

Dakota Attitude: ‘A Nickel’s Worth of Nails’, ‘No More Grain Shoveling’, & ‘Start the Day at Dickey Bar’

“A Nickel’s Worth of Nails”

Jerry tells, “Mother found out three weeks before Dad died that she was gonna have a baby.” Jerry was that baby. “My mom had to give up the farm. It was in a trust.” In 1938, when Jerry was just a year old, the family of seven children moved into a house in Wales bought for them by an uncle, Joe Klein. “[Joe] said, ‘Bertha, you can pay me as you want.’ He was great.”

Jerry remembers growing up with “life as it was,” not a struggle. When times were hard, they “made do. Every [toy] we had we made. We broke up apple and orange crates, and stuff for the Miller’s Grocery Store in Wales, and when we got done, Mr. Miller would say, ‘What are them boards for?’ We’d say, ‘We’re gonna take them home and make toys out of ‘em.’ ‘Oh, good idea!’ he’d say, and we’d get a nickel for smashin’ them boxes all day long. We’d take that nickel, go across the street to the lumberyard, and—I’ve said it hundreds of times—we got more nails for a nickel from Paul Liming than anybody else in the country. He’d grab a bag and throw in a handful, and he said, ‘There you are.’ And it probably was 50 cents worth to anybody else. “Mom cooked at the school. When she first cooked there she used to do all that baking at home. One time it was



12 dozen buns. The older boys would carry it to school for the next morning.” Jerry remembers, “Mom never cried. And I’d ask her, ‘Mom, you never cry, how come?’ She said, ‘When your dad died, I ran out of tears.’” He asked her, “Mom, how come you hated lilacs? They’re the best-smelling flower I think I’ve ever smelled.’ And she started to cry and said, ‘That was the only flowers I had for your dad’s casket.’” Jerry and his siblings knew the only flower that was not to be planted at their mother’s grave was a lilac. One of his sisters said, “Mom would hate you if you did that.” Jerry adds, “No, Mom would never hate any of us. She never did, either.”

Jerry and Grace (Schneider) Bergman, interview: June 29, 2016, County: Cavalier, City: Wales

“No More Grain Shoveling”

Ronald Haug was born in 1943, attended grade school in Epping, and graduated from Epping High School in 1961. After graduation, he married Carole Vinger. They have three children. When he was 28, Ronald

was injured in a snowmobile accident that left him with permanent injuries. “When I left the hospital [after 118 days], I was able to walk with short leg braces and crutches [that he still uses]. I wore out many pairs; wrecked a few, ran over a few.”

Carole says, “He just went out and bought more land and continued to farm. Bought more land and hired more help. He operated the farm machinery but couldn’t lift or carry anything.”

“I got out of the grain shoveling,” Ronald says to shared laughter. “If you have good equipment you can get on and run it. I did a lot of it. I hired more help. I had a full-time man all the time. The last 10 years here, I not only had the guy I hired for all those years with us, but our son-in-law is farming now. Come in with us, and we farmed together—the land he already had acquired and so forth. “The bad years weren’t so fun, you know, but you have to take the good with the bad. If you want to succeed in life, you just have to keep plodding along. There are times where some years are not going to be so good, but then there



are some good ones to make up for it. We can remember the bad times here when we thought we were going to lose the whole farm. Several crops were lost in a row. We had hail seven years. There were times we had a beautiful crop, and oh, my goodness, a hailstorm come up, and it was gone in 20 minutes. And then again we had several in a row where there were just excellent crops. So you just kind of hang in there. If it wouldn’t have been for all [Carole’s] hard work, we wouldn’t be where we are today.” Carole adds, “We had a good life.”

Ronald and Carole (Vinger) Haug, Interview: June 14, 2012, County: Williams, City: Epping

“Start the Day at Dickey Bar”

Agriculture drives Dickey’s economy, but owning Dickey Bar enabled Ramona and James Haakenson to cultivate the community and become uniquely acquainted with its people.

Jim and Ramona were scheduled to be married on March 5, 1966, in Valley City, but a regional winter blizzard forced its cancellation. However,

they carried through and exchanged vows March 18. “We ended up getting the job done,” Ramona says. “That is why I keep telling him he had the opportunity. The good Lord gave him a hint that maybe he shouldn’t get married. He did it anyway. He stuck with me.”

After Ramona and James married, they made their home in Dickey, where James graduated from high school in 1963, and where they operated Dickey Bar while raising four children. I asked her what it was like running a small town bar. “Oh, good... you would have your bad moments, too. But I like happy people, and what most of them are around here are happy people and good people. Many years we put in a lot of l-o-n-g hours.

“We had retired people at nine in the morning for their morning startup to visit and socialize,” Ramona says. “Because it is a farm and ranch community that was what they talked about. Like, ‘Okay, we got this in, we got that in, we are going to turn the bull out at such and such a date.’ That was what they basically talked about.”

Ramona says customers’ desire to visit made listening a responsibility—and she has a story proving she fulfilled it very well. “There would be two guys [discussing cattle]. One guy was [artificially inseminating] his cows, and he was trying to remember the name of the bull he used. He sat there for the longest time. He finally looked at me and said, ‘Moni, what was the name of the bull I used?’ and I said, ‘Boot Jack.’ And why I do remember that? My mind is full of senseless trivia... I remembered the name of the bull he used three years before.”

Ramona (Anderson) and James Haakenson, Interview: June 9, 2011, County: LaMoure, City: Dickey

(Editor’s Note: These profiles of North Dakota residents were collected by author James Puppe between 2004-2018, covering 617 subjects and 113,000 miles. He has given permission for his book to be serialized in North Dakota Newspapers at no charge. To find out how you can read the entire collection of Dakota Attitude profiles go to dakotaattitude.com.)

CITY RESIDENTS

There will be
NO GARBAGE
picked up on
Friday, July 4th

Friday’s garbage
will be
picked up on
Monday, July 7th

Please have your
garbage out by
7:00am

Have a Safe
4th of July
**DEVILS LAKE
SANITATION DEPT.**

Senior
Meals and
Services

**ANNUAL
MEETING**
*will be held
at the*
**Wilcox
Community
Senior Center**

*on Thursday,
July 24th
at 1:00 PM*

Boom

From page 1

- Fish: These produce an aerial effect that seems like several objects swimming through the air and only lasts a few seconds.
- Fountains: These fireworks shoot between four and eight feet into

the air and are very colorful. They are sometimes called “driveway items” or “safe and sane” because they don’t propel like other fireworks and may be safer for novices.

- Pistil: A pistil features a center sphere of stars that burst in a spherical shape. Pistils contain an outer sphere of stars as well.

- Roman candle: This firework has a paper tube that shoots flaming balls out of one end of the tube.
- Strobe: Similar to other fireworks with a spherical break shape, this has the added effect of blinking components that makes it appear like shimmering water in the sky.
- UFO: This firework spins very fast and lifts

high into the sky, where it bursts into a special aerial effect.

They’re sometimes called helicopters, sky flyers or planes.

There are many different types of fireworks that add bang and color to evening celebrations.

Editor’s Note: See pages 8 and 9 inside for more fireworks fun and safety.

JOB OPENING

Dockside Entertainment Manager
Devils Lake Park District
Devils Lake, ND

The Devils Lake Park Board is accepting applications for the Dockside Entertainment Manager position. The position is for managing the operations of the Devils Lake Park District Dockside Entertainment Center. This position will work as a team with the Superintendent of Parks and Recreation and other Full-Time staff in the administration of the Devils Lake Parks and Recreation District and the Board of Park Commissioners. There may be extensive contact with community organizations, City of Devils Lake, Lake Region State College, and Devils Lake School District. This position is responsible and accountable for directing the Park District’s Dockside Entertainment Center through managing the day-to-day activities, operations, maintenance, and by providing leadership, instruction, and direction for staff. This position also helps plan, coordinate, and the marketing of the Park District. Marketing responsibilities could include public information communications, media relations, advertising, and customer service.

A complete job description and how to apply are available by contacting the Devils Lake Park Board by email to: dlparkboard@gondtc.com or calling 701-662-8243. **Deadline to apply: July 8, 2025.**

Academy Village Greenspace
Annual Meeting

Thursday, July 17, 2025
10:00 am
415 6th Ave NE
Buchii, Britsch & Svidal office

All persons who are a part of the
Academy Village Greenspace
are encouraged to attend.

Welcome
TO
Devils Lake

FOR THE
4th of July
HOLIDAY

ENJOY THE
PARADE AND FIREWORKS
from the
devils lake
North Dakota

DON’T GET LEFT OUT

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

ACCEPTING BIDS:

Ramsey County will be accepting Quotes for Installation Of Culverts at (2) sites near Edmore ND:
Freije Crossing: Fancher Township, Ramsey County: remove the existing culverts and install (3) 60”diameter x 50’ long culverts
Schlatehorn Crossing: Fancher Township, Ramsey County: remove and salvage existing culverts and install (3) 84” diameter x 54’ long culverts

Project Information and Quote sheets can be obtained by calling or emailing,

Jason Kraft Highway Superintendent
Office 701.662.7015
Cell 701.350.2300
Email hwydept@gondtc.com