

Calendar of Area Meetings



- **O.P.E.R.A. Inc. (Ellendale Opera House)** board meets the second Thursday of each month at noon in the Lobby & Gallery (and online). To join the meeting remotely, email gah@gah.com and request a link.
- **Coleman Museum** Closed for the season. For visits by appointment, call Ken Smith at 701-320-2794 or 349-3222.
- **Ellendale City Council** meets every second Monday of the month at City Hall at 5:30 p.m.
- **Ellendale Area Arts Council** meets the 1st Tuesday of every month 6:00 p.m. - Call 701-320-2794 for details.
- **Ellendale Park Board** meets the 2nd Wednesday of every month at 5:30 p.m.
- **Ellendale Public School Board** meets the second Monday of every month 7:00 p.m.
- **DICKEY COUNTY WIC** In Ellendale the program is administered by Dickey County Health District Office on the 2nd Thursday of the Odd months. Appointments are made through Central Valley HD. Call 701-252-8130 for appointments. For more information call DCHD at 349-4348.
- **Dickey Co. Commissioners** meet in Ellendale the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month at the Courthouse.
- **Dickey County Health District** Foot Clinics held at Dickey County Health District office in Ellendale. For appointment call 349-4348.
- **Ellendale Masonic Lodge** meets every 2nd and 4th Thursday at 7:30 p.m.
- **American Legion Auxiliary** meets at 7:00 on the 2nd Tuesday of every month at the Legion Clubrooms.
- **American Legion and Sons of the American Legion** meets every 3rd Tuesday of the month at 6:45 p.m.
- **The Fire Department** meets the 1st Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m.
- **Ellendale Lions Club** meets on the 2nd Monday of each month at 12:00 noon at the bowling alley.
- **Ellendale Public Library Board** meets the 2nd Thursday of each odd month at 10:00 a.m. at the library.

— Compliments of —

Ellendale Pharmacy

For all your Pharmaceutical needs visit Ellendale Pharmacy 117 Main St.

Ellendale Temps Last Week		
November 16	46	35
November 17	44	34
November 18	45	30
November 19	45	39
November 20	44	26
November 21	50	23
November 22	54	30

Ellendale Temps Last Year		
November 16, 2024	56	34
November 17, 2024	55	26
November 18, 2024	53	25
November 19, 2024	42	27
November 20, 2024	27	22
November 21, 2024	30	17
November 22, 2024	39	15

DICKEY COUNTY LEADER

— Established in 1882 —

THE OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF DICKEY COUNTY

- Published each Thursday by Nordmark Publishing, Rolla, ND 58367
- Ken Smith, Editor • Aidan Thurber, Assistant Editor • Robin Smith, Accounting, Production & Proofreading, Peggy Gilbert, advertising and outreach
- Willie B. C. (a.k.a. B.C. Dawg) & Caroline Cardinal: newspaper mascots
- Member of the North Dakota Newspaper Association
- Periodicals postage paid at Ellendale, N. D. & additional mailing offices. (USPS 156-600)
- Street Address: 55 2nd Ave. N., Ellendale, ND 58436-0009
- POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: DICKEY COUNTY LEADER, PO Box 9, Ellendale, ND 58436
- Phone: 701-349-3222

email: dcleader@drtel.net

- In Dickey County: \$42.00/yr • In state, out of County: \$44.00
- Out of state: \$48.00 • Digital (weekly pdf): \$47.00

Transitions column by Ken Smith, Editor of the Dickey County Leader

Generosity

As the end of November nears, many thoughts turn toward food. "The week of Thanksgiving," says a miniature poster I picked up at Rollag, "is a lawless waste of dietary anarchy." I'll probably put that little sign in the *Leader's* front window next week, in rotation with 100 or so other clever notices I've been placing there.

Besides Thanksgiving, a few things have prompted me to put down some food-related thoughts here. One was the grand opening of Ellendale Grocery. Another was the recent government shutdown, which had a major impact on SNAP (Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program). Governor Kelly Armstrong issued a request for private sector donations in the wake of the suspension of federal SNAP funds:

We strongly encourage residents to open their hearts, wallets and food pantries to support their local food banks with cash or food donations and help their fellow North Dakotans in their time of need."

Other prompts on the topic were the awarding of a generous check from the American Legion to the Seconds Meal Program at our public school, and a piece we received about the September "Food Fight" in which our three local financial institutions competed to amass donations for the Ellendale Food Pantry. On top of this was a generous donation of turkeys and other foods from the Ellendale Masonic Lodge to the Kedish House, which maintains its own food pantry for families in crisis.

Amid these prompts, I've been considering the views of a good friend—an older gentleman who is an Ellendale native and now lives far away—who disagrees with much or most of the philosophy that motivates community food pantries.

"Food Banks Are Killing Small Grocers," he opined in a November 10 social media post. "And It Needs to Stop."

"I know this won't be a popular opinion," the post continued, "but someone needs to say it. Food banks—well-intentioned as they may be—are slowly strangling the life out of small-town grocery stores. The local grocer, who's been there for decades, employing a few people, buying from local suppliers, paying taxes, and sponsoring the Little League team, can't compete with free.

"When food banks become year-round substitutes rather than short-term help, they distort the local economy. People who could buy groceries stop doing so. Inventory sits. Margins collapse. The grocer closes up—and then what? The town loses its store, its jobs, its tax base, and its community center.

"Yes, hunger is real, and charity matters. But the system we've built doesn't just feed the hungry—it undercuts the very businesses that keep small towns alive. If we really care about sustainability and dignity, let's start supporting local grocers instead of replacing them.

"Enough is enough. This model is broken. It's time to stop pretending that food banks are harmless 'helpers' when they're actually hollowing out the towns they claim to serve."

I posed this statement to several board members of the Ellendale Food Pantry last week. My goal was to provoke them to explain more explicitly the purposes of the organization. Their responses were thoughtful and heartfelt, and some are found on the front page of this issue

Memories from Marion, Indiana

I agree with those who say certain kinds of charity can have adverse effects. I've seen it myself. Serving on the staff of a big church in Marion, Indiana in the mid 1980s, I often visited families that subsisted on welfare. I got to know people who were physically and mentally capable but who were too addicted to the couch and the TV to seek gainful employment.

Our minister, Rev. A.W. Thomason, had seen this too, but I thought he had a wise perspective. A native of Muskogee, Oklahoma, he'd seen a great deal of poverty growing up in the thirties. In fact, he'd lived through quite a lot of it firsthand.

Based on long experience—and spiritual conviction—he often said he'd much rather give to people who in reality don't seriously need the help, than refuse to give to people who actually do need the help.

Rev. Thomason maintained this view even while relating a story from early in his ministry. As a traveling tent revivalist in the early 1950s, he and a local crew had pitched a circus-style tent in a cornfield on the outskirts of Marion. While he and the workers were taking a rest break, a man drove up in a black car, wearing an old suit and necktie, and said he was an evangelist headed to Fort Wayne to preach the gospel. All he needed, he said, was money for a tank of gas and a little food. The crew happily passed the hat, circled around for prayer, and sent the man on his way.

Almost exactly a year later, the cornfield had become a parking lot. Homes had sprung up on either side of the street. Rev. Thomason and a group of volunteers were putting up siding on their newly built church, when the very same car drove up. The same man got out, with the same necktie. He started to recite the same story; he was an evangelist, heading to Fort Wayne to preach, and he needed gas money. But then he noticed familiar faces and

got nervous. Realizing he was peddling his story at the exact same spot as a year before, he quickly got back in his car and sped away.

I heard this story more than once. Each time Pastor Thomason roared out a big belly laugh.

During my time on staff, he related several other stories about swindlers, some of whom were ministers. I noticed he wasn't mad about any of them. Rather, he found them hilarious.

I also remember Pastor Thomason's perspective, encapsulated in these words, which he repeated often: *"You can give without loving, but you can't love without giving."*



Rev. A. W. Thomason (1927- 2018), a master preacher and storyteller who served for decades as pastor of Westside Assembly of God in Marion, Indiana. Ken Smith attended the church and served on Rev. Thomason's staff for three years before returning to North Dakota to pursue a teaching degree at Dickinson State University.

(Photo via Westside AG Facebook, posted 2018)

Everyone is free, of course, to reach their own conclusions about works of charity, including food pantries. As with most questions of public policy, experience and reason can lead different people to different conclusions.

Some might prefer the maxim "trust but verify." That's not a bad approach to many things in life.

I'd remind them, though, that President Reagan used that phrase in reference to a global enemy, the Soviet Union, and not in reference to his fellow Americans. Individuals and families seeking help—including help with food—are not our enemies.

Based on what I've seen of Ellendale, folks around here have a lot in common with Pastor Thomason's perspective on generosity. When in doubt, generosity is usually the best policy.

The thinking of this old-fashioned "Okie from Muskogee" isn't just for preachers.

Step into the

60 Years Ago (November 25, 1965)

- Pete Retzlaff (who grew up in Ellendale) "gets better with age," NFL Philadelphia Eagles trainer Moose Detty says—Pete's last game vs the Cleveland Browns he grabbed seven passes for 151 yards, some under difficult conditions, and scored 3 touchdowns • A 34 inch-diameter elm tree, a tree more than 200 years old, was cut down in Forbes last week—the tree had once served as a gathering point for Native American tribes in the area • Mrs. Robert Long and Mrs. Bud Watkins of Ellendale received 5-year awards for their service as 4H leaders • Janell Nitschke won a \$100 scholarship to the UND-Ellendale Center from the owners of Sam's Drive-In here in town • The EHS basketball and wrestling teams both emerged victorious in their season openers Tuesday night—the cards beat Monango 75-57 while the wrestling team beat Sargent Central 34-15 • Many locals stores will be staying open till 9:30pm on select nights for holiday season shoppers

50 Years Ago (November 27, 1975)

- Jim Kaiser and Daryl Nitschke All Southeastern Conference football team of 1975 • DC Auditor Wayne Lematta received petitions to form a new fire district from 9 townships in the county • Someone robbed Ellendale dentist Dr. Stemm's house last Saturday, taking his rifle, shotgun, and pocket watches • Todd Steinwand, Tim Flakoll, Jeff Heitmann, and David Gramlow were nominated by Mark Thielges as Babe Ruth Baseball Athletes of the Year 1975 • The new Ellendale airport held a successful ribbon cutting ceremony

40 Years Ago (November 28, 1985)

- The Friday musicale from local performers at The Ranch ended on a "high note" with over 300 people in attendance—Mayor Steinwand was surprised by the large turnout, and thanked Lucy Grueneich and the Booster Club for the great event • Skating rinks officially opened for the season at the southeast corner of the Dickey County fair grounds • Ellendale's first snowfall of the season forced many to bring out their shovels sooner than preferred—Mavis Jundt wrote a comedic poem about Ellendale's winters; "Wish as they might, T'Was the citizen's plight, To have ice on the streets till spring"

30 Years Ago (November 23, 1995)

- Ellendale's annual Tree Lighting Ceremony will take place Monday—the tree to be lighted was the one to the east of the *Leader* office • The annual TBC Community Christmas Concert will be December 1, conducted by Ken Prettyman • Liebe Fledderjohann of Ellendale came 2nd in swim meet held at the NSU Barnette center in Aberdeen—she won the 50, 200, and 400 meter freestyle events, and hit times qualifying her for a meet to be held in Watertown • 56 people donated blood at a recent TBC blood drive • The Evergreen board meets and decides to construct 5 two-bedroom apartments instead of 3 two-bedroom apartments and 3 one-bedroom apartments • A new sidewalk was installed in front of the post-office • MANY Thanksgiving and Christmas ads from local business were in the paper this week, racking up the page count to 16 pages

20 Years Ago (November 24, 2005)

- The 2005 KELOE Music Festival was held in Kulm • A dinner theatre play "Murder by the Book" was set to be held at the Fireside the nights of Dec. 1-4—Grant Crabtree, Val Wagner, Brenda Rekow, Austin Swisher, and Tim Steinwand made up the stellar cast • A Parade of Lights will be held Nov. 28, sponsored by the Ellendale Civic Association • DRN is hosting a holiday bake sale to raise money for the Kedish House—they also hosted a "Business After Hours" event where people could come tour the facility • To celebrate Ellendale's 125th celebration a historical committee is putting together a new Ellendale history book, and is asking for information • The Prince of Peace Care Center held their annual Wine and Cheese Social • A photo was shown of Vaughn Jordan of the Trinity Lions basketball team rebounding the ball during his stellar game Friday night • Brennan Hack and Kurtis Cayman were selected for the 2005 All-State football team as a defensive back and linebacker, respectively

10 Years Ago (November 26, 2015)

- The Christmas season will officially kick off Monday night at the Opera House, where a soup supper (choice of Knoepfla, Wild Rice, or Chili) was to be served, followed by a lighting of the tree at Brandenburger park and a "Wake Up Santa" event for the children—local business were also hosting open houses throughout December, some with auctions, cookies, and prizes for customers to win • Clayton Grueneich, Tanner Mathern, and Connor Entzi of the EEK Thunder were named to the All-Region football team—Taylor Walks, Adam Blonde, Tucker Knutson, and Tanner Zahn were honorable mentions

Jessie Veeder: Birthdays bring excitement but also reflection

WATFORD CITY, N.D. — Welcome to birthday party week at the ranch.

Both of our daughters turn another year older within a week of one another, and this year, I'm packing both of their parties into one weekend. By the time you read this, I'll be knee deep in parties for two daughters who are turning 10 and 8, which, really, in the timeline of things, is a peak time for birthday parties.

After 10 years of motherhood, honestly, emailing a photo of Rosie's pet hamster isn't the weirdest thing I've done, but it's up there with the time I found myself apologizing to the neighbor who walked into the yard to witness my oldest, a 3-year-old at the time, naked and drinking from a water puddle.

"I'm glad I don't live in town," my 8-year-old said as we drove through Watford City the other day.

"Why's that?" I asked, curious to hear her version of the perks of country living.

Turns out it was directly related to having the space to run naked through the sprinkler and play wild girls in the trees.

And riding horses. That was in there, too.

I have to say, the 8-year-old version of me would have agreed with her wholeheartedly. And honestly, so does the middle-aged-mom version. I don't think you're ever too old to appreciate the sentiment around space to run wild.

And while I scratch out the birthday grocery list that includes five racks of ribs the girls asked their dad to make for them and their tiny

friends, I can't help but do the thing that all moms do when facing another year: wonder where the time has gone.

This morning, I ran into one of my high school friends, as you do when you live in your hometown. I asked her how she was, and she said busy. And then I asked how the kids were doing, and she said it's going too fast.

"I have a 16-year-old," she reminded me. "I keep thinking — what have we been doing?! We haven't done all the trips, all the plans I had for us! We haven't done it all."

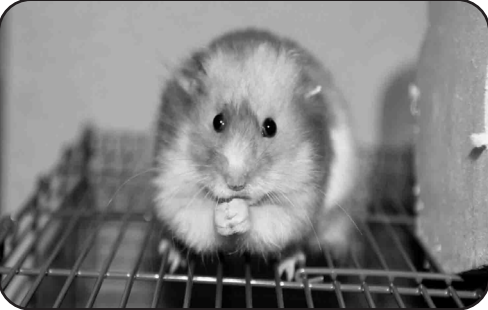
To me, there couldn't have been a more relatable exclamation spoken. Could there be a more terrifying image than my oldest daughter, at 16, driving a car alone down the highway someday? Except that someday is only six short years away now, about the same amount of time we've spent procrastinating fixing that wonky, crooked board on the deck.

"I'd take a messy house over a quiet house," another friend of mine said to me as we walked back with our Styrofoam cups full of lemonade at Turkey Bingo. She has four daughters; her youngest is now the only one at home with her for another couple years. She's facing down an empty nest, and I'm rolling out sleeping bags for little girls on the basement floor.

I think about her moment in motherhood as I hit send on the email with the hamster photo attached. My daughter helped me conduct a regular photoshoot for her pet the night before, complete with decent lighting, carrot stick bribes and my big, professional camera. Turns out getting a decent picture of a rodent is harder than it looks.

Anyway, I suppose I could have just said no to her custom hamster cake request. Parents my age tend to feel guilty about being too indulgent.

But how many years do I have left humoring these silly ideas? Isn't that what parenting's about in some ways? I mean, maybe I can't take them to Disneyland, or buy her the



Jessie Veeder took this photo of her daughter's hamster so she could request a custom birthday cake featuring the beloved pet for Rosie's birthday. Contributed / Jessie Veeder



Jessie Veeder's daughters enjoy playing a game they call wild girls on the ranch. Contributed / Jessie Veeder

\$1,000 drone she thinks she wants for some reason, but dang it, I can get this hamster's photo on a cake and we can invite your friends over and you can play wild girls in the trees. Now! While you're 8 and 9 and 10.

Hurry, drag the dirt in while you're at it. Before it's too late.

NOTICE OF HEARING

NOTICE OF HEARING BY CITY OF ELLENDALE

The City of Ellendale will hold a public hearing after two consecutive weekly publications of this Notice to discuss Zoning Amendments covering the City of Ellendale and relating to Mobile Homes and Recreational Vehicle Parks. The hearing shall be held the 11th day of December, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. at City Hall located at 55, 3rd Ave South, Ellendale, ND 58436. The property involved includes the areas zoned as Mobile Home District (Mobile Home/Recreational Vehicle Parks) within the City of Ellendale, North Dakota, a map of which is available for inspection during the City's regular business hours. The nature, scope and purposes of the proposed changes are to change the zoning ordinances by changing the zoning rules relating to Mobile Home and Recreational Vehicle Parks. The proposed zoning amendments are available for public inspections during the City's regular business hours at the auditor's office at 55, 3rd Ave. South, Ellendale, ND 58436. Following the public hearing, the city council shall consider holding a second reading of the proposed ordinance amendments at a city council meeting immediately following the public hearing.

BY ORDER OF THE CITY COUNCIL
(November 27 & December 4, 2025)