

HILLSBORO Banner

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General Excellence Award Winner
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Over the Years

70 Years Ago

December 15, 1955 – Santa Claus was set to visit Hillsboro with a Saturday stop at the Traill Theatre. Children were invited to a 2 p.m. matinee movie followed by “personal interview” time with Santa.

Hillsboro native Lawrence Aasen was named public relations representative for the New York Life Insurance Co. in its San Francisco headquarters.

Hillsboro’s independent amateur basketball team would soon begin play in District 11. Opponents on the schedule included Colgate, Grandin and Page. The team was sponsored by the Junior Chamber of Commerce.

60 Years Ago

December 15, 1965 – A year-end sale at Hillsboro Auto featured a 1964 Ford Galaxie 500 for \$2,150 and a 1964 Mercury Park Lane for \$2,395.

Ray’s Super Valu in Hillsboro had everything a family needed for Christmas – turkeys for 29 cents a pound, a pound of cranberries for 23 cents, canned sweet potatoes for 25 cents and even Christmas trees – spruce, Scotch pine and Norway pine.

50 Years Ago

December 18, 1975 – Five townships in western Traill County offered to pay for an additional deputy to patrol their area.

Local residents petitioned the Public Service Commission to establish toll-free telephone service between Hillsboro and Fargo.

Hillsboro Farmers Union Oil Co. distributed more than \$63,000 in stock retirement checks as well as \$28,000 in dividends to cooperative members. The announcement was made by board president David Eblen and co-op manager David Jenny.

40 Years Ago

December 16, 1985 – Traill County township officers discussed a new idea to number farmsteads in the county to aid law enforcement and emergency services. Neighboring Norman County Minnesota had introduced the numbering plan and the cost for 2,000 rural residences was \$10 to \$12 for each site, reported local sheriff Richard Fisher.

Adult education classes offered in Hillsboro included parenting, public speaking, beginner hardanger, nutrition, word processing, microwave cooking, VCRs, woodworking, engine repair, sewing and computer programming.

30 Years Ago

December 18, 1995 – Traill County Economic Development officials received word that a metal fabrication plant would not be locating in the county. The unnamed Fargo-based company intended to build a 175,000 square-foot plant and employ 100 people by 1998. Indications were Barnes County would be home to the new plant.

20 Years Ago

December 16, 2005 – Scott Toenies resigned as Hillsboro’s high school volleyball coach. He had coached the sport for 17 seasons and guided the Burros to a Class B state championship in 2000.

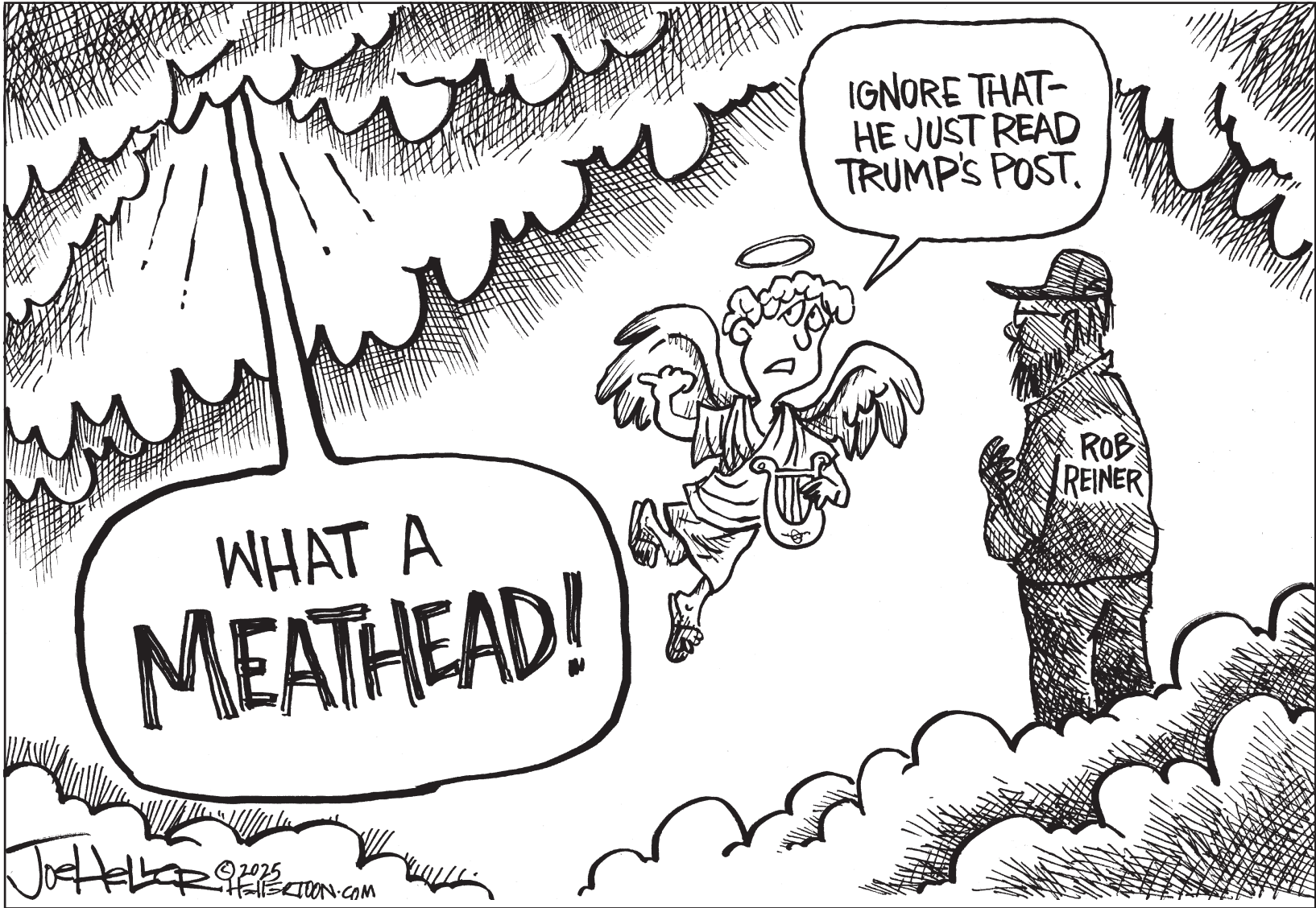
Onvoy selected Halstad, Minn. as the new operation service center for the expanding telecommunications company.

After 22 years as administrator of the Hillsboro Medical Center, Bruce Bowersox planned to retire and work part-time as a health care consultant. Patty Dirk would take over at HMC in January. The facility was gearing up for a major renovation and the possible addition of assisted living options.

10 Years Ago

December 18, 2015 – Hillsboro-Central Valley’s boys basketball team opened its season with a 57-41 home win over Kindred.

The Hillsboro School District received a \$1.3 million bid from RAM General Contractors of Winsted, Minn., to build the school’s new outdoor sports complex.



COLUMNIST

Random thoughts ... about ordinary voices

At the Mayville State music department’s Christmas program Dec. 7, audience members were invited to join the chorus in singing a number of songs of the season. It was a delight to hear those dozens of voices enthusiastically ring out.

Most of us probably have “ordinary” voices – able to carry a tune, not likely to ever sing a solo, but enjoying singing. I was reminded of that Sunday, Dec. 14, when I watched a video of a church choir in LaCrosse, Wis., perform a cantata.

My brother, Jerry, was a member of the choir. I listened with tears in my eyes as I recalled the many times he and I and other family members sang together.

I was reminded as well of other performances I have been part of, or have had the privilege of listening to at this time of year, especially, Handel’s oratorio “The Messiah.” The gorgeous voices who brought Handel’s glorious music to life were beyond “ordinary.”

That leads me to think of extraordinary times when “ordinary” voices have been part of something great, as in joining a “flash mob.”

That term is defined as “a group of people who give a choreographed but unannounced performance in a public space.” It’s pure but unexpected entertainment. However, its success

depends on participation from people who happen to be at the same place at the same time. Just ordinary people, shopping, having something to eat, waiting to get on a train or otherwise going about their business.

Examples of flash mobs on YouTube show that it takes folks a moment to catch on. They have to stop and listen. One memorable example is from a food court, when a single soloist starts singing the “Hallelujah Chorus” from “The Messiah” She is joined by other pros, one by one, and before long the audience realizes what is happening and adds their voices to the performance.

The chorus “Va, pensiero” from Verdi’s opera “Nabucco” is perhaps my favorite example of “ordinary” singers joining the professionals.

The chorus is famously known in Italy (it is so well-known that it is practically the national anthem) and people join in enthusiastically when they hear the unmistakable opening strains.

It’s been done as a flash mob all over the world. Hearing the chorus takes me back to the times when members of my family and I, on Mayville State music study tours, heard the whole opera, once in Rome and once in the Colosseum in Verona. Wonderful memories.

While I prefer the performances when the “crowd” can sing along with “Va, pensiero,” another memorable version took place in a shopping mall in Berlin, where a 1,000-piece orchestra played it. Fifty of those 1,000 were from a German symphony orchestra.

Another flash mob that strikes a chord with

me (no pun intended) is not so much the music, but the site and the participants.

It is a choreographed rendition of “Don’t Stop Believing” as performed by students, faculty and staff in the student union at Ohio State University.

My husband, Merwin, and I were in the Union many times when he was working on his Ph.D. at the school.

The Buckeye mascot, “Brutus,” and the university president, Dr. Gordon Gee, were among the participants. (Not as dancers, but as perhaps two of them most-recognized “Buckeyes” on campus.) That brought back fond memories of our time in Columbus.

What is so impressive about most of the flash mob music participation is the joy with which those ordinary people enter in. You can tell that their hearts are in it and that they probably have precious memories of hearing that music or perhaps performing it in a more traditional setting themselves.

It’s said that “Music hath charms,” and indeed it does. Whether it be the Mormon Tabernacle Choir or your church’s “ordinary” Sunday School children singing about Christmas, the music is uplifting.

The voices can inspire, comfort, make us smile (especially if that Sunday School program included some bit of mischief) and perhaps even have us shed a tear.

Yes. Music has the extraordinary capacity to take us back. And sometimes take us home.



**MYRNA
LYNG**
Columnist

COLUMNIST

Christmas trivia challenging, but fun

If all your Christmas cards are signed, sealed and delivered, presents purchased and under the tree, and your many different menu items frozen chilled, shelved or ordered, then you are ready for my annual Christmas trivia quiz.

The trivia in this year’s NONsensual holiday listing is tiered, starting with the more all-too-familiar traditional questions, graduating to the slightly more difficult trivialities and ending with lesser-known tidbits on Christmas, plus some true and false questions, all given in the spirit of the season.

So, let’s get started, Here’s the Neil O. Nelson 2025 Christmas Trivia.

1) Which U.S. singer in 1994 sang “All I Want for Christmas is You?” Diana Ross, Mariah Carey, Gwen Stefani or Alicia Keys.

2) What was the name of the stumbling, bumbling but lovable angel who saves George Bailey’s life in “It’s a Wonderful Life?” Clarence Goodfellow, Clarence Thomas, Clarence Odbody or Clarence Darrow.

3) What is the biggest-selling Christmas single of all time? “Santa Baby,” “White Christmas,” “I’ll Be Home for Christmas,” “Frosty the Snowman,” “Christmas at Selz.”

4) What is the most successful Christmas movie ever made? “Die Hard,” “Home Alone,” “It’s a Wonderful Life,” “Miracle on 34th Street.”

5) The burglars who break into the McCallister house in “Home Alone” called



**NEIL O.
NELSON**
Columnist

themselves The Holy Rollers, The Wet Bandits, Santa’s Helpers or the Swift Sweeps?

6) Who said, “Christmas is a time when everybody wants their past forgotten and present remembered?” Donald Trump, Phyllis Diller, Joe Biden or Hillary Clinton.

Here’s where the trivia is more difficult.

7) According to the classic holiday song “The Twelve Days of Christmas,” how many swans are swimming? Six, seven, eight, 10.

8) In the song “Frosty the Snowman,” what article of clothing makes Frosty come to life? Wool scarf, heavy boots, long silk hat, long flannel underwear.

9) Where was Mommy when she was caught kissing Santa Claus? Under the Christmas tree, under the mistletoe, under the kitchen table or down at the VFW.

Here’s where the trivia is even more difficult.

10) Where is it tradition to fill children’s clogs with candy and treats? Norway, Sweden, Italy or the Esmond bar.

11) Where was the Christmas classic film “Home Alone” filmed? Rochester, N.Y.; Muncie, Ind.; Winnetka, Ill.; or Meadville, Penn.

12) What is the first line of the third verse of the song “Away in a Manger?” “The stars in the bright sky,” “The cattle are lowing,” “I love you, Lord Jesus,” “Bless all the dear children.”

13) What is the name of the little girl who befriends the Grinch and what is the Grinch’s dog’s name? Mary Lou Why, Cindy Lou Who, Cassie Lou Where or Missy Lou When? And the dog? Buster, Max, Chatterpaws or Muffin.

14) What year was “Silent Night” first performed? 1808, 1818, 1828 or 1838.

15) True or false: There are 250 gifts given in total in “The Twelve Days of Christmas.”

16) True or false: If you’re born on Christmas Day, your star sign is Sagittarius.

17) True or false: The first Christmas card was sent in the year 1901.

18) Who wrote the poem “A Visit from St. Nicholas” (“’Twas The Night Before Christmas”)? William Wordsworth, John Keats, Clement-Cooke Moore or Percy Bysshe Shelley.

19) How many points does a snowflake have? Six, eight, 10 or changes with every snowflake.

20) In “A Christmas Carol,” what is the name of Scrooge’s deceased business partner? Samuel Coldhart, Jacob Marley, Harper Pennyson or Oliver Kitteridge.

As usual, the Christmas trivia is challenging at best, befuddling at worst; impossible to pass on.

If you correctly answered the more traditional questions, congratulations, you know your Christmas trivia. If you were on the money in the second and third tiers; good for you, you’re one smart Christmas cookie.

Regardless, thanks for participating; you have embraced the Christmas spirit. Look for the answers in one of the following pages.

TIE BREAKERS: Who would Santa like find in his sleigh: Dolly Parton, Martha Stewart, Reba McEntire or the Tigirlily Gold sisters?

Who does Mrs. Claus want to find under her mistletoe: The elves, Rudolph, Michael Buble or John Dutton?

Finally, hold your applause, please. Is the weather at Christmas in North Dakota – delightful, frightful, eventful or North Dakota normal?

Merry Christmas, everyone.

And to all, a good night.

(Quiz answers can be found on Page 14.)