

# Buyer of nursing home undecided on its future

Coates says purchase was 'spontaneous'

By John Bayer

The property in southeast Crosby that formerly housed a nursing home is now owned by a private citizen, Austin Coates.

Coates -- who works for the city of Crosby in the public works department -- said he bought the building around the end of October.

He was inspired by a friend of his in Kansas who purchased an old school and transformed it into an indoor archery range.

Coates didn't really have a specific plan for the property, but felt it would be "pretty cool" to have.

So he approached Jody Nelson, the CEO of St. Luke's Medical Center, which closed the St. Luke's Care Center there in 2021.

"I approached the hospital about it, and they said nobody had expressed any interest in purchasing it," Coates said.



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The former St. Luke's Care Center in Crosby, which closed in 2021. The property is now owned by Austin Coates, a Crosby resident.

"So I just shot them a number, \$5,000, and she took it to a meeting, and they said, 'OK,'" Coates said.

According to Coates, the purchase was completed about two weeks later.

"It was that spontaneous," he said.

St. Luke's officials declined to comment to The Journal about the sale.

Coates admitted that owning the property may prove to be a costly one.

"I can't afford to own it -- put it that way," Coates said, adding, "It's a conglomeration

of headaches, to tell you the truth."

The goal for Coates now is to figure out what to do with the former nursing home. Coates has reached out to the Divide County Job Development Authority seeking assistance.

"I'm working with them to try and figure out something to do with it," Coates said.

"It's probably going to become some type of a community project or asset," Coates added, although there are no specifics figured out thus far for the property.

# One Time it was News

10 years ago

Wednesday, March 30, 2016: Levi Andrist, a 2003 graduate of Divide County High School, shared how his father and grandfather inspired him to pursue owning his own small business, GA Group, a government relations law firm in Bismarck.

The Divide County High School FFA livestock judging and ag sales team competed at a state contest in Minot.

Nicole Joraanstad, daughter of Crosby natives Debra and Gary Joraanstad, played second for Team USA last week at the 2016 World Women's Curling Championship in Swift Current, Saskatchewan.

Two friends, Brenda and Elgene Smith, are the new owners of the Prairie Kitchen cafe in Westby, Montana. Brenda, a native of Oregon, moved to Watford City in 2013 with her fiancé and had a previous restaurant background.

Crosby's Squirt hockey team won the Saskatchewan Southeast Minor Hockey League title for the second year in a row with a 5-0 win against the Weyburn Blues.

20 years ago

Wednesday, March 29, 2006: After a mild winter, a 50 degree reading on Monday was all it took for many people in Crosby to take their jackets off, roll up their sleeves and declare spring had officially arrived.

When Elaine Leininger, 80, receives a degree from Williston State College in May, she might become the school's oldest graduate ever.

A new communications tower will be put into service early next month about 3 miles south of the junction of U.S. Highway 85 and state Highway 5 in Divide County, enhancing emergency communications capabilities throughout the county.

As another Easter approaches, Nancy Mosser will mark the 10th anniversary of the cross her late husband, Jim, erected on a hill southeast of Fortuna.

For the fourth year in a row, Daniel Gillund, son of Jerry and Chris, has qualified for competition in the state National Geographic Bee. Entry into the contest requires passing an extensive test of geography given to students in North Dakota each year. Only the top 100 geography students in the state make the cut.

30 years ago

Wednesday, March 27, 1996: A spring snowstorm swept through North Dakota over the weekend, delivering 5 to 6 inches of snow in the northwest corner of the state.

A fire destroyed the home of Donovan and Joann Ellis of Lignite, three years and three weeks to the day when their grocery store burned. The home fire is believed to have been caused by faulty wiring.

The Crosby Atom hockey team is celebrating a Canadian League championship with a 6-4 win over Radville (Saskatchewan) on Saturday. Tim



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Axel Peterson, son of Aaron and Stacey Peterson of Minot, shares a moment with the Easter Bunny during an egg hunt in Crosby on March 26, 2016.

Serviss scored 11 goals during the three-game series.

Carrie Selle of Fortuna has been elected statewide president of North Dakota Future Business Leaders of America.

Ekness SuperValu in Crosby created a Campbell's Soup store display that netted a bonus for Divide County Elementary School in the Campbell's Labels for Education fundraising program, which will help in the purchase of a computer printer.

40 years ago

Wednesday, March 26, 1986: Crosby Elementary School was chosen as a finalist in a U.S. Education Department recognition program for America's best schools, trying to follow in the footsteps of Divide County High School, which won the award two years ago.

Columbus patrons said they want their school kept open as long as possible, even though revenue for the district is declining.

Some area farmers received food from a shipment provided by last year's Farm Aid benefit concert in Illinois.

The Divide County School District board affirmed its decision to cut two high school teachers and close Noonan Elementary School. Resignations of Richard Pontius and Charlene Brox made it unnecessary to further reduce the elementary staff.

Freshmen who won Divide County High School's first Academic Olympics competition were David Redlin, Krista Jacobson, Joey Elsbernd, Kristi Lokken and Tom Mosser. Picked for the regional team were Jacobson, Redlin, Kevin Anderson, Cristophe Dekelver, Rick Phillion and Chris Dhuyvetter.

50 years ago

Wednesday, March 31, 1976: Another landmark is coming down in Ambrose, as the school was burned out on Thursday in preparation for tearing down and removing it.

Northwest Implement Co. of Crosby celebrated 20 years of ownership by Marvin Lervick.

A quick spring thaw created problems on a couple of highways near Crosby. State Highway 5 was closed 6 miles to the east, and the road near the Long Creek bridge north of Crosby was also closed to traffic.

60 years ago

Wednesday, March 30, 1966: Ken Jacobson has opened a stereo and TV sales and service agency in Crosby's Farm and Home Electric Building. Jacobson is a native of Montevideo, Minnesota.

Dr. Roger Truax, formerly of Crosby and now of Albert Lea, Minnesota, was elected president of Southeastern District Optometric Society.

Cast members for the senior class play at Noonan High School were Linda Fjeld, Diane Wallin, Lonnie Miller, Jay Espeseth, Deborah Moses, Dean Wissbrod, Judith Krecklaur, Allan Zimmerman, Delores Bratlien, Gary Pederson, Dawn Geil and Bonnie Hysjulien.

Sons were born to Mr. and Mrs. Duane Pederson and Mr. and Mrs. Delmer Ekness, all of Crosby, on March 27.

Ten freshman boys were initiated as Greenhands in the Crosby FFA chapter: Kenny Borreson, Gerald Brady, John Elsbernd, Mick Elsbernd, Lance Glasoe, Wayne Lervik, Darryl Lindsey, Blaine Miller, Perry Moe and Rick Tangedal.

70 years ago

Thursday, March 29, 1956: The Rev. S.O. Kvaale, pastor of the Ambrose-Fortuna Lutheran parish for 10 years, will give his farewell sermon on Easter Sunday.

Officers elected for the newly formed Lettermen's Club of Crosby High School were Arthur Tysse, president; Harry Olson, vice president; John Lervick, secretary; Richard Fettig, treasurer; and Mike Hattel, parliamentarian.

James Emanuel, a Crosby eighth-grader, won the county spelling contest.

The golden anniversary of Mr. and Mrs. Selmer Knudson of Crosby was celebrated at the home of their son and daughter-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Roland Knudson.

Sons were born to Mr. and Mrs. George King of Crosby on March 23 and Mr. and Mrs. Don Chaffee of Crosby on March 27. Daughters were born to Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Johnson of Columbus on March 24 and Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Pederson of Ambrose on March 28.

80 years ago

Friday, March 29, 1946: The Crosby High School basketball team ended its season with an interclass tournament won by the senior class.

Mr. and Mrs. Barrett Raam of Westby, Montana, became the proud parents of a son at St. Luke's Hospital in Crosby on March 22.

Mr. and Mrs. Wallace Tanberg of Crosby became the parents of a daughter born at St. Luke's Hospital on March 27.

Mr. and Mrs. Jack Carson, former residents of Plumer Township who left last fall for Salem, Oregon, have recently returned to Divide County before returning west to make their home in Kalispell, Montana.

# Ray seeks to get utilities in place on purchased lots

Preparing land for residential development

By Avonlea Brown

The Ray City Commission held a special meeting Friday to discuss moving forward with utility improvements on properties bought by the city for residential development.

City Auditor Ronda Rustad reported to the commission about a required motion to work with Montana-Dakota Utilities on the property that the city recently purchased from WeDak LLC and in the Prairie Heights subdivision, formerly Jordan Heights.

Rustad had talked with MDU about getting all the necessary utilities in place throughout the properties.

"The utilities are all there," Rustad said. "They just need to be extended."

During her discussion with them, MDU required a developer to be identified. Rustad recommended the commission move for the city to be declared the official developer, since it plans to hold the land and sell it to people who want to build or move a house onto one of the 54 parcels created from the land.



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City Hall in Ray, where the city commission voted Friday to work with Montana-Dakota Utilities to bring utility improvements to properties recently bought by the city for residential development.

"I talked with MDU, and they said this would be the easiest," Rustad said.

Commissioners also moved to put a half curb and gutter on the properties instead of a full curb to allow for more customizing once the land is bought from the city.

"We don't know where we will put entries and driveways eventually," Commissioner Richard Liesener said. "It wouldn't make sense to do a full curb and then someone comes along and says, 'Well, I don't want my driveway facing that way.'"

Commissioners also approved the rehiring of Jeff

Schneeman, a former public works employee.

Schneeman was fired by commissioners in September of last year for "attendance issues," and his position remained open.

In their March 11 meeting, commissioners had mentioned rehiring Schneeman and decided to approach him about taking on the open position.

"I went and had a really great visit with him," Liesener said.

Liesener motioned to rehire Schneeman on a probation period of three months, during which he will make his original starting wage of \$28.

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## Concordia Lutheran Church

(Crosby)

is requesting bids for mowing the cemetery. Bids must be into Concordia dropbox or emails to: [Concordia.crosby.office@gmail.com](mailto:Concordia.crosby.office@gmail.com)



by **Midnight April 20th**

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