Northern Celebrations: Patricia Stockdill / Embracing our North Dakota Lifestyle

November outdoor musings

One's mind tends to wander when sitting in a quiet blind.

Well, it wasn't really a blind, it was hidden – as much as one can be with a hunter orange cap and jacket – amongst a tangled clump of silverberry shrubs on a pasture knoll during a warm, near mid-November late afternoon. Pheasants cackled somewhere in the background. Waves of snow geese and lesser Canada geese creased the sky.

While the deer rut activity was increasing, on that particular afternoon they must have decided they would wait until the dark hours to be up and about because they were as quiet as the beautiful North Dakota day.

But that's OK because it provides opportunities to relax and just let one's mind wander; musing about past mid-November outdoor experiences and reflecting on the abundant opportunities afforded here:

Hmm, it seems there was one year when the weather was just like the day sitting in the silverberry, only this time instead of silverberry it was wearing the same orange cap and jacket trying to appear as nothing but a weird colored rock among buckbrush. Being a shorter shrub than silverberry it's harder to hide. But it was easy to soak up the sun.

And fall asleep on that particular quiet November afternoon. A setting sun and much cooler temperatures brought the realization – and awakening - that it was time to leave the field.

Those memories bring warm thoughts. The memory of trying to drag a buck out of a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Waterfowl Production Area (WPA - they're open to all legal hunting seasons) through knee-deep snow while it's still snowing provided a reminder of just how different each deer gun season can be.

Bundled up in warm layers of clothing with the advantage of walking to keep even warmer, the idea was to head out for what, given weather conditions, would likely be the last opportunity before the season closed a few days later.

One shot and I had my deer. But that's where the challenge began. Even the hilltops had more than a foot of snow and I had about one-half mile between me with my field-dressed deer and the vehicle. It was a slow, slow drag but as darkness set in my husband realized I wasn't along the prairie trail bordering the WPA.

He had been sitting in a blind (hmm, much more weather protection than my walk) about 4 miles away. Being prepared, we had taken a sled along "just in case". Also, thankfully, we were in an area with wireless reception so I could describe the direction the deer and I were slowly coming from, and he met me with the sled for a much easier exit.

The other thing one tends to think of when it's a beautiful, calm mid-November day is that it seems a vast majority of light geese wait and lesser Canada geese wait until the North Dakota deer gun season is on before they start their major migration southbound.

Living in west-central North Dakota, we get to experience the heart of Central Flyway migration, especially along the Missouri River System. The air almost echoes with their cackling and honking. It's a treasure to observe and a major waterfowl hunting opportunity.

If one isn't trying to harvest a deer.

Sometimes the geese will stay, resting, loafing, and feeding for the strength to travel yet another 1,000-plus miles. Other time weather dictates they continue arduously onward to the south with conditions like that deer season with a deer on a snow-laden WPA.

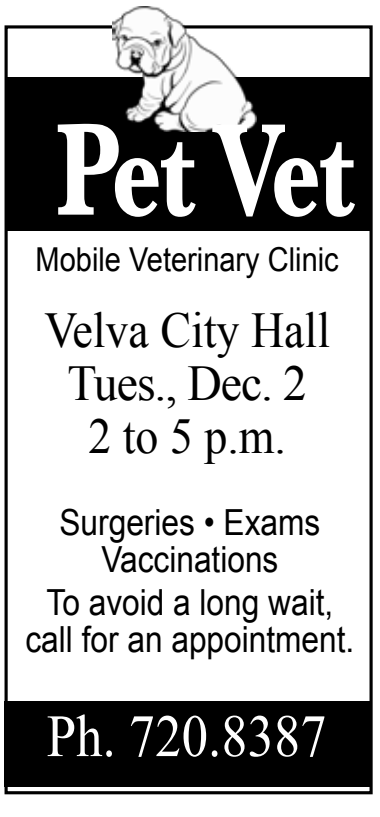
The "big" geese – giant Canada geese, though, will stay for as long as Mother Nature dictates, which means late-season waterfowl opportunities as well as the opportunity to watch the hardy birds on the Missouri River and open water of Lake Sakakwea.

And then there are those taunting pheasants one hears while sitting among the quietness of that mid-November afternoon. It seems they know there's a rifle in hand and no one is carrying a shotgun with an eager Brittany in the lead, nose busily scenting their presence.

So they can cackle and crow away, taunting.

Maybe the quiet afternoon in the silverberry shrubs atop a pasture knoll wasn't so quiet after all. It was busy with memories, smiles, and silent laughter.

More than anything, it was busy with the appreciation of the opportunities afforded someone taking the time to soak up the true outdoor experience.



Legal Notices: Your right to know

VELVA PUBLIC SCHOOL
BOARD OF EDUCATION
OCTOBER 14, 2025 5:00PM

The Regular meeting of the Velva Public School Board was held Tuesday October 14, 2025, at 5pm at Velva Public School in the Public Library. Alongside President Lance Selzler were board members Melissa Haskins, Robert Kasowski, Kendra Colby and Tonya Harden. Also present were Karen Hinch, Monty Mayer, Kelly Mogen and Skyler Helseth. The Pledge of allegiance was recited by all. The agenda was approved with a motion from Haskins and 2nd from Colby.

The BeLegendary progress was discussed and Mr Mayer gave an update on the superintendent guardrails and the plan to increase student related funding expenditures.

The consent agenda was approved with a motion from Kasowski and a 2nd from Haskins to included: September board minutes, Administrative reports, September bills and reports as follows: Payroll: #133928-133936 and DD #227801619-227801778 Auto Pay #227801430-227801439 $431,361.12. General: check #'s 31561-31605 and Auto pay #227801432-227801440 total $166,106.79

Activity:check #'s 31234-31332 total $27,754.87. SL- Auto Pay #3 $9,743.76 check#9180-9191 $9,270.37. Building Fund- #1272-1276 & 1278 $117,499.46.

Haskins and Helseth were asked to give their feedback on the NDSBA conference that was held in the previous week. The board held discussion with them on their take away. The wrestling co-op with Underwood was discussed and requested with the information provided by Mr. Nagel. There was a motion by Colby and a 2nd by Harden to approve the co-op.

The school board held discussion on parameters for the possible purchasing of a school vehicle that will replace the current 2013 Suburban used for both drivers-ed and extracurricular activities. Parameters were set and the transportation supervisor/superintendent will work with the board and business manager to determine the best fit for the schools needs.

The superintendent evaluation is due November 15th and the board will complete this via google form.

The board decided on the school board retreat location and time.This will be held November 18th at 5:30pm at the Velva American Legion.

The next regular board meeting will be held at 5:00pm on Monday, November 10th in the VPS meeting room.

11/20/2025

VELVA PUBLIC SCHOOL
SPECIAL MEETING
OCTOBER 27, 2025

The Velva Public School board met at 9am on Monday October 27, 2025, to discuss the purchase of a new school vehicle.

Present were board members Colby, Haskins, Kasowski, Vice President Harden, and President Selzler. Also present were Skyler Helseth and Monty Mayer. President Selzler called the meeting to order at 9:00am.

Robert and Kendra approve the agenda. Discussion was held about a vehicle for Velva School. The board was provided with information for the week of October 20th to review and decide on today.

Haskins made a motion with a 2nd from Colby to purchase the 2021 Ford Expedition from Eide Ford in Mandan with the platinum warranty. Motion carried.

Roll Call -Lance Tonya, Melissa, Kendra, Robert.

Adjourned at 9:23am

11/20/2025

SAWYER PUBLIC SCHOOL
DISTRICT NO 16
SAWYER, NORTH DAKOTA
Wednesday, October 22, 2025

Regular School Board Meeting was called to order at 5:10 p.m. by President Folden. Board members present were Barb Jandl, Correen Jones, and Mandy Vigness. Also present: Heather Ell, Superintendent, Patti Syverson, Business Manager, Jeff Beck, Transportation Lead, Tracy Helm-Sjoquist, teacher.

M/S/C: Vigness/Jones to approve the consent agenda

1. Business Manager's Reports
2. Approval of September15th Regular and Taxation Minutes
3. Approval of Bills

a. Prepaid Bills $7,150.03
b. Visa Bills $5,304.51
c. Board Bills $17,381.34

OLD BUSINESS: a. Policy IAD School District Real Property Disposal 2nd Reading. b. Policy AAC – Nondiscrimination and Anti-Harassment 2nd Reading. c. Administrative Regulation AACA-AR Section 504 Evaluation Standard and Procedures 2nd Reading.

d. Exhibit AAC-E1 Filing a State or Federal Discrimination and/or Harassment. Complaint – 2nd Reading.

M/S/C: Jones/Jandl to approve Policy IAD School District Real Property Disposal.

M/S/C: Vigness/Jandl to approve Policy AAC Nondiscrimination and Anti-Harassment.

M/S/C: Jandl/Vigness to approve Administrative Regulation AACA-AR Section 504 Evaluation Standard and Procedures.

M/S/C: Vigness/Jandl to approve Exhibit AAC-E1 Filing a State or Federal Discrimination and/or Harassment Complaint.

SUPERINTENDENT/PRINCIPAL REPORT:

Enrollment Report

- Total enrollment K-12: 93 students as of Oct. 22, 2025
- Elementary = 42 students (does NOT include 10 Pre-K.)
- PK3=2, PK=8, K=8, 1=11, 2=6, 3=7, 4=7, 5=3.
- Middle School = 17 students
- 6=7, 7=5, 8=5.
- High School = 24 students
- 9=8, 10=9, 11=3, 12=4.
- Special Education Strategist Case Load = 21; case manages 14.
- Speech/Language Caseload = 12 students; case manages 10 (3 in testing).

Upcoming events: 25 Students interested in eSports. 4 Junior High girls are participating in Basketball at Nedrose. Phil has been running a Fall Program for Trap. Student Council has been busy with their Store, Boo Grams, Popcorn Friday, Turkey Bingo and other events.

NEW BUSINESS: a. Bus Drivers; b. Policy ABAC-Virtual Learning Because of Weather or other Conditions 1st Reading; c. Policy AACA Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 Policy 1st Reading.

Calendar: Next meeting on Wednesday, November 12th at 5 p.m.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:58 p.m.

Tim Folden, President
Patti Syverson, Business Manager
11/20/2025