

## OBITUARIES

## ROLAND NELSEN



Roland "Ron" Gale Nelsen, 88, passed away on March 12, 2026, in Bismarck, ND. A funeral service was held on Friday, March 20 at 10:30 a.m. at Bismarck Funeral Home. Burial will follow in Minnewaukan, ND, in the spring.

Roland was born Dec. 26, 1937, in Church's Ferry, ND, to George Nelsen, Sr., and Annabelle Nelsen. He grew up in the Leeds area and attended Leeds High School, where he proudly played football for the Leeds Lions.

Following high school, Roland served in the United States Air Force as an Airman Second Class and was stationed in Okinawa, Japan. He was deeply proud of his military service and his country.

On Feb. 20, 1962, Roland married the love of his life, Lila Silberg. They shared 34 years of marriage before her unexpected passing on April 17, 1996. Their marriage was blessed with four children, whom Roland deeply loved: Traci, Courtney, Michael and Maleah.

Roland worked for the Benson County Highway Department as a heavy equipment operator for 50 years. Much of that time was spent operating a Caterpillar dozer, work he genuinely loved and

continued to do well into his seventies.

Beyond his work and accomplishments, Roland's life was defined by something even greater. Woven deeply into the fabric of his being was a story of redemption and faith that he shared with anyone willing to listen. His faith was not simply something he believed; it was the very foundation upon which his life was built.

Roland is survived by his children: Traci Blackwood (Kevin), Courtney Nelsen, Michael Nelsen (Raquel), and Maleah Nelsen; his grandchildren: Kara Blackwood, Jared Blackwood (Kayla), Bailey Nelsen, Summer Nelsen, and Gabrielle Nelsen; and his great-grandchildren: Jacob Blackwood, Jenna Blackwood, and Tessa Blackwood. He is also survived by his sisters, Kay Verke (Robert) and Lavonne Rardon (Von).

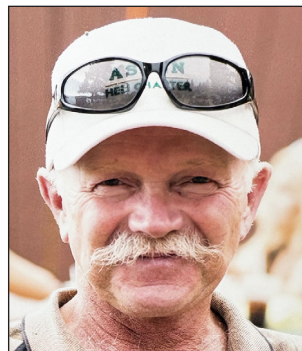
He was preceded in death by his beloved wife, Lila; his mother, Annabelle; his father, George, Sr.; and his brothers George, Jr., James, Kenneth, and Robert.

The family extends their sincere gratitude to the staff at Baptist Health & Rehab for the excellent care Roland received over the past three years.

While his family mourns his absence here on earth, they take comfort in knowing that the man who spent a lifetime speaking about heaven has now finally seen it for himself.

To sign the online guestbook and share memories with the family, go to [www.bismarckfuneralhome.com](http://www.bismarckfuneralhome.com)

## DANIEL STROMME



It is with deep sadness that we announce the passing of Daniel Floyd Stromme, aged 70, on Monday, March 12, 2026, in Grand Junction, Colorado. Born on Aug. 26, 1955, Dan was raised in Devils Lake, ND, by his parents Floyd and Delores

Stromme. He spent a significant portion of his adult life in Carbondale, CO, where he developed a profound appreciation for the mountains and the natural beauty of Colorado. Dan is survived by his siblings, Craig Stromme, Cindy Blazer (Tim), Scott Stromme (Cindy) and Gwen Moreno, (John).

He is preceded in death by his parents, sister-in-law, Debbie, and grandparents.

He will be laid to rest beside his parents at St. Benedict's Cemetery. A Celebration of Life will held at a later date.

## My Faith Journey, part 2 (so far)

by Louise Oleson, DLJ Editor Emeritus

I ended the first installment of "My Faith Journey" with the following:

"My response was, "If that's what this church teaches, then maybe I don't belong here."

His response to me was, "Maybe you don't."

To quote *neusman, Paul Harvey*, "the rest of the story" will come next week in the *Devils Lake Journal*, so "stay tuned!"

Therefore, here it is, "The rest of the story," or at least part of it, because I am still on that journey and will be until I am face to face with my Savior.

I wish I could tell you that I had a holy life all 73 years (so far) but that would not be the truth. Like lots of people, including many in the Bible, my journey has been filled with joy and sorrow, great heights and deep lows. I have loved the Lord my whole life, but I haven't always lived that out in all my life choices. I still struggle with that and I'm guessing, I always will.

When people ask me "When did you become a Christian?" my answer varies because it's not about me. Not really. Oh, I figure out what they are really asking me about my faith walk and depending on the circumstances I know how



Oleson

to respond to answer the question they appear to be asking me. Phrases come to me like "asking Jesus to come into my life/heart to be the Lord of my life" or acknowledging a date along the way as the day I "became" a Christian but that doesn't always fit the situation.

Through the years I have had some of the best training possible for this Christian life of mine.

I worked for a number of years as a bartender at The River Queen in Grand Forks. It was a great place to work and Bea and Mac McGarry who owned "The Queen" got some of the best bands in the country to play our little, busy bar on 3rd Street in downtown Grand Forks. We had bands like Fat City and Mighty Joe Young from Chicago and beyond. They were our favorites and we all partied hard with those guys in the bands.

I believe The Guess Who from Canada played there a number of times, as well, but perhaps my memory is a bit faulty on that. It happens, I accept that.

When I was working as a campus minister 1983 - 2003 in Minot and Dickinson my boss, the late Bishop John Kinney, once asked me what one thing in my life prepared me the most for the ministry. I answered without hesitation, "Being a bartender in a biker bar." I learned to take people as they are and to appreciate them - no matter where they came from."

Once on a retreat we were asked to draw a picture of our guardian angel and while everyone else was reaching for the pastels to draw blonde-haired angels with feathery wings and haloes, I drew a big, burly dude on a Harley Davidson with a tattoo. The Catholic priest who was leading the retreat had us turn our drawings in and because one was so different from all the others, he called out, "who belongs to this one?" I figured it was me so I explained to them.

"When I was in college working at the Queen in downtown Grand Forks we had a lot of bikers who hung out there all the time. I lived out by the University and each night

would walk home with my ears ringing from the loud music from the bands. But I could hear that distinctive rumble of the Harley Davidsons as the guys I knew from the bar rode past me as I hoofed along University Avenue. At first I wondered if they all lived out near the U. but when I asked they told me, "No, we just like to make sure you made it home safely."

That choked me up. I had guardian angels who wore leather jackets with biker patches on them.

I always made it home safely.

Like my experience on Lake Oahe in South Dakota, that was another "mountaintop moment" for me. Recalling the love, care and concern those guys, many of them Vietnam Veterans who had seen terrible things happen in their lifetimes yet they did their best to help keep me safe each and every night on my long walk home. Talking about that, like writing about it here and now, years later, gives me a lump in my throat and warmth in my heart for all who find ourselves on the fringe and on our own, alone in this world. Now you have a share in this "mountaintop moment."

To be continued in the *DLJ 032626*.

## Ag

From page 2

tighten and it would pull the clutch back thereby stopping the tractor. The hitch worked great, the only downside to it was that it seems like when the clutch was pulled back it would always slam into your knee!

The outfit my Dad drove though used a different type of hitch in that the plow was attached to a clevis on the tractor and if the plow hit a large rock, the plow would unhitch from the tractor. So instead of the tractor stopping, the plow would stop. Then you would have to back the tractor up to the plow again and lift a rod on the plow to raise the plow hitch up and hook it to the clevis again. You could do all this without getting off the tractor but it was kind of cumbersome. If you were distracted like being deep in thought or day dreaming you didn't always notice right away that you lost your plow so you would be driving down the field without your plow and pony drill. Kind of embarrassing if anyone was watching!

Ever since man first turned the earth over and planted a seed there had been a quest to build a better plow. From the one bottom plow pulled by oxen and kept in the ground by the man behind it, to the steel frame plow, to the sulky plow, and finally to the Reiten plow farmers have always been trying to improve on it.

Farmers have improved the seeding of grain process so much that the plow is now pretty much obsolete. You only find them in yard displays and old time

equipment farm shows and events.

In the late 1980's I had a 6 acre field that I used as pasture for horses and it became over run with the weed wormwood so I decided the best way to control the weed was to plow the field, turn the weeds under, and then spray as needed. I didn't have any farm equipment so I tried to hire someone to plow it for me. But none of my neighbors had a plow anymore.

Luckily though for me, a fellow who was about my age and who lived in Fargo but he still owned his parents farm and their equipment which included a plow and he agreed to plow the field for me. His farm is only a few miles from me. His name is Brad and I still remember the look of total enjoyment on his face as he plowed my little field. I think he was re-living childhood memories just as I was.

In my stories I write about my Dad's wide front A John Deere tractor which he bought new I think in about 1947. This tractor was capable of handling 3 bottom plows and was noted for it's distinctive pop-pop-pop engine sound and was referred to

as a "Johnny Popper". It sold new for about \$2,400. There were several versions of the A such as the AR, AO, AI, and AW. According to Farm Collector magazine John Deere sold 320,000 model A tractors, rivaling the Farmall H in popularity. Dad also had a narrow front A.

I am not a farmer and the last time I drove a tractor and did any actual field work was over 50 years ago. But I am a farm boy at heart and I follow farming practices through farm and ag magazines, listening to farm news on the radio and tv, and observing my farmer neighbors. I am also fortunate to have 2 great son-in-laws who are farmers and involved in the AG world and they share lots of their knowledge with me. I am just amazed and impressed at how farming has evolved over the past 50 years. I am very proud of our farmers.

The source for this story is my memories. I cherish the memory of spending the day pony drilling and doing field work with my Dad. I hope you have similar memories. Thanks for letting me share mine with you.

## Sanitation

From page 1

Meanwhile, Grafsgaard and his team are considering which trash containers would be best to use in conjunction with the new automated sanitation truck. During review of commission portfolios, Grafsgaard told the Commission that he already had two of the requested samples of roll-out trash carts, in 64 and 95-gallon sizes, which he invited commissioners to examine at their convenience. "We're hoping to get a few different options from a couple different vendors, so we can compare them before we put together requests for proposals or

put together a bid package for cans that will be coming up this summer."

After the meeting, Grafsgaard stressed that residents will not have to buy the carts themselves and between now and October, his staff will be putting together a set of specifications for the garbage containers that will be utilized with the automated truck. He is inclined to acquire the 95-gallon size roll-out trash carts, as they're less likely to topple over from strong winds. Also, the wheels and handle will make them easier to maneuver and require less physical labor. "The City will be buying the cans," he said, adding that each will have to be in a particular location and

have free space around it, so that the automated arm can grab it and dump the contents into the truck. "There shouldn't be a lot of significant difference for the typical resident in town."

Another change in trash pickup is the special pickup of items like furniture, appliances, tree branches and construction debris. Due to budgetary concerns, instead of scheduling the special pickup twice a year in the spring and fall, it will now be once a year, starting at the beginning of June. The pickup schedule will be divided into the four weeks of the month, with each week having special trash pickup in a different area of Devils Lake. As

it gets closer to the new dates, additional reminders and information will be posted on both the City's Facebook page as well as the front page of the City website.

Non-acceptable items for special pickup will remain the same: household garbage, microwaves, televisions, computer monitors, laptop computers, tablets (dispose of these items in your regular garbage), as well as items containing asbestos, batteries, and liquids of any kind.

For more information on the revised special pickup schedule, visit the City's website at [dvlnd.com/departments/public-works/sanitation-recycling/p/item/2641/annual-special-pickup](http://dvlnd.com/departments/public-works/sanitation-recycling/p/item/2641/annual-special-pickup).

