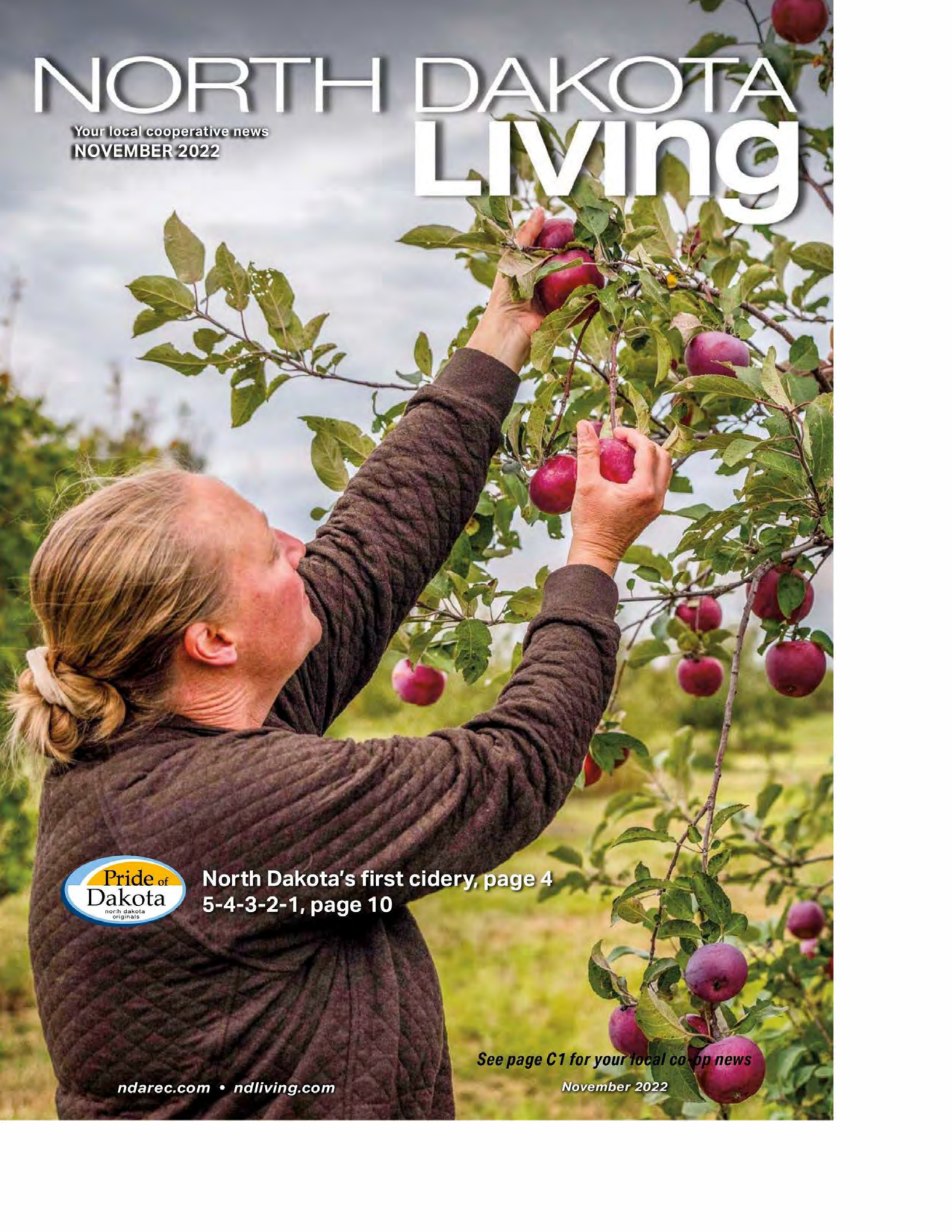


NORTH DAKOTA Living

Your local cooperative news
NOVEMBER 2022



North Dakota's first cidery, page 4
5-4-3-2-1, page 10

See page C1 for your local co-op news

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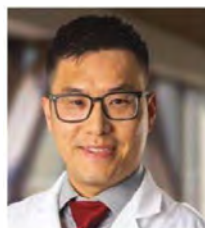
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ON THE COVER

Stacy Nelson-Heising, owner of North Dakota's first cidery, Cottonwood Cider House, picks apples from her orchard on her family's fourth-generation farm near Ayr.
PHOTO BY KATIE RYAN-ANDERSON



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Living

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Being intentional

Thank you. That is how I close most email messages, and let me tell you, I send and receive a lot throughout my day. Ending a message with “thank you” has become habit for me, almost to



Josh Kramer

the point, I fear, of overuse. I worry if these two meaningful words, together, have lost their chutzpah.

Like many things, responses have become automatic.

“How are you doing?” “Good. And you?” we quickly reply.

But how are you doing, actually? Have there been days you weren’t “good,” and by not saying so, did you miss an opportunity for an authentic interaction?

What about texts? Is your phone notifying you of messages more than you care to reply? Do you feel an obligation to respond? What would be the worst thing to happen if you didn’t immediately reply to that text message? Could you try putting down the phone, maybe save some of that energy for yourself?

How about those pictures you post online from a birthday celebration? Do those photos come with an expiration date? Do you have to post them to the social-media-verse before Aunt Ethel does? Or could you capture the images and feelings and experiences of that birthday for yourself, adding another colorful picture to your own memory bank?

This is not to say we shouldn’t have social media, or cellphones have ruined society, or we should share our true feelings with everyone we meet. Certainly, some instances require an automatic response or a quick action. But others don’t. In these moments, it is OK to pause, take a minute for yourself, clear the noise, think and reflect. Be intentional – with your words and actions.

I did a little test with my kids. I asked them what comes to mind when they hear “thank you.” Their responses ranged from “No problem,” “Donuts,” “My home,” “Umm, you’re welcome. ... Is everything OK?” to what I thought was the most reflective answer, “I feel accomplished and that I really did something helpful.”

While their responses reflect their ages, they also demonstrate how individuals uniquely receive words. It is a reminder to not just seek intentionality with words, but with the actions that follow.

Fortunately, November offers opportunities to be intentional with our words and actions.

On Nov. 8, Election Day, vote. Don’t stop there. Volunteer at the polls or serve on a canvassing board. Learn how local elections work.

On Nov. 11, Veterans Day, indeed express thanks to our veterans.

Then, put thanks into action. Learn about veterans’ issues, ask a veteran how they’re doing, donate to veteran causes, or give the gift of your time.

On Nov. 24, Thanksgiving Day, pause not to only give thanks, but to be an example of gratitude. Choose the intentional conversation, not the automatic one.

Thank you to our poll workers and veterans, and happy Thanksgiving (*said with intention*)! ■

Josh Kramer, editor-in-chief of *North Dakota Living*, is executive vice president and general manager of NDAREC. Contact him at jkramer@ndarec.com.

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A FAMILY TREE – WHERE APPLES GROW

Cottonwood Cider House nourishes bellies, souls

STORY AND PHOTOS BY KATIE RYAN-ANDERSON

Cottonwood Cider House is rooted in family – both blood relatives and the family that exists only in rural America.

For Stacy Nelson-Heising and her husband, Dan Heising, the fourth-generation farmstead provides for their family. It also provides a place for the community to gather and connect.


Located near Ayr, about 20 miles northeast of Tower City, Cottonwood Farm is an 11-acre orchard with thousands of semi-dwarf apple trees. The couple planted 100 apple and 50 cherry trees there in 2012. Since then, they've planted thousands more. Organically, both the apples and the business grew. Organic farming is what Stacy's dad, Charles, started when he grew grain crops there in the 1980s.

The Nelson farm was the first certified organic farm in Cass County, with more than 2,000 certified acres of farmland.

At Cottonwood Farm, the apples grow alongside alfalfa, native prairie flowers and grasses. This assorted plant life attracts pollinators like butterflies and bees. Birds make nests in the apple trees, too, and offer natural pest control.

"We will have a peck on an apple from time to time, but we don't have chemical residue on our apples," Stacy writes on her website.

"I wouldn't know how to do it any other way," Stacy says. "We grow organically to give



Stacy Nelson-Heising is the fourth-generation on her family's farmstead near Ayr, where she operates an apple farm, cidery and restaurant with her husband, Dan Heising.

back to the earth that's given to us for years and years."

The farm supported the Nelson family for generations, and Stacy is proud of her family history.

"Growing up, I spent most of my time with my family," she says. "These people made me who I am today."

Stacy's great-great-grandparents, Karolius and Olianna Nelson, moved to the Dakota Territory from Norway in 1884. They farmed in Ransom and Sargent counties. By 1910, one of their sons, Nels, had moved to Cass County, settling near Ayr. There, he and his wife, Nellie, and

their children raised animals.

In 1938, during the Great Depression, Nels planted the cottonwood trees that continue to tower over the family home and outbuildings. These trees are one of the reasons the couple named their business Cottonwood Farm.

Nels' son, Norman, took over the family farm in 1952. Norman transitioned the farm from animals to grain crops, until the early 1980s, when his sons, Charles (Stacy's dad) and Larry, took over. Together, the brothers converted the land from conventional farming to using organic-only methods. When they retired from farming in 2006, they sold the machines and equipment and rented out the land.

No machinery meant grain farming was no longer an option. Then, one day, Stacy and her mom had an idea to continue the farming heritage. The Nelson family farm legacy could continue if they transformed the grain farm into an apple orchard.

Stacy calls these leaves of change "innovative reshaping." The transformation tradition is one she continues into the 21st century.

BRANCHING OUT

Today, the orchard includes a cidery and family- and pet-friendly restaurant. Cottonwood Cider House

is Stacy's full-time job. The Cider House is also a part-time job for Dan and about eight others who help serve and cook at the restaurant, as well as sell cider at vendor shows across the state.

"Pride of Dakota definitely made a difference," Stacy says. "The people at those vendor shows want to purchase North Dakota products and support North Dakota businesses."

Often, Cottonwood teams are slinging cider at two to three vendor shows each weekend. Cottonwood creates more than a dozen cider varieties, with names like "Ayr Mule" and "Peach Me."

"Because we are so secluded, we take Cottonwood Cider House all over the state," Dan says, adding the couple usually runs out of product each year.

Connoisseurs won't find it in liquor stores.

"I can't make enough to do that," he says.

The operation is mostly by hand. Stacy picks apples from August to November. Since the trees are semi-dwarf, she can reach them from the ground. No ladder or equipment is needed. From there, she collects the apples in a picking apron and then stores them in totes loaded in the back of a pickup.

The biggest challenges are the late-season varieties.

"These last few years, I've dug through snowbanks to get apples," she says.

More than 40 apple cultivars grow in the orchard, creating a variety of tastes and textures. No two apple trees or apples are alike, and each apple has its own special flavor. The variety creates a more complex fermented cider.

The couple built the cidery in 2017, renovating one of the farm's old Quonsets. The Cider House experienced significant growth in 2020. With outdoor seating, Cottonwood could accommodate guests and visitors throughout the pandemic.

"People actually came out," Dan says. "We didn't think they would."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6





Pride of Dakota member Cottonwood Cider House offers a selection of more than a dozen different ciders, with names like "Ayr Mule," "College Try," and "Pear of the North." Their ciders can be found at various vendor shows throughout the year, including the Pride of Dakota Holiday Showcase, and at their cidery and restaurant near Ayr, open Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays from March through October.

Residents often utilize the space too, for bridal showers and birthday parties. Sometimes, the school's parent-teacher association or individuals just wanting to play cards and board games use the space, too. In the winter, the couple also offers one Sunday brunch a month.

On any given Friday, Saturday and Sunday, more than 70 people spend their suppers at Cottonwood. That's a hearty number – considering the town of Ayr ranges in population between five and 12 residents.

"They usually come for the cider and stay for the food," Stacy says. Residents of nearby towns also swing through, along with guests from larger areas like Fargo, Casselton and Valley City.

Stacy's background is in the culinary arts. She was a professional chef, specializing in desserts, before operating her own orchard.

"Her meals are great. First class," says Bruce Hagen, Ayr resident and former mayor.

Meals range from tater tot hotdish to coq au vin, a French-style, hearty chicken stew, to queso fundido – all in the same weekend. Desserts that same weekend included a peanut butter mousse tartlet and apple bread pudding with ice cream and caramel sauce.

Hagen and his wife dine at the Cottonwood Cider House almost every Friday. The portions there are generous, though he has one complaint.

"The helpings are too much," he says with a smile. "It's real critical that I get my dessert."

COMMUNITY TO THE CORE

The restaurant nourishes the region's belly and its soul.

Ayr no longer has businesses like a grocery store, bar or even a church.

"When you come here, you see people you may otherwise not see," Hagen says, as people who do

live there often work in larger towns.

Marsha Kasowski agrees. She lives on a farm near Buffalo and serves as the board president of Buffalo Food Market, which manages the town's grocery store.

"It's just fun to see small businesses start up in these smaller communities," she says. "It's another way to draw people to the area."

Kasowski donates her own apples to the Cider House, as do several area residents.

Cottonwood sometimes supplements the farm's apples with what it calls "found" apples. These are apples they harvest from family, friends and neighbors' trees. This helps them meet demand and complements their own supply.

Stacy and Dan say they are grateful for the community and the opportunity.

"We just have great customers. People are so supportive," she says.

That's why the Cottonwood Cider House logo is shaped like it is – the leaf of the cottonwood tree supports the apple the way the community and their families supported the farm.

As for the future, the couple says they'll stay the course for now. They don't plan too far ahead, knowing that times could change.

"We pay attention to what the world is saying to us at each particular moment," Stacy says.

Cottonwood Cider House is open Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays in March through October. Visit it on Facebook at facebook.com/cottonwoodciderhouse or online at www.cottonwoodciderhouse.com. ■

Katie Ryan-Anderson is a freelance writer and former co-op communicator. She is a Dakota Valley Electric Cooperative member and lives in Marion with her husband and two boys.

See page 22 for Stacy's apple cranberry crisp and cider house grilled cheese recipes!



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PHOTO BY LUANN DART

Pam Emmil's handmade bracelets combine various gemstones.

5 Second Rule Bracelet leads creator to sobriety

BY LUANN DART

5-4-3-2-1. Pam Emmil didn't count on a pain medication prescription plummeting her into addiction. But those five numbers helped count her steps back to sobriety. And to a thriving, therapeutic business.

Wrapped around Emmil's wrists are the bracelets that not only helped her overcome her addiction,

but which are now part of her business, 5 Second Rule Bracelet.

She now shares her personal journey of opioid addiction – and recovery – through her business, as she sells bracelets and other jewelry with a message.

"My pain gave me purpose, which has lead me to my passion," she states on her website.

INTO DARKNESS

Emmil doesn't begin her story with the day her addiction began. Rather, she begins with Feb. 21, 2018. That is the day she began her journey to recovery.

She became addicted to pain medication after several surgeries following an initial surgery in 2013.

"It was the perfect storm," she says, as pain medications were pushed her way during her surgery recovery. "I had six different pain meds at my disposal at times, so your body just gets used to it. Before you know it, you're severely in addiction mode and ruining your life."

"I didn't understand what was happening to me," she says, not recognizing her addiction.

But a doctor intervened.

"I remember the doctor saying to me, 'You need help,' and I was very against it," she says. "I felt I'm too good for this. It's not me."

Then Ideal Option, which offers medication-assisted treatment for addiction to opioids, alcohol and other substances, opened in Bismarck. Emmil was its first patient Feb. 21, 2018.

"I feel like Ideal Option has saved my life and my marriage and my relationship with my kids," she says.

"They made me feel human again," she says. She completed extensive therapy for two years, and continues a medication-assisted program and addiction therapy on an outpatient basis.

FIVE SECOND RULE

In 2018, she was the mom making sporting attire for volleyball games and dabbling in creating jewelry from her home in Bismarck, where her business is still centered.

She discovered "The Five Second Rule," a book written by self-help author Mel Robbins, which touts counting backward from 5-4-3-2-1 and immediately acting at the end of the count, before the mind creates a reason not to act.

"I combined the gemstones and the five second rule into a tool that would work for me," Emmil says. She created a bracelet with four rows of five pink zebra jasper beads, a stone gemstone enthusiasts say eases stress and anxiety, and provides relaxation and contentment.

She paired those beads with a larger aura stone bead, which emulates light as if an LED is inside



COURTESY PHOTOS

A sampling of the bracelets created by Pam Emmil through her home-based Pride of Dakota business, 5 Second Rule Bracelet.

the stone.

"I just wanted my inner light to shine. When I saw that stone, I thought that was the coolest thing," she says.

The bracelet became a meditation aid.

"Whenever I start getting those overwhelming feelings, I would count backwards, 5-4-3-2-1," she describes, touching each of the five beads as she counts. Then she touches the aura stone.

"Stop, take a deep breath. Change that negative thought to a positive thought, then act on it. Counting backward will stop your impulses and will focus you on the goal or action and distract you from the worries, negative thoughts and excuses in your mind," she says.

"Interrupt those feelings. When I was starting recovery, I was feeling a lot of shame, a lot of guilt. It was really helping me to get over the mental state I was in. When you're struggling with stress or anxiety, you need something to interrupt that pattern that's going on in your brain," she says.

"5-4-3-2-1, put the drink down and walk away."

"If we walk away from something within the first five seconds, our brain is onto something new," Emmil says.

"We have to move our body within that first five seconds."

She wore that first bracelet for a year, counting the beads.

"No matter where I was. I could be in church, 5-4-3-2-1. I could be in the grocery store, starting to get a panic attack, 5-4-3-2-1," she says.

"It's a mindfulness tool to cut through all the things blocking you," she says.

After a year of intensive therapy, she told her closest girlfriends what she was going through and explained the bracelet she was wearing.

Her friends encouraged her to share her powerful story.

"Bismarck is way too small for me to share my garbage," she replied with a laugh.

But as a former kindergarten teacher, she felt a pull to help others.

"Through prayer and meditation, I really felt the call from the good Lord, who said, 'I didn't put you through something for you not to help other people,'" she says.

First, she approached her husband and two

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12



COURTESY PHOTO

Pam Emmil sells most of her product through vendor shows, including Pride of Dakota shows.

grown daughters.

"I kept getting this calling through prayer," she says. "I talked with my family and I said, 'If you got a calling from God, would you ever tell him no?' They said, 'Of course not.' And I said, 'Well, I got a big one.'"

She made 30 bracelets for her first vendor show, sharing her story and selling bracelets, in 2019.

She sold all the bracelets. For her second show, she sold all 80 bracelets.

She joined Pride of Dakota in 2019, and sold nearly 400 bracelets at one show.

"I thought, 'Hmm, I think I've got something,'" she says.

"It's blowing up right now. It's very exciting times," she says, now with thousands of bracelets and other jewelry on inventory, all handmade by either herself or friends and family.

Soon, others started sharing their own stories with her.

"People want to be heard. People have a story and they just want someone to listen," she says. "So many women are hurting and they just want to be heard."

SHARING HER PASSION

Emmil developed a logo, created a website and launched her social media, but not without outside support.

She enrolled in training through Shopify Specialist, which offers daily sessions from instructors across the world.

"It's really cool to have that network of people," she says.

And Pride of Dakota has helped with trainings and through its vendor shows.

"Every package that goes out has a Pride of Dakota sticker, because I'm proud to be a Pride of Dakota artisan," she says.

While she sells online, the bulk of her sales are through vendor shows.

"I really like being in front of my product and meeting people," she says. "I always ask people, 'Can I share my story?'"

"Now that I'm good mental health wise, now I can be of service to others," she says.

With each bracelet or other piece she sells, she includes a card describing the gemstone, and an explanation of the five second rule.

Besides the aura stone in the center, other stones include rose quartz, amethyst, lava stone, gray jersey and blue sandstone.

Her bracelets also come with a toggle to attach a charm, with more than 300 different charms available, ranging from faith-based charms to rodeo themes. She's also incorporated sayings from customers, such as "My past is not my future."

Her classic collection of bracelets, with the pink zebra jasper beads, comes with or without rhinestones.

She has also started a men's line of bracelets, with black labradorite stone and cedar wood, which emanates the scent of the wood.

"Cedar is called the timber of God. It's very grounding, strengthening, with purpose," she says.

She also makes children's bracelets for the three senses of sight, smell and touch, with cedar wood.

A black obsidian with tiger's eye is the newest combination. Ankle bracelets, earrings and keychains are also available.

HER STORY CONTINUES

Emmil is now sober for over four years, but continues the medication-assisted program and therapy with Ideal Option.

She also uses a social network app, Clubhouse, to join a sobriety club with people from all over the world every morning.

And she encourages others.

"Go get help. I fought getting help for so long. I didn't understand. Get help and be honest. When you are an alcoholic and an addict, we lie and manipulate. We know how to make it not about us. We have to be truthful with ourselves," she says.

She also followed her faith to sobriety, she says.

"When I say, 'God, I can't do this anymore,' he gives me the strength to keep going. Then I get that happy little email from a customer saying, 'This tool has helped me so much. Thank you so much,'" she says.

"I get so many wonderful messages," she says. "If I had to go through my hard day to help you, then I did what I needed to do." ■

Luann Dart is a freelance writer and editor who lives in the Elgin area.

To learn more: www.pamemmil.com

From Black Friday to the end of December, Emmil will be at a storefront at 401 East Broadway Ave. in Bismarck, with the hours posted on her website and Facebook page. She can also be found at most Pride of Dakota vendor shows. ■



2022 Holiday Showcase Dates

Grand Forks, Alerus Center

November 4 & 5

Friday 4pm - 9pm

Saturday 9am - 5pm

Fargo, Scheels Arena

November 18 & 19

Friday 12pm - 9pm

Saturday 9am - 5pm

Bismarck, Event Center

December 2 & 3

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Saturday 9am - 5pm



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NOVEMBER 2022

In September, North Dakota educators participated in a poverty simulation exercise to gain better understanding of the challenges experienced by low-income families. Read more in this month's feature story.



IN THIS ISSUE

- Poverty simulation highlights difficult reality faced by low-income families
- Keep pets and energy bills comfortable
- Win a trip to Youth Tour
- LIHEAP helps with heating costs
- Board minutes



North Dakota educators discuss challenges faced by their assigned family units during a poverty simulation exercise.

IN THEIR SHOES: **Poverty simulation highlights difficult reality faced by low-income families**

BY KRISTA RAUSCH

According to U.S. Census data, nearly 38 million Americans live in poverty. Every day, these families struggle to put food on the table and keep a roof over their heads, and they experience a wave of emotions as they try to cope, including depression, frustration and fear. In September, North Dakota educators stepped into their shoes to help bridge the gap between misconception and understanding.

More than 80 teachers from across the state participated in a poverty simulation exercise, which aimed to promote poverty awareness, increase understanding, transform perspectives and inspire local change. Facilitated by the Central Regional Education Association (CREA), the exercise was part of the North Dakota Association of

Lifelong Learners (NDALL) Fall Conference.

Throughout the two-hour immersive exercise, participants experienced what it would be like to live one month in poverty. Divided into one of 15 family units, each person was assigned a role and given a budget, identification cards, cash and other assets. Participants were expected to find or keep a job, purchase food, pay bills, receive medical care and care for their children. Each 15-minute segment, which represented a week, presented different dilemmas.

“They all have different scenarios, and they all face different challenges,” says Community Coordinator Anne Williamson, CREA. “It could be a single parent household or an elderly person who is living alone and trying to



North Dakota educators review information during a poverty simulation exercise. Participants were divided into family units and assigned individual roles.

navigate the situation by themselves. Maybe there is an unexpected illness or a teen pregnancy. Maybe one of the parents becomes incarcerated. There are many, many real-life scenarios these folks must navigate through.”

Volunteers played important roles in the exercise, representing important community resources, rental agencies, schools, medical centers, banks, utility providers and more. Capital Electric Cooperative’s Dana Solem was one of those volunteers.

“My role in the exercise was the utility collector,” Solem explains. “So, they had to come to me to pay their phone, electricity and gas bills. If they couldn’t pay it, they faced collection fees or service disconnection.”

As a senior billing specialist, Solem was a natural for the part. Every day, she works with co-op members who are struggling to pay their bills and are at risk of disconnection. She says the exercise was a true reflection of reality.

“I hear these stories every day. You can hear their struggle. You can hear their defeat,” she says.

Exercise participants did everything they could to survive. They carpooled to work, stood in long lines at Social Services and took out quick cash loans. As one participant recalls, some even resorted to stealing.

“Someone tried to steal money out of my hands! That was a little scary. But, I held tight enough so they didn’t get any. They were a little surprised I held it that tightly. I didn’t realize I had that reflex!” says Sara Mitzel, adult education program manager and adult education lead, N.D. Department of Public Instruction.

Mitzel was assigned to a four-person family unit, which included a husband, a teenage daughter and a mother-in-law. As a family, their biggest challenges were managing a budget and navigating available resources.

“One week, we didn’t have money for groceries, and

we had to find a way to get what we could and save a little money for other things we need. At the end, we had to pay utilities and the mortgage. All of it came due, and we didn’t have enough money,” Mitzel says.


“My husband was never home. He was always working, and I was having to run around and figure things out. And, it was challenging to figure out transportation. One day, he carpooled to work with our neighbors, but that only worked one week, because the neighbor got cut to part time,” she says.

For many North Dakotans, scenarios like these aren’t an exercise, they’re real life.

“North Dakota is not immune to poverty. We are not exempt from it,” Williamson says. “About 10% of people living in North Dakota are living below the poverty line, and a lot of kids are facing food insecurity regardless of which community or which neighborhood they’re in.”

Mitzel says the exercise gave her empathy and compassion for those living in poverty.

“At the end of the exercise, a quote was shared from ‘Ted Lasso,’ and it really impacted me — ‘Be curious, not judgmental,’” Mitzel recalls. “This exercise was an emotional rollercoaster, and it helped me appreciate what these families are going through.”

For more information on CREA and the poverty simulation exercise, visit www.creand.org. 



Capital Electric Cooperative Senior Billing Representative **Dana Solem** plays the role of a utility collector during a poverty simulation exercise on Sept. 23. The exercise was part of the North Dakota Association of Lifelong Learners’ (NDALL) Fall Conference.



S'mores, a cockapoo, gets all the love and attention in the Fitterer house, says Capital Electric Cooperative General Manager Paul Fitterer.

Keep pets and energy bills comfortable

BY PAUL FITTERER

I don't know about you, but I consider my four-legged companion part of the family. Our cockapoo, S'mores, gets all the love and attention at our house, and I can't imagine life without her. I know others feel this way, too. That's why during the winter months, we make sure our whole family, including S'mores, is cozy — without taking a big bite out of our budget.

This month, I'd like to share a few simple ways you can make your home more comfortable this winter, which can ultimately help you save on energy bills.

At the onset of the cold weather season, we replace the HVAC filter for better air quality and to help the unit operate more efficiently. You can also keep your home cozier by caulking and weatherstripping windows and

doors. If your home is particularly chilly, you can tape or affix heavy, clear plastic to the inside of your window frames to create an additional barrier against the cold. Ensure the plastic is tightly sealed to the frame to help reduce infiltration.

We know winter can be “ruff,” so we set our thermostat to 68 degrees, a “purr-fect” temperature for people and pets. This is especially important for smaller, short hair and senior dogs — not just for warmth, but for their general health. Puppies, kittens and older pets with arthritis or other ailments may have a harder time controlling their body heat and need the additional warmth when it’s chilly out.

Pets that sleep close to the floor can be subject to cold drafts that enter your home through windows and exterior doors. If your pet’s bed is near a window or door that feels



Paul Fitterer

drafty, tightly roll up a towel and place it near the bottom of the door or window to eliminate the draft. Cutting down on cold drafts helps everyone feel more comfortable during colder months.

If possible, elevate your pet’s bed so it’s not placed directly on a cold floor. An old chair or sofa cushion works well. If you don’t use a pet bed, take some old blankets and create a donut shape on the cushion so the dog can snuggle and nest within the blanket. You can do the same for cats, but on a smaller scale. Blankets enable pets to nestle into them, even when they aren’t tired, and provide a comfortable place for dogs and cats to curl up.

During the day, open your blinds and curtains to allow sunlight to warm your home. Close window coverings at night for an added layer of insulation.

At Capital Electric Cooperative, we want to help you save energy and money. Check out our website, capitalelec.com, for additional energy-saving tips.

We can’t control the weather, but we can provide advice to help you save energy and keep your family and furry friends more comfortable during the winter season.

Paul Fitterer is the general manager of Capital Electric Cooperative. ☺

Sheila Wald joins CEC’s billing department

BY WES ENGBRECHT



Sheila Wald

Capital Electric Cooperative is pleased to announce the addition of Sheila Wald to its billing department staff. Sheila brings a calm disposition to the department, one that is necessary to handle member issues and needs in an efficient manner.

Her positivity results in a constant smile, which is an important addition to any office setting.

Most of Sheila’s work background was gained at Basin Electric Power Cooperative, which generates much of our members’ power. She spent ten years at Basin Electric, working in the property and right-of-way department for six years and completing her last years in the legal department. During that time, she worked on board administration and a wide variety of legal topics.

One of the aspects of her new job that Sheila enjoys is

member interaction.

“At Basin, I didn’t have an opportunity to work directly with the public, and I really enjoy that. While I’m still learning and growing here, I feel like it will be a great job moving forward,” she explains.

Sheila was a farm girl, growing up south of Napoleon. When asked about those years, she remembers, “It was a grain farm, but we also raised cattle and a wide variety of other animals. We were members of KEM Electric Cooperative, and my parents looked forward to attending their annual meeting each year.”

Sheila attended Bismarck State College, where she earned an associate degree as an administrative assistant. She then went on to earn her bachelor’s degree in business management from the University of Mary.

When she isn’t at work, Sheila loves to raise vegetables and flowers in her garden at home. In addition, she spends time on the water, either on a kayak or pontoon. She is an avid reader and enjoys yoga as well.

The cooperative is fortunate to add Sheila to our team, and we look forward to having her positive energy and productivity in the billing department. ☺



Need Help with Heating Costs? LIHEAP can help.

The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) helps eligible low-income households with home heating costs.

- Heating assistance
- Weatherization services (insulation, weather stripping, etc.)
- Furnace and chimney cleaning
- Furnace repair and replacement
- Emergency assistance

Applications are accepted from October 1 through May 31 for each heating season.

For help filling out and submitting the LIHEAP application, call 1-800-823-2417 ext: 140.



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Board minute excerpts SEPT. 19, 2022

The Capital Electric Cooperative Board of Directors held its regular meeting on Monday, Sept. 19. All directors were present at that time. Also present, in person, were Manager Paul Fitterer, Business Manager Luke Steen, Operations Manager Rick Dressler, Engineering Services Manager Greg Owen, Energy Services Manager Josh Schaffner and Attorney Zachary Pelham of Pearce Durick, PLLC, who acted as recording secretary.

Minutes and Agenda: Board President Deon Vilhauer called the meeting to order. The agenda was approved as presented. After review, the minutes from the Aug. 26 board meeting were approved.

Financial Review: The financial review was approved as presented.

Management Reports (Business Department, Operations Department, Engineering Services, Energy Services and Communications/IT):

Business Department Report: Steen presented the August 2022 financial and statistical report to the board.

Total kilowatt-hour (kWh) sales for August were ahead of budget by 5.6%. Monthly electric revenue was ahead of budget by 3.9%.

Capital Electric's August load factor was ahead of budget by 4.3%.

The operating margin for August was -\$220,343, ahead of the budgeted -\$429,887. The total margin for August was -\$144,004, which was ahead of the budgeted -\$429,285.

The co-op began billing 20 new services in August, bringing active services to 21,815 versus 21,521 at this time last year, or a net increase of 294 accounts over the last 12 months.

Monthly power costs and the cash flow statement were reviewed.

Accounts receivable balances as of Sept. 16 were reviewed.

Estate Retirements: Payment for one estate retirement was authorized in the amount of \$133.87.

Employee Retention Tax Credit: Fitterer reported on the availability of the Employee Retention Tax Credit. He will work with a third-party to evaluate.

Operations Report: Dressler reviewed the written report from the operations department.

Crews have completed the Lincoln substation rebuild. They are working to change out meter pedestals at a trailer court and move materials to the new headquarters facility.

Safety Report: There were no lost time accidents in August.

Without objection, the Safety Report was approved.

Engineering Services Report: Owen reviewed the written report from the engineering services department.

There were 43 work orders completed in August.

Owen reported on ongoing and upcoming projects, including completion of connections at several local subdivisions, continued fiber optic cable replacement on the 43rd Avenue road construction project and a three-phase cable replacement south of Regan.

Work Order Inventory Rural Utilities Service (RUS) Form 216: Owen reviewed RUS Form 219 for inventory 506, which was approved.

Property Update: Owen reported on continued efforts to market the administrative building, the closing on the sale of cooperative property scheduled for Sept. 30, renewal of a real estate broker contract, and status and progress of modifications to the new facility.

Energy Services: Schaffner reviewed the Energy Services Report.

Nineteen service orders were completed in August.

Schaffner reported on replacement of a damaged sign at the Wing outpost, disassembly of the vehicle hoist that will be reassembled at the new facility, installation of a fuel tank at the new facility and continued efforts to move materials to the new facility.

Communications and IT: Fitterer reviewed topics of interest.

The Member Advisory Committee meeting will be held Oct. 5.

Rate Discussion: Fitterer reviewed external forces impacting rates and how management is working to develop rate structures to lessen the impact.

2023-2026 Construction Work Plan: Owen reviewed the proposed 2023-2026 construction work plan, which was approved.

2023 Budget Draft: Steen, Fitterer and Owen reviewed draft budgets for 2023 for revenue, power cost, general plant expenditures, construction and the new facility. No action was taken.

Policies: Steen reviewed proposed modifications to Policy IV-1 (Rate 29) - Demand TOU Rate. The modifications to the policy were adopted as presented.

Fitterer reviewed proposed Policy E-22 - Employee Use of Cooperative Equipment for Non-work Purposes. Fitterer also reviewed modifications to Policy No. IV-03 - Use, Sale and Disposal of Material and Other Cooperative Assets and Services, and Policy No. I-21 - Visitor Policy and Use of Cooperative Facilities for Non-work-related Purposes. Following discussion, the new policy and modified policies were adopted as presented.

Owen reviewed proposed modifications to Policy III-13 - Distributed Energy Resources. The modifications were adopted as presented.

Vilhauer reviewed proposed modifications to Policy No. I-17-Board of Director Meeting Attendance-Physical Presence. The policy modifications were adopted.

Basin Electric Power Cooperative: Fitterer reported on Basin Electric matters, including the co-op's positive financial outlook and information on Dakota Gasification Company.

2023 Load Forecast: Fitterer reviewed the 2023 load forecast prepared for Capital Electric by Basin Electric. The load forecast was approved.

Central Power Electric Cooperative: The Central Power board meeting is Sept. 20.

Industry Update: Fitterer reviewed materials related to power markets and general cooperative news.

North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives (NDAREC): Fitterer reported on the Rural Electric Political Action Committee board meeting and the Quentin Burdick Center for Cooperatives.

Vilhauer reported on the Rural Electric and Telecommunications Development Center's work on an addiction rehabilitation center in Wolford and the Spirit Lake Food Distribution program on the Spirit Lake Indian Reservation.

National Rural Electric Cooperatives Association (NRECA): Fitterer reviewed the upcoming September regional meeting in Minneapolis.

Adjournment: There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned. ☪

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*This work is supported by a Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network grant from USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

Celebrate National Native American Heritage Month

BY NORTH DAKOTA TOURISM

North Dakota has one of the largest Native American populations in the country. This makes tribal heritage something to celebrate year-round, and especially during National Native American Heritage Month every November.

Spend an afternoon experiencing authentic Native American culture by exploring reconstructed earthlodge villages at On-A-Slant Indian Village near Mandan or at the Mandan Hidatsa Arikara Tourism Earth Lodge Village near New Town. The crisp air will help you appreciate the strength and resiliency of these impressive structures, just as much as the people who built them. Historically, when winter arrived, families would gather in an earthlodge to enjoy the warmth, while holding rituals around a roaring fire. Up to 40 people from connected families could live in an earthlodge at one time.

Modern-day celebrations and the gifts that come with them might be on your mind. Consider shopping at one of North Dakota's native-owned boutiques for the upcoming holiday season. If you have a fashion-forward loved one in your life, check out the Sparkling Spur in Mandaree. The founder, Tiffany Johnson, self-describes her boutique's unique style as a mix of Native American, cowboy and western, rocker glam and biker. Or you can check out Beyond Buckskin, which brings together over 40 Native American and First Nations fashion designers and artists through an online boutique. Here, you can browse clothing, accessories and home décor from artists dedicated to showcasing and celebrating their culture.

If you need a break from the hustle and bustle this time of year brings, you can reflect on the history and simple beauty of Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site. Located near Stanton, this area was occupied by Native American tribes for over 11,000 years. Today, the remains of three Hidatsa villages lie here, along with 210 depressions of what used to be earthlodges.

The history of Native Americans far precedes North Dakota's statehood, so take some time to appreciate all the pieces and places that have made our home what is it today, both past and present.

Find out more about Native American culture in North Dakota at:

- Turtle Mountain Chippewa Center in Belcourt
- Sitting Bull Visitor Center in Fort Yates
- N. D. State Museum and Heritage Center in Bismarck
- MHA Nation Interpretive Center in New Town
- Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center in Washburn

Go to <https://belegendary.link/NativeAmericanCulture> or scan the QR code for additional Native American experiences and itineraries in North Dakota. ■



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NOVEMBER

4-5 • Pride of Dakota Holiday Showcase, 4-9 p.m. Friday and 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday, Alerus Center, Grand Forks. 701-328-2231.

4-5 • The Big One Art & Craft Fair, North Dakota State Fair Center, Minot. 701-837-6059.

4-6 • Capital Quiltfest, Bismarck Hotel and Conference Center, Bismarck. 701-220-5677.

8 • Minot Christian Women's Club luncheon, 12:15 p.m., Grand Hotel, Minot. 701-624-5531.

11-17 • Badlands Association Art Show, 6-9 p.m., Prairie Hills Mall, Dickinson. 701-690-6603.

12 • Holiday Bazaar and Luncheon, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., Sacred Heart Parish Center, Glen Ullin. 701-348-3325.

17 • Festival of the Arts, 6-10 p.m., 422 E. Front Ave., Bismarck Art & Galleries Association, Bismarck. 701-223-5986.

18-19 • Big One Art and Craft Fair, Event Center, Bismarck. 701-837-6059.

18-19 • Pride of Dakota Holiday Showcase, noon-9 p.m. Friday and 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday, Sheels Arena, Fargo. 701-328-2231.

18-19 • Performance of "Christmas in New England VII," 7:30 p.m. Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday, St. Mary's Catholic Church, New England. 701-579-4708.

18-19 • Festival of Trees, North Dakota State Fair Center, Minot. 701-852-4675.

19 • Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Sleep Inn & Suites, Minot. 605-290-2399.

19-20 • Dakota Holiday Market & Sweet Shop, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., North Dakota State Fair Center, Minot. 701-852-4675.

20 • HollyDazzle Festival of Lights, 2-9 p.m., Town Square, Grand Forks. 701-757-4051.

22 • Tree Lighting, Heritage Square, 5:30 p.m., Wahpeton. 701-642-8448.

25 • Passport to the North Pole with real reindeer and Santa, noon-6 p.m., The Spot, Minot. 701-852-7768.

25-26 • Dickens Village Festival, 10 a.m.-7 p.m. Garrison. 701-463-2345.

26 • Santa Parade of Lights, 5 p.m., Cavalier.

DECEMBER

2-3 • Pride of Dakota Holiday Showcase, noon-9 p.m. Friday and 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday, Event Center, Bismarck. 701-328-2231.

2-3, 9-10 • Dickens Village Festival, 10 a.m.-7 p.m. Garrison. 701-463-2345.

3 • Hay Ride and Santa, noon-3 p.m., Buckstop Junction, Bismarck. 701-220-6311.

3 • Holiday Lights Parade and Winterfest, 6:30 p.m., downtown, Fargo.

9-11 • "The Nutcracker," 7 p.m. Friday, 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday, Belle Mehus Auditorium, Bismarck. 701-530-0986.

13 • Minot Christian Women's Club luncheon, 12:15 p.m., Grand Hotel, Minot. 701-624-5531.

North Dakota Living publishes calendar events free of charge. We only publish the date, name of the event, time, place and location, and contact telephone number. To submit an item, email ndliving@ndarec.com or mail to: NDAREC, calendar of events, *North Dakota Living*, P.O. Box 727, Mandan ND 58554-0727. The deadline is the 10th of each month. *North Dakota Living* does not guarantee the publication of any event.



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MOVING ON LIKE JAEGER

Secretary of State retiring after 30 years

BY CALLY PETERSON

This month, Alvin "Al" Jaeger, the son of a North Dakota coal miner and Beulah native, presides over his last election. Jaeger, a Republican, will retire as North Dakota's secretary of state at the close of the year.

"There's nobody in the class I graduated with (in high school) that would someday think I'd be secretary of state," Jaeger says with a laugh. "I know I didn't."

But the voters who elected him to his first four-year term in 1992 – and seven more times over the course of three decades – sure did.

The stories Jaeger tells of running a backhoe, tarring septic tanks or putting in water lines with his dad are relatable. So is his admission, like others of his make and model, that he has no desire to leave the state or travel outside of North Dakota in retirement.

And despite his towering stature, Jaeger's delivery is soft, passionate and sincere. Perhaps that comes from being a dad of daughters.

Whether the voters elected him eight times because of his politics, persona or his ability to do the job, Jaeger has taken his oath of office seriously.

"I'm very appreciative of the confidence they put in me. I've tried to do the right thing for them," Jaeger says.

That means leaving the politics at the door, he says.

"You get this job through a political process, but our job is to do the right thing," he says. "You look at situations, you determine the best way of doing it, and you make your decisions based on that, not based on political considerations. The goal is to do the right thing. That's what we do. We treat everybody the same."

THROUGH MANY SEASONS

Jaeger has many duties as secretary of state. He oversees the elections process, candidate filings, campaign disclosure reports and petitions for initiated, constitutional and referred measures. He licenses contractors, commissions notaries public and registers lobbyists. He files and maintains records for business entities, including cooperatives. Plus, he serves on numerous boards and commissions in his capacity as secretary of state, including the state's Emergency Commission, State Historical Board and Board of University and School Lands.

Over 30 years, Jaeger has led the office through many seasons, including the transition from a paper office to computers, with its first online presence occurring around 1997. Today, Jaeger estimates



Al Jaeger has been elected secretary of state by North Dakotans eight times and will retire at the end of 2022.

PHOTOS BY NIDAREC/LIZA KESSELE

about 90% of the work is done by computer, with business and other filings done online.

The growth of the oil and gas industry in the Bakken around 2012 posed challenges. Jaeger made the decision to shut down his office to the public one day a week, so his staff could work. The work turnaround in the office was about six weeks at the time, compared to the one- or two-day turnaround North Dakotans experience today, Jaeger says.

During his tenure, more

than 90 ballot measure petitions were approved by his office for circulation, though not all made it to the ballot. He cautions citizens to know what they're signing and what they're voting for, noting some ballot initiatives in recent years have been funded by out-of-state interests.

"The initiated measure process is for the people of North Dakota," he says.

And, Jaeger is concerned by recent attempts to cast doubt on the security and accuracy of U.S. elections, which has spilled into North Dakota.

"This element of distrust has been launched," he says. "Despite what we say, what we show, what we can prove, there is this element of distrust. I don't know how we deal with that."

"When naysayers don't believe the result, it concerns me," he continues. "We have an excellent history in North Dakota of elections. They've been done well. They've been done accurately. We can be proud of that. If I had any thought that any of it could be compromised, I wouldn't have any part of it. I wouldn't have been able to do this job."

He has weathered the seasons of politics, too.

Jaeger, a Republican, failed to garner his party's endorsement for reelection in 2018. When the Republican-endorsed candidate that year dropped out after a disorderly conduct charge came to light, Jaeger reentered the race as an independent on the

primary ballot. He went on to win his eighth election – and first as an independent – in November's general election.

As Jaeger reaches the end of his political career, he does so at a time when other elected officials are doing the same.

N.D. Senate Majority Leader Rich Wardner and House Majority Leader Chet Pollert will be noticeably absent from the 2023 legislative session. Together, the majority leaders served in the legislature for more than 50 years.

Last November, state Sens. Nicole Poolman, R-Bismarck, and Erin Oban, D-Bismarck, announced they would not seek reelection. Both cited the erosion of civility in public discourse as factors in their decisions.

While not a factor in his retirement decision, still, Wardner urged civility.

"As I pass the torch, my greatest hope is we can come together as a party and as a state to focus on our shared needs and common goals," Wardner told the *Williston Herald*. "That our actions would be rooted in civility; building each other up, recognizing each other's inherent worth, and disagreeing respectfully when necessary. Not only is this critical to ensure that good people are willing to serve, but also for the greater good of the people we represent."

Jaeger expresses similar sentiments.

"People need to know what's going on, stay engaged and involved, and I really hope they do it with kindness and tolerance and without name calling. Two people can disagree and still be friends," he says. "If there is something that will be good for the community, state or school, talk about it – the idea, not the personality."

WHAT I AM

Many people, in North Dakota or elsewhere, have used the office of secretary of state as a steppingstone to higher political office. Not Jaeger.

On his first day in office, Jan. 1, 1993, Jaeger sat at the sturdy, faded wooden desk of his predecessors, that was now his.

"I went over to Dan's (Supermarket), and I bought some Liquid Gold," he recalls. "I rubbed down that desk and the color really came out."

On Jan. 1, 2023, a new secretary of state will sit at that same desk to work for North Dakotans, hopefully with the same care, attention and detail Jaeger paid the office.

"The work of the office continues, and it's going to continue beyond me," Jaeger says. "I was very blessed. I've never wanted to be anything other than what I am." ■

Cally Peterson is editor of *North Dakota Living*. She can be reached at cpeterson@ndarec.com.

What is your favorite product made in North Dakota and why?

STATE BEVERAGE

Did you know milk is our state beverage? My favorite product made in North Dakota is milk and other dairy products. My family loves milk, butter, ice cream, cheese and all of the other wonderful foods made of dairy!

This summer, I enjoyed attending a breakfast on the farm at one of the largest dairy farms in North Dakota near Mandan to watch the process of milk production. It is sure hard work being a dairy farmer! I admire all they do, especially the long hours worked every day.

Dairy farms are such an important part of our state's history. My parents both grew up on small dairy farms in North Dakota, and it runs deep in our roots. We are fond of the industry, and hope to get a dairy cow one day soon.

I am proud of what we produce in our state, and it is wonderful to support our local farmers and business owners. Now, go grab yourself a cold glass of milk and thank a dairy farmer!

Jada Vetter

McLean Electric Cooperative

RURAL PEOPLE

My favorite thing produced in North Dakota is its rural people. No matter where you go, you can spot a local. They are the people who will stop and visit with you, whether you are known to them or not. They are the ones who stop and help someone in need, helping to load a heavy item in a parking lot or stopping to help change a tire. They wave at every car that passes them on the road.

They're not fancy or fashionable. They have eaten organic their entire life, because they grow their food in their gardens. They love to share the fruits of their labors.

They consider anyone who lives within a 20-mile radius to be their neighbor. They watch out for those neighbors and their children. They bring food to funerals.

You can find them at every student event at any school and in every church, giving support.

When you shake their hand, you can feel callouses made by hard work. Their hands are stained from soil or the tools of their trade. They believe in an honest day's work. They wear out their bodies and are weathered from the sun. They play as hard as they work. And at the end of the day, they say a prayer to the good Lord, thanking him.

Lana Procrive

Roughrider Electric Cooperative

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Teen-2-Teen and Reader Reply provide moments to contemplate.

Recipe Roundup could fill your plate.

Al Gustin always has something to debate.

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Lucille DesRoches

Northern Plains Electric Cooperative

SEE READER REPLY QUESTION ON PAGE 22

Long-hauler has a new meaning thanks to Covid-19.



Symptoms of long Covid have been known to last weeks, months, and even years. Get vaccinated to help lower your risk of becoming a long-hauler. Talk with your health care professionals to make sure you are up to date with the vaccines recommended for you.

This project was supported in part by grant number 2101NDCAVS, U.S. Administration for Community Living, Department of Health and Human Services.



An 'electric' opportunity

The Electric Cooperative Youth Tour is a week filled with history, new friends, tons of fun and memories that will last a lifetime. You



COURTESY PHOTO

Annaliese Rauschenberger

get to visit Washington, D.C., learn about electric cooperatives, meet with your elected leaders, see historical sites and so much more!

My favorite part of Youth Tour was the memories I made and the time I spent with new friends! The North Dakota participants

traveled with the Montana tour group. Our chaperones were so welcoming, and my fellow students were so fun! I felt right at home with everyone right away, and when the week ended, I didn't want to leave. I'm still in touch with many of the people I met on Youth Tour.

We got to see so many sights on Youth Tour. No time was wasted sitting around. Every day was packed full of exciting activities. Some of my favorite stops were Arlington National Cemetery, a Baltimore

Orioles game, the Naval Academy and the Capitol building. My overall favorite stop was the Gettysburg National Military Park. The beauty of the landscape combined with its fascinating history made it a truly unforgettable experience.

Another great part of Youth Tour was the educational aspect. Our tour group got to meet with Rep. Kelly Armstrong and Sen. John Hoeven. We had fun and informative conversations with both about North Dakota and the energy industry. We also learned more about the cooperatives that sent us on Youth Tour from representatives of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA).

Youth Tour truly is an "electric" opportunity. I'm so glad I decided to apply. Time spent writing a short essay is well spent, when the possible reward is an all-expense-paid trip to our nation's capital! Don't miss out on your chance at this once-in-a-lifetime experience! ■

Annaliese Rauschenberger, 17, is a senior at South Prairie High School, where she is involved in FFA, trapshooting, choir and student council. She enjoys participating in FFA, reading, beading and baking. Annaliese is the daughter of Gabe and Karlee Rauschenberger, members of Verendrye Electric Cooperative. During the Youth Tour, she was selected as the Youth Leadership Council delegate from North Dakota.

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DECEMBER: Share a favorite Christmas memory.
Deadline for submission: Nov. 11

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The 2022 Big Iron Farm Show Committee members represent a sampling of agribusinesses in the region. They include: **John Nowatzki**, NDSU; **Cole Peterson**, U.S. Bank; **Bridgette Readell**, Corteva Agriscience; **Chris Prochnow**, Agassiz Seed & Supply; **Terry Longtin**, Farmers National Company; **Jay Rehder**, Red River Farm Network; and **Jason Ehlert**, Ehlert Excavating

FALL IS IN (THE) AYR!

Stacy Nelson-Heising was a professional chef before operating her own orchard, cidery and restaurant on her family's fourth-generation farm near Ayr, about 20 miles northeast of Tower City. These apple-forward recipes are perfect for fall, and *trust us*, Stacy's apple cranberry crisp belongs on your Thanksgiving table!

Read Stacy's story on page 4.

APPLE CRANBERRY CRISP

FRUIT BASE:

- 2 cups fresh cranberries
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup hard cider, such as Cottonwood Cider House's "The Action," cranberry or apple juice
- 4-5 lbs. room-temperature apples, about 12-15*
- ¼ cup flour
- 1-2 tsp. cinnamon
- ½ cup sugar

OAT CRUMBLE TOPPING:

- 1 cup regular old-fashioned oats
- 1 cup flour
- 1 cup sugar
- 1-2 tsp. cinnamon
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- ¾ cup room-temperature butter

Combine cranberries, 1 cup sugar and hard cider in a pot over medium heat. Cook mixture until cranberries begin to burst and thicken a bit, about 20 minutes. Remove from heat and set aside.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Peel, core and dice apples. Toss apples with flour, cinnamon, ½ cup sugar and cranberry mixture. Pour into 9x13-inch baking dish and bake for 15 minutes. Stir, then bake an additional 15 minutes.

While apple-cranberry mixture is baking, prepare topping. Combine all topping ingredients together, mixing until crumbly. Put on top of pre-baked fruit. Bake an additional 20-30 minutes, until topping is browned and crispy. Serve warm or at room temperature with real whipped cream or ice cream.

* Try Haralson, Honeycrisp or Granny Smith varieties.

Recipe by **Stacy Nelson-Heising**
Cottonwood Farm and Cider House





CIDER HOUSE GRILLED CHEESE

- 2 slices crusty bread, like sourdough
- 3-4 slices Black Forest ham
- 1 T. Dijon mustard
- 2 tsp. apple butter
- ½ cup grated sharp cheddar cheese, or sliced cheese
- ¼ thinly sliced apple
- Softened butter

Warm pan. Butter two slices of bread. In-between the non-buttered sides of the bread, layer apple butter, Dijon mustard, apple slices, cheese and ham. Don't be stingy with the ham! Grill until cheese is melted and both sides are toasted.

*Recipe by Stacy Nelson-Heising
Cottonwood Farm and Cider House*

PHOTOS BY NDARECILIZA KESSEL

A brighter future for oilseeds

At a trade show last spring, I asked a soybean industry official, “What is the most exciting thing happening in your world these days?”



PHOTO BY CAMERON DENNEY

Al Gustin

Without hesitation, he said, “Renewable diesel.” He went on to explain there were two soybean processing plants planned for North Dakota, and at least some soybean oil from those plants would be converted to renewable diesel at a refinery near Dickinson. The renewable diesel, he said, would then be shipped to states like California.

Late this summer, I interviewed Barry Coleman, executive director of the Northern Canola Growers Association, about this new demand for oilseeds.

“Right now, 44% of the diesel used in California is biodiesel or renewable diesel, and soy oil is the main feedstock for that,” he said. The amount of soy oil used for food use is predicted to decrease in the United States in the coming 20 years, he said, and canola oil will be needed to fill that gap.

To a large degree, vegetable oils can be substituted

for each other. The vegetable oil you buy at the grocery store might be a blend of soybean, canola and sunflower oils. And the hope is that renewable diesel will soon be made from soybean oil, or sunflower oil, or canola oil or a blend of all three.

“It’s just incredible what we’re seeing going forward for the next 20 years in the oilseeds sector,” Coleman told me.

When I asked a sunflower industry official if renewable diesel could do for oilseeds what ethanol did for corn, he said “absolutely.” About one-third of the U.S. corn crop goes into ethanol production.

In March 1980, we went to Chuck Bahm’s farm south of New Salem to report on renewable fuels. Bahm was running a tractor diesel engine on 80% sunflower oil and 20% diesel, with just minor modifications to the engine.

“If I had an extractor today, I’d be making my own fuel and I’d be running it,” Bahm said. Grow your own diesel! It seemed, at the time, to be the logical direction we should be headed. Now, 40-plus years later, renewable diesel might be what Bahm and others like him were dreaming about. ■

Al Gustin is a retired farm broadcaster, active rancher and a member of Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative.

The graphic features a background of a sunset over a field with silhouettes of cows. The main title 'DAKOTA FARM & RANCH REPORT' is in large, bold, red and white letters. Below it, 'with Scott Bachmeier' is written in a smaller font. To the right, there are logos for 'iHeart MEDIA' (a red heart with radio waves), '1460 KLTC' (a blue and red logo), 'KBMR' (a logo with an American flag and the text 'Bismarck-Mandan's Original Country 1130'), 'KFYR 550 AM RADIO' (a logo with a microphone), and '91 Country KCJB' (a red and white logo).

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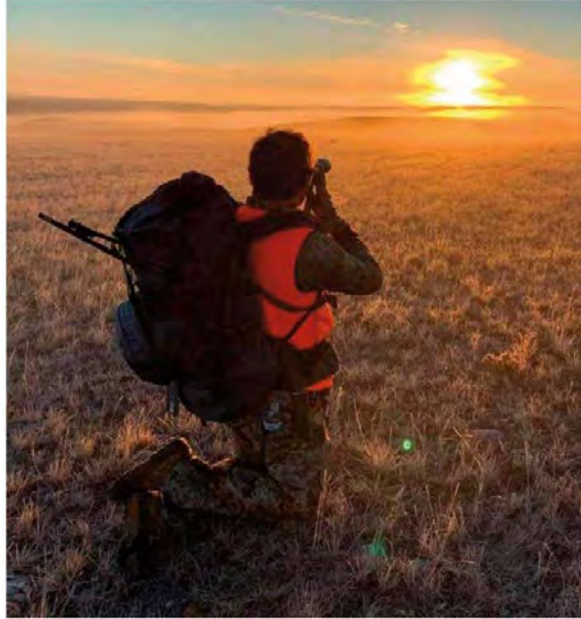
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