

Dakota Gardener: Growing giants

BY EMILY HOW
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“This is huge; it’s taller than the garage!”

The plant in question was a sunflower. And it was, in fact, taller than the garage. What started as a pack of seeds I had gotten for 50% off at a local garden store and just tossed into a bare spot of my garden was now the first thing people noticed.

The sunflower variety was not an ornamental variety like the ones I had growing in my other flower beds. This one is called Mammoth Grey Striped sunflower, and from the name I should have guessed that it would be huge! But it’s hard to imagine what an eight- to 10-foot-tall plant looks like from one tiny seed. The Mammoth Grey Striped sunflower is an heirloom variety that produces a single flower on one stalk. Mind you, it is a single flower that can be up to 14 inches!

As the sunflower grew, I watched as it tracked the sun. This process is called heliotropism. Young sunflowers will track the sun turning from east to west before reorientating themselves back to the east during the evening, waiting again for the morning sun to rise. Once the flower becomes more mature, the flower will stay facing the east. This allows the sun to warm the flower quickly, making it a popular spot for male bumblebees to use it as a resting spot to sleep throughout the late summer and early fall.

In the late summer, my Mammoth Grey Striped sunflowers and my prettier ornamental sunflowers provided a reliable source of food for pollinators. Bees of all varieties swarmed to them for food. These plants also provide habitat for many beneficial insects, such as lady beetles and soldier beetles which prey on pests in the garden.

Sunflowers offer more than just food and habitat for pollina-



The Mammoth Grey Striped sunflower is an heirloom variety that produces very large flowers (up to 14 inches) on one stalk. (NDSU photo)

tors; after the growing season is over, the sunflowers can be harvested for seeds. Sunflower seeds are high in oil and are great for roasting. In the winter, the seeds also serve as a valuable food source for native birds when protein sources are scarce.

Sunflowers have their benefit in the garden as well. They belong to the Helianthus family, making them a great plant for crop rotation. Because sunflowers have taproots, they make for a great cover crop in areas with compacted soil.

While the flower is the most noticeable part of the mammoth sunflower, the second most noticeable part is the flower stalk. The stalks are not only tall but thick to support the weight of the flower. These sturdy stalks are useful beyond supporting the sunflower. If you let them dry over the winter, they can be used as a trellis support for vining produce such as tomatoes, peas and cucumbers. The stalk can also be added to your compost pile.

Not only are sunflowers versatile in use, they are native to the North Dakota and the rest of the continental US. Next year, plant a sunflower; you never know what beauty they may add to your garden.

McVile Community Library

Hours: T-F 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.; Sat. 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
701-322-5541

BY RITA LOIBL

Congratulations! For the fifth year, McVile Community Library has been designated as a North Dakota STAR Library winner. This honor is presented by the ND State Library. STAR awards are given on a series of criteria documented by the annual report. The criteria include: circulation per capita, hours open per week, program attendance, computer and Wi-Fi usage, and percentage of library standards met. The awards are given out to select libraries that go above and beyond with the services they provide to their communities. McVile Community Library is extremely proud of a volunteer staff, led by Executive Director Marilyn Dehne, for making this happen. Also, the staff is very happy to have the patrons who make use of the library services. Without you, the library wouldn’t have received this recognition. It takes a village!

Mitch Albom is a popular author in the library. According to *Time* magazine, “Think of Mitch Albom as the Babe Ruth of popular literature, hitting the ball out of the park every time he’s at bat.” He has written many books which are part of the library’s inventory. A recent book by Mitch Albom has been added to the library. *Twice* is the name of the book, and it pursues the concept of what would happen if you got to do everything in your life -- again. This newest love story is about a life of second chances and how our unchecked temptations may cost everything we’ve had all along.

Have you marked your calendars? **Souperfest** will welcome McVile’s Christmas season on Sunday, Nov. 30. Plans are in the making, but you can be assured that Santa and Mrs. Claus will be there to welcome you. Watch this column for more details!

- New release!**
The Widow: A Novel by John Grisham (adult fiction)
Books new to the library:
Yours Truly: An Obituary Writer’s Guide to Telling Your Story by James Hagerty (adult nonfiction)
The Bear: A Novel by Claire Cameron (adult fiction)
Pinkalicious and the Pinkadorable Pony (early reader)
Little Gale Gumbo: A Novel by Erika Marks (adult fiction)
Airborne: A Guided Tour of an Airborne Task Force by Tom Clancy (adult nonfiction)
Dr. Carbles is Losing His Marbles by Dan Gutman (juvenile fiction)
Pig’s Dirty Tractor by Jackie East (children’s fiction)
Moonlight Mile by Dennis Lehane (adult fiction)
Bones of the Lost by Kathy Reichs (adult fiction)
Night Night Farm by Jean Claude (children’s fiction)
Deck the Halls, We’re Off the Walls by Dan Gutman (juvenile fiction)
Falling Darkness by Karen Harper (adult fiction)
Lost Echoes: A Novel by Joe R. Lansdale (adult fiction)
Dead Midnight: A Sharon McCone Mystery by Marcie Muller (adult fiction)

NDSU to celebrate 51st annual Harvest Bowl

The 51st annual Harvest Bowl program at NDSU will be held Friday and Saturday, Nov. 14 and 15.

Highlights of the event include a Harvest Bowl dinner and awards program November 14 at the Red River Valley Fair Association in West Fargo, and the Harvest Bowl football game between NDSU and Northern Iowa November 15. Also November 15, as part of Harvest Bowl, honorees will participate in educational sessions and tours on the NDSU campus.

As the state’s land-grant university, NDSU plays a major role in contributing knowledge through research, academic programs and NDSU Extension. More than 3,000 agriculturists have been recognized and more than \$1,535,000 in scholarships have been awarded to NDSU student athletes who are studying agriculture, business or premed and come from an agricultural background.

The NDSU Harvest Bowl program recognizes the success, dedication and hard work of



outstanding agriculturists in 53 counties in North Dakota and 10 counties in western Minnesota.

This year’s honorees for Nelson County are Lanny and Tammy Klefstad of Pekin.

An agribusiness award recipient is chosen annually. This award recognizes individuals who have distinguished themselves in the field of agriculture and business in North Dakota and beyond.

The 2025 NDSU Harvest Bowl Agribusiness Award recipient is Carl Larson Sr., former founder and chairman of the board of ProGold, LLC, and founding member of Gooseneck Implement. For information on Harvest Bowl and to register, visit the NDSU Foundation website at <https://ndsufoundation.com/harvest-bowl>.

Public invited to submit ornaments for State Christmas Tree

The Office of the First Lady is inviting members of the public to submit handmade ornaments for the North Dakota State Christmas Tree, which will be displayed in Memorial Hall at the state Capitol starting with a tree lighting ceremony on Dec. 2.

First Lady Kjersti Armstrong has selected “Peace” as the theme of this year’s State Christmas Tree. Submitted ornaments can vary from traditional to contemporary arts. Items that are commercially produced or made from kits are not eligible.

Designers are free to create ornaments in any shape or medium of their choosing. Each ornament should include the name of the person entering it,



their email address and a brief one- or two-line description of the ornament, including the art form used and the special circumstances through which it was created, such as a class or senior center project.

Ornaments must be received in the Office of Management and Budget office no later than Dec. 1. The ornaments become the property of the Office of the First Lady and may be hung on the state tree in ensuing years.

Mail ornaments to State of North Dakota, Office of Management and Budget, Julie Strom, 600 E. Boulevard Ave., Bismarck, ND, 58505.

Gov. Kelly Armstrong and the first lady invite the public to join them for the annual North Dakota State Christmas Tree Lighting ceremony with music, readings and remarks at 6 p.m. Dec. 2 in Memorial Hall at the Capitol.

The Nelson County Calendar of Events

Nov. 9: Petersburg Lutheran Church Pancake Breakfast, 8 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Nov. 11: Veterans Day Supper, Lakota Legion Hall, 5 p.m.
Nov. 12: NCHS/NCHSF Annual Meeting, McVile Lutheran Church, 5:30 p.m.
Nov. 15-Dec. 20: Christmas Extravaganza, Library, Michigan Mall
Nov. 26: All-Faiths Community Thanksgiving Service, Aneta Community Church, 7 p.m.
Dec. 6: Aneta Comm. Church Christmas Banquet, City Auditorium, 6 p.m.

Brought to you by the State Bank of Lakota

Seeking candidate for Board of Public School Ed.

State School Superintendent Kirsten Baesler has invited North Dakotans who live in seven eastern counties to seek a pending vacancy on the Board of Public School Education, which oversees K-12 and career and technical education in the state.

An applicant must be a North Dakotan who is eligible to vote and who lives in Barnes, Cass, Grand Forks, Griggs, Nelson, Steele or Traill counties.

The person chosen will succeed Levi Bachmeier, a West Fargo resident and the business manager of the city’s school district, who was recently appointed as Baesler’s successor as superintendent of public instruction. Baesler is resigning as superintendent to become assistant secretary of education for the US Department of Education in Washington.

Bachmeier’s successor will serve the time left on his six-year term, which ends June 30, 2030. Bachmeier will remain on the board as the new superintendent of public instruction. The superintendent is a member by law.

North Dakotans who are interested in the opening may use the governor’s website (<https://apps.nd.gov/boards/Home/Login>) to apply. The application deadline falls at 5 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 28.

The Board of Public School Education has seven members -- the superintendent of public instruction, who serves as the board’s executive secretary, and

six others who are appointed by the governor for six-year terms. The six represent groups of counties that are specified in state law (NDCC 15.1-01-01).

The Board of Public School Education’s members are part of the state Board of Career and Technical Education, which supervises North Dakota’s Department of Career and Technical Education and its programs.

The board also oversees North Dakota’s six regional education associations and the ND K-12 Education Coordination Council, which encourages collaboration among education stakeholders, supports education innovation initiatives, and makes policy recommendations to the State Legislature.

The Board of Public School Education’s primary work involves deciding school district requests to transfer property, reorganize or dissolve. It normally meets 10 times a year.

The governor will appoint Bachmeier’s successor from a list of names submitted by a committee made up of the president of ND United, the president of the ND Council of Educational Leaders, and the president of the ND School Boards Association.

Baesler will transition to her new federal job when the ongoing federal government shutdown ends. She does not plan to resign her state position until she is able to take the job of assistant secretary.

Produce grower training sessions scheduled

The ND Department of Agriculture will host several Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) produce safety grower training courses.

“Fruit and vegetable growers and others interested in learning about produce safety; the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) Produce Safety Rule; Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs); and co-management of natural resources and food safety should attend,” Agriculture Commissioner Doug Goehring said. “Attending a session will satisfy the FSMA Produce Safety Rule requirement that requires at least one supervisor or responsible party on a farm to complete food safety training recognized as adequate by the Food and Drug Administration.”

Courses are free for produce growers. There is a fee for non-produce growers. Priority will be given to North Dakota growers, but the sessions are open to all fruit and vegetable producers in the United States.

Course dates are the following Wednesdays: December 10, January 14 and 28, and February 11. All courses are held remotely from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. with a brief break for lunch. Participants must have an Internet connection to take the course.

- Topics to be covered include:
- Introduction to produce safety
 - Worker health, hygiene and training
 - Soil amendments

- Wildlife, domesticated animals and land use
- Agricultural water
- Postharvest handling and sanitation
- How to develop a farm food safety plan

In addition to learning about produce safety best practices, key parts of the FSMA Produce Safety Rule requirements are outlined within each topic. There will be time for questions and discussion, so participants should come prepared to share their experiences and produce safety questions.

To register, visit www.ndda.nd.gov/produce-safety-course. Course materials will be mailed out prior to the training. Participants are required to have their camera on and engage in the course throughout the day to receive their certificate of completion.

To ask questions about either the session or the FSMA Produce Safety Rule, please contact Jenna Nieters at 701-328-2659 or jnieters@nd.gov.

Weather report

MICHIGAN

Reports from the NDSU ND Agricultural Weather Network station at Michigan for the 24-hour period each day.

Date	High	Low	Rain
Oct. 27	57	43	.85
Oct. 28	48	30	
Oct. 29	48	26	
Oct. 30	45	33	.06
Oct. 31	39	34	.06
Nov. 1	41	30	
Nov. 2	60	36	

Weather report

PEKIN

Reports from the NDSU ND Agricultural Weather Network station at Pekin for the 24-hour period each day.

Date	High	Low	Rain
Oct. 27	56	43	.52
Oct. 28	48	32	
Oct. 29	48	25	
Oct. 30	45	33	.06
Oct. 31	39	34	.06
Nov. 1	42	28	
Nov. 2	59	35	

PETERSBURG LUTHERAN CHURCH

Pancake Breakfast

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 9 • 8 AM–1 PM • FREE-WILL OFFERING
PANCAKES FRENCH TOAST BACON SAUSAGE EGGS COFFEE JUICE
309 5TH STREET • PETERSBURG, ND 58272

American Legion Post #21 VETERANS DAY SUPPER

Tuesday, November 11
Serving 5 p.m. - until gone • FREE WILL OFFERING • VETERANS FREE
Lakota Legion Hall
Come out for a great meal & support our local American Legion
PORK ROAST, MASHED POTATOES, VEGETABLE, BUNS, DESSERT

Since 1984, our family-owned business has proudly served Lakota & the surrounding communities with professional plumbing & heating services, always prioritizing customer satisfaction.

We would like to **THANK** all the Veterans that have made it possible for us to do this.
Thank you!
- Kevin, Kerry, Terry & Travis

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