News, Photo & Special Awards

133rd Annual Convention
May 30 - June 1, 2019
Medora, ND
News & Editorial Awards
Reporting
Reporting: Small Weeklies

◆ Third Place
  ▪ Bowbells, Burke County Tribune
    Storm Hits
    Lisa Thomas

◆ Second Place
  ▪ Park River, Walsh County Press
    Hundred for Haiti x 10
    Allison Olimb
First Place

- Parshall, Mountrail County Record

A New School for Parshall

Jerry W. Kram

A NEW SCHOOL FOR PARSHALL

Bond referendum passes with 72 percent of the vote
Third Place
- Tioga Tribune
  Clean up takes 5 years, part one
  Jacob Orledge

Second Place
- Washburn, The Leader-News
  Swallowed by the river
  Alyssa Meier
Reporting: Mid-Size Weeklies

First Place

- Hazen Star

Weathering the storm: A tale of family and community

Daniel Arens

Weathering the storm:
A tale of family and community

BY DARRA ARENS

On a late Thursday evening at the Cotton house in Hazen, the wind picked up. It was shortly after the tornado warning was issued, and the Cotton family, like many in the area, was preparing for the worst.

Kayla Cotton and Josh Cotton stood in their front yard, watching the storms as they approached. The Cotton house, like many others in the area, was built to withstand such weather conditions. They were relieved to see that their house was intact.

The Cotton family has lived in Hazen for generations, and they have weathered many storms. They are proud of their community and the way they come together to support each other.

“Even though the storms were scary, we knew we were prepared,” said Kayla Cotton.

Storm Aftermath

The next day, the Cotton family was back to their normal routine. They were thankful for the safety of their home and the support of their community.

See Storm page 3
Honorable Mention
- Crosby, The Journal
  Pit Bull case
  Brad Nygaard

Third Place
- Bottineau Courant
  Rolette shooting
  Scott Wagar

Second Place
- Casselton, Cass County Reporter
  Crossing the Line
  Angela Kolden
Watford City, McKenzie County Farmer
Tornado destroys over 100 RVs
Neal A. Shipman
Honorable Mention
- Jamestown Sun
  Emotions strong at vigil for slain mother of two
  Tom LaVenture

Third Place
- Dickinson Press
  The Eyesore On Bible Camp Road
  James Miller

Second Place
- Williston Herald
  Judge wont allow late evidence in theft
  Jamie Kelly
We lost a true superhero last week – Jessy Haberman

With a deep dimple and twinkle in his eyes, Jessy smiled through it all.

BY KAREN SPEIDEL - DAILY NEWS

The world lost a superhero Monday morning, Feb. 29 to an 8-year-old

James “Jessy” Haberman

died at St. Mary’s Hospital in Rochester, Minn., while recovering from open heart surgery.

His parents, Jim and Heather Haberman of rural Wyndmere, North Dakota, say Jessy was their superhero. He never complained through the endless procedures, 15 surgeries, doctor’s visits or even when he wasn’t feeling good. Jessy smiled through it all, with that deep, deep dimple in his right cheek and twinkle in his eye — one blue and the other brown because God made him special, proclaimed his older sister McKinnlee. That’s what people remember best about this young boy, his charm and zest for life.

“One of my favorite moments was seeing him come out with his cape on and underwear on top of his head. He just stood there and said, “I am Super Underpants Man.” He did that to make me laugh.” Heather said, smiling through the tears over a beloved memory.

Wednesday morning she was planning what clothes to bring to the funeral home. She and Jim decided to dress Jessy in his favorite Batman shirt for the funeral. Jessy hated ties, the constriction, so the thought of making that her final act as his mother was something Heather would not do.

“He’s like me. He hates anything on his neck. I can’t do that. I can’t do that to him. Jim’s like, ‘then don’t. He can wear anything you like,’” she said, so the theme for
Reporting: Large Dailies

Honorable Mention
- Grand Forks Herald
  Troubling trend
  Pamela Knudson

Third Place
- Bismarck Tribune
  Questions remain after death of Bismarck child
  Blair Emerson

Second Place
- Grand Forks Herald
  Species in conflict
  Brad Dokken
First Place

- Fargo, The Forum of Fargo-Moorhead
  Homicide of NDSU freshman still a deep wound 4 years later

Kim Hyatt
REPORTING SERIES
Third Place
- Drayton, Valley News & Views
  Curb Side Recycling
  Lesa Van Camp

Second Place
- Elgin, Grant County News
  E/NL School Board asking for Building Fund Levy
  Jill Friesz
First Place

- Parshall, Mountrail County Record

Parshall seeks livable community designation

Jerry W. Kram

Parshall designated “Livable Community”

BY JERRY W. KRAM

After months of meetings and efforts to improve the quality of life in Parshall, about 30 people gathered at the El Patron Restaurant (formerly the Wrangler) to report on what they sought to improve that would benefit the community. By doing so, Parshall earned the designation as a North Dakota Livable Community.

Parshall is just the second community to earn this honor, after Watford City, located north of Jamestown. The city is also pursuing the designation as the other town in the second round of the pilot project. The program is being coordinated by the North Dakota Rural Development Office, in partnership with the Parshall-Mountrail County Livable Communities Initiative.

The Parshall program began in April when more than 20 students met at the Baptist Church to review what could be done. From there, a group of four commission members met to develop a list of projects that could be implemented to improve the community’s quality of life. The results are

- Full text continues on the following page.
Reporting Series: Mid-Size Weeklies

✧ Third Place
  - Hankinson, News-Monitor
    Richland students investigated for alleged misconduct
    Frank Stanko

✧ Second Place
  - Hillsboro Banner
    Norman County West tuition deal
    Cole Short
Survey offers insight on teen challenges

By Amy Wobbema and Rachel Brazil

The New Rockford Transcript is proud to present our first place entry in the Mid-Size Weeklies category. Our report, "Youth Risk Behavior Survey and Teen Challenges," offers valuable insights into the lives of our community's youth.

First Place

- New Rockford Transcript
- Youth Risk Behavior Survey and Teen Challenges
- Rachel Brazil, Amy Wobbema, Lora Wobbema
Reporting Series: Large Weeklies

ثالثین مکان
- بیستون، رپورتر کاػلتون، قایس کاػ کاػ کاػن
  - پروژه خورشیدی اول کشور؟
  - آنگلا کولدن

دومین مکان
- کروسبی، جنرال جورنال
  - اختلال شهری ویلدرس
  - براد نیگارد
City is running low on housing options

Is Watford City ready for another boom?

By Neal A. Shipman

Watford City, McKenzie County Farmer

Watford City is facing a housing crunch, with many people looking for homes, but few available. The city is also experiencing a population growth, with many people moving in from other areas. The city is looking into ways to address the housing shortage and accommodate the growing population.
Reporting Series: Small Dailies

Honorable Mention
- Dickinson Press
  Theodore Roosevelt Library Series
  Iain Woessner

Third Place
- Jamestown Sun
  Justice Lange leaves baby at slough
  Keith Norman, Tom LaVenture

Second Place
- Dickinson Press
  Correctional Facility On Chopping Block
  James Miller
First Place

Wahpeton, The Daily News

Richland 44 assaults

Frank Stanko

Richland 44 task force releases recommendations

Revised policies on sexual violence, cyberbullying expected as district implements empathy-building method

BY FRANK STANKO

“This is an opportunity to create a culture of respect and empathy,” said Richland 44 Superintendent Josh Jones. The task force was created in response to student reports of sexual violence and cyberbullying.

The task force consists of teachers, administrators, and other community members. They met regularly to discuss how to improve the district’s policies and procedures.

“I think we’re making progress,” said Jones. “We need to continue to work on this.”

The task force is expected to release its final report in the next few weeks.

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Outgoing school board member Heidi Foley, left, and incoming school board member Sarah Myers, right.

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“One of the biggest challenges we’ve faced is how to balance safety and privacy,” said Foley. “We need to make sure that everyone feels safe, but we also need to respect their privacy.”

The task force has recommended implementing new policies on sexual violence and cyberbullying.

“Sexual violence is never acceptable,” said Myers. “We need to do everything we can to prevent it.”

The task force has also recommended implementing new policies on cybersafety.

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Richland 44, PAGE 4
Reporting Series: Large Dailies

Honorable Mention
- Grand Forks Herald
  Marijuana
  April Baumgarten

Third Place
- Bismarck Tribune
  Davis Refinery and Theodore Roosevelt National Park
  Amy Dalrymple

Second Place
- Fargo, The Forum of Fargo-Moorhead
  Liquor license series
  Tu-Uyen Tran
Changing climate patterns are leading to increased temperatures and altered weather patterns, affecting agriculture and ecosystem health. A recent report by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) highlights the significant impacts of climate change on the Midwest region. The report reveals that temperatures are expected to increase at a rate faster than the global average, with the Midwest experiencing more frequent and intense heat waves due to rising greenhouse gas concentrations.

According to the report, the Midwest, known for its diverse agricultural landscape, will face challenges in adapting to new climate conditions. Farmers will need to adjust their cultivation practices, while city planners must prepare for increased urban heat islands. The report also underscores the importance of public health education, emphasizing the need for communities to be prepared for potential health risks, such as heat-related illnesses.

The Grand Forks Herald, a leading newspaper in North Dakota, has been recognized for its comprehensive coverage of climate change. Their reporting series, titled "Climate: Change on the Plains," has helped raise awareness about the region's vulnerability to climate change and the urgent need for adaptation strategies. The series has highlighted the stories of individuals and communities who are already feeling the impacts of climate change, offering a powerful narrative that underscores the importance of action.

"Climate: Change on the Plains" is a compelling example of how local journalism can make a significant impact by bringing complex scientific issues into the public conversation. The series has not only informed readers about the risks associated with climate change but has also inspired actions to mitigate these impacts. As the Midwest continues to adapt to the new climate reality, it is crucial to maintain such robust reporting to ensure that the region is prepared for the challenges ahead.
Feature Reporting: Small Weeklies

Honorable Mention
- New Town News
  French Cyclist
  Edna Sailor

Third Place
- New Town News
  Save the last dance
  Jerry W. Kram

Second Place
- Bowbells, Burke County Tribune
  Giving Globally
  Lisa Thomas
Feature Reporting: Small Weeklies

First Place

- Park River, Walsh County Press
  Connected to Mars
  Allison Olimb

By Allison Olimb

First Place: Park River, Walsh County Press
Connected to Mars
Allison Olimb
Feature Reporting: Mid-Size Weeklies

△ Honorable Mention
  ▪ Milnor, The Sargent County Teller
    Beating the odds... Bryan Gabel: The gift of life
    Mary Engst

△ Third Place
  ▪ Hillsboro Banner
    Brick by brick
    Cory Erickson

△ Second Place
  ▪ Hillsboro Banner
    Three little pigs
    Cole Short
Bald can be beautiful

In a show of solidarity, Hankinson students buzz off their hair to help a classmate—because after all, it really is only hair.

Karen Speidel

Hankinson, News-Monitor

Bald can be beautiful

Karen Speidel
Feature Reporting: Large Weeklies

Honorable Mention
- Casselton, Cass County Reporter
  Bottle Collector
  Angela Kolden

Third Place
- Watford City, McKenzie County Farmer
  Drilling for love
  Betsy Ryan

Second Place
- Watford City, McKenzie County Farmer
  On the road to recovery
  Neal A. Shipman
First Place

- Crosby, The Journal
Therapy dog is a hit
Brad Nygaard
Feature Reporting: Small Dailies

🌟 Third Place
- Williston Herald
  Local musician releases new album
  Mitch Melberg

🌟 Second Place
- Dickinson Press
  A beautiful backyard
  Sydney Mook
First Place

- Dickinson Press
  For the American Dream
  Iain Woessner
Feature Reporting: Large Dailies

- **Honorable Mention**
  - Bismarck Tribune
  - Story of survival
  - Amy Dalrymple

- **Third Place**
  - Grand Forks Herald
  - Pulse of the community
  - Bonnie Meibers

- **Second Place**
  - Minot Daily News
  - Grocers find rural niche
  - Jill Schramm
First Place

Fargo, The Forum of Fargo-Moorhead

I refused to quit fighting

Tracy Briggs
Feature Reporting Series
Feature Reporting Series: Small Weeklies

 FXMLLoader: Third Place

- New Town News
  Fun and fitness day
  Jerry W. Kram

FXMLLoader: Second Place

- New Town News
  The toughest stories
  Edna Sailor
Christmas Memories

Clinton Neff shares Christmas Memories

By ALLAN TINKER

Christmas memories of their early life
by Allan Tinker

McClusky Gazette

Christmas Memories

Allan Tinker

Clinton Neff enjoys his window view east from within his apartment at Sheridan Memorial Home.

Clinton Neff, the oldest of the four children of August and Amelia Neff, has one brother and two sisters. He recalled his home in town was the large house a block north of the high school.

Prior to living there they had lived in a farm home.

One day, while his parents were in town, the house caught fire. The children knew to call and their dad sent the fire truck and the truck and his parents got there at the same time.

Clinton was 12 at the time and his younger sister Eileen worked to save things from the house but they couldn’t get the dresser out so they took the dresser out and “saved a lot.”

The fire had started upstairs where there was a heater with electric (12 volt) batteries in it. Clinton thought that was what started the fire.

He recalled that at Christmas they always had a tree. “We would decorate it with most anything: popcorn strings, candy canes and real candles. Santa showed up and filled stockings with candy and fruit such as oranges and apples.

After the big farmhouse burned, they lived in a small house until moving to town.

They had turkey and pork for Christmas dinner and “lots of cookies and cake.”

He didn’t remember any special Christmas gifts but did recall the time he won a bicycle at the Wells County Fair. Even with his name in the wrong barrel when first drawn, when they put his name in the right barrel and drew again, he still was the winner.

The next year, his sister Beadie (Beatrice) wanted to go to the fair again as she wanted to win a bicycle, too. Again luck would have it, she did.

He recalled they always had big family get-togethers for Christmas.
Feature Reporting Series: Mid-Size Weeklies

Honorable Mention
- Tioga Tribune
  Cleanup takes 5 years and $93 million
  Jacob Orledge

Third Place
- New Rockford Transcript
  Summer Exploration series
  Transcript Staff

Second Place
- Hankinson, News-Monitor
  Point of View: Unsung heroes
  Karen Speidel, Carrie McDermott, Frank Stanko
Feature Reporting Series: Mid-Size Weeklies

First Place

- Hillsboro Banner
  Hillsboro teacher
  retirement
  Cory Erickson,
  Cole Short,
  Pace Maier
Feature Reporting Series: Large Weeklies

**Honorable Mention**
- Grafton, Walsh County Record
  4-H
- Sue Matcha

**Third Place**
- Crosby, The Journal
  Far and away: Filipino people find opportunity in ND
- Sydney Glasoe Caraballo

**Second Place**
- Watford City, McKenzie County Farmer
  Faces of the Patch
- Ashleigh Plempner
When teenagers move to the Bakken

With just $60 left in their pockets on arriving, two teenagers started their new life in Watford City.
Feature Reporting Series: Small Dailies

Third Place
- Valley City Times-Record
  Hi-Liners for Christ Group
  Tina Olson, Ellie Boese

Second Place
- Wahpeton, The Daily News
  Out and About
  Katie Betz
Feature Reporting Series: Small Dailies

First Place
- Wahpeton, The Daily News
  POV A Day in the Life
  Julie Bezenek, Frank Stanko, Karen Speidel

Mrs. Claus tells all

There comes a time, usually just before the sleigh takes off on Christmas Eve, recalls Mrs. Claus, I think to myself, I really am lucky. It’s usually followed by, “We really are lucky.” Make no mistake, no matter your age, you’re still one of Santa’s boys and girls.

Her life at the North Pole, the perks of a 500-year-old marriage and why it helps to remember the names of each and every elf

Point of View

My name is Jessica Kristen Knight, I’m Mrs. Claus, the queen of the North Pole. When I first married Santa in December of 1986, I was excited to join in the fun and festivities of the holidays. However, I soon realized that being Mrs. Claus was not as easy as it seemed.

The job of Mrs. Claus is not for the faint of heart. We work long hours, often until the wee hours of the morning. The stress of keeping track of all the children’s names and addresses can be overwhelming at times.

But the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow is the joy of seeing the delight on the faces of children around the world. It makes all the hard work worth it.

Times change. The world seems a lot bigger. We get smarter. Santa still pulls all nighters closer to Christmas Eve. For the rest of the year, we rely on our special “naughty or nice” map system. We use Google Alerts before Google Alerts, but I’m not bitter, it is better to give rather than receive.

Deciding is one of the ways I must give back to the North Pole community. There’s few things I enjoy more than trimming trees, arranging knick-knacks and hanging lights.

I enjoy spreading joy not only my home, but the land around me. That’s actually love Santa and I met.
Feature Reporting Series: Large Dailies

★ Third Place
  - Fargo, The Forum of Fargo-Moorhead
  - Celebrating champion volunteers
  - Forum staff

★ Second Place
  - Bismarck Tribune
  - Heitkamp-Cramer
  - Jack Dura
Feature Reporting Series: Large Dailies

First Place
- Grand Forks Herald
  Hometown heart
  Staff
Government Reporting
Gov’t. Reporting: Small Weeklies

◆ Third Place
  - Parshall, Mountrail County Record
    Cold Makes Water Meters a Hot Topic
    Jerry W. Kram

◆ Second Place
  - McClusky Gazette
    Rumors running wild discussed at special meeting
    Allan Tinker
Gov’t Reporting: Small Weeklies

First Place

- New Town News
- Rally speaks to Native American power
- Jerry W. Kram

Rally speaks to Native American power

By JERRY W. KRAM

Native American power and influence were on display in the heart of downtown New Town at the rally to support Native American rights and sovereignty. The rally was held at the central plaza, where hundreds of people gathered to hear speakers and discuss the issues affecting their communities.

Voting problems in Four Bears

By JERRY W. KRAM

Four Bears, a Native American reservation, has been facing voting problems for the past few years. The community is working to overcome these obstacles and ensure fair elections for all its residents.
Gov’t. Reporting: Mid-Size Weeklies

Honorable Mention
- Tioga Tribune
  Letters detail testy personal dispute at city
  Jacob Orledge

Third Place
- Hankinson, News-Monitor
  Ready to light up a joint?
  Karen Speidel

Second Place
- Hillsboro Banner
  Hillsboro School Board restricting MN transfers
  Cole Short
Gov’t. Reporting: Mid-Size Weeklies

First Place

- Hankinson, News-Monitor
  Life of an inspector
  Carrie McDermott

“Each day at work is different for Breckenridge city employee Joel Holstad. As the city’s building official, he issues all permits for buildings, signs, and sidewalks, inspects construction projects to ensure codes are met, answers zoning questions including those relating to the flood plain, and he can help with property lines on new city developments. He’s also the city’s codes administrator, the city’s engineering technician, and its GIS coordinator. “Every day is different. Some days, I have no inspections scheduled, but then I get three different calls,” Holstad said. “Inspect everything if it’s a new home, from the footings all the way up to the roof, for code issues. Anyway, the Minnesota code doesn’t deal with...”
Gov’t Reporting: Large Weeklies

Honorable Mention
- Casselton, Cass County Reporter
  ‘Share your Truth’
  Angela Kolden

Third Place
- Bottineau Courant
  City-County police budget at a stalemate
  Scott Wagar

Second Place
- Crosby, The Journal
  Group texts by Wildrose officials ruled illegal
  Brad Nygaard
County wants junkyard to meet state rules

County commissioners agree to hire Johnson & Sundeen Law Office to handle lawsuit bringing owner of Novak Junkyard into state compliance

By Neal A. Shipman
Editor

The McKenzie County Board of County Commissioners has grown tired of an unsightly junkyard next to U.S. Highway 85, north of Alexander, and has hired an attorney to begin legal proceedings to bring the site into compliance with North Dakota state law.

The junkyard, which is owned by Tom Novak, is filled with old campers and assorted vehicles and is located within 1,000 feet of the highway. And that proximity to the highway makes it a violation of state law.

"It has been an eyesore for so long," states Jim Talbert, McKenzie County Planning and Zoning director. "And it continues to grow.

During the board's meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 6, Talbert told the commissioners rather than to pursue corrective action by enforcing county zoning regulations, it would be better to use state laws that follow the Federal Highway Beautification Act.

"We think it makes more sense to follow state laws and to hire outside counsel to work with the state's attorney office to bring this to resolution," stated Talbert.

Chas Neff, McKenzie County state's attorney, agreed with Talbert's recommendation to hire an outside law firm due to the length of time that a lawsuit could last.

Art Johnson, an attorney with the Watford City law firm of Johnson & Sundeen, was subsequently hired to represent the county in the lawsuit. He told the commissioners that it would be easy to show that the junkyard is in violation of state law.

"The junkyard is in violation of the Federal Highway Beautification Act," stated Johnson as he recommended that the county institute a lawsuit to force the cleanup. "We have to prove that a junkyard was established along the highway right of way. That's easy to prove."

According to North Dakota Century Code 25-16, no junkyards, automobile graveyards, or scrap metal processing facilities may be established and maintained within 1,000 feet of the nearest edge of the right of way of a highway on the state highway system unless permission has been granted by the North Dakota Dept. of Transportation (NDDOT) director. Junkyards outside of violation of NOCC 25-16 are declared to be a public nuisance.

Talbert told the commission that he has been in contact with the NDDOT and indicated that the agency is in full support of the junkyard's removal.

According to Talbert, it is his understanding that Novak has the option to remove the junkyard or to have it moved.

See Junkyard (Continued on Page 3)
Gov’t Reporting: Small Dailies

**Third Place**
- Wahpeton, The Daily News
  - No. 1 reason children in foster care is parental drug use
  - Carrie McDermott

**Second Place**
- Williston Herald
  - PSC admonishes representatives of Kinder Morgan
  - Renée Jean
Gov’t. Reporting: Small Dailies

‘There’s no special treatment’
Sheriff Oestreich defends against allegations of hostile workplace

By James B. Miller, Jr.
The Dickinson Press

As the Stark County election looms, multiple sources have come forward with information which paints the Stark County Sheriff’s Department as a toxic, retaliatory and predatory work environment, rife with mismanagement and a “good ol’ boys” leadership system.

Stark County Sheriff Terry Oestreich’s biggest challenger, Sgt. Corey Lee, previously stated that the sheriff’s department’s turnover rate was 86 percent.

Two recently-terminated deputies, Ray Kaylor and Ben Jarrett, spoke with The Press about the environment within the department.

Jarrett was fired in late 2017 for “not being truthful” and “intimidating a teacher” according to Oestreich, while Kaylor was terminated this past month for “violating a policy” in his “divisive” remarks.

The allegations raised by the two former deputies and other sources close to the sheriff’s department point to a hostile work environment being responsible for high turnover rates within the department.

OESTREICH: Page A3

First Place
Dickinson Press
There’s No Special Treatment
James Miller
Gov’t. Reporting: Large Dailies

Honorable Mention
- Bismarck Tribune
  Critter creates a ruckus
  Lauren Donovan

Third Place
- Fargo, The Forum of Fargo-Moorhead
  'One of our greatest challenges'
  Helmut Schmidt

Second Place
- Fargo, The Forum of Fargo-Moorhead
  3 Clay County sheriff candidates have discipline on records
  Robin Huebner
Gov’t. Reporting: Large Dailies

First Place

- Fargo, The Forum of Fargo-Moorhead

Some spills don't count

Patrick Springer

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SOME SPILLS DON’T COUNT

80 percent of ND oil spills wouldn’t have been reported under new law

By Patrick Springer
pgspringer@forumcomm.com

Fargo

A recently adopted higher threshold for reporting spills in North Dakota’s Oil Patch, if applied to a current five-year period, would mean 80 percent of oil spills and 69 percent of toxic saltwater spills would have gone unreported, an analysis by The Forum shows.

North Dakota long had one of the lowest reporting thresholds among major oil-producing states, requiring all oil and saltwater spills of at least one barrel, or 42 gallons, to be reported. As of August 2017, the threshold was raised to 30 barrels, or 1,260 gallons, for oil and saltwater spills contained in a well site, meaning that fewer spills have to be reported.

In terms of volumes, 9 percent of the oil reported spilled in North Dakota’s Oil Patch from 2013 through 2017 would have gone unreported under the new reporting requirements, while 6 percent of saltwater would have gone unreported, according to The Forum’s analysis of reports compiled by health officials.

The higher reporting threshold only applies to oil wells drilled after Sept. 1, 2000, when new standards for well construction, including measures to contain spills, took effect. In analyzing spill reports compiled by the North Dakota Department of Health, it wasn’t
Government Reporting Series
Government Series: Small Weeklies

Honorable Mention
- McClusky Gazette
  Budget, benefit, Brenda and bow-wows
  Allan Tinker

Third Place
- Drayton, Valley News & Views
  Recycling
  Lesa Van Camp

Second Place
- Park River, Walsh County Press
  Proposed restaurant requests
  PR liquor ordinance variant
  Allison Olimb
Wind Farm Approved at County Level

Mixed Reactions on Wind Farm Decision from County Residents & Officials

Two County Measures on November Ballot

First Place

- Bowbells, Burke County Tribune
  Wind Farm Controversy
  Lisa Thomas, Lyann Olson
Government Series: Mid-Size Weeklies

✨ Honorable Mention
- Tioga Tribune
  Understaffed Tioga police
  Jacob Orledge

✨ Third Place
- Tioga Tribune
  Tioga city data breach
  Cecile Wehrman, Traci Papineau

✨ Second Place
- Hankinson, News-Monitor
  Point of View CDC programs helping communities thrive
  Karen Speidel, Carrie McDermott, Frank Stanko
First Place

Hillsboro Banner
Nielsville Bridge coverage
Cole Short

Grant application for Nielsville bridge submitted to feds

By COLE SHORT

BLJ Engineering has submitted a federal grant application on behalf of Traill and Polk counties seeking money to pay for a new Red River bridge west of Nielsville, Minn.

Matt Lange, a BLJ engineer, told the Traill County Board of Commissioners on Tuesday that his firm fired off the application prior to Thursday’s deadline.

The counties are hoping to tap into $1.5 billion in federal funds available through the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) grant program.

The program will distribute grants to a variety of road, bridge and rail projects across the country with 30 percent of grants going to rural areas.

Traill and Polk counties were rejected on their first two attempts seeking grants to pay for a new Nielsville bridge through the Obama administration’s popular TIGER (Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery) grant program.

However, the revamped BUILD grant program has tripled the amount of federal money available for infrastructure projects.

Lange told county officials in May that he planned to collect more data showing how farmers and businesses have been affected since the closing of the Nielsville bridge in 2015.

Lange said on Tuesday that American Crystal Sugar Co. and TranSCAN both submitted information showing the impact of the bridge’s closure had on the companies.

“We had great data from the local businesses ... to help tell the story and give quantifiable information in the grant that we didn’t have before,” he said.

BRIDGE

Continued on page 7

The Red River bridge near Nielsville, Minn., has been closed since September 2015 after a hole was discovered in the deck of the bridge. Traill and Polk county commissioners are seeking a federal transportation grant to help pay for a new bridge at the site of the existing structure.
Government Series: Large Weeklies

◊ Third Place
  - Watford City, McKenzie County Farmer
    2018 City-County tax initiatives
    Neal A. Shipman

◊ Second Place
  - Crosby, The Journal
    Controversial sheriff's race
    Brad Nygaard
Voters have three ways to vote in the November General Election

County residents should have received Vote by Mail applications

By Betsy Ryan

Watford City, McKenzie County Farmer
2018 County Election series
Betsy Ryan

Election are expensive and we have election equipment that was nearing the end of its life cycle," Horan said. "Also, the voters in the town that have been an increased in vote turnout."

Watford City has also added an additional option for voters to cast their vote in person at the county's vote-by-mail office in Watford City. The office is open from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. weekly.

In the first primaries, McKenzie County saw a higher number of voters turn out than any previous primary election with 874 residents choosing to cast their vote by mail.

"In 2012, we had 5,494 eligible voters in the county," Horan said. "In 2018 that number was up to 6,100 votes based on DOT records."

In vote by mail, voters must fill out the votes in their mail applications and return it to the county by hand in the drop box in the office. Those who return their application to the county, they can pick up their ballot on the spot to take home and vote or vote in the Absentee Office. They also have the option to return the ballot in the mail, the delivery address of the ballot, or by hand in the county's vote-by-mail office.

To vote in person on Nov. 6, McKenzie County residents can go to the polling center at the Watford City Civic Center at 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Government Series: Small Dailies

Honorable Mention
- Wahpeton, The Daily News
  Diversion fight series
  Frank Stanko

Third Place
- Williston Herald
  Williston airport coverage
  Mitch Melberg

Second Place
- Williston Herald
  Farm Bill coverage
  Renée Jean
'HIGH ANXIETY'
Presidential Library project faces 'dissonance' on its board

By Iain Woessner

Following a decision to delay the Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum for two years to allow for the construction of a new, larger and more expensive building, the project's backers are experiencing a sense of unease.

"We received a lot of pushback from the community," said Library Director Sarah Brown. "They wanted us to move forward and not stall the project." The decision was made after a meeting with members of the Library's advisory committee.

Iain Woessner, who covered the project for the Dickinson Press, said the move has left many feeling uncertain about the future of the Library.

"I believe this explains the hesitation people have had to support the project, given the uncertainty," Woessner said. "It's a bittersweet victory for us."
Third Place
- Grand Forks Herald
  Thief River Falls City Hall fight
  April Baumgarten, Tess Williams

Second Place
- Fargo, The Forum of Fargo-Moorhead
  Secretary of State campaign scandal
  Tu-Uyen Tran, Patrick Springer, Ryan Johnson, John Hageman
Doing more with less

North Dakota juvenile justice system looking ahead amid budget cuts

Jack Dura
Bismarck Tribune
Juvenile Justice
Jack Dura
Spot News: Small Weeklies

Second Place
- New Town News
  New Town teacher dies in collision
  Jerry W. Kram
Spot News: Small Weeklies

First Place

- Elgin, Grant County News
  Fire claims Dakota Farm Equipment
  Jill Friesz
Spot News: Mid-Size Weeklies

Honorable Mention
- Hankinson, News-Monitor
  Lidgerwood Market destroyed
  Karen Speidel

Third Place
- Tioga Tribune
  Alleged heroin overdose
  leads police to investigate Tioga bar
  Jacob Orledge

Second Place
- New Rockford Transcript
  Herman sentenced for role in Engst murder
  Amy Wobberma
Hillsboro Banner

‘The water came up really, really fast’
Cole Short, Cory Erickson
Spot News: Large Weeklies

★ Third Place
- Grafton, Walsh County Record
  Commissioner facing numerous charges
  Todd Morgan

★ Second Place
- Crosby, The Journal
  One dead, four injured in MT rollover
  Brad Nygaard
Minto trailer house a total loss

A fire swept through Raul and Kayla Rodriguez’s home late Saturday afternoon. Donations for clothes can be dropped off at the Minto Fire Hall.

Cause of fire unknown

MINTO – A Minto family lost everything in a Saturday night house fire. The family was home at the time, but made it out safely, according to Minto Volunteer Fire Department Chief Mark Wilson.

The community is collecting clothing items for Raul and Kayla Rodriguez and their two daughters, whose trailer home was a total loss in the house fire that also claimed one of their dogs on Aug. 25. A second dog and a cat were saved.

Minto Volunteer Fire Department responded to the call and was assisted by Grafton Volunteer Fire. See FIRE on page A-3.
Spot News: Small Dailies

Honorable Mention
- Wahpeton, The Daily News
  July 4 storm takes down trees, damages buildings
  Carrie McDermott

Third Place
- Dickinson Press
  Stark County Auditor Arrested for DUI
  Harvey Brock

Second Place
- Williston Herald
  6-day-old killed, dozens injured, hundreds displaced
  Jamie Kelly
Spot News: Small Dailies

First Place

- Wahpeton, The Daily News

Friday: Two Fire Responses

Carrie McDermott, Frank Stanko
Spot News: Large Dailies

♦ Third Place
  - Fargo, The Forum of Fargo-Moorhead
    "This is a sad day in West Fargo"
    Kim Hyatt

♦ Second Place
  - Fargo, The Forum of Fargo-Moorhead
    "Imminent deadly threat"
    Wendy Reuer
Spot News: Large Dailies

First Place
- Bismarck Tribune
  Storm slams Watford
  Amy Dalrymple
Business News Reporting: Small Weeklies

💎 Third Place
- New Town News
- Taxi Joe
- Jerry W. Kram

💎 Second Place
- Parshall, Mountrail County Record
- On the Rise
- Jerry W. Kram
Getting Stronger: Safe-T-Pull, Inc. gains new, familiar product line

By Allison Olimb of The Press

PARK RIVER, N.D. — Safe-T-Pull, Inc., of Park River recently announced the acquisition of The Strong Box from Walhalla-based B.L. Industries.

The Kringstad family has been operating its manufacturing businesses since the ’90s, developing and incorporating products with one guiding premise through the years – there has got to be a better way. Their latest acquisition came about because of what Production Manager Alek Kringstad referred to as “a perfect storm.”

Safe-T-Pull Vice President Jacob

Safe-T-Pull
Cont. page 7
Business News Reporting: Mid-Size Weeklies

Third Place
- Washburn, The Leader-News
  New clothing outlet opens
  Alyssa Meier

Second Place
- Tioga Tribune
  Aurora Wind Project
  Brad Nygaard
Longtime grocers Dale and Doris Bakken reflect on a lifetime spent serving shoppers

By CURT BEGGS

A fire at the John Dean dealership in Hillsboro recently forced Dale and Doris Bakken to move their business to a new location. The new site is a former Ace Hardware store, which has been converted to a supermarket. The Bakkens have been working in supermarkets for more than 30 years and have been in the food distribution business for 40 years. Dale and his wife plan to retire this month and will sell the store to Miller's Fresh Foods in May. Miller's is a new grocery store that has been planning to open in Hillsboro for several months.

Dale and Doris Bakken own a business that has been in the food distribution business for 40 years. When asked why they chose to move their business, Dale said, "We love the community and the people. We have been here for a long time and we want to continue serving the community." Doris added, "We have been working in supermarkets for a long time and we love the people. We want to continue serving the community." Dale's Food Pride sold to Miller's Fresh Foods; new owner plans updates

By CURT BEGGS

The owners of Dale's Food Pride in Hillsboro announced on Monday that they have agreed to sell the store to Miller's Fresh Foods, a new grocery store that has been planning to open in Hillsboro for several months. Miller's is a new grocery store that has been planning to open in Hillsboro for several months.

Dale Bakken said he and his wife, Doris, are planning to retire and have sold the store to Miller's, who owns several grocery stores in the North Dakota area. The sale is expected to be finalized later this month.

"We're delighted to welcome Miller's to Hillsboro," Miller said. "We want to add a new grocery store to the community and we're excited to be a part of it."
Business News Reporting: Large Weeklies

Third Place
- Grafton, Walsh County Record
  Shakti Moon
  Todd Morgan

Second Place
- Crosby, The Journal
  Familiar faces get new duties at St. Luke's
  Brad Nygaard
Watford City pair opens Burrito Bros

Watford City, McKenzie County Farmer

Betsy Ryan
Business News Reporting: Small Dailies

Third Place
- Wahpeton, The Daily News
  Business suspended at Wahpeton's Oasis
  Frank Stanko

Second Place
- Wahpeton, The Daily News
  RDO in Breckenridge adds 9 jobs, bulk oil
  Carrie McDermott
Bakken jobs bubble bigger than reported
State losing millions in tax revenues with unfilled positions

BY RENÉE JEAN
RJEAN@WILLISTONHERALD.COM

The jobs bubble in North Dakota has grown much larger than has been reported, but no one is certain how much bigger it’s getting to be. Nor has the state done any particular studies on how much revenue it’s losing from the thousands and thousands of positions that are going unfilled, and the activity that isn’t occurring as a result.

Jobs in North Dakota tend to trend up and down with oil prices, of course. They can get quite large — like a price bubble — which means they can also suddenly disappear, when oil prices suffer a big downturn.

North Dakota Job Services has estimated that the state’s current jobs bubble is 14,000 statewide — a brand new Jamestown, if all of the positions were filled.

But Gov. Doug Burgum, while he was visiting Williston, said many employers have told him that their job postings only represent a fraction of their actual job openings. Companies are listing one or two positions with Job Services, but hiring 10, 20 or even 100 people from that.

“There could be 20, 25,000 job openings in our state,” Burgum suggested, based on that.

The North Dakota Office of the State Tax Commis-
Business News Reporting: Large Dailies

Third Place
- Grand Forks Herald
  Energy boom, carbon cost
  Bonnie Meibers

Second Place
- Grand Forks Herald
  Exporters: Trade agreement tip of the iceberg
  Emily Allen
First Place

- Fargo, The Forum of Fargo-Moorhead

Fraud: Costly, painful and all too common

Helmut Schmidt
Sports Page: Small Weeklies

Third Place
- Drayton, Valley News & Views
  Boys and Girls Basketball
  Lyle Van Camp, Lesa Van Camp

Second Place
- Park River, Walsh County Press
  Walsh County Press - Sports Page
  Allison Olimb, Larry Biri, Kevin Skavhaug
One upset to go

Mandaree faces Watford City for State Tournament Berth

By JEFF W. MASON

Wildcats protect their house on Parents’ Night

By JEFF W. MASON

New Town, Panhall, wind up boys season

By JEFF W. MASON

First Place

- New Town News
- New Town News Staff
Sports Page: Mid-Size Weeklies

Honorable Mention
- Tioga Tribune
  Tioga sports pages
  Jody Michael

Third Place
- Washburn, The Leader-News
  Miners, Cardinals each take a win
  Alyssa Meier

Second Place
- Carrington, Foster County Independent
  Sports Section
  Erik Gjovik
Sports Page: Mid-Size Weeklies

First Place
- Hillsboro Banner
  Hillsboro Banner Sports
  Pace Maier
Sports Page: Large Weeklies

 saliva

Third Place
- Watford City, McKenzie County Farmer
  Feb. 28, Sept. 19, Oct. 17
  Neal A. Shipman

Second Place
- Grafton, Walsh County Record
  18-Apr
  Chelsea Wysocki
DCR goes unbeaten at Colorado tourney

First Place

Bottineau Courant

Matthew Semisch
Sports Page: Small Dailies

Third Place
- Devils Lake Journal
  DLJ Sports Section
  Chris Harris

Second Place
- Wahpeton, The Daily News
  Sports
  Turner Blaufuss
First Place

- Dickinson Press
- The Next Level
- Shelby Reardon,
- Patrick Bernadeau,
- Forum Designers
Sports Page: Large Dailies

Honorable Mention
- Fargo, The Forum of Fargo-Moorhead
  Forum sports pages
  Forum staff

Third Place
- Minot Daily News
  Spring Sports Coverage
  Alex Eisen, Ashton Gerard, Rex Larson

Second Place
- Bismarck Tribune
  Bismarck Tribune Sports
  Dave Selvig
Sports Page: Large Dailies

First Place

- Minot Daily News
  Winter Sports Coverage
  Alex Eisen, Garrick Hodge,
  Ashton Gerard, Rex Larson
Sports Reporting
Sports Reporting: Small Weeklies

💎 **Third Place**
- New Town News
  - Warriors fall short
  - Jerry W. Kram

💎 **Second Place**
- Bowbells, Burke County Tribune
  - Hinds
  - Lisa Thomas
Hoops, hoops and more hoops

By TIM HANSON

The Trojans played the next games last week, facing four games in two days and three nights. The Trojans played games against Tower/ Graceville, Pickensville, and Mountain View. The Trojans won all three games.

McClusky Gazette scored 53 points in a win against Tower/ Graceville. Pickensville scored 50 points in a win against Mountain View. The Trojans scored 49 points in a win against Mountain View.

McClusky Gazette

Saturday, February 10, 2023

First Place

McClusky Gazette

Hoops, hoops and more hoops

Tim Hanson
Sports Reporting: Mid-Size Weeklies

❖ Honorable Mention
  • Hankinson, News-Monitor
    LOOKING to make HISTORY
    Karen Speidel

❖ Third Place
  • Hillsboro Banner
    Beasts in the East
    Pace Maier

❖ Second Place
  • Carrington, Foster County Independent
    On Target
    Erik Gjovik
CARDINALS FALL IN FINAL INNING

Wilton-Wing takes one-run victory over Washburn

BY ALYSSA MEIER

The Wilton-Wing football team didn’t expect to lose to Washburn in their last game of the season. However, Washburn scored a unexpected touchdown in the final inning, leading to the Wilton-Wing team’s unexpected loss.

The game started off with Washburn scoring a quick touchdown, but the Wilton-Wing team quickly tied the score back up. The rest of the game was a back-and-forth battle, with both teams scoring multiple times.

As the game progressed, Washburn began to gain the upper hand, scoring more touchdowns than the Wilton-Wing team. The game became fierce and intense, with both teams fighting hard to win.

In the final inning, Washburn scored a touchdown that proved to be the game-winning score. The Wilton-Wing team tried to come back, but it was too late. The final score was 18-17, with Washburn winning the game.

The Wilton-Wing team was disappointed with the loss, but they knew they had given their best effort. They vowed to come back stronger next year and challenge Washburn for the championship.

The coach of the Wilton-Wing team expressed his pride for his team’s performance throughout the season, despite the final game’s outcome. He praised the team’s teamwork and dedication, stating that they had made tremendous progress over the season.
Sports Reporting: Large Weeklies

◊ Third Place
  - Grafton, Walsh County Record
    Spoilers battle, take Aggies to 10
  - Chelsea Wysocki

◊ Second Place
  - Crosby, The Journal
    DC football coaches praise upcoming realignment
  - Jody Michael
First Place

- Bottineau Courant

W-N undergoes coaching change mid-tournament

Matthew Semisch

W-N undergoes coaching change mid-tournament

Former assistant coach bumped up after Sioux’s first-year head coach steps away from program

By Matthew Semisch
Bottineau Courant

Westhope-Newburg’s girls basketball program experienced a jolt Friday when first-year coach Cedric Roberts resigned a third of the way through the District 11 tournament. The night before, W-N outlasted Dedo 58-56 in overtime in the teams’ quarterfinal game in Velva. They were tied 25-25 at halftime and again at 37-37 after three quarters before the Sioux finished on the right side of lead changes down the stretch. Roberts told the Bottineau Courant in an interview Sunday that, midway through the second quarter, he chose to rest a Sioux player carrying two fouls out of the four she could give before fouling out on a fifth. W-N was in no real danger not having her on the floor at that point, Roberts reasoned, but he said the player was put back in the game without him being consulted. “Our team had a game plan and they had a scouting report and they...
Sports Reporting: Small Dailies

Third Place
- Wahpeton, The Daily News
  Petermann has new meaning for life post-surgery
  Turner Blaufuss

Second Place
- Dickinson Press
  Back To State
  Patrick Bernadeau
First Place

- Jamestown Sun

CLASS OF 2018:
inducted in N.D.
Sports Hall of Fame

Mike Savaloja
Sports Reporting: Large Dailies

Honorable Mention
- Bismarck Tribune
  Irving visits Standing Rock
  Dave Selvig

Third Place
- Grand Forks Herald
  UND, donor at odds over logo
  Tom Miller

Second Place
- Fargo, The Forum of Fargo-Moorhead
  'That wrecked me'
  Chris Murphy
HAZARDOUS OCCUPATION

By Brad E. Schlossman

Riding this很多人 say I should stay away, but I want to stay. I want to be in the game. I want to be on the ice. I want to be a hockey referee. It's dangerous, but it's what I love. I want to be out there, making calls, making decisions. I want to be part of the game. I want to be able to say I was there, I was part of it. I want to be able to tell my kids that I was there, I was a part of it. I want to be able to say I was there, I was part of the action. I want to be able to say I was there, I was part of the game. I want to be able to say I was there, I was part of the action. I want to be able to say I was there, I was part of the game. I want to be able to say I was there, I was part of the action. I want to be able to say I was there, I was part of the game. I want to be able to say I was there, I was part of the action.

Being a college hockey ref is a part-time job that can lose money. Dan Dreger found that out firsthand.

PHOTOGRAPHER: Alen Shabanzadeh

Grand Forks Herald

Hazardous occupation, puck to the face

Brad E. Schlossman

First Place

- Grand Forks Herald
Sports Reporting Series
First Place

Elgin, Grant County News
Grant County Coyotes
State Bound
Jill Friesz
Sports Series: Mid-Size Weeklies

♦ Third Place
  ▪ Carrington, Foster County Independent
    M-P-B Thunder girls' basketball
    Erik Gjovik

♦ Second Place
  ▪ Hillsboro Banner
    H-CV boys basketball title coverage
    Pace Maier
RISING Star

First Place

- Hankinson, News-Monitor
  Rising Star: Speedster has one job to keep running
  Karen Speidel
Sports Series: Large Weeklies

Third Place
- Crosby, The Journal
  Softball program series
  Jody Michael

Second Place
- Grafton, Walsh County Record
  PR-F-L Aggies Baseball State Tournament
  Chelsea Wysocki
Sports Series: Large Weeklies

Kug takes FCS offer

DCB graduate accepts full ride from NC. Central

By Matthew Simonich

Former DCB offensive lineman Deing Kug has been
accepted to NC. Central on a full ride. He
made the decision to go to NC Central after a
visit to the school and seeing the facilities and
environment. Kug previously played for
the Bottineau Courant and was recruited by
Matthew Semisch.

First Place

- Bottineau Courant
- Deing Kug Recruitment
- Matthew Semisch
Sports Series: Small Dailies

 دمشق Place
- Jamestown Sun
  Park River-Fordville-Lankin win State title
  Mitchell Johnson

 دمشق Place
- Wahpeton, The Daily News
  Breck boys basketball coverage
  Turner Blaufuss
Central Cass wins state 'B' softball title

Sweep swats Squirrels to victory

By Michael Savaloja
The Jamestown Sun

Madison Sweep put on a show Thursday in the quarterfinals of the state Class B softball tournament at Trapper Field. The Central Cass senior shortstop went 4-for-4 at the plate against Watford City, accounting for all of the Squirrels' 13 runs in a 13-3, six-inning victory over the Wolves. The all-state Sweep finished with a homer, a double, six RBIs, five runs scored and a walk.

Central Cass will play Minot Bishop Ryan in tonight's semifinals at 6 p.m. "It's all a team effort," said Sweepey, who said she'll be playing softball at Dordt College Community College (Kan.) of the National Junior College Athletic Association next season. "I wouldn't have been able to hit all those girls is if they didn't do their job and get on base."

Sweep's biggest blow came in the bottom of the fourth and fifth innings. She first drilled a bases-clearing fly-ball to center field to lead off the fourth. A sacrifice fly to deep left in the fifth put the Sweep ahead, 13-3.
Sports Series: Large Dailies

**Honorable Mention**
- Minot Daily News
  - Minotauros Playoff Run
  - Alex Eisen

**Third Place**
- Grand Forks Herald
  - NCHC series
  - Brad E. Schlossman

**Second Place**
- Grand Forks Herald
  - Engelstad vs Kennedy
  - Andrew Haffner, Tom Miller, Sydney Mook
First Place

- Fargo, The Forum of Fargo-Moorhead
- Bison playoffs
- Mike McFeely, Jeff Kolpack, Eric Peterson
Sports Feature: Small Weeklies

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Third Place
- Park River, Walsh County Press
  Park River teen shines a light on Shrine Bowl
  Allison Olimb

Second Place
- New Town News
  Boxer's living legacy
  Jerry W. Kram
Sports Feature: Small Weeklies

First Place

- Drayton, Valley News & Views
- Bombers Return

Lyle Van Camp

Bombers Football Set to Return to Drayton High School
School Board votes to Participate in Six Man Football Next Fall

For years, the Drayton High School Bombers football program has been one of the smallest in the province. However, with the addition of six-man football to the school board’s agenda, the Bombers are set to return to the gridiron next fall.

As Lyle Van Camp reports, the Bombers were last seen on the field in 2013, when they faced off against the Indian Head Warriors. Since then, the program has been on hold due to financial constraints and a lack of players.

But with the new format, the Bombers are back in action. "We’re excited to see the Bombers back on the field," said Drayton High School Principal, Mr. Thompson. "It’s great to see the community come together for our athletes."
Sports Feature: Mid-Size Weeklies

第三个名次
- Hillsboro Banner
  3x champ
  Pace Maier

第二个名次
- Hankinson, News-Monitor
  Programs stress being physically active
  Turner Blaufuss
Love of the game

Jamie Mauch was renowned for his 3-point shooting in his high school and college careers, but as a freshman for the Hankinson Pirates, he only tried eight 3-point shots, a holdover from his elementary coach who made him run crunchers.

First Place

- Hankinson, News-Monitor
  - Love of the game
  - Karen Speidel
Sports Feature: Large Weeklies

◊ Third Place
- Watford City, McKenzie County Farmer
  Berquist, Hepper named
  2018 Future Stars of Rodeo
  Betsy Ryan

◊ Second Place
- Crosby, The Journal
  Fortuna -- home of the hoppers
  once again
  Brad Nygaard
Conquering obstacles on, off slopes

"You did great skiing with me at the Olympics. It was amazing. I love you a lot." - CHARLIE KERN, TO HIS MOM, JANICE, AFTER WINNING A SPECIAL OLYMPICS MEDAL

Charlie was diagnosed with autism when he was 3 years old but has overcome many obstacles that have come his way with the help and support of many loved ones, including his mom, Janice. Charlie grew up in Bottineau and says it was surreal to win the gold medal on the slopes.

On Jan. 26, 2013, Charlie took a break from the slopes to the 2013 Special Olympics World Winter Games in Bottineau and then headed to the slopes to compete. Charlie was diagnosed as autistic at age 3 but has learned to overcome the challenges he faces. Charlie's mom, Janice, says she is proud of her son and his accomplishments.

Charlie's mom, Janice, says she is proud of her son and his accomplishments.

Charlie, left, and Janie Kern enjoy a picture after showing off the car for their trip to the Special Olympics in Bottineau in January. The Winter Games were Charlie's first time in a car and he took home first and second place medals.
Sports Feature: Small Dailies

Honorable Mention
- Devils Lake Journal
  - DLJ Alexander Sports Feature
    - Making the Impossible (Chris)
  - Chris Harris

Third Place
- Wahpeton, The Daily News
  - New crop of coaches
  - Turner Blaufuss

Second Place
- Dickinson Press
  - "I can build the car, and they can drive them"
  - Patrick Bernadeau
Sports Feature: Small Dailies

First Place

Jamestown Sun

Jamestown sports community mourns loss of No. 1 fan

Mike Savaloja
Sports Feature: Large Dailies

Honorable Mention
- Grand Forks Herald
  Age 101 and still golfing
  Greg DeVillers

Third Place
- Fargo, The Forum of Fargo-Moorhead
  The American goal
  John Miller

Second Place
- Grand Forks Herald
  YouTube-taught punter may help UND football
  Tom Miller
EYES FORWARD

Concordia hockey player never slowed down by hunting accident that nearly took his eye

by Chris Murphy

As he opened his eyes, Concordia sophomore hockey player Brock Montgomery left no doubt. He could see out of his right eye, but there was nothing but darkness in his left. He felt a ringing in his ear and his right arm had some blood on it.

Montgomery doesn’t remember seeing anything in his left eye.

"I don’t want to think about that. Everything just sort of occurred to me," Montgomery, 24, said. "I just couldn’t get over it. I just couldn’t get over it.
He was playing hockey four months later. "The first hockey game was a dream come true. I just sort of played and had fun,” Montgomery said.

The story by the end of the season, the team was in the hunt for a championship. "I don’t want to think about that. Everything just sort of occurred to me," Montgomery, 24, said. "I just couldn’t get over it. I just couldn’t get over it.
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Sports Column
Sports Column: Mid-Size Weeklies

diamond Honorable Mention
diamond Hillsboro Banner
Troftgruben emerges as hero
Cole Short

diamond Third Place
diamond Rolla, Turtle Mountain Star
Unforgettable peewee moments
John Rosinski

diamond Second Place
diamond Hillsboro Banner
Lessons learned
Cory Erickson
Nash says goodbye to Lidgerwood baseball

Don Nash has been a staple in Lidgerwood baseball for years, coaching both American Legion and Babe Ruth. He even took over the 15- to 16-year-old Babe Ruth program the past few years.

He just retired from teaching at the close of the 2017-18 school year and is looking forward to the next chapter of his life — retirement.

He told me a few years ago he was done coaching. One year later he was back on the ball diamond coaching. He came back because without him, there was no one else stepping forward and a Babe Ruth program here was in jeopardy.

So he came back to keep coaching, taking last year's youngsters to state.

“I have been coaching since I was 15 years old. I am now 63. I’m sure some people thought it was too many after one year when I coached Little league in Garfield. Oh man, that was interesting,” Nash said with a laugh. After his Lidgerwood Babe Ruths dropped their tournament game early Wednesday afternoon, which ultimately ended their season, and Nash’s coaching tradition as he has finally hung up his uniform and cleats.

Nash coached 21 years in Lidgerwood — all years all together. That is a lot of time in helping young men on the diamond and off. I asked him what he hoped to teach these youngsters during all of the years he acted as a multi-sport coach.

“Play together, he said with a nod. Teach them to respect the game. His T-shirt said it all, “Honor the Game.”

That is the message he hoped the young men going through his program learned these past years.

“It’s a great game, and it’s fun,” he said to sum up this game he has played since he was a youngster and his mother hit fly balls to her sons. That was his first taste of baseball, of the fun and camaraderie that develops from playing the game.

It is a game, but it is also so much more. This game teaches life lessons, which comes from any team sport. There are nine people on the field because no one player can win a game alone. It takes teamwork, the ability to communicate and it takes patience because not every outing is perfect.

Sometimes you drop the ball, but that doesn’t mean you give up.

Sometimes you strike out with runners at both corners looking to make their way home. That doesn’t mean you don’t keep swinging.

Sometimes you can’t do anything right, but you can never give up.

Respect for this game means taking time to toss the ball back and forth, working on fielding grounders and fly balls, spending time in the batting cage. Nash learned these skills at an early age because his mother took the time to teach him.

Then he took the time to teach the next generation.

People are quick to say these youngsters he’s been coaching are different than other generations. That makes Nash shake his head in disbelief. They aren’t different, he said. If you treat a child with respect, they will return the favor. He’s kept up with coaching because he loves the game.

“I like the kids. I have always liked working with young men. That 13, 14 and 15 year is interesting. Sometimes they act like adults, others act like 2 year olds and some are in between. It’s hard to believe a 13 or 14 year old will be a functional human being some day. You just keep working with them and be patient with them,” he stressed.

It will be strange attending Babe Ruth baseball games and not seeing Nash on the field offering encouragement. Or even at Wyndmere-Lidgerwood ball games since he was always in the stands. Since he and his wife Penny are moving to Fargo, their lives are moving away from Lidgerwood.

Good luck Don and Penny Nash on your upcoming ventures. Lidgerwood will miss you.

KAREN SPEIDEL is the News-Monitor Media’s Managing Editor.
Sports Column: Large Weeklies

◊ Third Place
  ▪ Crosby, The Journal
    From This Angle -- Sports gambling
    Jody Michael

◊ Second Place
  ▪ Bottineau Courant
    Think preseason football doesn't matter? Think again
    Matthew Semisch
A football family
Brittany Brevik

Small-town scenes

Brittany Brevik

The newspaper is dated more than 15 years ago, but reading the article still brings tears to my eyes. Because that was the day I fell in love with sports. My parents are huge sports fans. I was raised that way. It’s in our culture, especially in small-town North Dakota where I grew up. The day I was born, my dad and I were on the delivery room with tears streaming down his face and proudly announced, “We have a cheerleader.” I wore a cheerleader uniform before I could walk. And, just like my mother, I was also on track and played basketball. In the summer, there were backyard baseball games. NFL games provided the background music to every holiday, and Mom and Dad took us to every University of North Dakota home football game.

This was also long enough ago that North Dakota was still the Fighting Sioux. It was during those games when my little brother Bubba and I learned what a real sports fan was. We sat outside in the frigid North Dakota air to cheer on the football team at Memorial Stadium. We saw the hockey team play at the Old Barn, years before the $100 million Ralph Engelstad Arena (so the “Taj Mahal of hockey”) was erected. The Old Barn had old-school style when we played against the high school rival. The first goal, the second goal, the third and the fourth, and then and back and forth. This is how I learned to love the game of football and delay the game. It was so exciting to see the large crowd, the game, and the atmosphere. The game was a passion of a group of people as I’ve never seen in my short number of years, and we remained that way to this day.

So, yes, I was raised around sports. But when I fell madly in love with sports was 2001, when the UND football team won a Division 1 national championship. It was enough noise to roar, UND. The championship title game was to be held in Florence, Alabama, UND on the heels of an unfoiled season, hosted UC Davis. For the semifinal game, in front of 11,000 fans in our new indoor stadium. Mom, Dad, Bubba, and I were in the crowd and was loud due that day. We made enough noise to roar, UND. That is how the team is, and the noise was unparalled. The game was a game as the final minutes of a 14-10 game ticked off the clock. The stadium blasted “Sweet Home Alabama.” We were on our way to Alabama, to play for a national championship. It was so exciting to see the game. Some players came over and shook hands with us. It was the happiest 12,000 people I’ve ever seen in my life. It was a rainy day, down south, so the Storm took on Texas A&M at the title game. Mom, Dad, Bubba and I watched faithfully from our living room back at home, screaming and yelling as if we were there.

Fourth and one, UND trailed 18-10 with 3 minutes, 42 seconds remaining in the game. After successfully converting a fourth and one, we found ourselves back at fourth and one and this time facing a long four yards with less than a minute on the clock. Fourth downs, in general, make me nervous. I’m leery of fourth and inches. Fourth and four? Remember feeling as if it were over.

Bubba, then 9 years old, went outside to play with friends around this time. What then seemed over was felt again when Bubba was giving us, not believing his team had any chance of a comeback, now seems to be something else. Watching my brother grow up and wining his own passions in sports, I realize now that he may have had to leave the house. I don’t think he could bear to watch his team lose the national championship. This was a kid who has often been brought to tears by regular-season losses. This one was too important. Too emotional.

Fourth and four. Quarterback Kelly Kuhnmund took the snap. My hands shook. Senior wide receiver Lake Schilder, a barn-burner, ran a quick hook pattern, which was designed to gain the two yards needed for the First down but not much more. I felt like throwing up. He caught the ball. I screamed. Schilder sprinted a tackle and headed downfield. Mom, Dad, Bubba, and I screamed at the TV and jumped up and down in our living room. Schilder made it to the 5-yard line before being taken down. The sound of us took our screaming procession out to the clock, where we hovered to Bubba at the 1-yard line to let him know what had just happened. But remember how loud our team was inside the end zone for a 1-yard score as time ran out.

We won. If you’re a sports fan, you know the feeling. That takes-your-breath-away moment, when you can’t believe what just occurred. You’re trying to wrap your mind around what just happened, and you can’t wipe that goofy grin off your face.

When it happens, I can literally feel my heart sing. Maybe it’s because I’m holding my breath from nerves, but I feel a fullness in my chest. And then it happens. The Touchdown. The Touchdown. The Touchdown. The Touchdown. It gives you faith. It makes you remember that anything can happen. It makes you remember why you watch. Why you cheer. Why you agonize over the losses. Because the wins are just so good.
Sports Column: Small Dailies

◊ Honorable Mention
  - Wahpeton, The Daily News
    T-Wolves need to end this drought
    Turner Blaufuss

◊ Third Place
  - Dickinson Press
    Kyrie, sneakers, and a close connection
    Patrick Bernadeau

◊ Second Place
  - Dickinson Press
    Rooting for the impossible
    Shelby Reardon
Our condemnation toward athletes because of past tweets says more about us than them

If you allow me this one time, I want to get on my religious soap box...

"Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at me."

Anyone who was raised in a religious institution has heard that line from John 8:7 from a minister, priest, pastor, heck, a fellow congregant or more accurately than yourself has probably been in the house of worship. But still, it doesn’t seem to resonate with us, especially sports fans, in the age of social media.

To better understand what Jesus was teaching, I’m going to put the message in a sports context because, well, this is a sports commentary.

Something came out of the 2018 MLB All-Star Game back in July besides home runs and an American League victory. Milwaukee all-star pitcher Josh Hader had to apologize to the media, the fans, the organization and the League for tweets that were “dug up” by writers that were posted years ago. The season was at its halfway point, and apparently, Hader’s performances on the mound earned him the all-star vote and nothing of these tweets were ever mentioned.

But as soon as he gave up the go-ahead three-run home in a meaningless exhibition, fans wanted to shame Hader through the crowd at the Mount of Olives with staves at the ready for tweets that are described as racist, homophobic and misogynistic that were sent to the Twittersphere seven years ago — when Hader was a 17-year-old kid.

Hader definitely isn’t the first athlete who’s past sins of his twitter fingers has gotten him in an apologetic state of mind. There was Troy Turner of the Washington Nationals, soon Newcomb of the Atlanta Braves and back in April, Bills rookie quarterback Josh Allen had to say he’s sorry for tweets that emerged during the pre-draft circus of him using a racial slur that he posted six years ago, as a 15-year-old.

“Being 17 years old, you make stupid decisions and mistakes,” Hader said following the All-Star Game. “I was in high school. We’re still learning who we are in high school. You live and you learn. This mistake won’t happen again.”

Anyone who is reading this was 17 once (some are 17 now). Think back to what you did as a teenager, that speaking-out-part-curiose-to-take-a-hit-of-that-joint moment. Or what if Twitter was around during the era of segregation? How sure your teenage self would’ve tweeted wordplay so racist that it would’ve made the Grand Wizard smile.

“Any claim that we take on, that’s generally the first step we do in the process,” publicist Lauren Walsh told the Associated Press. “This can take someone down in an instant. All it takes is one tweet. Now, he’s going to be known for this. This is what people are talking about.”

But we mature past those old sins. Many of us have become the great individuals we are today because of what those lessons taught us. And we’ll correct a person quick if they bring up our past, but look at me now. However, we still have the gall to remind an athlete of what he said yesterday because he missed that championship winning field goal today. Like our names won’t be written in the ground.

He without sin — dig up the next old tweet.
Sports Column: Large Dailies

💎 Third Place
- Fargo, The Forum of Fargo-Moorhead
  Football is the great diversion
  Jeff Kolpack

💎 Second Place
- Grand Forks Herald
  Looking ahead to the Summit
  Wayne Nelson
Sports Column: Large Dailies

First Place

Grand Forks Herald

NCHC and WCHA voted to keep 3-on-3 overtimes

Brad E. Schlossman

Three-on-three overtimes a hit among NCHC, WCHA

Jonny Tychonick was on the phone, doing an interview for an NHL draft preview, when the news came out.

So, in passing, I asked him what he thought of the NCAA Men’s and Women’s Ice Hockey Rules Committee’s decision to forward a proposal that would eliminate the possibility of college hockey leagues using 3-on-3 overtimes or shootouts to break ties. He hadn’t heard about it yet.

“So what happens?” he asked. “We tie?”

If the proposal, aimed at standardizing overtimes across all college hockey conferences, goes through later this month, yes.

It’s a foreign concept to someone like Tychonick, who had just turned 2 years old the last time there was a tie game in the NHL.

Hockey has evolved in the last decade-plus, finding ways to make the game more entertaining and more skill-based.

The 3-on-3 has been a huge hit in the NHL, its minor leagues and in Europe. Former UND star Jeff Ulmer, who has played professionally in 13 different countries, couldn’t think of a single pro league that doesn’t use 3-on-3.

College hockey allowed individual conferences to pick up on it three years ago and two of them did the Western-based National Collegiate Hockey Conference and the Western Collegiate Hockey Association.

In their April meetings in South Florida, those two leagues voted 18-0 in support of keeping the 3-on-3. The only dissenters have been the leagues who have never tried it.

Why? Reasons vary. Some coaches want to be able to play for a tie.

Two head coaches have privately acknowledged to me that they think more time helps even out their record and improves their job security. But it certainly doesn’t help the product on the ice.

Also, in this day and age of teams playing such structured hockey — and making it so hard to create odd-man chances — all the open ice in 3-on-3 has to give some coaches anxiety.

While the NCHC has been rather outspoken about its position on three-on-three, commissioner Josh Fenton released a statement immediately after the proposal was forwarded.

UND coach Brad Berry and Minnesota Duluth coach Scott Sandelin gave their local papers their thoughts and the league even posted a Lubricator video highlights of some 3-on-3 goals — the WCHA has remained relatively quiet.

So, I decided to shoot a text to Bemidji State coach Tom Serratore to get his thoughts. Serratore is a hockey traditionalist, who has been around the game for a long time and always gives his unfiltered thoughts.

I told him that I was doing a story on 3-on-3 overtimes and would like to get his thoughts on it. He called within five minutes and unloaded.

“I think 3-on-3 is probably one of the best changes we’ve had to our sport since I’ve been coaching 25 years,” he said. “To me, it’s a fan’s game and it’s a player’s game. It’s not a coaches game.”

Do the players and fans like it?

“There’s probably nothing more awesome on the bench than before the 3-on-3,” Serratore said. “You can sense the energy. They’re excited. Even the guys who don’t play 3-on-3 are excited. The vibe is there. There’s a special kind of energy. Everyone is standing up in the building. Nobody is leaving. That right there tells me it’s a home run. The fans love it. The players love it.

SCHLOSSMAN: Page D6
Editorial
Editorial: Small Weeklies

First Place

Drayton, Valley News & Views
To Publish or Not to Publish
Lesa Van Camp

Valley News & Views Editorial
To Publish or Not to Publish is the Popular Question These Days

Public Notices otherwise called Legal Notices are being heavily contested between government agencies, North Dakota Legislators, and Newspapers. With the debate about public notices being heavily discussed it is time for the people to weigh in on the subject. This is a topic that will affect every tax paying citizen and perhaps it is time for those who pay for legal notices to speak up and be heard.

There is a very fine line between being fiscally responsible and full transparency. The issue at hand is the cost of legal notices and trying to be fiscally responsible and maintain balanced budgets with taxpayer money.

There are two sides to this coin. On one side is the cost, on the other is transparency. What is the solution? The taxpayers need to start speaking up and making their voices heard on this issue.

The cost. The cost of legal notices is set by the State Procurement Office. It is a fixed rate that is given to newspapers using a formula involving font and column sizes. City Council Minutes and School Board Minutes are put to a vote every two years. In the State of North Dakota, the voters have historically voted in favor of publication by a substantial majority. The biggest question at hand seems to be County Commission Minutes. In particular publishing the list of bills. Which can in larger counties add up to a substantial sum for the tax payers. Due to the cost there is a push to have public notices published on a website instead of in print.

Full transparency. If an agency has trouble publishing their legal notices in a newspaper then will they be responsible for putting them on a website? Also comes into the question the length of time that they will be required to keep them posted and will taxpayers be able to find them? Here is another wrinkle that people may not have thought about. What happens when there is a disgruntled employee or perhaps a less than honest employee? They could go into the web site and change the information at any time. If the notices are in print in a newspaper they are there forever as a part of a historical document and can not be altered after the fact.

This issue is far more complicated than just the cost. Every angle needs to be looked at very carefully. All proceedings are a matter of public record. The public has a right to see these records at any time. The public fools the bill for them to be printed through their taxes and they can read them for free in the newspaper. If they do not own a computer and want to read them they could go to their local agency and request them, but then they very likely will be charged for the hard copy. What they were once able to view for free they will have to pay for.

This is an issue that newspapers will fight because of the issue of transparency that is at stake. As it stands right now newspapers along with the tax paying public are the watchdogs who make sure that everything is on the up and up. There was a citizen who faithfully read the local minutes. While doing so this person noticed that the same person who was no longer an employee was being paid a monthly sum. After questioning the agency it was found out that this person had been being paid severance pay for years. It was stopped soon after.

Would this have been revealed had the minutes been posted on some obscure website?

There are also entities who are not timely in submitting their minutes for publication. If this is the case, then what is the likely hood that they will hold themselves accountable enough to post them to a website? Who will hold them accountable for following the law?

If this is an issue that tax payers feel strongly about one way or the other, then now is the time to speak up. Call, email, or text your local legislator. Don’t wait until their votes are in, call now while they are still deciding on the legislation that they will submit to vote on. This is your money so now is the time to say how you would like it to be spent.

Valley News & Views editorials reflect the opinions of the Valley News & Views staff.
Editorial: Mid-Size Weeklies

onné

Third Place
- Hankinson, News-Monitor
  Fairmount High seniors live in post 9/11 world
  Karen Speidel

Second Place
- Hillsboro Banner
  No better time to run for public office
  Cole Short
EDITORIAL

Transparency

A meeting this month of the Washburn City Commission resulted in the approval of a six-digit contract -- a contract for engineering on a project that has never been formally approved.

Speaking under an agenda item simply titled “AES Engineering,” city commissioners spent just over nine minutes discussing a potential intake upgrade project for the city and what was referred to as Task Order No. 12. The task order, according to documents presented at the meeting, includes engineering fees for bidding, construction and post construction, along with other anticipated phases, for the intake project.

The commission moved on to approve the task order in its entirety. The $555,000 total cost was never mentioned. The intake project was never officially accepted. The public was never asked for feedback.

The gargantuan bill slipped through largely undetected, as issues with city employees and results from a special election overshadowed the brief discussion over a “task order” with no clear price tag. And, riding on its coattails, it seems that a much larger expense was approved in the process.

The engineering in the $555,000 task order revolves around approximately $2.9 million in intake construction, which the commission is apparently moving forward on. And even if the city receives all of the funding it has applied for, the project will still cost upwards of $300,000, at minimum. If a FEMA grant covering 75 percent of the total doesn’t come through, that price jumps to over $1.2 million.

So why was action that started the wheels in motion for a six-digit -- potentially seven-digit -- project downplayed so severely by public officials? There was neither a clear reference to the intake project on the agenda, nor was there any disclosure of the amount of money being approved in the inconspicuous task order.

Though state laws regarding meeting agendas and action on large-ticket items leaves room for interpretation and it isn’t clear if the commission violated Century Code, this type of procedure openly bypasses the public and undercuts the rights protected by open meeting laws. Intentional or not, the move betrays an invaluable trust the constituents place in their representatives.

And as final numbers for the intake project are projected, it appears initial estimations were also misleading -- tallying only the cost of construction, but not of engineering fees or evaluations. With almost $200,000 paid out to engineers already, another $555,000 promised for the rest of those services, and the $2.9-million estimate for construction, what was proposed as a $2.9-million upgrade looks to be closer to $3.65 million.

There can be no room for interpretation or question when it comes to public funds and city matters, especially in regard to multi-million dollar projects, for which taxpayers will foot the bill. Moving forward with the project -- or, at minimum, the engineering for it -- should have been listed clearly on the agenda, and the associated costs laid out plainly for all to see. To not do so only serves to cause frustration, concern and distrust over the representatives sitting at that table, and their disregard for the citizens this project is supposed to benefit.

(The Leader-News editorial board consists of Alyssa Meier, Don Winter and Hayley Anderson.)
Editorial: Large Weeklies

💎 Third Place
- Watford City, McKenzie County Farmer
  Legalizing marijuana would be a bad move for voters!
  Neal A. Shipman

💎 Second Place
- Grafton, Walsh County Record
  Business promotes peace
  Todd Morgan
Journal Editorial

Journalists should ask hard questions

This week, more than 100 newspapers across the country are publishing editorials on the danger of rhetoric undermining a free press.

President Trump has frequently claimed journalists' stories are fake and that journalists are "enemies of the people." He calls journalists "vile" people and thousands of his supporters cheer, tearing the other side of the story largely untold.

As a press release from the North Dakota Newspaper Association declares, this week newspapers are affirming their role as "members of their community, chroniclers of the first draft of history, and watchdogs who shed light on local troubles as well as local triumphs." A recent Ipsos survey shows an overwhelming number of people — 85 percent — believe "freedom of the press is essential for American democracy," but the same survey illuminates a growing belief among some that the government should be able to silence "bad" media.

But who gets to decide what media is "bad"? Your guy may be in office now, but what if your side was in the minority? Would you want the party in power to have the right to silence all dissenting voices?

The danger that our democracy could be derailed in this way was deemed so important, the founders of our country recognized those rights must be among the bedrock principles enshrined in the First Amendment.

While few people would welcome a law eliminating a state religion or removing their right to peacefully assemble, we now live in a time when discord over exposure to information we do not like would cause a significant number of people to curtail their own freedoms in order to quiet it.

But how would the public become aware of inequalities without a free press to hold government accountable?

On the local level, that means requiring the boards of political subdivisions to follow the open-meeting and open-records laws we have here in North Dakota. It means reporting its budget processes to keep the public informed of how their tax dollars are spent. It's questioning the hiring, firing and wage decisions these boards make. At times it may mean questioning whether a public official's personal lobbying influence decisions on the job, or if it could involve reporting on a city's decision to see public funds to build a new community pool.

On the local level we also report on how communities come together in times of tragedy, raising money for neighbors hurt by illness or accident. And we chronicle good times when towns celebrate their heritage or invite youngsters to fly drones.

What happens on the national level is similar, but with greater consequences, and increasingly, threats of physical violence to the people whose job it is to gather facts on your behalf.

Whatever the level of government, the most important function of the press is to question the actions and aims of elected officials. The reporter who was recently banned from a Rose Garden ceremony was "punished" for asking her job as members of the Washington Post Corps have always done. A president may not like the questions, but regardless of your political persuasion, the right of a reporter to ask hard questions must be upheld.

Likewise, the right of the official to offer no comment — a fact that will also be duly reported.

When you see a public figure slaming doors in the face of questioning or extending a hand to block a newspaper photographer's camera, too, metaphorically, do elected officials who try to curtail the press from asking questions they have a right to ask.

History has shown that when a leader attempts to silence the press, it is the people who suffer and the truth that is obscured. It's a tactic designed to confine citizens and inflame hearts.

Leaders who tell people not to believe what they see with their own eyes or hear with their own ears are playing a dangerous game with democracy hanging in the balance.

Yet the next time there's a story that makes them look good, guess who they call?

Thank goodness an overwhelming majority of Americans still recognize this dynamic: for what it is, even in the midst of the increasingly polarized political climate we live in today.

Rather than retreating, the notion of silencing any opposition, citizens need now more than ever, to challenge themselves to hear multiple views, not take the word of those attempting to quash critical thinking. Read newspapers, vote in elections, oppose any effort to curtail the public's right to know what the government is doing on your behalf.

We may be living in an era where there is little shared national reality, but the truth is out there — and it is a free press that will reveal it through factual reporting.

Perhaps the best argument for a free press is made by looking at the countries without one.

And the best evidence of a journalist doing a good job? People on both sides of an issue who are angry.
Editorial: Small Dailies

◊ Third Place
  ▪ Wahpeton, The Daily News
    Daily News Media gives A Call to Write
    Daily News Media

◊ Second Place
  ▪ Jamestown Sun
    Solutions still needed for JPS
    Sun Staff
A reason to give thanks

By James B. Miller, Jr.
The Dickinson Press

As this year’s Thanksgiving festivities see countless families gather to feast on an extravaganza of turkey, stuffing, mashed potatoes, marshmallow sweet potatoes, ham and multitudes of delicious desserts, I wanted to personally share with you my own reasons for being thankful to be living in these great United States. As someone who has spent thirteen Thanksgivings feasting on military rations in places ranging from the back of a humvee in Afghanistan and Iraq to tented mess halls in Korea and Libya, I feel especially thankful for the blessings I have to live in this great experiment in democracy we call home.

America’s longest-standing civil rights organization turned 1/7 years old this week. That organization has, over that period, defended the constitutional rights of countless millions of Americans. I speak of course of that noble, and in recent years taboo, civil rights organization known as the National Rifle Association.

I speak of that civil rights organization which fought for, and won, the rights of former slaves to own firearms. I speak of that civil rights organization which teaches millions of Americans proper gun safety and marksmanship, trains police training officers, and runs marksmanship competitions. I speak of that civil rights organization which as we speak prepares to defend the 2nd Amendment from the promised onslaught of attacks from one of our nation’s political parties.

Lobbyist’s are those people who represents the interests of an organization, and by proxy their members, through direct contact with politicians. Their role has become something of a negative in the public purview, as many have come to view them as playing a role in aiding “greedy corporations manipulate the political system” as it was taught to me in my civics class in college. But a lobbyist is more than that, it’s a driving force of democracy that serves to promote the voice of the the people against the often tyrannical opinions of those in Washington.

Following the most recent midterm elections, one side of the political spectrum has openly said that they intend to seek every legislative means available to attack one of the constitutional rights that they swore to defend.

Believing that “gun control” is a winning strategy, many midterm democratic candidates embraced the position of legislative measures aimed at restricting our second amendment rights. Many of these candidates did so in electoral districts where the issue was once deemed too risky and could potentially turn off voters. Many of these candidates won their elections. It’s not a new thing. Banning firearms has been a central viewpoint for years.

“If I could have gotten 51 votes in the Senate of the United States for an outright ban, picking up every one of them — Mr. and Mrs. America, turn them all in — I would have done it.” — Sen. Feinstein (D-CA)

Now is the time to become a lobbyist with your membership. Now is the time to take a stance on this hotly divisive topic.

The NRA is the preeminent second amendment rights organization in the United States. They comprise of retirees and millennials; men and women; rich and poor; and every race under the sun. Made up of nearly five million members, they fight and win the toughest battles for our rights, all while offering educational programs, training and more. But these efforts do not come without cost, and they can’t be done alone.

To fight back against politicians, judges and bureaucrats whose desire it is to regulate, restrict and ultimately, erode your second amendment costs money and time.

So today, I give thanks to the NRA for their steadfast defense of our rights — our constitution.

James B. Miller, Jr. is a reporter with The Dickinson Press
Editorial: Large Dailies

Honorable Mention
- Bismarck Tribune
  Major changes won't be easy in higher ed
  Steve Wallick

Third Place
- Minot Daily News
  Mr. President, stop the war on media
  Michael Sasser

Second Place
- Grand Forks Herald
  Accusations in Roosevelt are serious
  Korrie Wenzel
North Dakota needs a working two-party system. Really.

We take no satisfaction in noting that, with Heidi Heitkamp’s defeat in the U.S. Senate race, North Dakota Democrats soon will not hold any statewide offices. Although the North Dakota Republican Party’s rise to power now has been unfolding for more than 25 years, it’s still a nasty shock to this now-thoroughly red state for one party to have a total lock on statewide offices.

No political party, no matter how successful at the ballot box, has a monopoly on good ideas. Public policy benefits when it results from robust debate and clashing viewpoints are aired, incorporating the views of competing sides. North Dakota Republicans simply don’t have to listen to their Democratic colleagues — and even distant Republicans should realize that’s less than optimal for public policy and accountability. State will undoubtedly read this lament and be quick to pounce: What, didn’t The Forum editorial page just endorse only Republicans in the fall election? In North Dakota races, that’s true. But don’t overlook the fact that this page also enthusiastically endorsed three Minnesota Democratic candidates in major races: Sen. Amy Klobuchar, D-Minn., Rep. Collin Peterson, D-Minn., and Steve Simon, secretary of state.

We won’t endorse candidates simply for the sake of presenting a tidy slate of candidates that adheres to some ideal of bipartisanship. This page unapologetically represents a conservative-leaning point of view. But we’re sincere in urging North Dakota Democrats to strengthen their gene. We need more diverse points of view in Bismarck, and we need more women be elected to shape policies that better reflect and serve society.

Here in Fargo’s District 28A, Secretaries of State Democrats and women demonstrated they can win. Republican incumbent Michelle Strickland and Democratic incumbent Pamela Anderson were elected to the House — stunning Rep. Al Carlson, the powerful GOP House majority leader, a major upset. Anderson and Strickland were strong candidates who connected with voters.

Now starting into the abyss, North Dakota Democrats will have to engage in a thorough self-examination. There’s no denying that North Dakota Republicans have succeeded in putting forward candidates and policies that appeal to voters. It’s worth remembering that Ed Schafer’s capture of the governor’s office in the 1992 election started the GOP’s ascendency. He sensed the state’s shift toward conservatism, exploiting the sentiments expressed in 1988, when voters rejected a package of tax increases. Once in office, Schaefer consciously set about building the party, recruiting and appointing, among others, young Republicans like Bernd Graeber, who just unseated Heitkamp.

In fairness, North Dakota Democrats are badly hampered by their national party, which has entirely ignored the issues important to rural communities. Some accuse the Democrats of losing touch with the workers and farmers who formed their voting base. It’s often noted that we’re a badly divided nation; it’s less often noted that perhaps the biggest divisions are between rural and urban populations.

To be successful, a political party must listen to and respond to both rural and urban constituencies. North Dakota Democrats have shown they’re capable of doing that. Less than half of all, the state’s senior congressional delegation was blue. But it’s hard to imagine that happening again anytime soon, or the restoration of a functioning two-party system in state government. We take no satisfaction in noting that.
First Place
- Drayton, Valley News & Views
- Editorial Page Design
- Lesa Van Camp
Editorial Page: Mid-Size Weeklies

 THIRD PLACE
 - Carrington, Foster County Independent
   Independent Editorial Pages
   Allen Stock, Lori Buchholtz

 SECOND PLACE
 - Hankinson, News-Monitor
   News-Monitor Editorial Pages
   Karen Speidel
Editorial Page: Mid-Size Weeklies

First Place
- Hillsboro Banner

Opinion Page
Banner Staff
Editorial Page: Large Weeklies

❤️ Second Place

- Grafton, Walsh County Record
  17-Oct
  Staff
Editorial Page: Large Weeklies

diamond First Place

- Crosby, The Journal

Journal editorial pages

Journal Staff
Editorial Page: Small Dailies

- Third Place
  - Jamestown Sun
  - Opinion page
  - Kathy Steiner

- Second Place
  - Dickinson Press
  - The Dickinson Press Editorial Page
  - Harvey Brock
Opinion

Spend some time at the park this summer

School shootings have become all too familiar as headline news. The conversation has begun, if we are allowing concerned taxpayers, who should carry?

Superintendent - 5%
Principal - 45%
Teacher - 25%
Lawyer - 10%
None of the above - 10%

We're happy to respond to your thoughts on this matter. Send us your letters.

guest editorial
Defending Richland-Wilkin Counties

National Review
Trump deserves due credit in Korean story

In the last few months, the Korean peninsula has seen a remarkable series of events. The summit between President Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has been a turning point in the long and difficult relationship between the two countries. The agreement reached at the summit is a significant step towards peace and stability on the peninsula.

The United States, under the leadership of President Trump, has played a crucial role in facilitating these negotiations. The president's commitment to the denuclearization of North Korea and the pursuit of a peaceful coexistence with our neighbor is praiseworthy. The world has witnessed the potential for peaceful resolution through dialogue and diplomacy, thanks to the efforts of the Trump administration.

The Trump administration's approach has been to engage in direct and substantive conversations with North Korea, rather than relying solely on sanctions and threats. This strategy has opened up new possibilities for understanding and cooperation. The outcome of these discussions at the summit was a joint statement that committed both sides to work towards complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

The agreement also includes provisions for enhanced economic and diplomatic ties, as well as the establishment of an inter-Korean committee to facilitate the reunification of the Korean Peninsula. These provisions are crucial for the long-term stability and prosperity of the region.

The Trump administration's commitment to the denuclearization of North Korea is commendable. The president's leadership has demonstrated that peaceful solutions can be achieved through strong leadership and unwavering determination. The world is watching the developments on the peninsula with hope, and we can only hope that the agreement will be implemented in a way that benefits all parties involved.

In conclusion, President Trump's efforts in leading the negotiations on the Korean peninsula have been significant and should be commended. The world is watching, and we can only hope that the agreement will bring about lasting peace and prosperity for all.

First Place

Wahpeton, The Daily News
May 3 editorial page
Daily News Media
Editorial Page: Large Dailies

**Third Place**
- Grand Forks Herald
  - The power of state funerals
  - Korrie Wenzel

**Second Place**
- Bismarck Tribune
  - Bismarck Tribune Editorial Page
  - Staff
Editorial Page: Large Dailies

First Place
- Fargo, The Forum
  Forum Editorial Pages
  Angie Wieck
Standing News Fronts
Standing News Fronts: Small Dailies

Honorable Mention
- Valley City Times-Record
  Red Knights 9/11 Tribute Ride
  Tina Olson

Third Place
- Dickinson Press
  Bad Case of Hillbilly Hankering
  Linda Sailer

Second Place
- Jamestown Sun
  Sun Country March 17
  Meghan Dowhaniuk
Standing News Fronts: Small Dailies

First Place

- Wahpeton, The Daily News
  22-Apr
  Daily News Media
Standing News Fronts: Large Dailies

- **Third Place**
  - Fargo, The Forum of Fargo-Moorhead
    - Art deco icon gets a thorough polishing
    - Mark Merck

- **Second Place**
  - Grand Forks Herald
    - Northern View: A place for peregrines
    - Jackie Ausk
Standing News Fronts: Large Dailies

First Place
- Grand Forks Herald
  Northland Outdoors: 2018 year in review
  Wayne Elfman
Ag Coverage
Ag Coverage: Small Weeklies

◇ Third Place
- Park River, Walsh County Press
  Piece of Park River comes down
  Allison Olimb

◇ Second Place
- New Town News
  Parshall's skyline gets overhaul
  Jerry W. Kram
Storms and rain limit yields

Allan Tinker

By ALLAN TINKER

With 12 to 12 1/2-foot tall corn, many village pits should be full, corn hoppers, and farmers in the cornfields chopping three weeks early.

Rondon Faul, McClusky Co-

Op Elevator spokes-

man, stated the recent

lack of rain diminished record yields in wheat, field corn and soybeans, but they are still holding up well.

The largest crop planted this year in Sheridan County is about 90 percent harvested. Yields are running 45-55 bushels per acre with test weights at 63-64.

Protein in a "pretty decent" amount of the wheat is 14 1/2 to 14 1/2, with a smaller amount in the low 14s. There are a few fields with 13 protein.

Ergot, pushed into storm-damaged wheat from its brown grass host around the fields, has caused some losses. Faul noted that while wheat has a natural resistance to ergot, that resistance is lost when the wheat kernels are damaged.

Rain continued on 7
Ag Coverage: Mid-Size Weeklies

Honorable Mention
- Hankinson, News-Monitor
  Frame and Rafters up
  Carrie McDermott

Third Place
- Carrington, Foster County Independent
  Palmer amaranth confirmed in Foster County
  John Gallagher

Second Place
- Tioga Tribune
  Trade agreement produces mixed results
  Jacob Orledge
Ag Coverage: Mid-Size Weeklies

First Place

Washburn, The Leader-News
Drought, tariffs plague farmers
Alyssa Meier, Jill Denning-Gackle

Drought, tariffs plague farmers

BY ALYSSA MEIER AND JILL DENNING GACKLE

Area farmers are battling drought, lower commodity prices and tariffs. That's what Chris Gratton, CHS Inc. said about the harvest that was bringing a long line of grain trucks each day last week to the Garrison facility.

Small grains like spring wheat, barley and canola saw exceptional yields. “It was some of the best quality we’ve seen,” he said. Although the spring wheat yields were 55-65 a bushel per acre and as high as 75 bushels an acre, prices were lower because the export market was more limited because of tariffs on Chinese exports. The trade battle continues with the European Union, China, Canada, Mexico and other countries.

Soybeans and corn are victims of the trade battleground. “We can’t ship to the West Coast like we normally do,” he said. North Dakota exports about two-thirds of its annual $2 billion soybean crop to China. Last year soybeans were bringing $8.35 a bushel locally, while this year they are bringing $7.51. Spring wheat brought $5 a bushel this week, while a year ago it brought about $5.75.

As if prices and tariffs aren’t enough, now farmers are dealing with a drought. “We need some rain terribly bad,” Gratton said.

Ag managers throughout the region are saying much of the same. Marl Melcher, Plaza Makoti Elevator manager, said, “The small grains should be a great harvest. Where we may see some problems are with the lack of rain for our... Farmers page 16
Ag Coverage: Large Weeklies

◈ Third Place
  ▪ Watford City, McKenzie County Farmer
    Tough spring for calving
    Betsy Ryan

◈ Second Place
  ▪ Grafton, Walsh County Record
    Zahradka finds her niche
    Chelsea Wysocki
Producers speak of trade wars and tariffs

By Sydney Glasoe Caraballo

Producers speak of trade wars and tariffs
Sydney Glasoe Caraballo

First Place

- Crosby, The Journal
Ag Coverage: Small Dailies

- **Third Place**
  - Dickinson Press
  - Bags of Beetles
  - Iain Woessner

- **Second Place**
  - Wahpeton, The Daily News
  - Birds of a feather flock together
  - Frank Stanko
Oil on the ranch changes things

Landowner near N.D. border talks about the impact of oil and gas on his ranch during Montana range tour by Renee Jean

Williston Herald

First Place

Ag Coverage: Small Dailies
Ag Coverage: Large Dailies

**Honorable Mention**
- Grand Forks Herald
  Wolf-related cattle losses a major concern
  April Baumgarten

**Third Place**
- Grand Forks Herald
  ND's ag economy bucking Upper Midwest trend
  Bonnie Meibers

**Second Place**
- Grand Forks Herald
  Watery web
  Sam Easter
Ag Coverage: Large Dailies

First Place
- Grand Forks Herald
  Farther afield
  Diane Newberry
Personal Column-
Serious
Personal Column - Serious: Small Weeklies

✨ Honorable Mention
- Drayton, Valley News & Views
  Love
  Laiken Larson

✨ Third Place
- Drayton, Valley News & Views
  Last Column
  Taylor Stegman

✨ Second Place
- McClusky Gazette
  Edge of Chaos: Blue Zones
  Allan Tinker
Far Afield

And yet they published

Last Friday, a newspaper published its regular edition.

That is news. News is that Friday was not a regular day.

On Thursday afternoon, just hours before editors and designers would be putting finishing touches on the next morning’s edition, a man with a shotgun started blasting away inside the newsroom. Five people died, more were wounded. Had it ever been a good reason for taking the afternoon off, this was the one.

And yet, come the next morning, they published.

The headline of the Amarillo-based Capital Gazette was “Five Dead At The Capital.” Their opinion page was mostly blank, centered on the names: Gerald Fischman, Robbi Hiaasen, John McNamara, Rebecca Smith, and Wendi Winters—under the banner, “We’re Speechless.” But the page also promised that the paper’s opinion page would be back the next day and all the days after that.

And so they published.

It reminded me of North Dakota’s own brush with journalism disaster. I was at the Devils Lake Journal at the time where we had been dealing with our own high water issues going on four years. But that seemed like a petty problem when the images came over the television of the rising water that breached the dikes. We watched as the water claimed downtown and swept most of the rest of the city. Our former publisher sold the historic Grand Forks Herald building.

First Place

- New Town News

And yet they published

Jerry W. Kram
Personal Column - Serious: Mid-Size Weeklies

Third Place
- Washburn, The Leader-News
  The end of a chapter
  Alyssa Meier

Second Place
- Hillsboro Banner
  So many lessons learned in only 12 seconds
  Cole Short
People don’t often celebrate cancer. Until Wednesday afternoon at Hankinson Public School when students showed their compassion for a sixth grade classmate recently diagnosed with leukemia.

It wasn’t the disease itself they honored, but the boy and his bravery. Logan Falk, who is only 11 years old, is just starting his battle against cancer. His face is starting to get puffy from prednisone treatments and his hair was thinning from chemo.

What to do, What to do.

For his classmates, it was rather simple. They just couldn’t let Logan be the only kid walking Hankinson Public School hallways with a bald head, so about 40 people shaved their heads Wednesday in front of an ecstatic crowd made up mostly of Logan’s fellow elementary students.

A special event started with six girls lopping off about 8 inches of hair, and a few anxious boys sitting in front of the rest of their peers to have their heads shaved in this grand display of school solidarity.

That’s when things really took off. Children were chanting names as even more boys stepped off the bleachers to take their place at the assigned chairs and let Kally Kratcha shave their head right down to the skin.

“That’s what friends are for,” stressed Oaklee Medenwald when he sat with intertwining glimpses of horror and happiness as hair piled beneath his chair.

It was amazing how so many kids were willing to take part in this event. Yes, it is just hair. But it also signifies something else. Cancer patients taking chemo often lose their hair. It is a badge of their fight to beat this dreaded disease. It also sets them apart from many other people in the grocery stores, at work, even in the schools. That shiny bald scalp makes them different.

The cheers Wednesday afternoon became even louder when Logan took a seat to have his hair buzzed in front of friends and classmates. That was empowering on Wednesday. The hair came off on Logan’s terms.

“I was moved by this support for a sick child, especially after hearing it was the students’ idea. Elementary Principal Anne Biever said it began with a few girls wanting to do something big to honor Logan. The girls thought they would be the only one leaving the gym with less hair that day. They were so happily wrong as the entire boys basketball team, all of Logan’s brothers, most of the boys in his sixth grade class, his teacher Eric Groahke, Superintended Chad Benson and so many others sat in those chairs with big smiles on their faces.

Benson decided that morning when he heard about the ceremony taking place in the afternoon. He was all in and joined a very special club at Hankinson School.

“This has been sentimental for everyone. Logan’s losing his hair now too, so this is a great transition,” Biever stressed. “This is very empowering.”

“Our whole school cares about him,” added classmate Ashlyn Fretts, who was one of the girls willing to chop off a good chunk of hair that is being donated to make wigs for cancer patients.

They get it. Very few people want to stand out, to be different. Right now Logan has many people walking the Hankinson School hallways who look just like him. They are bold. They are beautiful. And they are helping a young boy understand he most definitely is not alone in this cancer fight.

And neither is his family as the Hankinson community is embracing the Falkes by keeping them in their prayers, helping wherever they can, bringing food and companionship. No one has to fight cancer alone. That’s why it takes a community to raise a child.

There are so many things Logan can’t choose for himself when it comes to treating the disease. But in this one instance, Logan could choose to lose his hair on his terms. Magical.

Karen Speidel is the News-Monitor’s Managing Editor.
Personal Column- Serious: Large Weeklies

diamond Third Place
  - Grafton, Walsh County Record
    Beauty in every body
    Chelsea Wysocki

diamond Second Place
  - Watford City, McKenzie County Farmer
    The voters have spoken
    Neal A. Shipman
Predators have no place to hide now

Whines & Roses

Cecile Wehrman

First Place

Crosby, The Journal

Whines & Roses: Predators have no place to hide now

Cecile Wehrman

Predators have no place to hide now

Women of my generation learned about injustice early. As a sixth-grader, I was told girls weren’t allowed to be anti-social monitors – the kids who ruled the TVs and projected toys to classrooms. I became the first.

But there was a greater injustice occurring every day in my life at that time, as I learned to put up and shut up about unwanted sexual advances.

Now, with the #MeToo movement, I hope younger women are beginning to see the importance of consent.

Feminism has been made out to be as bad as another "F" word by what’s really about is women insisting that they’re tired of being "scared.

It’s not about eating all men or bad-mouthing all men as part of "the problem.

It’s also not about trying to hold men down the way women haven’t been mistreated in this society. We can’t even affirm the Equal Rights Amendment.

What’s about is standing in support when a woman like Christine Blasey Ford comes forward with a credible assault allegation – especially when I learned early on, so many women know that attackers come in all shapes, sizes, affluence and social classes.

It’s true that one can make the argument that the kind of privilege Kavanaugh has enjoyed in life is a recreation from taking advantage of someone with less power. In fact, it may even make attacks on the true powerful more likely.

He really may not remember the incident in question, especially if alcohol was involved. But there’s no reason to believe he changed a lot – because the attitudes that “boys will be boys” and "we shouldn’t have been drinking" are so ingrained. The perceived trauma and social stigmatization is enough to change a lot.

Women have no place to hide now.
Honorable Mention
- Wahpeton, The Daily News
  When the weather is agreeable,
  winter recreation can't be beat
  Wayne Beyer

Third Place
- Wahpeton, The Daily News
  Change can be scary,
  but can create opportunities
  Chris DeVries

Second Place
- Williston Herald
  Fear wont stop us
  Jamie Kelly
Cannibals of free speech

By Iain Woessner
The Dickinson Press
Cannibals of free speech
Iain Woessner
Personal Column - Serious: Large Dailies

\begin{itemize}
\item \textbf{Third Place}
  \begin{itemize}
  \item Grand Forks Herald
    \begin{itemize}
    \item The 'Daily Miracle' will go on
    \end{itemize}
  \end{itemize}
  Mike Jacobs
\item \textbf{Second Place}
  \begin{itemize}
  \item Fargo, The Forum of Fargo-Moorhead
    \begin{itemize}
    \item Faithful dog was first family member
    \end{itemize}
  \end{itemize}
  Jessie Veeder
\end{itemize}
Big Eddie was oh-so-talented, and equally complicated

This is complicated, because Ed Schultz was complicated. How does one eulogize such a man honestly, knowing that for every ounce of talent, there was an ounce of darkness to match?

How does one tell the story with at least a semblance of balance, recognizing that for all the successes of the small-market sportscaster gone big time there are innumerable tales of woe from many of those who dealt with him?

Schultz died Thursday, July 5, leaving a legacy of broadcasting greatness. But there was more.

There is the story of the football player from a modest background in Virginia who came to the prairie to play quarterback for Moorhead State, became an All-American and got a shot at pro ball before becoming a sportscasting dynamo at Fargo television stations.

Then came political radio and gonzoe statewide ratings, followed by a national radio show, a national television program and, finally, an international television job working, unfortunately, for the Russian government.

Then there are the stories of the workplace blowups, the petty vindictiveness, a huge slice of narcissism and the win-at-any-cost, scorched-earth mentality that defined Ed from the day he set foot in the Red River Valley.

Schultz once went into the stands at a high school basketball tournament because a kid yelled, "Ed Schultz sucks!" He started a couple of scraps at media gatherings. He once chewed out a young TV photographer ("You're a mole!") because the kid, on his first day on the job, talked to a reporter from a competing station.

Those types of stories are endless. Schultz was a giant talent while also being a giant pain.

A fair question might be: Could he have accomplished all he did without being exactly what he was? Like we said, complicated.
Personal Column - Humorous
Personal Column - Humorous: Small Weeklies

 Emblem Third Place
  • Park River, Walsh County Press
    From the Editor's Desk - March 7, 2018
    Allison Olimb

 Emblem Second Place
  • New Town News
    Everything new is old
    Jerry W. Kram
Looking Down Main

Desperately Seeking Work!

by Lyle Van Camp

Desperately, in this case, is an extreme exaggeration of the truth. When I retired at the end of last March, I had a line on a possible part-time job. It didn’t work out and the way things have gone since I am glad it didn’t.

And to those of you who are wondering about my job here at Valley News & Views, no I do not want to quit it. I just figure since I am still relatively young, by today’s standards at least, it would be fun to pick up a little part-time work and make myself some mad money. Not unlike the housewife’s pin money of the past or grandma’s jar behind the sugar on the top counter.

A few weeks ago, the perfect full-time/part-time job came along and I applied for it almost immediately. Unfortunately, so did the perfect candidate and it wasn’t me. Oh well if I am patient the right situation will present itself eventually. So, without further ado I present my personal resume for all perspective employers to review.

63 year-old male seeking perfect part-time position.

Candidate has excellent organizational skills – just cannot remember where he left them.

Candidate is a graduate of the University of North Dakota with majors in History and Religious studies and is also graduate of the 4-Year Honors Program. Unfortunately, this degree was earned too long ago to be of much value in today’s job market. Go Flickertails!

Candidate is in excellent health – OK let’s be honest here – Candidate has serious vision problems, is somewhat overweight, has arthritis in nearly every joint and has a serious lack of hand-eye coordination, not to mention a serious lack of lifting skills.

Candidate possess a valid North Dakota drivers license with only one current restriction, vehicle must have both side mirrors. Something about a lack of peripheral vision.

Candidate has good phone skills – seriously – unfortunately everyone seems to want to do everything by email these days.

Candidate is very willing to work flexible hours – as long as he can pick them and knows at least one month in advance what they will be.

So there you have it. If your organization has a job opening, preferably ten to twenty hours per week just let me know. I can start immediately, or next week, well maybe we should wait until after the holidays...
Personal Column- Humorous: Mid-Size Weeklies

◊ Third Place
□ Washburn, The Leader-News
Hello, my name is Alice
Alyssa Meier

◊ Second Place
□ Hillsboro Banner
Granddaughters baptism was hardly a quiet affair
Neil O. Nelson
Finally catching up on my Hallmark viewing

Cole Short

COLUMNIST

Finally catching up on my Hallmark viewing

After nearly six weeks of dedication and concentrated effort, I am at the end of my journey. I have finished watching all of the Hallmark Channel’s Christmas movies recorded on our DVR this year. It wasn’t easy. The times were hectic. The drama forced the acting backstory at times. But I did my way to the finish. What did I learn through all of this?

Well, if you’re a widowed dad whose wife passed away five years ago and you’ve been reluctant to find love again, odds are there’s a pretty good chance you’re sorting off the New Year with a new wife. Congratulations.

For the most part, Hallmark’s holiday entries follow a time-tested format. A guy or girl comes to a new town or back home, meets a stranger, sparks fly, a misunderstanding flares up that almost ruins the burgeoning romance but then everything works out in the end. I know.

I was actually surprised at the number of entries in this year’s film procession that included journalists — and not all of them made it in the end. Maybe that was an oversight. For example, in “The Christmas Train,” a cynical journalist played by Dermot Mulroney runs a train from Washington, D.C. to Los Angeles to fulfill a promise to his late father. Along the way, he discovers a little Christmas magic and finds new love with an old flame aboard the train.

That’s pretty much how it is for most journalists nowadays. Except we find love on our way to work board meetings. And, instead of love, it’s a Christmas movie we are expected to enjoy making fun of them with our wife as we pore over Banner paperwork on cold winter nights. You’re probably too busy to record and watch all of Hallmark’s holiday classics, so here’s my personal guide to a few of their flicks that hopefully save readers a little time next Christmas.

“Christmas Festival of Ice” Fresh out of law school and working for her mom, Emma must save her hometown’s ice-sculpting contest after city leaders win the $20,000 festival from their budget. What kind of ice festival costs $20,000? Are they using Dom Pérignon?

Thankfully, Emma raises the money and convinces Nick, a master sculptor who secretly chisels ice in his garage, to help. All I do in my garage is secretly try to put the wood wackers on a shelf without it tipping over and falling on the floor.

“Miracle on 34th Street.” In this movie, the official tree finder for the Rockefeller Center lighting trees to convince a man to give up his decaying mom’s evergreen tree to wear crowds in Chicago.

I was more worried that it’s somebody’s year-round job to find a Christmas tree. And she had an assistant!

If this journalism thing doesn’t work out I’m making that my next career.

“The Sweetest Christmas.” Kyle Watson, a pastry chef, narrates the adventures of his old boyfriend, Nick, in the finals of the American Gingerbread Competition.

I have no clue how much these actors were paid but Hallmark’s should’ve forked out more to the chefs decorating their gingerbread, who appeared to have given some granola crackers to some white frosting and called it a day.

“Christmas Getaway.” A woman, another journalist who can’t love. Well, travel writer Emory ends up sharing a cabin with a widowed dad and his daughter due to a reservation snafu.

In real life she’s been stuck with a 350-pound guy named Galt from Cleveland, but it’s Hallmark so it’s a single dad with a well-trimmed beard and mustache. Love blossoms and Emory realizes she should settle down and stop traveling the world, which I’m sure will help her career as a travel writer.

“Christmas Incorporated.” Riley lands a job as an assistant to William, a wealthy businessman and headstrong socialist, who’s intent on closing down the town’s toy factory right before Christmas. Gasp!

Things get worse when William is arrested for driving without insurance and Rebecca, a local trouble-making reporter, follows him around town like a small-woman paparazzi exposing all his mistakes.

I should have a cup of coffee at Starbucks? Rebecca is there. Talking to a person about the toy factory in the hotel lobby? Rebecca is there. Seriously, doesn’t Rebecca have places to be? Isn’t there a city council meeting or a new business somewhere in town Rebecca should be reporting on?

Rebecca would never make it at the Banner. We have way more important things to do than following around wealthy businessmen. Like, you know, writing columns about Christmas movies two weeks after Christmas ended.
Personal Column- Humorous: Large Weeklies

第三名
- Grafton, Walsh County Record
  - Metallica time
  - Brittany Brevik

第二名
- Casselton, Cass County Reporter
  - Angels among Us
  - Angela Kolden
From the sidelines - Christmas' little brother

Christmas's little brother

I came downstairs last Sunday after laying our one year old down for a nap and was met with the question, "Should we put the tree up?"

The one asking was none other than my unsuspecting husband, even though he knows full well that I have a firm rule of not setting up the Christmas tree until after Thanksgiving gets its time. I set it up the weekend after turkey day every single year. So sure enough, he was met with what some may call "the look" before his tree idea was shot down...for one more week at least.

Don't get me wrong. Christmas is great and has always been one of my absolute favorite holidays, I could, however, go without the music that goes along with it...especially considering it seems to completely take over radio stations and speakers everywhere for a solid two months. But I think Thanksgiving is completely overshadowed. People are barely making it dent in their Halloween candy before Christmas lists are being requested and talks of snowy decor are met at every turn.

If Thanksgiving were a person, I think I'd be a young boy suffering from middle child syndrome. Christmas would be his older, better looking and more athletic brother who gets all the attention. Halloween would be the younger, silly sister who's always looked upon for a good laugh and gets whatever she wants. And Thanksgiving, while he's great and all, he's not as boisterous and entertaining as the other two. He flies under the radar all year long, until people pack up their costumes.

Then it is finally November and he becomes giddy with excitement as he hopes people everywhere will think of him, even if just for a week. But, to no avail, everyone's mind quickly shifts onto his big brother. People shop for their turkeys, stuffing and pie crusts with Christmas jingles in the background all while Thanksgiving is left with only one day of recognition. Even then, people typically talk about Christmas gifts and plans.

Oh, I'll admit maybe comparing Thanksgiving to a young boy is a little overboard, but so is giving Christmas two months of celebration. Feel free to call me the Grinch...for now.

Even as I type, there is a large tub of Christmas decor being divided up between everyone in the office and my coworkers are running back to their desks to join in on the festiveness. I also dug into the bin, but I refuse to do anything with the decor I claimed until Nov. 23.

Instead, I will YouTube the Thanksgiving Song by Adam Sandler and relish in my thoughts of family, laughter and being so full I couldn't vomit before managing to squeeze in a slice (or three) of pie.

Mmm...pie.

Chelsea Wysocki can be reached for comment at Chelsea@wearemsg.com
Personal Column- Humorous: Small Dailies

Honorable Mention
- Dickinson Press
  There's a bat in the house
  Linda Sailer

Third Place
- Dickinson Press
  Russia not to be trusted
  Harvey Brock

Second Place
- Wahpeton, The Daily News
  Aquaman nearly perfect
  Frank Stanko
I'll have the McDMZ

By Iain Woessner

I'll have the McDMZ, I thought. It's a new restaurant that just opened down the street from my apartment. The menu is unique and interesting, with dishes like 'McDMZ' and 'DMZ Coffee'. I've heard good things about it, and I'm excited to try it out.

Dickinson Press
I'll have the McDMZ
Iain Woessner
Personal Column- Humorous: Large Dailies

◊ Third Place
  - Fargo, The Forum of Fargo-Moorhead
    Ya got trouble, North Dakota
    Mike McFeely

◊ Second Place
  - Grand Forks Herald
    The Dreaded Kamatsi Squirrel
    Brad Dokken
First Place

Fargo, The Forum of Fargo-Moorhead

Bar set high for perfect middle-aged hangout

Tammy Swift

Bar set high for perfect middle-aged hangout

When you're young, you want to hang out where it's cool. You want to be where the music is loud, the waiters are appropriately snotty, the beer is trendy and the food is adventuresome. (Soup-Vide Shark with Sour Beer-Pickled Watermelon-Rind Kimchi, anyone?) At that stage of life, it's all about exploration and adventure. You can take it. You have supplie drums, fully-functioning knees and a robust digestive system. But as we age, things change. You don't crave cool as much as comfort. Forget ice bars and squid-infused martinis; just show us a place where there's bar support and an all-you-can-eat pudding station.

With that philosophy in mind, a place called "Fogey's" was born. Fogey's is a new bar concept for the middle-aged patron. It's the answer to the customer who goes out to eat for one hour -- and to complain about the meal for two hours afterward. It's a place where the waiters are patient, the lighting is flattering and everyone conveniently looks the other way while you stuff a year's supply of free Splenda into your purse.

Fogey's seemed to present the ideal opportunity to crossbreed ideas from the ultimate middle-aged focus group: my friends on Facebook. Thankfully, my fellow Fogey-fites couldn't wait to take time out of their busy schedules of reporting young kids on skateboards to police to share their opinions. (Middle-aged people, after all, live to share opinions.)

Sadly, I don't even have room for all of their suggestions. I will share the more popular ones.

So step inside Fogey's, my friends, where the Martinis flow like wine and all menu items were designed to minimize flavor combinations.

Music is set nice and quiet so you can hear yourself think. (I always thought hearing was the first thing to go with age.) In fact, certain types of hearing determerrants -- such as your ability to hear that damned college-age waiter who mumbles -- while other hearing abilities (e.g., sound of spouse tipping waiter with insufficient amount of change).

Lighting is a marvel of modern ingenuity. It is bright enough so you can read the menu, but soft enough to make you look 10 years younger and 35 pounds thinner.

Every woman gets a card, just to make her day.

Complimentary chocolates are placed at every table setting.

Diners are stopped at door and invited to remove shoes and slip them into heated, far-linen Cores.

There are no high-top tables because dangling your feet really irritates your socks. Instead, every chair in the joint has (amusing support, a cup holder, a valseimeter for the TV and heated massage capabilities.

Most of the drink options are laced with submarines and Advel.

A popular drink for the ladies will be the Hot Flash: a magical concoction of Black Cohosh, magnesium supplements, Estroven, Gabapentin and Diet Sprite. It's topped off with beauty and then set on fire for dramatic effect. (Diners can opt for the delicious but more-safety-conscious alternative: the cold, non-alcoholic Night Sweat.)

Bathrooms. Lots of lots of bathrooms.

Machines in restrooms dispense dental floss, mace, rain boots, Gu-Ni, Nyquil and Vicks.

No parking spot is farther than 50 feet from the entrance. In the winter, there are valets who don't expect to be tipped.

Every seat in the restaurant has a bag hook large enough to hold a main purse.

The interior of the restaurant is just the right temperature and is magically designed so no one has to sit under an air conditioning vent.

Benseet consists of fat-free, sugar-free dairy-free vanilla ice milk and white wedding cake. (Because once you hit 30, you inescapably begin to love white wedding cake.)

After-dinner mints are stool softeners and Tums.

No screaming, ill-mannered children allowed, unless -- of course -- they are your own adorable grandchildren.

Def Leppard cover band starts at 7 and finishes by closing time at 9:30 p.m.

See! That way you can brag to all your friends that you closed the bar down, yet still get home in time for the 10 o'clock news.

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