

COLUMNIST

Expressing thanks as 2025 comes to a close

A new year is upon us! As 2025 comes to a close, we reflect with grateful hearts on all that has happened and turn the page to what promises to be a bright 2026.

We have been blessed with many opportunities to make an impact as we educate the leaders of tomorrow.

We look forward to continuing this important work as we develop new programs and more that will give us additional tools to assist with the workforce needs of our local area, state, region and country.

Mayville State experienced record enrollment growth this fall, including a headcount AND a full-time equivalent (FTE) figure greater than any recorded in the history of the university!

A record number of North Dakota residents is included in the final official headcount of 1,215.



Brian Van Horn
MSU president

Residents of 47 of North Dakota's 53 counties were enrolled at Mayville State University during the fall semester that has just come to a close.

The spirit of positivity that is radiating from Mayville State University is truly unmistakable.

MSU is moving in great directions and is the university of choice for so many local students.

Many of the attributes that have made Mayville State exceptional since its establishment in 1889 are alive and well today, and an eye to the future is keeping these attributes fresh for the students of today.

Thanks to the generosity of our alumni and friends, the Mayville State University Foundation is experiencing many firsts.

As of Oct. 31, MSU Foundation assets were at an all-time high of \$21,712,575, and the endowment balance was at \$12,148,272.

The MSU Foundation board has approved the highest allotment of scholarship dollars ever in 2026-27, \$805,610.

Financial support for our athletic teams is outstanding.

The Comet Athletic Club allotted the highest amount ever for scholarships in 2025-26, \$285,000. We are grateful to the Comet Athletic Club board members for their tireless support for Comet Athletics.

Over the last several years, the North Dakota Challenge Grant has been multiplying the impact of the generosity of our alumni and friends who very thoughtfully provide scholarship resources for our students.

For the current biennium, the legislature has made \$1.32 million available in matching funds for Mayville State University, up from the \$1.1 million allotted in the last biennium.

We are fortunate to have already exhausted more than half of the challenge grant funds available for the biennium, thanks to the generosity of our alumni and friends whose private scholarship gifts are being matched at a rate of 50 cents on the dollar.

Challenge Grant support from the state has made a huge impact at Mayville State in the past and continues to do so today.

It's not too late to leverage

the impact of Challenge Grant Funding for this biennium!

The entire matching grant pool must be used by Dec. 31, 2026 per legislative guidelines. For more information, contact MSU Foundation Executive Director Dr. Lon Jorgensen at lonny.jorgensen@mayvillestate.edu or 701-788-4787.

The future is bright at Mayville State University. We thank our employees, students, friends and neighbors for the part they played in making 2025 a fantastic year.

We look forward to continuing these important partnerships that will help to bring our beloved university to greater levels of success in 2026 and beyond. Our best days are ahead of us at Mayville State University.

As we turn the calendar page, we know that many high school seniors are taking a serious look at where they will make their college homes next fall.

If you know of someone who would benefit from a Mayville State education, please encourage them to explore Mayville State.

COLUMNIST

Cherishing people and places at Christmas

Holidays have changed since my parents moved out of my childhood home.

Visiting them no longer means traveling back to the 5-acre lot north of Bismarck, where a wooden fence frames a red barn and pasture behind the ranch-style house I grew up in.

It no longer means the sound of crackling gravel under my car tires as I pull into their driveway, or the sound of dogs barking in the yard.

Holidays this year won't bring the smell of lilac trees that edge the south side of the

property, or of fresh lumber and sawdust in the nearby shop.

This year, we won't breathe in the scents of a wood-burning stove while watching Christmas movies on leather couches – the same leather couches that cradled me on sick days, for evening homework sessions, for first kisses and first heartbreaks.

Coming home no longer means the same flood of sense memories that leave me feeling suddenly aged and impossibly young at the same time.

But it will continue to mean the same soundtrack of Mom and Dad's favorite songs echoing through the house as playing cards hit the kitchen table.

It means the same blankets that have kept me warm in their guestroom for years, being greeted by the same hugs at the airport and the same chocolates on the night stand.

It means wild rice soup, candles and "Silent Night" on Christmas Eve.

It still means the scent of Mom's perfume, the scratch of my dad's beard on my forehead, arms wrapped tight for as long as we can.

And as we ring in my niece's second birthday, I can't help but wonder what she and my nephew will subconsciously register as the sounds, the smells, the feelings of home.

Will it be Dad's soft singing to them as they dance in the kitchen, the feeling of a Persian rug on their tiny bare toes?

Perhaps it will be the scent of fresh-pressed coffee in the pot, or the sizzle of food on the stove as my sister finishes dinner – a new recipe that, unbeknownst to them, will become a family favorite.

Maybe it will be the smell

of grass peeking through the window as they look out, waiting for Papa and Nana – and a suitcase of presents – to arrive.

It may be the sound of my dad letting out an exasperated gasp when my 4-year-old nephew steals a chip from his plate when Papa isn't looking.

Or the feel of Nana's hand on my niece's tiny one as they are lulled to sleep by bedtime stories and boundless love.

As we ring in the holidays and as I am reminded to cherish the people, places and senses that feel like home, I find an unexpected present in witnessing my niece and nephew forming those same connections.

What a gift to be able to create those memories, to fuel the subconscious pairings of physical sensations with the feeling of being safe, being loved and being home.



ALYSSA MEIER
Columnist

North Dakota secretary of state OKs petition for circulation of K-12 school meals measure

NORTH DAKOTA MONITOR

North Dakota Secretary of State Michael Howe announced Tuesday he has approved the format of a constitutional ballot measure that would require the state to cover the cost of free school meals to K-12 students.

Sponsors of the ballot measure have one year to submit 31,164 signatures of qualified North Dakota electors to the secretary of state to be considered for the ballot, according to Howe's office.

If the signatures are submitted by July 6, and are validated, the measure will appear on the general election ballot Nov. 3.

Robin Nelson, chair of the ballot measure sponsoring committee, said the committee hopes to have the measure be decided on that November ballot.



Nelson

"It's go time," Nelson said on Tuesday. "Once we get everything printed, we'll start collecting signatures in early January."

The organization, Together for School Meals, is heading up the informational campaign for the ballot measure, she said.

The ballot measure would require public schools to provide free breakfast and lunch to students.

Private schools, Bureau of Indian Education schools and other tribal schools could opt in to par-

ticipate in the program.

During a recent legislative committee meeting, Lynelle Johnson, director of child nutrition and food distribution for the Department of Public Instruction, told lawmakers the estimated cost to provide free school meals for the 2027-29 biennium is \$134 million.

She also said the figure is preliminary and may change as she continues to evaluate the measure.

The measure says if the Legislature is unable to identify funding, the dollars should come from the earnings of the state Legacy Fund.

STAY INFORMED

Read the news generated at the Traill County Courthouse in the Hillsboro Banner

Legal Notice

PROBATE NO. 49-2019-PR-00022
EAST CENTRAL DISTRICT COURT, TRAILL COUNTY, NORTH DAKOTA
In the Matter of the Estate of Harris O. Woell, Deceased
NOTICE OF HEARING
PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a hearing will be held regarding the Petition for Court Authorization of Settlement of Controversy at the Traill County Courthouse, 114 W Caledonia Ave, Hillsboro, ND 58045 on January 7, 2026, at 9:30 a.m. before the Honorable Reid Brady.
Dated: November 11, 2025.

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Cash Sales - Fresh Potatoes!

Monday-Friday
8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Red or Yellow Potatoes

20-lb. bag
\$10

50-lb. bag
\$20

Bag of imperfect potatoes → \$3

Stop by our wash plant at 16218 13th St NE, Buxton.
If you need assistance, call 701-847-2200

NOKOTA Packers INC.

BUXTON, ND

HOLIDAY HOURS

Wednesday, Dec. 24
OPEN 8:30 a.m. to Noon

Thursday, Dec. 25
CLOSED ALL DAY

Friday, Dec. 26
OPEN 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Saturday, Dec. 27
CLOSED ALL DAY

Wednesday, Dec. 31
OPEN 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Thursday, Jan. 1
CLOSED ALL DAY

Friday, Jan. 2
OPEN 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Saturday, Jan. 3
CLOSED ALL DAY

Happy Holidays

HealthMart PHARMACY

Hillsboro Drug
636-5231 Hillsboro