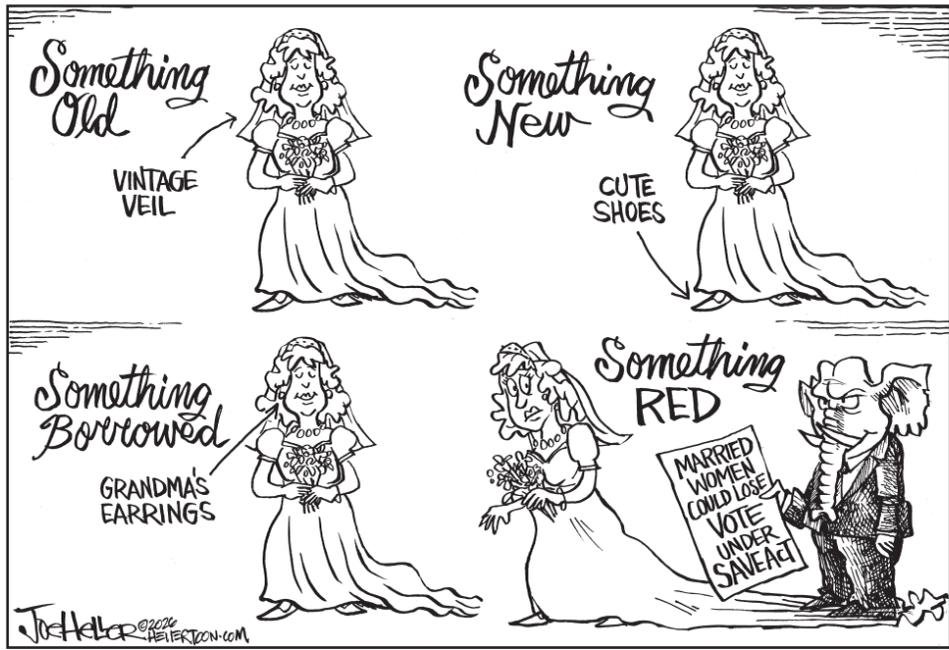


BACK IN THE DAY

Underwood

COMPILED BY SHELLY WALLACE

from the Files of the Central McLean News Journal



FROM THE PUBLISHER'S DESK

BY KELSEY MAJESKE

Fact or Fiction



In a small town, a rumor can travel from one end of Main Street to the other before the morning coffee is even finished brewing. But in the digital age, that rumor doesn't just walk; it flies. It lands on Facebook feeds, gets amplified by "likes," and is eventually presented as gospel on a digital soapbox.

The problem? Speed is not a synonym for accuracy, and a mountain of "shares" is no substitute for a fact.

Lately, the widespread outcry on social media has felt increasingly unrestrained. While some posts are grounded in reality, others... not so much. The trouble isn't just the local drama surrounding City and County commission issues; it's about the very foundation we use to build our opinions. On a social media soapbox, the loudest voice often wins, regardless of whether that voice has ever stepped foot in a city council meeting or read a single page of a public record.

These platforms are designed to trigger our emotions, not our intellect. They reward the "hot take" and the "blind share," often leaving the actual truth buried under a mountain of speculation.

We work hard each week as your local newspaper to be the best resource we can be. I stand behind our work as a reliable source focused on facts and the public record. That is the fundamental difference between a Facebook post and a newspaper. It comes down to one word: Accountability.

If a neighbor posts a half-truth online, they can hit "delete" the moment they're proven wrong, leaving the damage behind them. But a reliable source, whether it's a newspaper or a verified public record, stands by its word. We have a physical address, a masthead, and a commitment to the facts that doesn't vanish when the comment section gets heated. When we make mistakes, we issue corrections and clarifications, because the

printed copy of what is happening today will be here for the long haul, while social media posts fade and become unsearchable over time.

My message today is this: Know where your information is coming from. Emotions run high during times of change, investigations, or scandals. People from all sides tend to focus on the "truth" they want to see. However, the reality right now is that no one knows exactly what happens next for our area. We can speculate, but there is no hard, fast truth as to what the outcomes of any one decision will be, for better or worse.

It is vital to stay informed and make your own decisions based on what you know and how coming changes may personally affect you. But the only forward-moving thing you can do today is ask yourself: Is what I am hearing a fact, or is it just loud right now?

Right now, we as your local newspaper are working every day to bring you the facts about changes in our communities. Oftentimes, the search for the truth is an exhaustive marathon, not a sprint. While the social media soapboxes move on to the next outrage, we remain focused on the details, digging through records, filing requests, and asking the questions you are voicing, whether directly to us or online.

Misinformation has a real cost. It doesn't just stay online; it creates real-world divisions that make it harder for the community to come together and solve problems. Our communities have a great opportunity in the upcoming months to put leadership in place that YOU want and that YOU can believe in. Our goal from now until then is to give you as much factual information as possible to ensure an informed, well-attended election in June.

Ultimately, we must always remember that a community is only as strong as the facts it chooses to believe. Let's choose wisely.

20 years ago, March 2006

The Underwood Area Economic Development Corporation held a benefit pancake breakfast at the city hall on Sunday. Proceeds went to the senior citizens center.

Groundbreaking ceremonies last Friday marked the "official" start of construction on the \$85 million Blue Flint ethanol plant, located on land adjacent to Great River Energy's Coal Creek Station between Washburn and Underwood.

During the ceremonies, Underwood's mayor, Rick Olson, was congratulated on his 50th birthday by David Saggau, CEO of GRE. Olson received a shirt and was serenaded with a chorus of "Happy Birthday" by those attending.

Numbers have dwindled at a once-thriving Underwood Senior Citizens Center and members are hoping to encourage seniors to become active and join the center. Currently there are 16 active members and in order to do more at the center, the numbers need to grow.

Underwood Band and Choir received "I - Excellence Performance" ratings at the Region VII Large Group Music Festival, the fourth year in a row they have done so.

It's not unusual to see deer antlers on the wall in one form or another, but Dave and Roxie Kapanke have come up with a unique way to display them. A project that was started to create a memorable keepsake has turned into a winter hobby for the Kapankes. The result is a shop adorned with antlered light fixtures, 26 of them, to be exact.

The SmartBoard technology gives teachers in Underwood a new tool in educating their students. The school has purchased two portable SmartBoards and one permanently mounted board in the high school science room.

30 years ago, March 1996

Figures show that 30 students will be in kindergarten class next year. Elementary Principal Barb Robinson recommended splitting the class into two sections. The projection is for 27 students the following year and then the number drops to five for 1998-1999.

The high school will be gaining 20-25 students, bringing enrollment up from 130 to 150 or 155.

The Underwood Volunteer Fire Department held its annual banquet and presented awards to Dave Pederson, five years of service; David Werre, 10 years; Oliver Repnow, 15 years; and TeRoy Repnow, 45 years.

40 years ago, March 1986

Members of the Underwood Farmers Elevator directed the board to negotiate installation of a bulk weighing system with or without automatic sampler and control room. The board was

given authority to act on a purchase if terms are good. In other business, Bill Wilson was elected to a three-year term on the board.

Jayne Hatzenbuehler, age 4, won a coloring contest in a Minot grocery store promotion. She is the daughter of James and Deb Hatzenbuehler and a granddaughter of Art and Eldora Olson, who entered her in the contest.

Cub Scout Pinewood Derby winners were Jamie Lehmann, Jason Krumwiede, Aidan Jessor, Shawn Dziuk and Courtney Anderson

50 years ago, March 1976

First place winners in the "Keep North Dakota Clean" contest are Pam Rasmusson (third grade), Stephanie Burgard (fourth grade), Rhonda Radke (fifth grade), Tanya Pochant (sixth grade), Kim Tollefson (seventh grade), Toni Martin (eighth grade). The contest is statewide and sponsored by the governor's office.

Underwood School District has been awarded the full amount of money requested from the Coal Development Impact Fund. In a letter to the school board, director of the coal impact office, Ralph Dewing, announced the approval of a grant totaling \$170,580. The money is to be used for construction of a new elementary school, remodeling and repairing of the present building and equipment for the building.

A water line break created an unexpected holiday for nearly all the students at Underwood's schools last Thursday. All except for five students and their faculty advisor. The six gave up their free day to work on the school newspaper, missing out on a warm and sunny spring day. Pam Sayler, Jim Lizius (Underwood News editor), Russ Scheer, Vicki Leidholm, Mark Milkey, Tim Leidholm (high school editor) and Mary Thompson (faculty advisor) put the final touches on the issue of "Quill."

Coach Dave Binkley has announced his retirement from coaching. Binkley began coaching in Underwood in 1965.

The Town and Country Homemakers met at Denise Berg's on March 8. Plans are being made for a "Spring Fling" party for the senior center. Lunch was served by Mrs. Laurence Heger.

The junior class play at RHS, "The Crucible", will be presented March 26 and 27, under the direction of Ms. Marilyn Garrett and Mr. Vic Machart.

60 years ago, March 1966

Gwen Sayler, Underwood, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Q.O. Sayler, and Blaine Nordwall of Garrison, placed second, and was awarded \$75, in the annual "Know Your State" competi-

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