

DICKEY COUNTY LEADER

THE OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF DICKEY COUNTY, ESTABLISHED 1882

VOL. 143, ISSUE 2 • P.O. BOX 9, ELLENDALE, ND 58436 • 701-349-3222 • DCLEADER@DRTEL.NET • \$1.50 PER ISSUE • JANUARY 8, 2026



Fire Protection District Raffle & Chili Cookoff

It's not too late to get your tickets for the 2026 raffle! With over \$45,000 in prizes (50 main prizes), this is one of the best raffles you will find in this part of the state. Every \$20.00 raffle ticket purchased increases your chances of winning, and also boosts the funds that our local firemen need to stay well equipped and well trained. The event will be January 10,

2026 at the American Legion, Post #137. Cooking begins at 12:00 pm and the chili feed starts at 4:00. Judging of the chili is at 5:00 and the raffle drawings will start at 7:00.

People who bring their raffle ticket stubs will be eligible for additional raffles throughout the evening. Also, tickets will be available for additional raffles throughout the evening.



Public Service Commission to hold Three Public Hearings regarding JETx (Jamestown to Ellendale transmission line)

BISMARCK, ND – The North Dakota Public Service Commission (PSC) will hold three public hearings in January regarding a proposal to construct a transmission line in Dickey, LaMoure and Stutsman Counties. The project is known as the JETx Transmission Line.

Otter Tail Power Company (OTP) and Montana-Dakota Utilities Co. (MDU) are requesting a siting permit for approximately 92 miles of double circuit capable 345-kV transmission line. Initial construction would include one line with the ability to add a second line when needed. The companies are proposing the project to enhance reliability in local areas, including the city of Jamestown. The estimated cost of the project is \$406 million.

The project would run from OTP's existing Jamestown 345-kV substation to MDU's existing Ellendale 345-kV substation in Dickey County. (Note to the media: A map showing the proposed location of the project has been provided to you for use with any announcements/stories you print.)

Details for the public hearings are as follows:

ELLENDALE: Monday, Jan. 12, 2026 – 10 a.m. Central, American Legion Post #137, 82 Main Street, Ellendale, ND. This hearing will focus primarily on portions of the project in Dickey County*

EDGELEY: Wednesday, Jan. 14, 2026 – 9:30 a.m.

Central Edgeley Armory, 508 1st Ave. West, Edgeley, ND. This hearing will focus primarily on portions of the project in LaMoure County

JAMESTOWN: Friday, Jan. 16, 2026 – 9 a.m. Central Baymont by Wyndham Jamestown Conference Center & Water Park, 507 25th St. SW, Jamestown, ND. This hearing will focus primarily on portions of the project in Stutsman County.

The hearings provide an opportunity for members of the public to contribute to the PSC's official record. Any comments from members of the public must be received at a hearing to be part of the record. People with concerns or support/opposition for the project are encouraged to attend one of the hearings and present their information. Information received after the hearings will not be part of the official record and cannot be used as a basis for the Commission's decision unless certain additional procedures are followed.



Frost covers the ground in early February 2018, as power poles, part of the BSSE (Bigstone South to Ellendale) powerline, stand ready to be strung. The scene was at a marshy stretch of ground near Groton, South Dakota. Stacked beneath the line are massive flotation mats which were laid to allow heavy equipment to move across soft ground with minimal soil compaction. Planning for the 163-mile, 345 kV high-voltage powerline began in 2011; construction began in September 2016, and the line was energized in early 2019. (Photo by Ken Smith)

Technical hearings for the project will also be held in Bismarck, which will allow parties to present evidence, examine witnesses, and cross-examine witnesses.

These hearings are open to the public, but there will likely be no opportunity for public input during these hearings. Members of the public wishing to testify should attend one of the three public hearings. The hearings will also be available for viewing using the web stream link available at the PSC's website at www.psc.nd.gov.

Technical hearings will be held on Jan. 8 and 9, starting at 8:30 a.m. each day in the Pioneer Room in the State Capitol Building.

The North Dakota Public Service Commission is a constitutionally created state agency with authority to permit, site and regulate certain business activities in the state including electric and gas utilities, telecommunications companies, power plants, electric transmission lines, pipelines, railroads, commercial weighing devices, pipeline safety and coal mine reclamation. For more information, contact the Public Service Commission (PSC) reaffirms JETx approval

2025 in review, part 2: May to August

May 2025: Leader begins new historical series, "Rural life and the rural school" • Ellendale native Will Bernhagen inducted into University of Jamestown Alumni Hall of Fame; EHS math students placed well in the 70th annual Northern State University Math Competition. • Gov. Armstrong signs "bell to bell" ban on student cell phone use in ND public schools • In 75th commencement, Trinity confers first doctorates, signifying a major academic transition • 12 civic minded members of Ellendale High School's Junior class participated in the Close Up program—8 of them offered their observations on the trip • EHS math teacher Rachel Land selected for teacher empowerment program • Veteran's Club & Events Center now features Mexican food, as Dulce's Hispanic Store branches out to Ellendale • Concert in the Park features traditional west African Drummer Hamzat Koriko from Grand Forks • official senior meals discontinued at Family Way Restaurant in Fullerton, restaurant continues discounts for seniors • After "decisive public contest," North Dakota unveils a state icon • Ellendale Archers compete in Western Nationals, 12 heading to World Tournament in S.C. • "Rumpelstiltskin" continues the long connection between Missoula Children's Theatre and Ellendale Public School • Aidan Thurber qualifies for 4 state track events • Congratulations to these 18 good-looking graduates! Back: Nick Pool, Haven Greenley, Ethan Townsend, Carter Gibson, Ava Henning, Lennon Hagen, Aiden Miller, Greg Fuher, Brandon Rotondi, Evan Wagner, Ariel Hagen, Ayla Gill, Kaisa Lematta, Angelina Gonzalez, Brooke Olson, Jersie Kuno, & Rachael Scheffert • District 28 legislators approve 250,000 grant for Opera House restoration • Forbes native Howard Bohle profiled in article about his WWII heroism as a POW

June 2025: Kasi Holm (EHS 2020) joins Dickey County Extension • construction on Trinity campus as foundation laid for new music building • Long anticipated contract between Applied Digital and major hyperscaler Coreweave met with enthusiasm & sharp rise in APLD stock values • Cropland prices up double digits again--momentum continues into 2025 • memory piece with photo recalls Rev. Dan Kuno's 115 lb. paddlefish, caught in June 1995 • Benedictine CNAs Mya Glynn, Kali Norton, Rachel Scheffert, McKenna Glynn, Hannah Seefeld, Riley Goehring, Levi Reis offer their perspectives on the value of working at Benedictine and Evergreen • "new dirt on the west side of town" as acres west of elevator are landscaped smooth • ND Health and Human Services advises measles vaccinations • Matt Herman chosen West Region Director for Dakota Valley Electric Cooperative (DVEC) • Frost Fire Summer Theatre singers perform at Benedictine • Seven years after the bakery closed, a local "gang" continues to meet at the Cenex C-Store • At retirement, TBC librarian Phyllis Kuno recalls lifetime of service, opportunities & blessings • ND's Public Service Commission (PSC) reaffirms JETx approval

(continued on page 8)



Several EHS grads wore heartfelt messages on top of their mortarboards.



"Rumpelstiltskin" continues the long connection between Missoula Children's Theatre and Ellendale Public School



Trinity Bible College & Graduate School presented Ph.D. diplomas to eight students.



Applied Digital announced a 15 year multibillion dollar contract with Coreweave, a major hyperscaler company.



Members of the class of 1970, largest ever EHS graduating class, still loyal Cardinals after all these years.

Poll: North Dakota pride, satisfaction sky high

Sentiment rooted in safety, community and faith

By Michael Standaert, North Dakota News Cooperative, December 25, 2025

North Dakotans are overwhelmingly proud of their state and satisfied with their lives, with pride rooted in safety, community and faith, the latest North Dakota Poll commissioned by the North Dakota News Cooperative shows.

Asked if they were proud to be a North Dakotan, a total of 91% said they were.

Questioned about what they were most proud of, 32% said it was because the state is a safe place to live, 29% said it was because of the people in their communities, and 27% said it was due to values centered around faith and family.

"It's just nice to see that," Gov. Kelly Armstrong said. "When 91% of North Dakotans are proud to be from North Dakota, it makes me even more proud to be the governor."

As an example of something that gives him pride, Gov. Armstrong said that when SNAP benefits went away and the state worked with the Great Plains Food Bank and directed \$1.5 million in state funds to support food assistance programs, one of the remarkable things he saw was how regular people donated time, money and goods to the effort.

"(It highlights) the capacity of North Dakotans to step up and help out," Armstrong said.

Armstrong said he's proud the state leads in long-term gross domestic product growth and economic output and is a top oil producer with low unemployment.

"As tough as the ag numbers have been, it's really nice to see those numbers," Armstrong said.

Armstrong also remarked on the strong pride younger people have in the state, which was steady with overall numbers.

"That gives you a better shot of keeping them here," he said.

Only 4% said their main reason for being proud to be a North Dakotan was because elected leaders hold their values, and only 3% said it was because of the quality education in schools.

A total of 84% indicated they were either very or somewhat satisfied with their lives at the moment, according to the poll.

While 22% said they were less happy now than a year ago, a sizable majority at 66% said they remain optimistic about the year ahead.

Arik Spencer, CEO and president of the Greater North Dakota Chamber, said the optimism is grounded in strong fundamentals.

"North Dakota's economy continues to outperform much of the nation, with strong employment, continued growth, and a comparatively low risk of recession," he said. "Those strengths help families and businesses better weather inflation than in many other states."

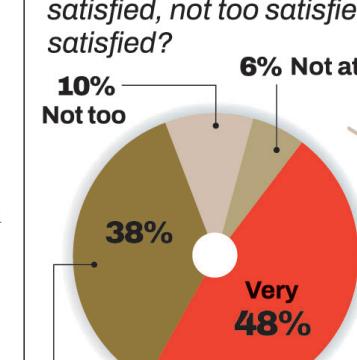
Senate Minority Leader Kathy Hogan, D-Fargo, said she felt the high pride and optimism reflected on the culture of respect and decorum in the state.

"Things are still functioning in routine ways that in many of the places in the nation we don't see, particularly in Washington, D.C.," Hogan said.

Hogan said she was surprised at how high optimism figures were, but was not surprised people were so proud of being from North Dakota.

HAPPINESS AND WELLBEING

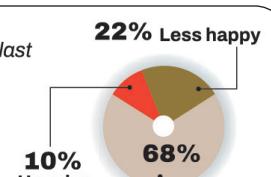
Q: Overall, how satisfied are you with your life right now? Are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, not too satisfied or not at all satisfied?



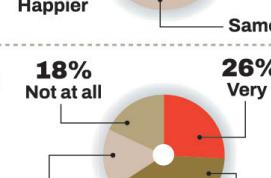
Note: Pollsters called 625 North Dakota voters Dec. 10-13. The poll has an error margin of +/- 4%.

Source: North Dakota News Cooperative, Mason-Dixon Polling & Strategy

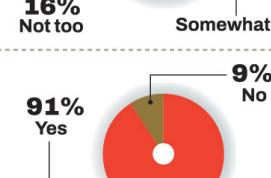
Compared to this time last year, how would you describe your overall happiness? Are you happier, less happy or about the same?



How optimistic are you about the coming year? Are you very optimistic, somewhat optimistic, not too optimistic or not at all optimistic?



Are you proud to be a North Dakotan?



Troy Becker / The Forum

"I love the fact that people feel it's a safe place to live, they like the people they're around, and the values," Hogan said.

Gov. Armstrong said figures like this could help attract more people to move to the state and part of that is microtargeting toward the right people.

"I think we can do a better job of that," Armstrong said. "If we think about things a little differently, and do things the same way we're doing them, I think we'll have success."

The North Dakota Poll was conducted by Mason-Dixon Polling & Strategy, Inc. of Jacksonville, Florida from Dec. 10-13 2025. A total of 625 North Dakota adult residents were interviewed statewide by telephone. The poll has an error margin of +/- 4%.

The North Dakota Poll is the only regular, non-partisan statewide survey of eligible North Dakota voters and consumers.

**NEW YEAR
NEW WAY TO SHOW
SCHOOL SPIRIT**



Starion. Bank

STARIONBANK.COM/SCHOOLSPIRIT | Member FDIC