

Benson County Calendar of Events

- Saturdays:** Coffee, Esmond Museum
- Second Tuesdays:** Golden Age Club Mtg., Esmond FH
- July 5:** MOHA Picnic, Mdk. Pool Park, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.
- July 7-9:** 4-H Achievement Days, BCEC, Maddock
- July 8:** NDAREC Rural Dev. Workshop, Maddock CC
- July 9:** Sip and Putt Wine Walk, Esmond
- July 9-12:** Esmond's Summer Celebration (The Big One! Esmond 125th B'day, All-School Reunion, EEAA 25th B'day, St. Boniface 75th Anniv.)
- July 11:** Esmond 5k (Inspired by Ron), Esmond, 9:30 a.m.
- July 16:** Blood Drive, Leeds Community Center
- July 17:** Harlow Day
- July 24-26:** Leeds Harvest Days
- Weekend of Aug. 1:** Maddock Renaissance Festival/125th Celebration
- Aug. 1:** Pilots for Christ Fly-in Breakfast, Maddock Airport
- Aug. 1:** Church of Cash, Maddock Opera House
- Aug. 8:** Minnewaukan Rock the Lake
- Aug. 8:** Harlow Church Service/Potluck
- Dec. 6:** MOHA Christmas Tour of Homes, Maddock

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Candidates participating in the statewide candidate forum in Fessenden included (L-R) Mark Nelson, Tim Lamb, John Pederson, Scot Kelsh, Ryan Braunberger, Tracy Layne Foss, Trygve Hammer and Vern Thompson.

District 14 Dem-NPL hosts candidate forum

Approximately 60 people attended a forum featuring North Dakota statewide candidates June 24 in Fessenden's Festival Hall. Hosted by the District 14 Democratic-Nonpartisan League, the event drew people from Rugby to Steele and everywhere in between to discuss issues important to rural North Dakota. The Dem-NPL-endorsed candidates introduced themselves, shared the issues they stand for and answered questions from the audience. Candidates participating included: Trygve Hammer for the US House of Representatives, Tracy Layne Foss for ND superintendent of public instruction, Mark Nelson for ND tax commissioner, Tim Lamb for ND attorney general, Ryan

Braunberger for ND secretary of state, Vern Thompson for ND ag commissioner, John Pederson for six-year term on the ND Public Service Commission and Scot Kelsh for a two-year term on the PSC. The question-and-answer session was led by District 14 Dem-NPL chair Christie Jaeger of Esmond. Candidates stayed and visited with attendees until the last folding chair was put in the rack. Since North Dakota legislative districts stagger elections by odd and even numbers, District 14 has no ND legislative election this year. The evening started with a taco bar featuring local beef and veggies and music was provided by Joel and Carol Braaten, Rugby.

Funds awarded to Native-owned businesses

The ND Department of Commerce has awarded \$600,000 through the Native American Small Business Support Program to help Native American-owned small businesses expand operations, strengthen competitiveness and create lasting economic impact across North Dakota. The program was established through funding appropriated by the 69th Legislative Assembly and provides flexible financial assistance to Native American entrepreneurs and business owners throughout the state.

"Native-owned businesses play an important role in North Dakota's economy and communities," said Economic Development and Finance Deputy Director and Head of Investments and Innovation Shayden Akason. "These awards will help entrepreneurs invest in their operations, create new opportunities and build long-term sustainability for their businesses." The program supports a wide range of business needs, including working capital, equipment and technology purchases, business expansion, workforce development, marketing and other strategic investments designed to increase revenue and strengthen operations. Among the grantees was Lakeside Smiles, which is based in Devils Lake and has an office in Maddock. Other grantees were Indigenous Behavioral Healing; Grey Willow, Inc.; ClearPath Behavioral Health, LLC; Pemmican Patty Food Company, Inc.; Main Inspira-

tions Salon; SkiJump Solutions, LLC; Warrior Energy, LLC; VerteBrey Chiropractic, LLC; DeCoteau Trauma-Informed Care and Practice, PLLC; First Seven Stones; Miigwech Candle Co., LLC; Black Feather Construction and Fencing, LLC; The Fringe 17' Boutique and Salon; YoungBird Family Funeral Homes; and Tiwahe Media. Award recipients will report on project outcomes and business impacts throughout the grant period. All funds must be expended by June 30, 2027. For more information about the department's business financing and grant programs, visit www.commerce.nd.gov/economic-development-finance.

ND nonprofit association has new executive director

Kara Deitch is first to serve full-time

The ND Association of Nonprofit Organizations (NDANO) has announced the hiring of its first-ever full-time executive director, Kayla Deitch, marking a significant milestone in the organization's history and a major investment in strengthening North Dakota's nonprofit sector. The position is made possible through an \$80,000 grant awarded by the National Council of Nonprofits, providing NDANO with dedicated leadership to expand services, strengthen advocacy efforts, and better support the more than 5,000 nonprofit organizations serving communities across North Dakota.



Kara Deitch

"For years, our strategic plan has said NDANO needs dedicated, full-time leadership. This year we stopped talking about it and did it," said Patrick Kirby, president of the NDANO board of directors. "We ran a competitive search, and Kayla stood out immediately bringing more energy, more vision and more practical ideas to her interview than we've seen in years. Combined with this incredible investment from the National Council of Nonprofits, we didn't just hire an executive director; we invested in the future of every nonprofit in North Dakota. NDANO is ready for this. And so is our sector."

Deitch brings extensive experience in leadership, association management, strategic planning, operations and organizational development. Throughout her career, she has worked alongside mission-driven organizations to strengthen systems, improve efficiency, foster collaboration and increase community impact. Lyndsay Ulrickson, NDANO board vice president and grant-making officer for the Bush Foundation, also shared her enthusiasm for this milestone. "Bringing full-time leadership to NDANO is a massive win for North Dakota nonprofits, particularly for our rural communities where grassroots leaders do so much heavy lifting with limited resources," said Ulrickson. "This next chapter of growth gives us the resources to provide elevated support and advocacy for the nonprofit sector."

As executive director, Deitch will lead NDANO's efforts to expand member engagement, strengthen partnerships, advocate for policies that support nonprofits, and build greater

connectivity across North Dakota's nonprofit ecosystem. "North Dakota nonprofits employ nearly 53,000 people -- about 16% of the state's private-sector workforce. These nonprofit organizations play a vital role in strengthening our communities, supporting economic development and improving quality of life for residents across the state," said Deitch. "I am honored to serve as NDANO's first full-time executive director and excited to work alongside nonprofit leaders, board members, staff, volunteers and partners to help advance the sector's impact. I want to meet everyone, and more importantly, I want to understand their needs." The creation of this role represents a strategic step forward for NDANO as the organization continues to grow its capacity to serve nonprofits in both rural and urban communities throughout North Dakota. Founded to support, connect and advocate for nonprofit organizations statewide, NDANO provides resources, education, networking opportunities and public policy leadership to strengthen the nonprofit sector and the communities it serves.

Rural development workshop is July 8 in Maddock

County and city officials, economic development professionals, financial institution representatives, small business owners, nonprofit leaders, and anyone interested in strengthening Benson County communities are encouraged to register now for a free in-person workshop intended to spotlight funding opportunities and technical assistance available to support businesses and community projects. The workshop will take place Wednesday, July 8 from 11:30

a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Maddock Community Center. A light lunch will be provided. The event will be led by the ND Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives (NDAREC) rural development services team, and will also include rural and community development information from the North Central Planning Council and Northern Plains Electric Cooperative. Additional details and registration are available at ndarec.com/ruraldevelopment.

Aabrekke receives Child Passenger Safety Tech Award

Lake Region District Health Unit (LRDHU) has announced that Benson County Health Nurse Shelley Aabrekke has been recognized with a Child Passenger Safety Technician Award by North Dakota's Vision Zero program. The award was presented during the 2026 Vision Zero Partner Conference in Bismarck and recognizes child passenger safety technicians and instructors for their commitment to protecting children through education, car seat inspections, community outreach and dedication to child passenger safety programs. As a certified child passenger safety technician, Aabrekke has dedicated many hours to helping families ensure children are traveling safely by providing car seat education, assisting with proper installation and promoting best practices for child passenger safety throughout Benson County and surrounding communities. "Keeping children safe on our roads starts long before a vehicle is in motion," said Wendy Frelich, LRDHU's director of nursing. "Shelley's commitment to educating caregivers and ensuring children are properly restrained has made a meaningful difference in the lives of families across our region. This recognition is a

testament to her dedication and passion for protecting children." According to Vision Zero, Child Passenger Safety Technician Awards recognize individuals who are nominated for their exceptional commitment to child passenger safety. Shellee Bercier from Tribal Health in Belcourt nominated Aabrekke through participation in a checkup event that made a lasting impression. She related how Aabrekke kept calm and collected during a very busy checkup event to make sure all families who wanted their child's seat checked were done by making certain that technicians were assuring every seat was installed correctly. ND Vision Zero is a statewide initiative committed to eliminating traffic fatalities and serious injuries through education, enforcement, engineering and emergency medical services. Child passenger safety remains a critical component of these efforts, helping ensure children are properly protected every time they travel. Lake Region District Health Unit congratulates Aabrekke on this well-deserved recognition and acknowledges her ongoing efforts to keep North Dakota's youngest passengers safe.

Sons of Norway pie social

The Mollargutten Sons of Norway Lodge will be sponsoring a pie social Saturday, Aug. 1 at the Maddock school gym in conjunction with the 125th pit barbecue meal. The social will begin at 12 noon and continue until all the pies are gone. Come and enjoy the celebration!

King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 "Chocolat" actor
- 5 Audio giant
- 9 Prune
- 12 Antioxidant berry
- 13 Egg
- 14 — budget
- 15 Plumbing problem
- 16 Firsties
- 17 TiVo precursor
- 18 Foolproof
- 19 Sch. URL ender
- 20 Borscht base
- 21 Sailing hazard
- 23 — Victor
- 25 Daughter of Muhammad
- 28 Lynx
- 32 "West Side Story" role
- 33 Prefix meaning "water"
- 34 Ocean bottoms
- 36 Grapevine talk
- 37 Chow down
- 38 "— was saying ..."
- 39 Scoff
- 42 Half of bi-
- 44 Sod
- 48 Napoleon's title (Abbr.)
- 49 Mideast gulf
- 50 Verifiable
- 51 Brit. record label

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- 52 Get up
- 53 Perimeter
- 54 Lobbyists' org.
- 55 Pitch
- 56 Reddish brown
- 7 Outlying area
- 8 Ambulance letters
- 9 Zero, in tennis
- 10 Formerly
- 11 Section
- 20 Date night hire
- 22 D-Day beach
- 24 Some Pacific salmon
- 25 Passing craze
- 26 Chemical suffix
- 27 Gratuity
- 29 LP successors
- 30 NPR's Shapiro
- 31 Pinnacle
- 35 Recording site
- 36 Olympic swimmer
- 39 "M*A*S*H" vehicle
- 40 Tennis star
- 41 Grand tale
- 43 Legendary loch
- 45 Language of Pakistan
- 46 Carpets
- 47 Shoe fillers
- 49 Illustrations

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(Crossword puzzle answers on Page 8)

SUDOKU

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Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Answer key on page 8!

Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

Level: Beginner