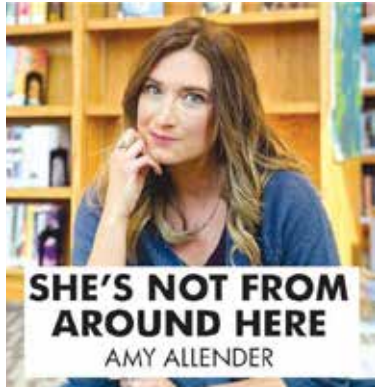


Whats happening in the area

“She’s Not From Around Here”

Submitted by Amy Allender

Whim—Low Stress Day Trips



Spring in North Dakota is both beautiful and unpredictable. We’ll see high temperatures nearing 70° in the same week we get an inch or two of snow. You really never know. And to me, that’s part of the fun.

By spring, I’m ready to soak up fresh air, anxiously observe plants peeking up from the frozen ground, and get out of my house (and even out of town). Spring is the perfect time to stretch your proverbial legs and shake off cabin fever left over from long, cold months.

If you, like me are itching for a way to get out of the house and shake up your scenery, here are three spring day trip ideas. When the weather aligns or the mood strikes, these are low-lift options—all less than two hours from Minot, offer affordable fun, and are enjoyable for a wide range of ages.

Turtle Island Adventure Park and Waterpark, Belcourt

This is the kind of place that saves a family on a weekend when the weather is doing something rude. Turtle Island Indoor Water Park is attached to Sky Dancer Resort & Casino and includes three waterslides, a 175-foot lazy river, an activity pool, and a splash pad style play area. The Sky High trampoline park is part of the same destination, so you can turn one stop into a whole day without needing a complicated plan. Friday family 4-packs are just \$40, hotel guests get free waterpark admission, and the resort also offers lodging and dining on site, which makes the whole thing feel wonderfully easy.

Turtle Island Waterpark includes water fun for all ages and abilities. This splash-pad like feature is housed along with big slides, a pool, and lazy river.

Garrison: Fort Stevenson State Park, the Fish Hatchery

Garrison might be my favorite of these because it feels like a little sampler plate of North Dakota. Fort Stevenson State Park sits three miles south of town on the north shore of Lake Sakakawea, and has miles of trails, a

swim beach, playground, interpretive center and prairie dog town. In other words, it is very easy to spend a morning hiking, exploring, skipping rocks, and letting the kids burn off energy before lunch. It’s also the site of one of my favorite annual festivals: Sky Fest, a weekend of kite flying fun overlooking the lake.

After the park head to downtown Garrison for the obligatory photo with the giant Walleye Wall-eye statue.

If you have a little more time, the Garrison Dam National Fish Hatchery makes a great bonus stop. It’s about 30 minutes from the town of Garrison, but has always been worth it for us. The hatchery offers free admission, self-guided tours year-round, and a visitor center with aquariums showing North Dakota fish species. The full experience includes touch tanks, lots of up close encounters, and the option to feed the smaller fish—my kids loved watching the feeding frenzy.

Lewis & Clark Interpretive Center and Fort Mandan, Washburn

Washburn is a day trip that sneaks in a little history without feeling like homework. The Lewis & Clark Interpretive Center features exhibits, artifacts, and crazy-knowledgeable staff who tell the expedition story, and admission includes Fort Mandan State Historic Site. Adult admission is \$10, children 6–17 are \$5, and children 5 and under are free. Fort Mandan is a reconstructed, full-size replica of the fort where the Lewis and Clark expedition overwintered in 1804–1805, and the site also includes a walking trail and a play area. It is the kind of outing that works especially well when grandparents or out-of-state family are visiting and you want to do something that feels local, meaningful, and still easy. When you go, don’t miss a Seaman’s overlook and the beautiful views of the Missouri River.

These are the kinds of North Dakota trips that are easy to overlook and very easy to enjoy. They are close enough to feel doable, affordable enough to try without a lot of planning, and varied enough that everyone gets something out of them. Sometimes the best memories are the ones that do not require a lot of planning, but rather can happen on a whim. A tank of gas, a snack bag, and a decent idea can go a long way.

Join me online at amyallender.com or social media at @heyminot for more ideas and inspiration for living in North Dakota.

Newspaper readers will see an abundance of insurance statements

Submitted by NDNA

A law change will require a greater number of insurance abstract statements to be published in North Dakota newspapers this year.

During the 69th Legislative Assembly, the North Dakota Legislature enacted House Bill 1398, which modified the publishing requirements for insurance companies doing business in North Dakota. The change nearly doubles the number of companies required to publish these financial statements, and requires all companies to publish in all eight judicial districts.

These publications have occurred in North Dakota newspapers for decades, but readers will notice significantly more than usual. Last year, all of the abstracts were distributed only to newspapers with the largest circulation in each judicial district. Prior to 2025, all newspapers shared equally in making these publications.

Traditionally, the notices were published in May, but so far, only about half have complied by supplying their information.

“This will require publication of these notices in batches, possibly stretching into July,” said Cecile Wehrman, executive director of the North Dakota Newspaper Association.

Under N.D.C.C. § 26.1-03-10 as amended by House Bill 1398, an insurance company shall submit an abstract of the annual statement on the form prescribed by the commissioner. This abstract must be published at least three times in a newspaper of general circulation and evenly distributed for publication across all newspapers operating in each of the state’s eight judicial districts. Proof of publication must be filed with the commis-

sioner within four months after the filing of the annual statement.

“These changes came about as a means of restoring publication to all newspapers in the state, rather than concentrating publication only in the largest newspapers, as had been directed by the insurance commissioner,” said Wehrman.

Payment for publication of these notices comes from the insurance companies. No tax dollars are involved.

The purpose of the statements is to provide consumers information about the financial stability of companies people pay premiums to for property/casualty, life and health insurance.