

Dakota Gardener: Take Another Look At Ficus Trees

By Esther E. McGinnis,
Horticulturist, NDSU Extension

The National Garden Bureau designated 2026 as the "Year of the Ficus." Your first thought might be the weeping fig (Ficus benjamina), the most commonly grown indoor ficus tree. Truth be told, the weeping fig can be persnickety, turning yellow and dropping its leaves. However, the Ficus genus encompasses many lesser-known species and cultivars that are easier to grow.

The rubber tree (Ficus elastica), with its shiny, oval-shaped leaves, is enjoying a resurgence. I am old enough to remember rubber trees being the trendy 1970s plant in the era of avocado-green appliances. New generations are rediscovering this beautiful tropical plant. Recent cultivars feature multicolored leaves with creamy margins, multiple shades of green on the interior, and red new growth.

To keep a rubber tree healthy, place it in bright, indirect light away from vents. In northern states, we can grow it in direct light in an east window. If you notice sunscald on the leaves, either move the plant towards the room's interior or behind a sheer curtain in a south- or west-facing window. Water the plant thoroughly until water trickles out the pot's bottom. Empty any water sitting in the saucer to prevent root rot. Allow the top inch or two of soil to dry between waterings. To keep the plant looking sensational and healthy, wipe the dust off the glossy leaves.

In indoor environments, rubber tree has a tendency to grow vertically without branching. Encourage branching by pruning above a node in spring or summer.

Fiddle leaf fig (Ficus lyrata) is another popular ficus. With its violin-shaped leaves, it is like the fashion

model of the houseplant world and graces the pages of many interior design magazines. From personal experience, this ficus requires an experienced plant parent. It is tough to grow in low-light environments and is finicky about watering. If you have struggled with fiddle leaf fig, give Ficus Audrey a try.

Ficus Audrey (Ficus benghalensis) is more forgiving than fiddle leaf and less likely to drop its leaves. Audrey's leaves look like a cross between those of rubber tree and fiddle leaf fig. The green oval leaves are shaped more like rubber trees', and the white leaf veins are reminiscent of fiddle leaf fig. While Audrey is more tolerant of watering mistakes, it is best to adhere to the watering advice mentioned for rubber tree.

Finally, a word of advice for those struggling with weeping fig trees mentioned at the beginning of this article. Treat this common houseplant like a drama queen. Understanding that the tree doesn't like change is the not-so-secret formula for being a successful ficus parent. If your tree is happy in its current location, don't move it. Otherwise, it will throw a tantrum and drop its leaves. Try and maintain a consistently warm temperature. In the winter, add a room humidifier to boost humidity, keep your ficus away from drafts and don't overwater.

All kidding aside, you can find a ficus tree to meet your needs and gardening level.

Helping ND Teens Recover From Human Trafficking, Other Trauma

By Mike Moen,
Prairie News Service

January is National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month and North Dakota youth organizations said for teen survivors, an open ear is just as important as meeting their basic needs.

Whether it is a podcast, Instagram story or a news headline, leaders from a coalition of regional service providers said the steady flow of information is hard to ignore for teens who have been exploited. And if there is a mention of human trafficking or sexual assault, the trauma of past events can come roaring back.

Mark Heinert, executive director of Youthworks of North Dakota, said as part of this outreach, they remind homeless and runaway youth about their many services. He added making them feel safe is a big part of it.

"When youth are in those formative years, those teen years, we often find that they're saying that people aren't listening," Heinert observed. "We see it as our mission to provide that place where they've got their basic needs met, but they've got a caring person to be there with them."

Another statewide group, the 31:8 Project, pointed to its mentorship program for cases involving human trafficking, in which the survivor receives guidance in resuming their education or gaining job skills. Case managers can also accompany survivors to places like the grocery store or a doctor's appointment if they need an added level of comfort.

Heinert stressed such work is not just about helping a young per-

son after a traumatic event. He cited intervention efforts when there are signs a young person is thinking about running away from home.

"We have an opportunity to be able to do more than just react to challenges that exist," Heinert added.

Experts said excessive truancy or teen hiding food, money and clothing are signs they are at risk of running away.

The latest messaging follows an announcement earlier this month, when six youth agencies shared details about the new ND HOPE Project. Partners are leading a campaign to highlight resources and bolster community awareness of sexual and domestic violence, child abuse and human trafficking.

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PUBLIC NOTICES

BECAUSE THE PEOPLE MUST KNOW

Probate No. 31-99-P-01516

IN THE DISTRICT COURT
OF MOUNTRAIL COUNTY,
STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF
EVELYN ARNESON, DECEASED

NOTICE OF HEARING

ON PETITION TO FORMALLY
REAPPOINT A PERSONAL
REPRESENTATIVE TO
DISTRIBUTE AFTER
DISCOVERED PROPERTY

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that

Jonathan Frantsvold, of 932 1st Avenue West, Dickinson, North Dakota, 58601, has filed in the above Court and cause a Petition to Formally Reappoint a Personal Representative to Distribute After Discovered Property for the Estate of EVELYN ARNESON. For further information, the Petition, as filed, may be examined in the office of the clerk of the above Court.

Hearing upon said Petition will be held in said Court at the Courtroom of the Mountrail County Courthouse, Stanley, North Dakota, on the 26th day of February, 2026, at the hour of 10:30 a.m., at which time all interested persons may appear and object.

Dated this January 14, 2026.

KARELL KIMMET BEDDOW PLLP
By: /s/ Patrick G.N. Beddow
Patrick G.N. Beddow, #07456
175 North 27th Street, Suite 1303
Billings, MT 59101
406-294-8485
pbeddow@kkllawmt.com

Jan. 21, 28, Feb. 4, 2026

NOTICE OF HEARING

N.D. INDUSTRIAL COMMISSION
OIL AND GAS DIVISION

The North Dakota Industrial Commission will hold a public hearing at 9:00 AM CST Wednesday, February 25, 2026 at N.D. Oil & Gas Division 1000 East Cavalry Avenue Bismarck, North Dakota. At the hearing the Commission will receive testimony and exhibits. Persons with any interest in the cases listed below, take notice.

NOTICE OF HEARING

TO THE ABOVE NAMED DEFENDANTS:

You are hereby summoned and required to appear and defend against the Complaint in the above entitled action, which is filed in said Court in Stanley, North Dakota, and is herewith served upon you, by serving upon the undersigned an answer or other proper response within twenty-one (21) days after service of this Summons upon you, exclusive of the day of service. If you fail to do so, judgment by default will be taken against you for the relief demanded in the Complaint.

Dated this 28th day of January, 2026

/s/ Joseph F. Larson II
Joseph F. Larson II, ID #03229
Attorney for Plaintiffs
2411 Hwy. 281 South
P.O. Box 1599
Jamestown, North Dakota 58402
(701) 252-5541
joelarson@daktel.com

NOTICE TO THE ABOVE NAMED DEFENDANTS:

Notice is hereby given to the Defendants the above action relates to and is brought for the purpose of determining adverse claims and quieting title to the undivided 10 mineral acres in Mountrail County, North Dakota, described as follows:

S1/2NW1/4, E1/2NW1/4, NE1/4SW1/4, W1/2SW1/4, SE1/4SW1/4, NE1/4SE1/4 and W1/2SE1/4 of Section 23, Township 158 North, Range 94 West of the 5th P.M., Mountrail County, North Dakota;

AND

S1/2NW1/4, SW1/4, W1/2SE1/4 of Section 24, Township 158 North, Range 94 West of the 5th P.M., Mountrail County, North Dakota;

AND

NE1/4 of Section 27, Township 158 North, Range 94 West of the 5th P.M., Mountrail County, North Dakota [Mountrail County Minerals].

and no personal claim is made against any Defendants in this action for a personal money judgment.

Dated this 28th day of January, 2026.

/s/ Joseph F. Larson II
Joseph F. Larson II, ID #03229
Attorney for Plaintiffs
2411 Hwy. 281 South
P.O. Box 1599
Jamestown, North Dakota 58402
(701) 252-5541
joelarson@daktel.com

Feb. 4, 11, 18, 2026

Signed by,
Kelly Armstrong, Governor
Chairman, NDIC

Feb. 4, 2026

Dakota Datebook: Unusual Marriage

By Sarah Walker

At the end of January in 1929, a rather unusual marriage for two residents of Tappen took place in Steele. The reports circulated around the state: Gertrude Murdoch, the 27-year-old principal and music teacher of the local high school, married Gordon Bell, a 17-year-old sophomore in her school and a student in one of her classes.

At age seventeen, Gordon was considered a minor by four years. Had their roles been reversed, and he was 27, marrying a 17-year-old girl, she would have been a minor by the year. In any case, because he was a minor, Gordon's parents had to grant permission for him to marry. They stood by his side as he married his principal. Gertrude had her brother Alex as a witness.

The marriage took place in Steele, and after a short honeymoon, they returned to classes on February 6 as the Tappen school board had "given Mrs. Bell permission to keep her husband in her classes" and to "retain her as principal."

According to the Bismarck Tribune, Dr. J.S. Whitson, a doctor in Tappen, was a friend of the couple, and said that "young Bell will finish high school and then go to college." Other reports flying across the state said the young couple was staying at the Whitson home, but the doctor disputed the claim, noting that his family was out of town and he was simply staying at the same hotel as Mrs. Bell and the other teachers of Tappen school, a situation that "was probably responsible for the error."

It was perhaps something of a scandal, but it might have been topped by a similar story that appeared in the Tribune the same day: two Renville County farm couples divorced, then traveled to Manitoba where they swapped spouses and were married in a double ceremony!

PUBLIC NOTICES

BECAUSE THE PEOPLE MUST KNOW

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS
MOUNTAIN COUNTY
STANLEY, NORTH DAKOTA
COUNTY ROUTE 2 HMA
SURFACING

General Notice
MOUNTAIN COUNTY (Owner) is requesting Bids for the construction of the following Project:

**COUNTY ROUTE 2 HMA
SURFACING
PROJECT NO. 02(64)25**

Bids for the construction of the Project will be received at the **MOUNTAIN COUNTY South Complex** located at **8103 61st Street NW, Stanley, ND**, until **Thursday, February 19, 2026 at 2:00 pm** local time. At that time the Bids received will be publicly opened and read.

The Project includes the following Work:

Sliver widening, aggregate base/reshaping existing aggregate base, and hot mix asphalt on 6.7 miles of County Route 2 beginning at County Route 3 (74th Avenue NW) and ending at County Route 11. The project will include the following approximate quantities: Borrow-Excavation - 60,000 CY; Aggregate Base Course CL 5 - 25,000 Tons; Superpave FAA 42 - 30,000 Tons; PG58H-34 Asphalt Cement - 1,700 Tons; Pipe Conduit 24IN-Approach - 600 LF; Pipe Conduit Jacked or Bored (multiple sizes) - 200 LF; Cured-In-Place Pipe (multiple sizes) - 2,000 LF.

The project has a date for substantial completion of **October 3, 2026**.

Obtaining the Bidding Documents

Bidding Documents may be viewed online at www.questcdn.com or www.questdn.com. You may download the digital plan documents for Twenty-two dollars (\$22.00) by inputting Quest project #02(64)25 on the website's Project Search page. Please contact QuestCDN.com at 952-233-1632 or info@questcdn.com for assistance in free membership registration, downloading, and working with this digital project information. Copies of the Bidding Documents may be examined at the office of Advanced Engineering and Environmental Services, LLC (AE2S), 601 18th Avenue SE, Suite 102, Minot, ND 58701 (701 852-4048). The Bidding Documents are available in the form of printed plans and specifications by request from AE2S, 3101 Frontage Road South, Moorhead, MN for a **NON-REFUNDABLE** charge of Two Hundred Dollars (\$200.00) for each set of Plans and Specifications requested. Bidding Documents may also be examined at the following locations: Builders Exchanges in Bismarck, ND; Mandan, ND; Minot, ND; Fargo, ND; Grand Forks, ND; Rapid City, SD; Minneapolis, MN. All Work shall be done according to the Bidding Documents.

All Bids are to be submitted on the basis of cash payment for the Work and materials, and each Bid shall be accompanied by a separate envelope containing a Bidder's Bond, payable to the City of Parshall, in a sum equal to five percent (5%) of the full amount of the Bid, executed by the Bidder as principal and by a surety company authorized to do business in the State of North Dakota, conditioned that if the principals' Bid be accepted and the contract awarded to him, he, within fifteen (15) days after Notice of Award, will execute and effect a Contract in accordance with the terms of his Bid and a Contractor's Bond as required by the laws of the State of North Dakota and the regulations and determinations of the City Commission of the City of Parshall, North Dakota.

All Bidders must be licensed for the highest amount of their Bids, as provided by Section 43-07-05 of the North Dakota Century Code. Cost of preparation of Bids by Bidder.

Contracts shall be awarded on the basis of the low Bid submitted by a responsible and responsive Bidder deemed most favorable to the City's interest.

All Bids shall be contained in a sealed envelope plainly marked showing that such envelope contains a Bid for the Project. In addition, the Bidder shall place upon the exterior of such envelope the following information:

1. The Work covered by the Bidder (General Construction).

2. The name of the Bidder.

3. Separate envelope containing Bid Bond and a copy of Contractor's License or Renewal Certificate.

4. Acknowledgement of all Addenda.

Bids shall be delivered or mailed to:

Attn: City Auditor
City of Parshall
PO Box 159
23 N Main St
Parshall, ND 58770

The City of Parshall reserves the right to reject any and all Bids, to waive any informality in any Bid, to hold all Bids for a period not to exceed thirty (30) days from the date of opening Bids, and to accept the Bid deemed most favorable to the interest of the City. After the Bid opening the Owner will return Bid Security of all except the three lowest responsible Bidders. When a Contract is awarded, the remaining unsuccessful Bidder's Bonds will be returned.

The Work on the improvements shall be completed and ready for Final Payment no later than September 30, 2026, with a substantial completion date of September 15, 2026. Should the Contractor fail to complete the Work within the time required, as set forth in the Agreement, or within such extra time as may have been granted by formal extensions approved by the City and Engineer, there shall be deducted from any amount due him the sum of \$1,000.00 per day as compensation to the City for each day and every day that the completion of the Work is delayed. The Contractor and his surety shall be liable for any excess. Such payment shall be for and for liquidated damages and not as a penalty.

All Bidders are invited to be present at the public opening of the Bids.

Dated this 23rd day of January, 2026.

By: /s/ Kelly Woessner, City Auditor

Parshall, North Dakota

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