



Just My Opinion By Mary Kilen

Back In The Flowerbeds

In the years that Dale and I have been in our home that was Dale's childhood home, we have spent some time working on flowerbeds. Usually, that starts with one of my "bright ideas".

We started out by cleaning out the shrubs in the front bed on the house. That was a lot of work, but once done it provided a beautiful space for both perennials and annuals.

Then came the day Dale was pulling an old double wash basin out of the laundry room in the basement. As he thought he was taking it to the dump, I saw another planting opportunity. It became a focal point for a planting area in the back yard. The basin holds colorful annuals each year, while the area around it is surrounded by perennials. I've had to replant some of those over the years, but it is another spot I really love.

Last year, to Dale's dismay, I decided to plant some daylilies along

the driveway. It started out with Dale having to till up the space first. We worked to clear most of the grass and weeds and I happily put the plants in the ground. They were doing really well and then I broke my foot.

They spent the end of the summer and fall being surrounded by weeds. I finally finished getting them fully cleaned out this weekend and we worked on a project that was Dale's idea this time.

After I got them cleared and could see that they were doing really well, we put down some fabric. Let me paint a picture for you. It was a beautiful day to be outside, that is until we went to put down the weed barrier fabric. As we rolled it out and cut it, the wind came up. There we stood, holding the fabric, as the wind pushed it out. I swear, we could have almost parasailed to Palermo. We got the fabric down and then put some fencing around them. That was followed by a layer of nice white rocks. We picked up four bags to start with. Silly us, we ended up going back for ten more. We also picked up some new solar pathway lights to put along the driveway.

It looks amazing and I'm hoping that Dale's thought process that it would cut down on some of the weeding plays out.

Dale also looked at a spot in the back yard between the basement windows. We can never get grass to grow there well, so he thought maybe we could put another planting area. We got some wood edging and Dale worked up the dirt. We then added more dirt to fill in the space. I picked up some beautiful perennials to put in that spot as well.

By the end of the day on Saturday, we both were beat. I headed out to White Earth to take some pictures at the rodeo and then came home to take a hot shower.

Before going to bed, there was some pain in this old body. Waking up Sunday, my body reminded me I'm not as young as I once was. By Monday, I was able to move without groaning and I know that I'm going to love the work we accomplished over the weekend. Maybe I need to really practice

my plans of working for a while and then resting, and repeat. Unfortunately, once I get started, I forget to take more than short breaks every once in a while.

The End Of School Sports

The final state tournament for high school sports for the year was held last week as golfers took to the course in Grand Forks in Class A and Carrington in Class B.

I know that we have no control over the weather, but I felt horrible for the kids golfing in Carrington last week.

First, their tournament was postponed a day because of the rains that had left chunks of the course under water. As the day progressed, they started being told how the tournament would look. It started out with talk about a one day, eighteen hole tournament instead of the two day thirty-six hole tournament. By the end of the day, they had decided to go with nine holes on the first day and eighteen the second.

That first day was less than ideal conditions, but they got the first nine holes in on the back half of the course where the water had receded. The second day, they were faced with more windy conditions and still wet holes. That led to a twelve-hole second day.

I saw pictures and video of the course and felt that it was too bad they couldn't have found a way to reschedule the tournament or move it to a course where conditions were more favorable. I know that isn't the easiest decision to make or accommodate, but I still feel like the athletes that competed throughout the season deserved more from their state tournament.

That being said, kudos and hats off to the kids that powered through. It might not have been the tournament they imagined, but they qualified for that tournament by being the best in their regions and the best golfers in the state!



Readers See Newspapers As "All Of The Above" By Cecile Wehrman, Executive Director, North Dakota Newspaper Association

With the state primary season concluded, the forms of messaging statewide candidates used leading up to June 11 is curious. Likewise, the steady drumbeat we hear from local and state governments to move public notices to government websites, along with the decisions some state agencies make in bypassing legacy media to publicize state programs.

As the executive director of the North Dakota Newspaper Association (NDNA), and also a community newspaper publisher, the requests for free coverage by statewide candidates when they make a campaign stop, announce an endorsement, or advance a policy position and the lack of paid advertising shows a disconnect between candidates wanting the newspaper audience and their unwillingness to pay for it.

Likewise, government agencies send press releases they want newspapers to print for free or use as the jumping off point for expanded coverage of an issue - which frequently happens because we're in the information business - yet they decry the cost of publishing required public notices or

minutes of public meetings when the cost is less than 1 percent of their budgets. Similarly, some public agencies steer communication budgets away from legacy media - and local newspapers - for reasons that are difficult to fathom for results that are less effective. Why would local and state governments want to pay Mark Zuckerberg in California rather than a community newspaper employing North Dakotans?

A few months ago, NDNA sought out the services of a respected polling firm to complete a demographically representative study of newspaper readership. The results are stunning.

- 76 percent of newspaper readers are UNDER age 65.
- Digital platforms disseminating print content have exploded the newspaper audience to include more than half the state.
- 86 percent of North Dakota adults read print or digital newspapers every month.
- 82 percent of North Dakota adults believe an independent third-party should be the primary source for dissemination of public notices - not government websites.
- 67 percent of newspaper readers vote in national or state elections.
- 77 percent of North Dakota adults says "newspaper advertising is important."

• 65 percent of North Dakota adults use newspaper advertising to help them decide what brands, products and local services to buy.

These are the kinds of statistics any industry would be proud to crow about, so we are!

It's interesting that district legislative and local government candidates seem to know the value of newspapers. Competitive primary races resulted in a great deal of advertising placed in community newspapers this cycle. In many cases, newspaper advertising is likely to have made the difference for candidates rising to the top of ballot.

Quite successfully, the state tax department earlier this year focused messaging heavily in North Dakota's 73 newspapers to get the phones ringing and applications flowing for a new primary residence tax credit.

Sometimes it seems like the biggest detriment to newspapers is our name. Planning a media campaign used to be a calculus between print, television and radio. Today the buzzword may be "digital" but today's newspapers are both print AND digital, giving advertisers access through trusted local news websites, apps, social media and emailed newsletters.

Ask a consumer whether they read the newspaper and they understand it's "all of the above," not just print. Our association is on a mission to help candidates, public agencies and advertisers of all kinds understand that, too.



The Passing Scene By Dennis Patrick

Putsch, Anyone?

For those not already familiar with the term, a "putsch" describes a revolt or a sudden and decisive change of government, a coup. Now, hold that thought.

Set the scene by identifying the players. In the crassest scenario think of the protagonist as the president of the US. Then, think of the antagonists or perpetrators of direct action. Different names apply, some more descriptive than others: deep state, administrative state, shadow state, bureaucracy, civil servants. Think in terms of unelected government employees. Imagine this loose alliance regarding themselves as anointed custodians of power.

To better grasp this entity, think of more than 450 federal agencies staffed by 2.7 million bureaucrats consuming billions of tax dollars. Making matters more problematic, the incestuous relation between these bureaucrats, the media, lobbyists, and leading universities create a focus of power feared by our Founders.

Annoying and sometimes harmful agencies and departments include the IRS, EPA, Agriculture Department, and others. We all interface with these.

But much more sinister are those agencies who exercise disdain for elected officials and our republic as founded. These include those who comprise the military intelligence complex.

There was a time when ranking active and retired officers in the CIA, FBI, DOJ, NSA, and the military were apolitical. Their loyalty was first and foremost to the US Constitution. They served both Democrat and Republican administrations without partisanship. That was then. This is now. At the highest levels the elite float among the State Department, Defense Department, White House, CIA, FBI, intelligence services, universities, and high paying media gigs.

Today the military intelligence complex has unabashedly become partisan. It wields tremendous power and will unhesitatingly use it to interfere with elected officials, their decisions, and to influence federal policy. The real danger occurred when the military intelligence complex became politicized wielding power to advance an ideology or political party or to preserve their own status. President Obama's misuse of the FBI, CIA, DOJ, and FISA courts to surveil the campaign and the transition to President Trump's administration convinced many Americans the military intelligence complex had too little oversight and too much power.

Consider examples of the unwarranted, if not illegal, involvement of unelected federal careerists in the exercise of power. A sampling illustrates the point. Soon after the 2016 election an opposition group described as #Resistance (Google it) gathered Trump opposition including Hillary Clinton.

FBI partisan lawyer Kevin Clinesmith was part of special counsel Robert Mueller's team investigating Trump's involvement with Russia in 2016 election interference (later proven to be a hoax). Clinesmith pled guilty in 2020 to a federal felony of concealing evidence in a FISA warrant application and altering a federal document submitted to the court.

Rosa Brooks had been in an advisory capacity in the Obama administration's State Department. She had also been a special consultant to President Obama at the George Soro's Open Society Institute. In "Foreign Policy"

magazine she offered advice on how to remove President Trump from his elected office before 2020 by means other than through a lost election. Her article was titled "Three Ways to Get Rid of President Trump Before 2020."

Fired acting FBI director Andrew McCabe together with deputy attorney general Rod Rosenstein had discussed the possibility of convincing authorities to remove President Trump under provisions of the 25th Amendment. Rosenstein offered to wear a wire to record Trump's conversations.

Retired General James Mattis serving as Trump's Secretary of Defense became so exasperated over policy differences, he discussed with others an intervention against an "unfit" and "dangerous" commander in chief. "Coup" became the bipartisan discussion topic among those resisting Trump - or any person in the future deemed "dangerous" like him.

Navy admiral William H. McRaven essentially declared President Trump a traitor.

Retired Army four-star general Barry McCaffrey (a former classmate of mine) stated, "He [Trump] is a serious threat to US national security."

Retired Air Force four-star general Michael Hayden and former CIA director compared Trump's policies to Nazism.

These examples are representative. Many more could be cited.

For all their involvement in domestic political shenanigans, consider intelligence agencies' failures to do their jobs warning of real dangers. Some include the Yom Kippur War, Iranian Revolution of 1979, the Pakistan detonation of a nuclear bomb, collapse of the Soviet Union, the planned attacks on 9/11, Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction, turmoil in Libya, and the rise of the ISIS caliphate.

A broader, more detailed, and footnoted discussion of this theme can be found in Victor Davis Hanson's 2021 book "The Dying Citizen: How Progressive Elites, Tribalism, and Globalization Are Destroying the Idea of America." Chapter Four, "Unelected," lays out the above argument in a detailed and comprehensive analysis.

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Trails Across Mountrail By Jim Hennessy



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Leafy Spurge

Leafy spurge (*Euphorbia esula* L.) is a widely established perennial weed in North Dakota, infesting approximately 990,000 acres of land in 2005 (North Dakota Department of Agriculture survey). The leafy spurge infestation in North Dakota seems to have peaked at about 1.5 million acres in 2000 and 2001. The decline thereafter has been a result of an effective control program initiated in the early 1980s. Prior to this control program, leafy spurge acreage doubled every 10 years from 1950 to 1985. Despite the decline in acreage, the widespread infestation continues to cost the state more than \$75 million annually in lost production.

Leafy spurge is a long-lived perennial plant that is native to Europe and Asia and was introduced in the United States in 1827. It first was identified in North Dakota in 1909, growing along a street in Fargo. Leafy spurge is a noxious weed, according to both the North Dakota Seed Law and North Dakota Noxious Weed Law.

Leafy spurge normally grows 2 to 3 feet tall as herbaceous stems from a woody crown that is below the soil surface. Each crown produces several erect stems, giving the plant a clump-like appearance. The plant bears numerous linear-shaped leaves with smooth margins. The leaves have a characteristic bluish-green color but turn yellow or reddish orange in the fall. Stems originating from crown buds and roots begin growth in late April, making leafy spurge one of the first plants to emerge in the spring. The early and rapid growth gives leafy spurge a competitive advantage over crop and pasture plants. All parts of the plant contain a milky juice called latex, which is a useful identifying characteristic.

Leafy spurge produces a flat-topped cluster of yellowish-green petal-like structures called bracts, which surround the true flowers. The showy, yellow bracts appear in late May and early June, giving the plant the appearance of "blooming." However, the true flowers, which are small and green, do not develop until mid-June. The distinction between bract appearance and true flowering is important for timing of herbicide applications. Spring-applied herbicides are more effective on plants with developing true flower parts than on plants with developed bracts but undeveloped flowers.

Seeds are borne in pods, which contain three gray-brown, oblong, smooth seeds. After the seed has matured, the seed pods burst explosively and throw seeds up to 15 feet from the parent plant. An average of 140 seeds is produced per stem, and seeds may remain viable in the soil at least eight years.

Leafy spurge seeds may germinate to re-establish infestations where total control of leafy spurge foliage and roots has been achieved. The peak period of germination is late May and early June, but seeds can germinate and seedlings become established throughout the growing season. Leafy spurge seedlings have a remarkable capacity for vegetative reproduction and can reproduce vegetatively within seven to 10 days after emergence. Seedlings typically do not flower during the first year.

Leafy spurge patches may have more than 200 stems per square yard in sandy soil and even higher densities in heavy clay soil. Patches of leafy spurge usually spread vegetatively from 1 to 3 feet per year and form dense stands that crowd out other plants by shading and competing for moisture and nutrients.

The root system of leafy spurge is extensive and consists of numerous

coarse and fine roots that occupy a large volume of soil. Roots are most abundant in the upper foot of soil, but some roots can extend to a depth of 15 feet or more. Roots are woody and durable in structure, with numerous buds capable of producing new shoots. Leafy spurge has two types of roots: vertical and horizontal. Vertical roots may be as large as 1/2-inch diameter in the upper foot of soil and decrease to the size of a pencil lead with increasing depth. Horizontal roots are smaller in diameter than vertical roots and spread out from the crown up to 15 feet per year. The root system contains a large nutrient reserve capable of sustaining the plant for years.

Leafy spurge contains a toxic substance that, when consumed by livestock, is an irritant, emetic and purgative. It causes scours and weakness in cattle and may result in death. The toxin has produced inflammation and loss of hair on the feet of horses from freshly mowed stubble during haying, and has caused mortality in sheep that grazed leafy spurge exclusively. However, sheep and goats safely can graze leafy spurge as a portion of their diet, and grazing can be used as a form of cultural control. Ruminants will eat dried plants in hay, but many livestock, particularly cattle, avoid eating live plants.

The Mountrail County Weed Control is busy trying to keep this noxious weed under control in the county. If you have leafy spurge on your property, please report it to the Mountrail County Weed Control Office by calling 628-2835.

Mosquito Control Around The Home

With the flooding and all the rain this spring in many areas, there are plenty of pools of standing water for mosquitoes to breed in. It is not a surprise that will we be dealing with these blood-sucking insects that interfere with outdoor activities.

Mosquitoes need water to complete their life cycle and the first three life stages (egg, larva, and pupa) require water for development. In the summer, mosquitoes can complete their life cycle in 7-30 days depending on species, temperature and environment. Residential areas are a major source of breeding sites. Man-made objects such as bird baths, uncovered boats, discarded tires and plant pots allow mosquitoes to breed in our own backyards. Ditches along roadways often become filled with water and are also ideal breeding sites for floodwater mosquito species. To minimize breeding sites for mosquitoes around the home:

- 1) Remove standing water that has accumulated in man-made objects - tires, bird baths, uncovered boats and plant pots, anything that will hold water.
- 2) Flush water out of bird baths and pet dishes at least twice a week
- 3) Clean debris out of roof gutters.
- 4) Correct any drainage problems in yards so rainwater will not pool in low areas.
- 5) Fill tree holes with cement or sand.
- 6) Swimming pools or spas should be chlorinated. If not in use, cover.
- 7) Repair leaky faucets or air conditioning units.
- 8) Keep grass and shrubs around your house well-trimmed.

For temporary relief around the yard, insecticides that target adult mosquitoes can be sprayed a few hours or a day before a picnic or other event. However, these measures only provide temporary relief because mosquitoes can move long distances of 20 or more miles. Outdoor foggers usually only provide about 3 hours of relief before the chemical dissipates and mosquitoes return. Spraying trees or shrubs, and long grass where adult mosquitoes are resting may help reduce local mosquito populations. Numerous insecticides are available for the homeowner, such as, Tempo, Demand CS, or Sevin.

Home owners can treat small water areas, such as bird baths, garden pools, etc., by using a bacterial insecticide. These insecticide products are known as "dunks" (or "donuts") and are available at many retail stores, garden centers and on-line garden suppliers. Dunks contain a granule that contains the bacterium *Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis* or "Bti". This bacterium kills mosquitoes, but does not harm fish, birds or other wildlife. The "dunk" versions are well-suited for small breeding sites (100 sq. ft. or less) and will control mosquito larvae for about 30 days. Before using Bti products, it is a good idea to understand the life cycle and habitat requirements of mosquitoes in your area. Simply treating all areas of standing water without knowing if they are actually sources of the problem is a waste of time and money.

Again, the best long-term solution to severe mosquito problems is to modify or eliminate breeding sites.

For protection against mosquito bites and diseases that they vector (such as West Nile Virus) follow these guidelines:

- 1) Wear long pants and long-sleeved shirts and earth-tone color clothing (light brown, olive, khaki).
- 2) Use mosquito repellent containing DEET, picaridin, or oil of lemon eucalyptus (biopesticide).
- 3) Fix holes in screen windows and doors to prevent mosquitoes from getting indoors.
- 4) Stay indoors at dawn and dusk when mosquitoes are most active.
- 5) If you are planning an outdoor picnic or activity, spray trees and shrubs with ready-to-use insecticide sprays, aerosols or foggers the day before your activity. Always read and follow the pesticide label.

Additional mosquito information is available at the website for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/index.htm>

Cheatgrass

Cheatgrass is native to Europe, the northern rim of Africa, and southwest-ern Asia.

Description: A winter annual in the grass family (Poaceae), bearing many finely hairy, drooping, yellowishgreen, bristly spikelets in a loose, much-branched, terminal cluster. It forms small tufts 8-24 inches tall, from a fine fibrous root system. Stems are erect and slender. Leaf blades are flat and pubescent. The inflorescence is a dense, drooping panicle 1 1/2 to 8 inches long and is pale green to purplish in color. Branches are thin, flexuous, and pubescent. Spikelets are four to seven-flowered and pubescent or villous. Cheatgrass reproduces by seed that germinates in the fall, over winters as a seedling, then flowers in the spring. Seeds have the potential to remain viable in the seed bank for 2 to 5 years.

Habitat: It grows on rangelands, pastures, prairies, fields, waste areas, eroded sites, and roadsides. It exists in many climatic areas but primarily in the 6-27 inches precipitation zone. It will grow in almost any type of soil, however, is most commonly found on coarse textured soils on B and C horizons of eroded areas and areas low in nitrogen with soil temperatures between 35-38°F and 59°F. Litter promotes germination and establishment of seedlings.

Control and Management: Manual - Fire, mowing, grazing, tillage, and inter-seeding of competitive native plants have all been shown to reduce populations.

Chemical - It can be effectively controlled using any of several readily available general use herbicides such as glyphosate. Follow label and state requirements.

Biological control is limited. Rabbits and mice will feed extensively on this species as do migratory grasshoppers. It is often infected with a head smut that, when severe, may reduce seed yield. Some research has been conducted on pink snow mold (*Fusarium nivale*) as a biological control agent, but information has yet to be released.

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