

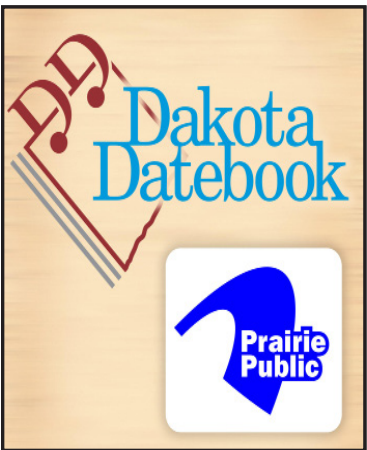
# Planning Easter egg hunts; writing of the true meaning of Easter

I love Easter egg hunts  
Unfortunately, I haven’t been allowed to participate in one for many years, which is clearly a form of age discrimination. I’ve often thought: Imagine the number of plastic eggs you could amass competing against 4- and 5-year-olds.  
Perhaps, if you offered to teach Sunday School, you could participate in a Church Easter egg hunt, my sisters once suggested.  
They weren’t serious, of course.  
Knowing how I intentionally hid my girls’ Easter eggs one year in places I knew they would never discover; then having to call the Easter Bunny to find where he hid the eggs, calming the girls’ tears and allowing them to enjoy the baskets of candy, I have never volunteered to serve on an committee planning an Easter egg hunt.  
Perish the thought, cried my sisters.  
However, in my advanced age, and much to the chagrin and disbelief of sisters Sue and Jenny,

I have discovered I can write of the true meaning of Easter.  
Perhaps now they will believe me.  
For there’s a message in the emptiness my two young daughters discovered in our Easter egg hunt on that Easter Sunday morning long ago.  
Emptiness isn’t usually something to get excited about, I know, I could have told my girls. Unless it’s Easter morning. Because in an empty tomb, Christians encountered the miracle of faith: that after three agonizing days, Jesus has been raised from the dead.  
And in that moment, everything changed. Our burdens were released, our sins forgiven, our lives redeemed, and death was conquered once and for all. And it all started with that initial discovery that Jesus was no longer held by his earthly prison, that the tomb was empty.  
I still embrace the thought of Easter egg hunts, not because of the jellybeans, but because nothing



beats watching a young child’s face light up with the thrill of discovery.  
That thrill of discovery was precisely what took place on that first Easter morning. The disciples experienced it when they came upon the empty tomb; children experience it when they find an Easter basket.  
However and wherever you celebrate, may you experience the joy of discovery this Easter. Through Jesus Christ, God gives fulfillment and meaning to emptiness. Which, even 2,000 years later, never ceases to amaze.  
– Neil O. Nelson



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## Haunted coal

By Derek Dahstad  
April 24, 2025 – On a cool but sunny March morning in 1944, schoolteacher Pauline Rebel was preparing the one-room Wild Plum School House, 20 miles south of Richardton, North Dakota, for the arrival of her eight students. It appeared to be a day like any other, but after the students arrived, strange things began to happen.

At first, lumps of coal began to hop around in the coal bucket, like Mexican jumping beans, higher and higher until the coal bounced off the walls. An invisible force moved books and other items around the room. Then, the coal began to burn, and the curtains and a bookcase caught fire. Two girls screamed that they saw a ghostly black-hooded man outside the school-house. Miss Rebel had no choice but to cancel school and call the authorities.

The superintendent of schools brought in the state fire marshal to look for a source of the fires, and they sent samples of coal to the University of North Dakota for analysis. They made arrangements with the FBI to analyze the coal, the coal bucket, and a dictionary from the bookshelf for anything that could explain the supernatural events at the Wild Plum School.

The tale of the haunted schoolhouse made national news. The fearful stories of the haunted coal and the hooded man ran in papers across the U.S., and on this date, TIME Magazine’s science section told the story.

Shortly before the story appeared in TIME, however, the source of the haunting had been discovered. Pauline Rebel’s students came forward and admitted that they had engineered the haunting. Miss Rebel had very poor eyesight, even with glasses, and the students had started pranking the nearsighted teacher in January. Because they didn’t get caught, the students escalated the pranks until they were hiding matches in the coal bucket and between pages of books on the bookshelf, and poking things with yardsticks to make it look like a ghost did it. Now that state officials and possibly the FBI were involved, the students decided to admit their hijinks.

TIME Magazine ran a retraction in the May 1 issue, but even though the truth is known, books published today still tell the story of the haunted Wild Plum Schoolhouse as though it was a true unsolved mystery.

# Easter parade of basketed eggs

The Herald-Press this week is welcoming back its beloved Easter Bunny, not to be confused with inflatable Easter bunnies, stuffed Easter bunnies, or the Cadbury milk chocolate Easter bunny, now on store shelves everywhere.  
The NON-traditional Easter Bunny, which many of you will recognize, having no doubt fallen in love with him last year, has a mischievous but successful sideline, unlike any commercial Easter bunny found in America, on Amazon or hidden in any household.  
Thanks to connections I have in Canada, bushel baskets of eggs – large Grade AA eggs, speckled, brown and white eggs, cracked eggs, double yolk, large, extra-large and misshapen eggs -- are currently enroute or have already been delivered to points across the U.S.  
My contracted Easter Bunny rewards the good, bad and ugly in his Easter Parade of Basketed Eggs.

Good at laying eggs, President Donald J. Trump, the Emperor who has no clothes but plenty of dough, is getting a bushel basket of eggs from a Mexican chicken farm, fined often for doing business under the table by hiring undocumented U.S. citizens living in Mexico.  
House Speaker Mike Johnson and Georgia Congresswoman Margorie Taylor Greene, egg-beater chaos creators in the Nation’s Capital, are deserving of a bushel basket each of misshapen, paper-thin-shelled double yolk eggs.  
Eggs shells everywhere, when cracked, I’m told.  
Good luck cleaning up that mess.  
Suspected of often dropping eggs, former President Joe Biden will get a basket of eggs from a stuttering chicken farm.  
Hardly charitable but a man who professes to know south of the border chickens, border czar Tom Homan sent his Easter

eggs to several Central America countries. The hard-boiled Homan was thanked for the nice gesture but discovered the eggs had been returned with illegal immigrants hiding inside the crates dressed as Easter bunnies, each carrying placards inscribed with -- “Give us citizenship or Green Cards, chips extra.”  
Former Democrat Vice President Kamala Harris, used to being rejected, welcomed the Homan eggs rejected by El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras, thinking her down and out folk south of the Mason Dixon Line will appreciate them.  
Think again, Kamala  
“Next time, Kamey Baby, send cash,” the coalition of Harris voters told the tar and feathered Dem-NPL presidential candidate.  
Elizabeth Warren, U.S. Senator from Massachusetts, was sent eggs genetically modified to make the perfect fried egg, largely because she

sounds like an egg frying.  
U.S. Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, of New York City, is receiving a truckload of Florida’s finest eggs; reported to crack easily but are just as easily restored, marketed and sold cheaper by the half dozen.  
To the three other judges on The Voice, Kelsea Ballerini delivered a truckload load of soprano-singing chickens.  
Tim Waltz, Minnesota governor and wannabe vice president, can expect a truckload of cackling chickens.  
The do-nothing Congress is being rewarded with omelets of shark eggs, chicken feathers, bird droppings and barnyard grass clippings for a little color.  
Seriously, Easter is meant to be a symbol of hope and renewal.  
Knowing this, I wish everyone, “A Happy, hoppy Easter.”



NEIL O. NELSON

# North Dakota newspapers thankful for legislative votes

By Cecile Wehrman, NDNA Executive Director

On the whole, North Dakota legislators understand the importance of newspapers and their actions during the 2025 legislative session show it.  
Legislators protected the publication of county minutes in newspapers voting down a bill that would have given the option to post them only on county websites; voted to keep highway bid notices in newspapers rather than only posting them on trade or government agency websites; restored the historic practice of spreading publication of insurance abstracts across all newspapers in the state instead of just eight; passed a postal resolution asking for better delivery service for newspapers and consumers alike; and on Wednesday passed a bill that gives legal weight to www.ndpublicnotices.com, a website maintained by the North Dakota Newspaper Association.  
SB 2069 was the first bill I testified on back on Jan. 9, and the last of the five bills passed among those we were most concerned about. The bill provides two backstops for legal notices in the rare instance a newspaper fails to publish a notice, counting a notice at ndpublicnotices.com as well as a notice on a state agency website, as fulfilling legal notice -- while leaving requirements for publication of print notices in place.  
Because I wrote on this topic earlier in the session, it’s important to let people know what is NOT happening.  
The state will NOT be developing a public notice website capable of cutting newspapers out of public notice placements at some future point. It was, however, a discussion among some legislators who saw this bill as a way to take a step toward eliminating the costs of publishing notices in newspapers.  
When you know there are people in government who feel notices in newspapers have no value, it can seem like your house is on fire.  
But the votes on some of the bills I mentioned above show that, by and large, legislators support upholding newspapers as the vehicle for delivering public notices.

Just look at some of these tallies: HB 1380, the county minutes on the web bill failed in the House 80-13; HB 1398, restoring the historical abstract publication process, passed in the House 86-6; and SB 2069, though it had a closer vote in the Senate -- possibly due to some confusion since we opposed it originally -- passed in the House 72-17; SB 2062, taking highway bids out of newspapers failed 89-4.  
That feels, to me, like an incredible showing of support for the importance of public notices in newspapers.  
Now, 73 privately owned businesses operating newspapers can breathe a sigh of relief, along with voters.  
We know citizens give overwhelming support to the concept of a trusted third party like newspapers having oversight of public notices.  
SB 2069 as passed will now solve the issue of a public hearing needing to be rescheduled because one out of a dozen or more papers required to publish it had a miss.  
I wish I could say newspapers are perfect, but every business occasionally has a hiccup due to illness, death, employee turnover -- heck, even a cyber attack -- which can cause highly consequential notices to be missed.  
You’ll still never convince me that a website alone is where public notices should be placed because the mechanism for people to see them is much different than for people sitting down with a newspaper delivering news about their community along with notices about the government actions that may impact them.  
However, in the end, SB 2069 is a good compromise -- providing an alternate avenue for people to learn of a pending hearing when unforeseen disruptions impact newspapers, while leaving alone the printed newspapers’ supremacy as the trusted place to access public notices in North Dakota.



Cecile Wehrman, NDNA Executive Director

## Letter to the Editor



# Continental divide

Tensions are on the rise on the Continental Divide. Wells and Eddy County zoning boards are dealing strong opposition over the PRC industrial wind tower project and the community is clearly divided.  
A core question comes to mind: How do residents benefit from the installation of 118 600 ft. tall behemoths scattered throughout a 43,000-acre plot in Wells and Eddy County?  
I believe there are three primary answers:  
1) will say to reduce Carbon Dioxide levels. Most ag producers and people that have an interest in horticulture understand the CO2 fear hoax and know that CO2 is a critical element for plant life.  
2) Some will say to generate added income for our counties. It has been suggested that after completion of the project that Eddy County could receive around \$1,000,000 annually. This may seem like a windfall; however, \$1,000,000 will barely cover the cost to pave one mile of road. This is simply a drop in the bucket with regards to the needs of our counties.  
3) And others will say to provide added personal income. This will primarily benefit a few individuals, those that own land in the footprint and those that have invested into the project. Most individuals in our county will not be receiving any direct benefits.  
The result of this industrial park will leave some property owners squarely in the middle of a 118-tower field with no compensation and the reality of diminished property values, elimination of wildlife and health hazards for decades to come.  
Then there is also the issue of waste disposal and damages generated by the project. Set aside the issue of the worn-out parts, damaged roads and ecological destruction, there is the issue of the tremendous amount of waste oil generated. Each tower will use 700+ gallons of oil that will be replaced annually. Multiply this by 118 towers and they will be generating over 82,000 gallons of waste oil annually. How is this ecologically beneficial?  
It’s easy to see how people can become divided. Money seems to bring out the greed in people.  
Individual property rights are key and both sides of this quandary are adamant about their positions.  
There needs to be a compromise. Stark Co has a two-mile setback from a residence and a one-mile setback from a property line. This gives residents a buffer from the 600-foot tall towers and will allow them the opportunity to negotiate for a reduced setback if desired. This should be a win for both sides of the issue.  
In the end we need to avoid dividing our communities and to promote an equitable solution.  
Larry Danduran  
New Rockford, ND

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Anything the publisher deems libelous, or anything of a personal nature between private individuals or businesses will not be published.  
All letters are subject to editing at the publisher’s discretion.  
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