend driver declined. Which then lead me to playing shame stories in my head, of an abandoned baby boy, and his ridiculously selfish childish mother. Mile by mile, the stories grew. The rain continued. Until, we finally pulled into my driveway and I grabbed my clearance bags of clothes and ran into our home like I was preparing for the 100-meter dash in middle school track.

Today, I can’t remember what I opened the door to. For the life of me, I can’t say if my sweet boy was crying

or smiling, and if his dad was doing the same.

But I can reflect on what its like to let go as a mom. That sweet boy is now 24 years old, and he has a younger brother and sister. Truth is, that feeling, of not being able to leave my kids- has stayed with me. That feeling of, trying to protect my babies (that are now all adults), from relationship ups and downs, has taken its toll.

And, that feeling of being an unmet, selfish, guilt and shame ridden mother- well, she’s still there.

At times, I need to remind myself, that my kids do not need the perfect life. They do not need a mom that will never leave and will never trust anyone to watch her kids, or focuses on all the dark areas of her parenting.

But what they do need, is love and support- from all avenues. From moms, and dads, and family and neighbors. From community. Imperfect love. Overwhelming love. Not trying to rescue or control or save love. A, we are all in this together- and everyone needs a little help sometime, Love.

Until next time momma’s, drive on. Turn the music up and love on imperfectly,

XO, Michelle ■

## Call for artists

Attention North Dakota Artists! Showcase your talent on the cover of Heart River Voice! We’re seeking diverse artists to feature and celebrate the rich artistic talent of North Dakota.

**Submission Guidelines:**

- Submit your colorful artwork!
- Include a brief (300 words or less) bio highlighting your artistic journey.
- Send high-resolution images of your artwork and/or you, your family, you creating, etc.

**Deadline:** Anytime, but the 1st of each month would be best.

Selected artists will not only grace our cover but also receive exposure to our wide readership. Let’s paint a vibrant picture of North Dakota’s creativity! Submit your entries to [kelly@thejileks.com](mailto:kelly@thejileks.com) and be part of this exciting showcase. ■

Dunn County Historical Museum  
Dunn Center

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[dunncountymuseum.org](http://dunncountymuseum.org)  
701-548-8111



**A program for maternal mental health**  
REACH OUT, STAY STRONG, ESSENTIAL

**Expecting a baby?**  
Join us in the ROSE Program—a supportive, empowering maternal mental health program designed especially for moms in their 2nd and 3rd trimesters!

**Join us!**  
CHILDCARE AND LIGHT REFRESHMENTS PROVIDED  
SPANISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE  
Scan for upcoming session dates and registration information. >>>  
wewnetwork.org/RoseProgram

Hosted at **BACKYARD** play café  
located inside Prairie Hills Mall  
1681 3rd Ave W Ste 54, Dickinson, ND

COMMUNITY

# New ROSE program offered

Ariel Gore once said, “When you study postpartum depression there is a very clear understanding that in communities where you see more support, there is less depression.”

That being said, Women Empowering Women along with the help of the Department of Health, is starting a new supportive program for expectant moms! The ROSE Program will start in January 2025 in Dickinson.

The ROSE (Reach Out Stay Strong Essentials) is an evidence-based program that was developed by Dr. Caron Zlotnick at the Women and Infants Hospital of Rhode Island and is now considered a recommended practice by the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force. The goal for the Rose program is to prevent postpartum depression by identifying women at risk and providing them with tools to manage motherhood and challenges.

ROSE is designed specifically for moms in their second and third trimesters. Michelle Massie, registered

nurse and mom of three is the ROSE program Educator. She, along with the help of the Women Empowering Women Lay Health Ambassadors (Jana, Alondra, and Monica) is here to support moms-to-be on this sensitive topic. The space is crafted to help expectant moms navigate the emotional journey of pregnancy through interactive workshops, group discussions and personalized guidance. Expectant moms will learn new ways to manage stress, boost mental wellness and connect with other moms-to-be.

Whether looking to share experiences, build confidence, or find a community that understands, the ROSE program is here to support you! Sessions start the end of January and will be held every Tuesday for 6 weeks at the Backyard Play Café. Childcare and refreshments are provided. Sessions are limited to 12 participants. Reach out for more information or to check eligibility and sign up for this FREE learning at wewnetwork.org/

RoseProgram. Spanish translation will be available.

*ROSE is a program of Women Empowering Women, a local nonprofit organization dedicated to responding to the needs of women and helping them become the best versions of themselves. To learn more, visit wewnetwork.org* ■



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# Calendar

SEND YOUR EVENTS TO [EDITOR@HEARTRIVERVOICE.COM](mailto:EDITOR@HEARTRIVERVOICE.COM) OR VISIT US ONLINE AT [HEARTRIVERVOICE.COM](http://HEARTRIVERVOICE.COM)

**Dickinson**  
AREA PUBLIC LIBRARY

## Winter READING Program

JANUARY 1ST - MARCH 1ST

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TO ALL AGES!

Read Books!  
Win Prizes!

SIGN-UP FOR THE READING PROGRAM AT:  
[HTTPS://DICKINSONLIBRARY.BEANSTACK.ORG](https://dickinsonlibrary.beanstack.org)

it is the start of their Winter Reading Program! The program starts January 1st. Get signed up on Beanstack to track your reading or activities. Stop by the library or call us for help with the process. If you've already created a Beanstack account for previous challenges, all you need to do is join the challenge. See their article on page 4 for more information. Visit [dickinsonlibrary.org](http://dickinsonlibrary.org) for up-to-date information.

**DUNN COUNTY MUSEUM WINTER SCHEDULE**  
Open Sundays 1PM to 5PM. Other days/times by appointment. More info, see ad, page 20, or [dunncountymuseum.org](http://dunncountymuseum.org). 701-548-8111. Dunn

County Museum, Dunn Center

**SATURDAY JANUARY 11**  
**COFFEE WITH THE LEGISLATORS** 10AM Join the Dickinson Chamber of Commerce to hear updates from Districts 36, 37 and 39. Dickinson Public Library Community Room.

**WEDNESDAY JANUARY 15**  
**LAND & LIVESTOCK FORUM** 9:30AM The Diversity Direction and Dollars (DDD) will take place in the morning and early afternoon featuring a great line-up of speakers and topics. While the Ag Livestock Forum will begin at roughly 4 PM with their speakers. Registration \$30 at the door. Biesiot Activities Center.

**THURSDAY JANUARY 16**  
**START UP YOUR DAY** 8AM This event offers opportunities for current and aspiring entrepreneurs and our area's entrepreneurial resources to come together to network. See ad, page 21, for more information. Stark County Veterans Pavilion.

## Land & Livestock Forum

Advancing Agriculture in Southwest North Dakota



**Wednesday, January 15, 2025**

9:30 am MST

Registration - \$30 at the door

Biesiot Activities Center

Dickinson State University, Dickinson, ND

**ONGOING IN JANUARY**  
DICKINSON AREA PUBLIC LIBRARY January is a

planning month for the library, so there won't be any storytimes or regular programs during the month. However,

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RESOURCE CENTER

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**Winterfest**

Sat 1/18/25 1681 3rd Ave W, Dickinson, ND Prairie Hills Mall

Event Schedule:  
9:00 am-4:00 pm  
Carnival Games/Food/ Silent Auction/Shop Local Vendors  
9:00 am - 3:00 pm Classes

9:00 am - Abstract Art Class  
10:30 am - Personal Growth  
10:30 am - Teddy Bear Party - Kids 0-7 and their siblings.  
12:00 pm - Puzzle Pazoala  
1:30 pm - Cake Decorating Class \*Fee Required  
1:30 pm - Valentine Family Art Craft \* Fee Required  
3:00 pm - Fit For Duty: Do Less Accomplish More  
3:00 pm - Bead Snowflake Craft

Classes Require Pre-Registration. Go to: CLASSES |  
Winterfest (winterfestnd.com) (Course Descriptions here too)

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and Visitors Bureau  
Fee Doubles Day at Entry

**JANUARY 16 AND 23  
POSTPARTUM DEPRES-  
SION** 10AM January 16 0-6  
mos/January 23 7-12 mos. See  
ad, page 7, for more info. Join  
Women Empowering Women  
at Backyard Play Cafe (located  
inside Prairie Hills Mall)

**SATURDAY JANUARY 18  
AUDITIONS FOR INTO  
THE WOODS** See article,  
page 14, for more information!

**6TH ANNUAL WINTER-  
FEST** 9AM-4PM Beat the  
cold with this annual indoor  
family fun event. Attend class-

es, shop local vendors, and let  
your kids enjoy carnival activ-  
ities by donation. See article,  
page 6, and ad, next page, for  
more info. Old White Drug  
building in Prairie Hills Mall.

**JANUARY 24-26  
TRINITY CATHOLIC  
SCHOOLS MARDI GRAS**  
A weekend of fun for the en-  
tire family! See ad, back cover,  
for all of the information!

**JANUARY 30 AND FEB 6  
TUMMY TIME: MENTAL  
HEALTH** 10AM January 30  
0-6 mos/Feb 6 7-12 mos. See

ad, page 7, for more info. Join  
Women Empowering Women  
at Backyard Play Cafe (located  
inside Prairie Hills Mall)

**SAVE THE DATE**

**THURSDAY FEBRUARY 13  
GIVING HEARTS DAY** See  
ad, page 13, for more informa-  
tion on participating entities  
and how you can give!

**TUESDAY FEBRUARY 18  
STARK DEVELOPMENT  
CORPORATION ANNU-  
AL MEETING** See ad, page  
7, for more information.



## COMMUNITY

## Oratorical Scholarship Program Contest winner

A Hope Christian Academy high school student is the winner of both the Dickinson Legion Post 3 and the District 8 American Legion Oratorical Scholarship Program Contests.

Christina Dohrman of Taylor won the district contest held on the Dickinson State University Campus. She was sponsored by American Legion Post 3 in Dickinson.

Christina earned scholarship funds and will now compete in the Western Division contest, competing with winners of contests in other communities in western North Dakota.

The Winner and Runner-up in both the East and West Division Contests will advance to the State Contest Finals during the American Legion Winter Conference at 1:30 p.m., Saturday, January 27, in Minot, ND.

Contestants were required give two speeches at the District Contest: a prepared speech and a topic assigned at the contest. The subject in the prepared oration portion of the contest must be about some phase of the Constitution of the United States, emphasizing the duties and obligations of a citizen to the U. S. government. The prepared oration must be the original effort of each contestant and must be 8-10 minutes in length.

Besides the prepared oration, each contestant delivered an oration on



Christina receiving her medal at the District 8 Oratorical Contest from Legionnaire David Del Padre

a randomly assigned constitutional topic. Contestants had 5 minutes to prepare this speech, which must be 3-5 minutes long.

Since 1938, The American Legion High School Oratorical Scholarship Program has encouraged the nation's high school students to study the U.S. Constitution and to hone their public speaking skills.

For more information, please visit [legion.org/oratorical](http://legion.org/oratorical). ■

## PAWSITIVELY POPPY

## New Year's Resolutions

By Miranda Kuhn

This time of year, everyone has renewed convictions for things like eating healthy, exercising more, detoxing from bad habits, and starting new regimens. I personally have never been very successful at my New Year's resolutions, and it feels like a letdown every time I set a goal for myself that inevitably ends up in the trash can of hopes and dreams. This year I think I'm going to try something different. Instead of trying to change something about myself or my lifestyle, I'm going to try to choose something each day to be thankful for or to just notice and appreciate. We seldom slow down to enjoy the simple things like the aroma of good coffee as it brews or the feeling of the sun on our faces (even if we also feel the sting of the cold wind at the same time). I've had just about enough of trying to find things about myself and my life that I don't like and want to change and I'm ready to instead find little things that bring

me joy and appreciate the many perfect little moments that come along in my day to day life. One of those little moments I enjoy most is the feeling of Poppy's wet nose on my arm as she tries to get my attention (or steal whatever I'm eating). I used to get so annoyed by the wet nose, until I realized that one day she won't be so spry, and that wet nose will come along less frequently. So this year, rather than setting lofty goals for ourselves let's spend the next 365 days appreciating the people, pets, and moments that make life worth living. Happy New Year! ■



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## Ask Alfie

Dear Alfie,

I recently saw the sad story about a stray cat in our community being found with a peanut butter jar stuck on his head. Luckily, the poor thing was able to be rescued before it was too late. But it got me thinking - are there things we should be doing to prevent this from happening?

Sincerely, Concerned

Dear Concerned,

Thank you for bringing up this topic, as there are many ways in which we can each be more responsible with our trash! Even if you live in an area where you think there are no stray cats or wildlife who have access to your garbage, it is important to understand that it can happen at any time. Ultimately, your trash will end up in a landfill or dump, which are areas that are frequently visited by animals scavenging for food scraps. For this

reason, we must all treat our trash as though animals could access it at any time.

Before tossing any type of food jar (especially those from peanut butter, mayonnaise, or foods that may smell enticing to small animals such as cats) it is important to tightly secure the lid onto the jar. This will help prevent animals from getting their heads stuck inside. The same caution should be used when discarding cans from any type of food. Before tossing, pinch the sides of your cans, so that it is impossible for an animal to get its head inside. If the material of your can feels difficult to pinch, place one side on the edge of a surface such as your counter or the rim of your trash can, and press down.

Larger plastic containers from things like cottage cheese, sour cream, or yogurt smell very enticing to animals. Unfortunately, lids from containers like these aren't likely to stay on, so the safest way to discard is to cut a slit along one side, preventing an animal's head from becoming stuck. Precautions

such as these take only a moment, but can literally be the determining factor between life or death for an animal.

Other considerations to make with regard to trash include cutting plastic rings (like those found on a six-pack of soda) to prevent wildlife from becoming tangled, and disposing of toxic chemicals in tightly sealed containers. This is especially true when discarding rodent poison: just because you have thrown it in your trash bin does not mean that neighboring dogs, cats, or wildlife will not ingest it. Keep poisons in a tightly sealed container. The safest thing to do with these substances is to contact your local government and ask about hazardous waste collection.



If we all do our part, we can help prevent tragedy! Thank you for caring!  
Sincerely, Alfie ■

Have a question for Alfie?  
Email [askalfiecat@gmail.com](mailto:askalfiecat@gmail.com)



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## CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

# Dickinson Area Chamber of Commerce launches National Civics Bee

The Dickinson Area Chamber of Commerce proudly announces the launch of the 2025 National Civics Bee, an initiative aimed at encouraging more young Americans to engage in civics and contribute to their communities. Hosted in partnership with The Civic Trust of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, the competition in Dickinson will inspire middle schoolers to become better informed about American democracy, to engage respectfully and constructively in the community, and to build greater trust in others and institutions.

Students in 6th, 7th, and 8th grade are invited to take part in the first-round civics essay competition. After a distinguished panel of judges review the essays, the top students will be selected to advance to their

local competition: an in-person live event featuring two rounds of civics questions followed by a Q&A round to test their civics knowledge. The Dickinson Area Chamber will partner with Dickinson State University to host its local competition, tentatively March 18th, 2025. The local finalists and top winners will receive various prizes, including prizes worth at least \$500 for the first-place student.

The competition enables students to explore issues that matter to their communities, furthering their understanding of civic engagement and fostering responsible citizenship. Winners from each of the local competitions across North Dakota will be invited to take part in the state finals. The first-place winner of the state finals will receive a trip to Washington, D.C. to compete for prizes worth at least \$50,000 during the national championship in the Fall of 2025.

“Fostering a deep understanding of civics and government among our young

students is critical to the vibrancy of democracy and civic life in America. The National Civics Bee provides a unique platform for them to not only showcase their knowledge but also become active and engaged citizens of the future,” said Hilary Crow, vice president of civics at the U.S. Chamber Foundation.

### About National Civics Bee

The National Civics Bee, a program of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce

Foundation’s The Civic Trust, is an annual nonpartisan competition aimed at improving civics education and literacy among middle school students, their families, and communities. The National Civics Bee helps elevate civics as a national priority through a network of state and local chambers across the country.

The National Civics Bee is made possible through the generous support of its founding partner, the Daniels Fund, Citizen Travelers, and other funders.

“With the potential to host a future state competition at the new Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library, we believe that the time is right to elevate Civics Education while honoring our best and brightest middle school students. We are eager to launch our first Middle School Civics Bee, with confidence that the event will grow locally and statewide in the years to come,” said Carter Fong, Executive Director of the Dickinson Area Chamber of Commerce. Fong, a former Social Studies instructor, will serve as the emcee at the 2025 state competition.

For more information on the National Civics Bee, visit [www.nationalcivicsbee.org](http://www.nationalcivicsbee.org) or contact Dickinson Area Chamber Executive Director Carter Fong [carter@dickinsonchamber.org](mailto:carter@dickinsonchamber.org). ■



# Heart River VOICE

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Country Kitchen  
Convention and Visitors Bureau  
Dickinson Museum Center  
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Rosie's Food & Gas  
DePorres House of Barbering and Lounge  
Dickinson Area Public Library  
The Clean Home Shop  
Fresh Sips  
Family Fare - West  
Players Sports Bar & Grill  
Stark Development Corporation  
Dickinson City Hall  
Holiday Inn Express  
TownPlace Suites  
Microtel Inn & Suites  
AmericInn  
Connect Medical Clinic  
Frankie's West Side Shell

Villard Cenex  
West River  
Community Center  
Edgewood Hawks Point  
The Hub  
Fluffy Fields  
Ukrainian Cultural Institute

## SOUTH HEART

Heart Country Gas Station

## RICHARDTON

Suzy's Stash  
The Country Drug Store  
Pharmacy

## HEBRON

Bassackward Studios  
Hebron Public Library

## BELFIELD

Trappers Kettle

## MEDORA

Chateau de Mores  
Roughriders Hotel  
AmericInn

## BISMARCK

Bismarck Art & Galleries  
Assoc.

## DUNN CENTER

Dunn County Historical  
Museum

## TRUE NORTH

# Floyd Hurt – A South Heart Gem

By LeAnn Stasiowski



Floyd and Muriel Hurt

For 22 years, Floyd Hurt led South Heart with determination and an unwavering commitment to the community's future. His leadership was highlighted by management of day-to-day operations and creating a lasting foundation that would benefit the town for generations.

Brock White, who joined the South Heart City Council in June 2020, immediately recognized Floyd's deep knowledge of the town. "I was struck by Floyd's incredible memory and his understanding of every corner of South Heart," White said. "He knew the status of our infrastructure down to the last detail—whether it was the lift station pumps or how much water we were drawing from Southwest Water that week. Floyd's hands-on leadership was rare, and his focus was always on ensuring that South Heart ran smoothly."

For White, it wasn't just Floyd's technical expertise that stood out, it was his dedication. "When you don't have public works employees like larger towns, the responsibilities fall on elected officials," White explained. "Floyd made sure everything functioned seamlessly, so residents never had to worry about service interruptions. His commitment was about making sure life in South Heart never skipped a beat."

One of the key lessons White learned from Floyd was the importance of proactive leadership. Floyd's approach was always forward-thinking, focused on issues that might not arise immediately

but would need attention down the road. "One of my favorite quotes sums it up perfectly," White said, quoting the proverb: "A society grows great when old men plant trees in whose shade they shall never sit." Floyd embodied that. He always asked, 'How do we improve things for the next generation, the next city council?' He understood that the benefits of today's work wouldn't be seen for decades—but that's the point."

Floyd's impact is particularly evident in the park he and his wife, alongside Ernie Bergquist, donated land for on the south side of town. The park, now named Floyd Hurt Park, is a reminder of his love for the town. "Floyd always gave back to the city in every way he could --I witnessed this for 22 years," said Muriel Hurt. [The couple will be celebrating their 67th anniversary in January.]

In July 2024, White was sworn in as South Heart's new mayor, stepping into the role Floyd held for over two decades. Reflecting on the future, White draws on the lessons he learned from Floyd. "Floyd always emphasized being proactive," White said. "He would address potential issues before they became problems—like aging sewer lines or infrastructure needs. Tackling them early saves money and avoids costly emergencies later on."

Looking forward, White envisions continued, sustainable growth for South Heart. "We won't ever be a large town, but if we continue to grow at a steady pace, adding 10 to 20 new homes each decade, that's a success," White said. "We've got a great K-12 school, safe neighborhoods, and a community people are proud to be a part of. Pheasant Country Golf Course is another asset that brings visitors to the area and highlights everything South Heart has to offer. These are all things that Floyd and past leaders worked toward, and we're building on that foundation."

As South Heart moves forward, Floyd's influence remains ever-present. "Floyd gave so much to this town," White said. "Now, it's up to us to carry that legacy forward. We'll continue planting those figurative and literal trees, so future generations can enjoy the shade of what Floyd and others built."

From the park to the trees along the road, Floyd's impact is evident throughout



Brock White and Floyd Hurt

the town. As White takes on the mayoral role he plans to continue the work that Floyd and others started, ensuring South Heart remains a place where community and growth thrive together.

### A Statement from Floyd Hurt

"When I was elected to the South Heart City Council, I had the privilege of working with Andy Kuylen, a great mentor who taught me how things should be done for the city. Andy and his wife, Mert, inspired me to start planting trees and cared for them alongside other council members, weeding and watering to help them grow.

When Andy retired, I was fortunate to have Quain Kudrna step into his role. Quain took up the task and later joined me in planting trees. Together, we continued that effort.

During my time as mayor, I was incredibly fortunate to work with council

members who were so willing to step up --Bringing fresh ideas and energy to carry out whatever needed to be tackled. I also want to thank Renee Praus, our outstanding city auditor, whose diligence kept us on track and ensured the city's operations ran smoothly.

To all the council members who served alongside me, I deeply appreciate your commitment to making our South Heart operations successful and efficient.

I feel very confident that Brock White and his Council will continue to keep South Heart up to date and in excellent condition.

Finally, to the people of South Heart and the surrounding area, thank you for your help and support over the years. It has been a privilege to work alongside such dedicated individuals, and I am proud of what we've accomplished together." ■



## HEALTH

# Seasonal Affective Disorder

By Steve Irsfeld



SAD is a type of depression that occurs during certain times of the year. Most often, people experience it in the fall and winter months when the days become shorter and there is less natural sunlight. SAD can affect anyone, but it is more common in those who live in areas far from the equator, like North Dakota, where daylight hours are more drastically reduced during winter. Understanding the background of this disorder and its signs and symptoms can help those affected find relief and manage their condition.

The exact causes of SAD are not fully understood, but scientists believe it is

linked to changes in sunlight exposure. During the fall and winter months, reduced sunlight can disrupt the body's internal clock, also known as the circadian rhythm. This disruption can lead to fatigue, sadness, and a lack of motivation.

Another factor is the brain chemical serotonin, which helps regulate mood. Reduced sunlight may cause a drop in serotonin levels, contributing to feelings of depression. Additionally, the change in light can affect the body's production of melatonin, a hormone that helps regulate sleep. Increased melatonin levels during the darker months can make people feel sluggish and tired.

Symptoms can range from mild to severe, interfering with daily life and relationships. While many of the symptoms overlap with those of major depression, they are linked to a specific time of the year. Common symptoms include:

- People with SAD often report persistent sadness or a low mood, which can be especially noticeable during the fall and winter months when the disorder is most prevalent.
- Hobbies or activities that once brought joy may no longer seem enjoyable or worth pursuing.



- Fatigue and lack of energy are hallmark symptoms of SAD. Even after a full night's sleep, individuals may feel exhausted and have difficulty performing daily tasks.

- People with SAD may experience oversleeping (hypersomnia) or difficulty staying awake during the day. Others may struggle with insomnia or poor sleep quality.

- Many crave carbohydrates or comfort foods, leading to weight gain during winter.

- SAD can make it hard to focus on work, school, or personal tasks, further adding to feelings of frustration and helplessness.

In severe cases, SAD can lead to deep feelings of despair and may even include thoughts of self-harm or suicide. If these thoughts occur, immediate professional help is critical.

Traditional treatment options for SAD include light therapy and medications. Light therapy involves sitting near a special light box that mimics natural sunlight. This helps regulate the body's internal clock and improve mood. Light therapy is usually done in the morning for 20-30 minutes daily.

Practitioners may also prescribe antidepressant medications, such as selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs). Sometimes, counseling or cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) is recommended to help patients manage negative thoughts and develop healthier habits.

Other non-conventional treatment options include exercise. Regular physical activity, especially outdoors, can improve mood by increasing the release of feel-good chemicals like endorphins. Even on cloudy days, getting outside for a walk or

jog can provide exposure to natural light, which may help regulate your body's internal clock.

If exercise is not your thing yet, you would still like to benefit from an increase in endorphins. A compounded medication like low-dose naltrexone can trick the body into making more of these energy-producing chemicals.

Another approach is dietary changes and supplements. Foods rich in omega-3 fatty acids, like salmon and walnuts, may help improve mood. When these foods are unavailable, taking omega-3 fish oil in supplement form is always an option.

One of my favorite supplements is vitamin D, which is often recommended since lower levels of this vitamin are common during the winter and can affect mood. Where we live in relation to the potency of the sun and our inability to get enough sun with the cold weather makes vitamin D a necessity in the winter month of ND. Remember that omega-3 and vitamin D levels can be easily tested to ensure you are at an optimal level.

Mindfulness and meditation practices can also help. Techniques like deep breathing, yoga, and guided meditations reduce stress and promote relaxation, helping to counter the anxiety or sadness that can accompany SAD.

While the changing seasons can be beautiful, they can also bring challenges. Knowing how they affect your mental health can make all the difference in facing those challenges head-on.

Stop by or call the pharmacy for more information on options to help deal with SAD during winter. Please visit my website at [www.irsfeldpharmacy.com](http://www.irsfeldpharmacy.com) to find this and other archived articles in the blog section. Until next time, be vigilant about your health! ■

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## COOKING CRAVE

### Cowboy Spaghetti

Tune into Consolidated's channel 18 to cook along with Laverne and Rhonda. You can watch their show Wednesday evenings at 6pm and 9pm or Thursday afternoons at 2pm or 5pm (replay of Wednesday's show). New shows air every other week.

Share your recipes to be considered for the show by sending to: Consolidated, Attn - Rhonda Fitterer, PO Box 1408, Dickinson ND 58602 ■



Laverne and Rhonda

## Homemade Recipes Made Easy!

### Cowboy Spaghetti

- 1 - 12 oz. package spaghetti
- 8 bacon strips, chopped
- 1 1/2 lbs. lean ground beef
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 - 15 oz. can kidney beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 - 15 oz. can tomato sauce
- 1 - 10 oz. can chili seasoned diced tomatoes and green chilies, undrained
- 2 Tbsp. chili powder
- 2 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tsp. ground cumin
- 1 tsp. dried oregano
- 1/2 tsp. garlic powder
- 3 cups shredded pepper jack cheese, divided
- Chopped green onions, optional

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Cook spaghetti according to package directions. In a 12-inch skillet, cook bacon over medium heat until crisp, stirring occasionally. Remove with a slotted spoon; drain on paper towels. Add beef & onion to drippings. Cook and stir until beef is no longer pink, 5-7 minutes, breaking meat into crumbles. Stir in tomato sauce, beans, diced tomatoes, chili powder, Worcestershire sauce, cumin, oregano and garlic powder. Drain spaghetti; stir into skillet. Stir in 1 1/2 cups cheese and half the bacon. Top with remaining 1 1/2 cups cheese. Bake until heated through, 20-25 minutes. Sprinkle with green onions and remaining bacon.



CONSOLIDATED  
CHANNEL 18

COOKING  
CRAVE



## CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU

# Coffee warms the heart and makes me smile

By Alicia Erickson, Executive Director

It's the smell that wakes many tired adults up in the morning. After the first sip, a person can get into a groove and seize the day. Some people may only need one cup to make it through the day while others enjoy a whole pot. Coffee is the most popular drink worldwide. Whether it is served cold or piping hot, around two billion cups are served daily. Two billion cups! That's a lot of coffee.

Locally, we have over 15 coffee shops that cater to the daily demands. You can drive by any coffee shop with a drive-thru and see a line of cars during the morning rush or a full parking lot with lines of customers waiting to place their order. Each coffee shop is unique in the coffee beans they use. Some roast their own specialty beans in-store while others

may serve an international variety. Most coffee drinkers have a preference on how their perfect cup of coffee is made. The friendly barista or waitress is happy to serve it to the customer's liking.

If you are looking for something to do this winter, consider trying out the various coffee shops in Dickinson and even along the Old Red Old Ten Scenic Byway from Medora to Mandan. Stop in at a local shop and order a cup of your favorite or ask for their recommendation. They'll be happy to serve you a coffee to your liking. Learn more about the locations of the shops by visiting the Dickinson Convention and Visitors Bureau's page, The Coffee Cruise, at: <https://www.visitdickinson.com/coffeecruise>

That cup of coffee is sure to bring a smile to your face. ■



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