

Hi, hello and welcome to our subscriber of the week:

Peter Brown, Drayton, ND

Your weather

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St. Thomas man facing felonies after roadside incident

By Mike Alan Steinfeldt

A St. Thomas man was arrested after allegedly assaulting a family member, then causing a disturbance on Highway 81 North of Minto, on the afternoon of Sept. 30.

The Walsh County Sheriff's Office was dispatched at 2:52 p.m. to the area for a report of a male who was lying down in the middle of traffic and reportedly jumping toward traffic.

According to the criminal complaint, 39-year-old Andrew Mattson, of St. Thomas, was a passenger in a vehicle traveling on Highway 81 when he assaulted a family member who was the driver.

The family member stated that the defendant "rubbed" his eye causing pain, causing him to stop the vehicle in the middle of the roadway. Mattson also allegedly punched the family member in the chin. Mattson then took the keys out of the ignition and threw them on the dash.

Mattson exited the vehicle, going over to the drivers side. Before he could enter the vehicle, the family member was able to drive off and told officers he "feared for his life."

Mattson allegedly laid down in the middle of the highway. When another motorist stopped to see if Mattson was okay, he was assaulted.

According to the criminal complaint, the motorist had a concealed carry permit and was able to keep Mattson from getting into his vehicle.

When law enforcement arrived on the scene, Mattson was walking north in heavy traffic.

A deputy ordered Mattson to stop

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Photo by Jamie Rarick
DVE senior Alyssa Hoyles runs through the opening lineup before Thursday's volleyball game in Drayton.

Expiration of tax credits could mean larger health insurance bills for ND farmers

Frustrations grow about fate of soybean crop, storage and long-term impacts
By Michael Standaert, North Dakota News Cooperative

Farmers heavily reliant on coverage through the Affordable Care Act marketplace are likely to see out-of-pocket health insurance premium payments rise more than 75% on average in 2026.

Enhanced Affordable Care Act premium tax credits will expire at the end of 2025, unless renewed by Congress.

For farmers accessing health insurance through the North Dakota Farmers Union insurance division, that could mean a big increase in family expenses.

More than 70% of those farmers in the state who are members of the union get a tax credit on the ACA marketplace, according to Lance Boyer, sales director of financial products at Farmers Union Insurance.

Those added out-of-pocket costs could hit North Dakota farmers at a time when many are already pressured from the impacts of tariffs, inflationary pressures on inputs and equipment, increased debt and high interest rates.

Increased costs could also lead to an increasing number of uninsured.



Some area farmers opted to plant pasture grass and cover crops in June, 2023. Photo provided by Josh Anderson.

"A lot of those folks are going to walk away from coverage because the reason they didn't have it before was because it was unaffordable," Boyer said.

Boyer predicts that we'll see a return to short-term medical plans that don't necessarily cover preexisting conditions.

"It's going to drive some bad behavior because some folks are going to end up in a difficult spot and make a decision on price, and not about what they're

actually getting," Boyer said.

Enrollment in the ACA Marketplace is expected to start Nov. 1 for next year, he said, and if tax credits are not extended by that time, some farm families could be in a difficult position, he said.

One other significant change to the ACA system is the elimination of automatic renewals, which will require active re-enrollment each year.

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Hop to Hoople for Tater Town Days

By Rebecca Davis

This Saturday, Oct. 11, Hoople will host its fourth annual Tater Town Days, a community celebration promising something for everyone. Organizers say this year's event will feature a wider variety of vendors than ever before.

Tater Town Days kicks off at 1 p.m. with a parade making its way down Second Avenue onto Myrtle Avenue. Parade lineup begins at 12:30 p.m. along Elevator Avenue. Following the parade, the French Fry Festival will be held at the Hoople Fire Hall, featuring kids' inflatables, face painting, a foam cannon, bonfires, and grain cart basketball.

The Golden Potato Scavenger Hunt will send attendees searching around town for clues, released hourly beginning at 2 p.m., with the final clue dropped at 5 p.m. Other highlights include kids' games, bingo, and hayrides through Hoople.

"This year, we are bringing lots of live music. Auto Drive from Munich, N.D., will provide afternoon entertainment; Herlof Huso will play during the French Fry Feed; and in the evening,

our dance will feature music from Some Sh!tty Cover Band," said Peyton Cole-Markel, a member of the Hoople Beautification Committee.

Although Hoople has held similar community celebrations in the past, this marks the town's fourth year officially hosting Tater Town Days in its current form.

"We see it as a time to honor our town, celebrate our rich agricultural history, and, most importantly, bring people together," Cole-Markel said.

The event will feature food truck favorites, including Hank's Ice Cream, Sap Sap, Linn's Tex-Mex, and Fill Your Cup Coffee Camper. Other vendors include Art of Touch, The Yield Co., and Drift Prairie Farm.

Attendees will also be able to enjoy Hoople's brand-new bar, The McIntyre, which opened earlier this year.

For more information, including a map and a full schedule of events, visit the Hoople Beautification Committee Facebook page or the Tater Town Days event on Facebook.

Thanksgiving food basket distribution

The Pembina County Emergency Food Pantry once again will be preparing Thanksgiving Baskets full of everything needed to prepare a Thanksgiving meal for those needing extra help with food supplies this holiday season.

Thanksgiving Baskets will be handed out on Thursday, Nov. 20, 2025, at the Pembina County Emergency Food Pantry from 3:00 p.m. until 4:30 p.m. at the Cavalier location, 106 Main Street West. For privacy purposes, please come to the back of the building in the alley. Our Food Pantry sign will be outside.

All Thanksgiving Baskets must be pre-reserved. To reserve, individuals must call 701-270-1408 between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. If there is no answer, please leave a clear message including your name and address.

The final day to reserve a Thanksgiving Basket is Monday, Nov. 17 by 4 p.m. One basket per household. This special holiday basket does not count toward the annual five basket household limit.

Bank of North Dakota developing loan program to aid farmers

By Jacob Orledge, ND Monitor

The Bank of North Dakota is working on a new loan assistance program for farmers in response to tough financial conditions facing the industry.

Don Morgan, president of the state-owned Bank of North Dakota, said the state's agricultural industry has been hit hard by a combination of low commodity prices, a sustained period of high interest rates and inflation.

"We believe we have an extreme stress situation coming up in our agricultural sector for 2026."
– Bank of North Dakota President Don Morgan, on the need for a relief program to help farmers.

The Bank of North Dakota is preparing a new relief program for farmers and ranchers modeled after a 2019 program that worked very well, Morgan said.

"It allowed our banks and credit unions to restructure some agricultural debt at some below-market rates," Morgan said.

The details of the program have yet to be determined. Morgan will return to the Industrial Commission in November or December, he said, with a finished product for the board's approval "so that we could roll out for the 2026 ag renewal season," he said.

Gov. Kelly Armstrong, who chairs the Industrial Commission, urged bank officials to keep in mind that there is discussion in Washington, D.C., about a federal relief program for farmers this year, though he noted the exact timing may change.

"My concern is not knowing what the federal government is going to do," Armstrong said.

The other factor to keep in mind, Armstrong said, is there will likely be a special session of the North

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