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VelvaareaVoice

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New State Superintendent emphasizes rural schools, and community connection

Reporter Heather Tudor

North Dakota's new State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Levi Bachmeier, is beginning his tenure with a focus that resonates strongly in rural communities like Velva, listening to local voices, supporting small school districts, and preparing students for life beyond graduation while keeping communities strong.

Bachmeier was appointed by Governor Kelly Armstrong in October 2025 and officially took office on November 24th, 2025, following the resignation of longtime Superintendent Kirsten Baesler. He will serve through the remainder of the current term and has announced his plans to run in the 2026 statewide election.

One of Bachmeier's first stated priorities is to visit every school district in North Dakota, including rural and small-town districts. That commitment is especially meaningful for communities like Velva, where schools often serve as the heart of the community and play a

critical role in the workforce development, and long-term population stability. Keeping true to his promise, he visited Velva Public School this past Friday and engaged with students with their questions and concerns. One of the hot topics was school districts moving towards a four-day week. Surprisingly, most students were against this idea, questioning the role this will play on demographics in our area and how that change would play out in today's parents' work week.

A native of West Fargo, Bachmeier brings both classroom and administrative experience to his new role. He began his career as a high school social studies teacher and coach, teaching at Crazy Horse School on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota. He has said that his time in the classroom continues to inform his understanding of what educators and students need to succeed.

As State Superintendent, Bachmeier now leads the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, which oversees public and nonpublic K-12 education across the state,



as well as institutions such as the North Dakota School for the Deaf, the School for the Blind, the center for Distance Education, as well as the State Library. Bachmeier has modeled his vision around ensuring students are "Choice Ready" – prepared for college, career, military service, or immediate entry into

the workforce. For Velva and the surrounding communities, that approach aligns with the importance of career and technical education, agriculture-related fields, health-care, skilled trades, and entrepreneurship. While also supporting students who choose to pursue higher education fields.

Word on the Street

VELVA COMMUNITY FOOD PANTRY:

January 20, February 17, March 17, April 21, May 19, June 16, July 21, August 18, September 15, October 20, November 17, December 15

The food pantry is open from 5:45-7:15pm in the Fellowship Hall of OVLC, Main Street. The pantry is short of these items: canned meats, canned fruit, personal hygiene products and laundry pods and can be dropped off at OVLC Mon.-Fri. 9am-3pm.



It Was Front Page News

Submitted by Kathy Holte

January 7, 1960

Boxing Slated at Velva School Gymnasium Saturday, January 16

The Bottineau State School of Forestry and the State Training School at Mandan will be matched in 10 bouts to be presented in the Velva school gymnasium on Saturday evening, January 16, starting at 8 p.m. Thirty rounds of good boxing are assured as there two teams prepare themselves for the Golden Gloves Tournaments which will be held in the near future. The main event will feature Bottineau's Dennis Langhaug and Mandan's Steve Charbaneau. This boxing event in Velva is sponsored by the Velva Junior Chamber of Commerce.

Pride Corn Awards

Awards for the McHenry County 4-H corn contest were presented to winners at a television broadcast

on KXMC-TV, Minot, recently. Awards were presented to the top three club members and one leader. The first-place plaque and a twenty-five-dollar bond were presented to Tom Bechtold, Velva, of the Young Citizens Club. Second place plaque was presented to Richard Frerichs, the Bergen Boys Club. Third place plaque was presented to Reuben David Zaback, Bergen of the Bergen Boys Club.

Spichke Resigns Post as Chairman for County Democratic Committee

Philip Spichke, prominent farmer of Kief, has recently resigned the post of chairman for the McHenry county Democratic committee. Spichke farms extensively and this past summer has embarked on cattle feeding operation with his two sons, Richie and Gene. Harold Bol-

gen of Velva will succeed Spichke at the office of chairman. Bolgen has been active for many years in NPL and Democratic activity having served for the past two years as vice chairman.

January 14, 1960

Fire Department Summoned Early Sunday Morning

Fire completely destroyed the house on the Oscar Johnson farm early Sunday morning. Mr. and Mrs. Roy Turner, of Sawyer, had moved some of their belongings in on Saturday and were planning to move in on Sunday. Their belongings were destroyed by the fire. The Velva Fire Department was called and quickly answered the summons, but the flames, aided by the strong northwest wind, completely destroyed the farm residence. Latest occupants of the farm residence

were Mr. and Mrs. Elwood Olafson, now of Glenburn.

Adult Education Classes in Beginning Sewing to be held at Velva High School

The Vocational home economics department of Velva high school is offering an adult course in beginning sewing. Enrollment and the first class will be held Monday, January 18, beginning at 8 o'clock in the home economics room. Enrollment will be limited to 15. Those interested are asked to contact Miss Peterson. Sewing supplies necessary to bring to class are pattern, material, needles, thread, pins, pin cushion, scissors, and tape measure.

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