

Hostfest fans saddened at its demise

By John Bayer
and Avonlea Brown

In 2022, Diane Anderson and her aunt by marriage, Arlene Anderson, both of Crosby, began a new yearly tradition: attending the Norsk Hostfest in Minot each September.

"Every year we went, she ran into people she knew -- you know, cousins and just different people," Diane Anderson said of her aunt, who is 91. "She was so interested in everything."

That four-year tradition abruptly ended on Jan. 29 with the announcement by the Norsk Hostfest Association that the event will not be continuing, "due to rising costs and declining attendance."

Diane Anderson noted the declining attendance from the event's heyday, recalling a previous trip there with husband Bert that was "wall-to-wall people, and we did not like that."

"So when I went with Arlene, I was like, 'ah' -- it wasn't so bad."

Anderson noted another attendance drop last year -- this one more concerning.

"Last year, I really noticed a difference," Anderson said.

"But what I was told was the Canadians didn't come down, and they were protesting, of course, the tariffs that had been put on their stuff. That's why they were not coming down. But they said usually, like, half the parking lot would be Canadian vehicles, and they just weren't there."

Betty Dhuyvetter, rural Columbus, also felt the impact of fewer Canadians attending the festival.

"It was such a fun sharing between the U.S. and Canada,"



Submitted photo

Diane Anderson and Arlene Anderson, both of Crosby, at the 2025 Norsk Hostfest in Minot.

Dhuyvetter said. "I was hopeful it would build back up, but now it's too late, it's not going to happen anymore. I'm sad to see it go."

Anderson also believes that an aging population contributed to the event's decline, although she had some optimism for the future.

"I did also notice in these four years, I could see more families and people with younger kids there," Anderson said. "So I thought, 'Well, maybe this will be OK.'"

According to the Norsk Hostfest Association, the festival was founded in 1978 by a group of friends who shared an interest in celebrating their Nordic heritage.

"I enjoyed the festival because it's devoted to my culture, my heritage, Scandinavian culture," said Dhuyvetter, who is very active in the local Sons of Norway chapter.

Amber Haugenoe, Crosby, shared Dhuyvetter's sentiment.

"I really enjoyed the Hostfest because it was a chance to

connect with my Norwegian heritage," Haugenoe said. "I'm 100% Norwegian, so it was great to be able to see and hear and taste all things Norwegian."

"I loved buying Norwegian gifts for my family, as well as Danish gifts for my friend from Denmark and his wife," she added.

From 2022 to 2024, Haugenoe, the director for Wildrose Public Transportation, took a group down to Hostfest in one of its vans.

"It was a fairly small group: four or five people, six people maybe," including folks from Crosby, Ray and Tioga, Haugenoe said.

The end of the festival affects more than those attending. Vendors will also be impacted.

Lucy Frandsen, owner of Hygge Hills in rural Noonan, participated in Hostfest for the past three years -- and was not surprised that it ended.

"I get why it doesn't work anymore: Our lifestyles are moving at a faster pace, people don't seem to have the desire to take time to do that stuff," she said. "And the cost, it just kept getting higher and higher."

The increasing cost wasn't just for attendees: Vendors were also beginning to feel burdened.

Frandsen made friends with neighboring vendors, and often found inspiration from the craftsmen who traveled from other states to showcase their goods. However, the travel comes with an increased risk of not turning a profit, or just breaking even.

"You have to sell an awful lot of goods to make up for the cost of the booth alone, not

to mention the travel and the expenses," Frandsen said.

Last year, she paid over \$1,000 to reserve a booth, needed proof of insurance and also paid to park her mom's camper for the duration of the festival. Other vendors had to pay for hotel rooms.

Yet the announcement of Hostfest ending holds consequences for vendors, Frandsen added, since many travel from out of state and count on selling their goods at the festival.

"They are building a supply all year," Frandsen said. "It's a big hit when it comes halfway through the year, hearing they won't do it again."

The true loss with the closing of Hostfest, Frandsen said, is the celebration of cultures and generations past.

"I don't know if people are just not as connected to their roots anymore, and they just aren't interested in that kind of thing, or if we are getting too far away from the generation that came over here from Norway," she said. "You try to hang on to it, but the world is moving so fast."

Haugenoe is now thinking about other ways to stay connected to her roots.

"I will certainly miss going there," Haugenoe said. "Now I guess I'm going to have to schedule that trip to Norway."

For the two Anderson women, they are on the lookout for new traditions.

Recently, Arlene Anderson showed Diane a news article about the International Peace Garden, north of Dunseith, offering free admission to seniors on Wednesdays through April.

"We're going to have to do that," Diane Anderson said.



Submitted photo

From left, Clark Nygaard, commander of the Crosby American Legion; Gary Rust, Danny Hansen, Gregg Hasselstrom and Ken Krebsbach, who were awarded North Dakota "Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans" coins; and Scott Post, North Dakota American Legion West Region vice commander, who presented the coins.

It Happened To . . .

Area Vietnam vets receive 'Welcome Home' coins

Four members of the Crosby American Legion have been awarded North Dakota "Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans" coins in recognition of their service during the Vietnam War.

Danny Hansen, Gregg Hasselstrom and Ken Krebsbach, all of Crosby; and Gary Rust, Fortuna, were presented the coins during a meeting of the Crosby American Legion on

Feb. 3 at the Crosby Community Center.

The coins feature a circle of 238 dots that represent the known North Dakota lives lost in Vietnam, as well as the state and POW/MIA flags; the state bird and flower; and 10 panels of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial wall in Washington, D.C., representing the North Dakota service members still missing in action.

If it happened to you, it belongs in "It Happened To." Submit your news by email to news@crobynd.com.

Divide County High School Honor Roll

Divide County schools have released the names of students on the honor roll for the second quarter of the 2025-2026 school year.

Divide County High School and junior high students on the A honor roll must have at least a 94% average with no more than one grade lower than 92% and no grades lower than 90%.

Students on the A honor roll are: Seniors -- Jocia Fuhrman, Emma Hay, Elydie Johnson, Brenna Landsverk, Emma Landsverk, Stockton Nelson, Gavin Nygard, Gracie Rowse, Samantha Smith, Easton Tibbs, Landyn Wagner, Maverick Wolf, Megan Wolter; Juniors -- Wyatt Lokken, Vivian Nygaard, Mira Stubbs, Vav Vincent Vasquez, Skylar Wehrman, Abigayle Wishart, Ransum Zaugg; Sophomores -- Riley Caraballo, Lillian Herold, Mason Johnson, Bella Osvold, Kathleen Ryan, Mackenzie Ryan, Paige Smithberg; Freshmen -- Cutler Billingsley, Farrah Fuhrman, Olivia Grote, Greenlee Haugland, Pax Johnson, Kailey Verlinde, Jurnee Wehrman, Hannah Williams.

Junior high students on the A honor roll are: Eighth grade -- Kylie Ator, Faith Fagerbakke, Milo Goldade, Lucas Hubble, Aliza Pulvermacher, Charles Verlinde, Hunter Watteur; Seventh grade -- Payzli Billingsley, Lilianna Gunlock,

Jaxon Hendrickson, Boen Johnson, George Knutson, DelliAnn Lindsey, Harper Lund, Cobain Paulson, Liam Pulvermacher, Oaklin Rindel, Jaylynn Rogers, Hoyt Sorum, Tellie Sparks, Chelsea Throntveit.

Students on the B honor roll must have at least an 87% average with no more than one grade lower than 87% and no grades lower than an 83%.

High school students on the B honor roll are: Seniors -- Braden Brown, Emma Gieseke, Elijah Kulstad, Charlie McCombs, Ailyn Ordonez-Guayamis, Marcus Shaw, Ashley Titus; Juniors -- Annal Ames, Cole Artman, Audrina Fortier, Jamie Fuhrman, Brandon Herrold, Landon Hubble, Isaac Johnson, Ryker Krebsbach, Jacob Reistad, Kenley Sundberg; Sophomores -- Chaos Bays; Freshmen -- Anja Frandsen, Bristol Hallgren, Brodie Haugenoe, Eric Head, Erie Head, Zoey Lervik, Aleyah Lindquist, Harper Lindsey, Carter Nelson.

Junior high students on the B honor roll are: Eighth grade -- Korbyn Krebsbach, Zachary Monson, Jubilee Stubbs, Breckyn Sundberg, Aasta Svangst; Seventh grade -- McGuire Ames, Tory Caraway, Jordyn Gunderson, Chale Krebsbach, Aiden Larson, Francis Monson, Sophie Overland, Raelynn Rogers, Carter Shaw, Trenton Trueax.

Ray man charged with theft in Divide

By Avonlea Brown

A Ray man is free on bond after being arrested on a charge of theft from a Divide County property and allegedly trying to sell the stolen items online.

Joseph LaChance was arrested on Jan. 30 and is charged with one felony count of theft of between \$1,000-10,000. The maximum sentence for this charge is five years in prison.

LaChance also currently has two other open criminal cases, in Williams and Ward counties, both misdemeanors. He has no criminal history in Divide County.

According to the affidavit, Cpl. James Stacey of the Divide County Sheriff's Office received a phone call Sept. 19, 2025, from Les Gunderson reporting a theft that reportedly took place between Sept. 11 and 18 at a property in Garnet

Township, about 7 miles north of Alamo.

Among the stolen items was a blue welder, some DeWalt power tools, air tools, gas cans and grease cans.

The welder is estimated to cost \$4,729, according to the affidavit.

Stacey stated LaChance was discovered to be selling the alleged stolen items on Facebook under the name Samantha Thibodaux.

Divide County Sheriff Zach Schroeder told The Journal an investigation had taken place to confirm Samantha Thibodaux is a fake identity.

LaChance's bail was set at \$10,000 cash with a 10% option, or a \$3,000 surety bond. A condition of the bond was a no-contact order between LaChance and Gunderson.

LaChance's next court appearance is scheduled for March 13.

ND reports first measles case of 2026

By Michael Achterling
North Dakota Monitor

Williams County in north-west North Dakota reported a measles case, the state's first case of the disease in 2026, the Department of Health and Human Services said Feb. 4.

The individual was unvaccinated and acquired the disease out of state, the department said in a statement. The agency's measles dashboard indicates the person is 20 or older.

There are no known community exposure locations, the agency said.

"This case serves as a reminder to North Dakotans that measles continues to circulate worldwide and in the United States," said Molly Howell, director of the department's disease control and forensic pathology section.

In 2025, North Dakota reported 36 measles cases, the first since 2011. Half of last year's cases were in Williams

County, which prompted about 180 unvaccinated students to quarantine last spring due to possible exposure.

Three cases statewide required hospitalization last year. The last 2025 case was confirmed in July, according to the department's measles dashboard.

The Department of Health and Human Services encouraged people who are unsure of their vaccination status to

contact their health care provider. Howell said the measles, mumps and rubella vaccine is 97% effective after two doses, and those who are vaccinated are unlikely to develop the disease.

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Corrections

An article on Jan. 21 about the new Dakota Theater manager Kirk Ferris misquoted Ferris in a comment about where his wife Carrie once lived and operated a video store. "She lived in Broadus (Montana) for 20 years or so," Kirk Ferris said.

Because of a transcription error, an article on Feb. 4 about a bill to provide free meals for North Dakota students misrendered state Rep. Bert Anderson's comments about the potential need for schools to hire more kitchen staff if the bill had passed. "They will have to hire several people to come in; well, now they have to pay them their salaries, and if they have to buy extra freezers and coolers, etc.," Anderson said.

To contact The Journal regarding correction requests, email news@crobynd.com.



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Property for Sale – Sealed Bids

Bids Due: March 2, 2026

Divide County, ND

Township 161 North, Range 101 West (Writing Rock)
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Township 160 North, Range 101 West (Sioux Trail)
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Williams County, ND

Township 159 North, Range 102 West (Barr Butte)
Parcel in Section 12

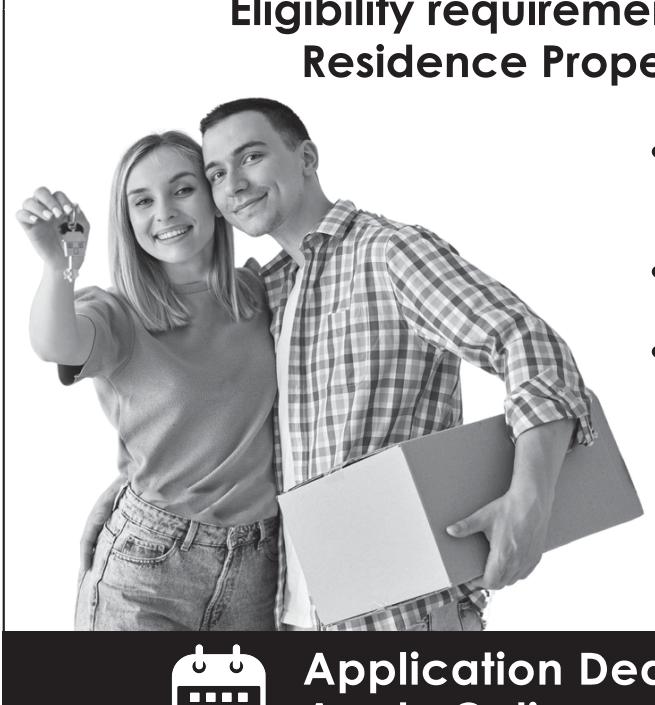
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Basin Brokers
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