

Bakken Briefs

Ray seeks new classrooms

The Ray Public School board voted March 25 to put two bond referendums on the ballot in June for major school improvements, including a replacement of the elementary classrooms, after a community survey found majority support.

The questions pertain to funding two facility improvement projects: a \$23 million replacement of the old elementary classrooms with a new school wing, and a new \$6 million multipurpose space on the north side of the building.

The elementary project would also renovate and expand the cafeteria, remove the courtyard and create seven additional classrooms. The second proposed addition would create a multipurpose space for sports practices, schoolwide events and community gatherings, as well as a space for relocation of the weight room.

--The Journal, Crosby

Kenmare educators resign

The Kenmare School District board has accepted the resignations of seven educators this school year and may be losing at least two more.

Superintendent Alex Hennix and Elementary Principal Keely Heidel gave their resignations in February, effective at the end of the school year.

That followed the resignations in January of social studies teacher Tim Wallstrum and math teachers Melanie Herman and Tracey Houck.

At a March 25 meeting, the board accepted resignations from elementary teacher Kacy Keyser and preschool teacher Kara Keyser, and two other current teachers had not signed contracts for next year which were due March 23.

The board has filled the elementary principal position and has received one application for superintendent, President Josh Cook said.

--Kenmare News

New tower for New Town

The city of New Town is planning to construct a new elevated water tower to replace aging infrastructure and improve system reliability.

The Sand Hill Water Tower project calls for a 500,000-gallon elevated storage tank to replace an existing ground-level reservoir built in the 1980s that is nearing the end of its useful life and showing signs of leakage. City officials have also received complaints about low water pressure, emphasizing the need for upgrades.

In addition to the new tower, the project will include improvements to water storage facilities, rehabilitation of booster station pumps and upgrades to water treatment plant equipment.

Funding for the project includes a \$3.7 million grant from the State Water Commission, which will cover up to 60% of eligible costs.

--Western Dakota Energy Association

Williston PD a little less busy

The Williston Police Department in 2025 received its fewest calls for service in five years.

Despite this drop, the calls still totaled 34,667 for the year, or just under 100 per day.

This and other trends were outlined in the Williston Police Department's annual report for 2025, which was released late last month.

The regional SWAT team was deployed 10 times last year, and the records department fielded 3,645 requests, a figure Chief Steven Gutknecht said "goes up every single year as people have more interest in what we are going on."

Officer Garrett Norsten was named North Dakota Peace Officer of the Year and was one of three Williston officers awarded by the state's Vision Zero program for enforcing traffic safety laws or removing impaired drivers from roads.

--Williston Herald

Upscale golfing for Killdeer

A former fire hall in the heart of Killdeer is being transformed into something entirely new for western North Dakota: an upscale golf simulator facility designed to serve youth athletes, recreational players and the broader community.

The Foundation, scheduled to open May 1, will feature multiple state-of-the-art golf simulators, lounge seating, food and beverage options and space for community events.

The project is led by the Cowboy Golf Foundation, a nonprofit organization dedicated to expanding opportunities for young golfers in Killdeer and surrounding communities.

While the organization has spent more than a decade supporting youth golf programs, the new facility represents its most ambitious project yet, one that leaders hope will benefit all ages.

--Dickinson Press

Mercer data center sought

Basin Electric Power Cooperative and NextEra Energy Resources are exploring development of a combined-cycle natural gas-fueled generation facility in Mercer County, named the River Run Energy Center, and an associated data center that the gas plant would power.

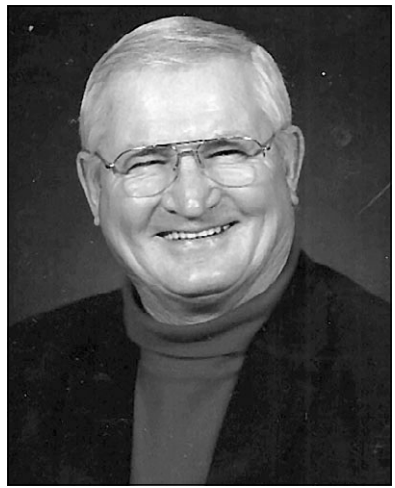
The project "would serve as the foundation for a multi-gigawatt data center campus," Basin Electric said in a news release March 20. "Under the program, the customer requesting service is responsible for the infrastructure costs needed to support it, helping insulate existing cooperative members from financial risk."

The project is being developed under Basin Electric's Large Load Commercial Program, which was adopted by the cooperative in 2025 to address increasing energy demands.

--Hazen Star

Obituaries

Garry Jacobson



Mar. 18, 1944-Apr. 2, 2026
Garry Jacobson, 82, Berthold/Tagus, ND, passed away Thursday, April 2, 2026, at Somerset Court Assisted Living in Minot.

Garry Allan Jacobson was born March 18, 1944, the son of Maynard and Marlyn (Graft) Jacobson, in Tacoma, Washington. He was raised and educated in Tagus, graduated from Berthold High School then attended college in Wahpeton.

Garry married Elaine Flaten on September 27, 1964, at Zion Lutheran Church in Berthold. They made their home in Tagus on the family farm where they lived for 60 years and were blessed with three children, Troy, Tony and Tammy.

He spent the majority of his life dedicated to farming, a profession he took great pride in. After retiring from farming, he continued serving others as a crop adjuster. His strong work ethic and commitment to agriculture were evident throughout his life.

Garry was deeply involved in his community. He served on the school board, was a member of the Jaycees, worked as a township assessor, and served as a Mountrail County Commissioner. For many years, he also cared for the St. Olaf Cemetery at Tagus. He was a member of St. Olaf Lutheran Church in Tagus, and later a member of Zion Lutheran Church in Berthold.

He enjoyed fishing and hunting, a love he passed on to his children and grandchildren. Garry was a great athlete. No matter the sport, he gave it his all and put in a lot of effort to not just learn the sport but to master it. In his youth he played baseball, football, and basketball. As an adult he played softball, golf, and bowling. He loved to play pool and was known to be a bit competitive. His family quickly learned, they rarely got a chance to shoot when playing pool with him.

Family was incredibly important to Garry. He created a home where his children knew they were safe and loved. He was a dad who showed up for his children's events, even if he had to stop during the middle of harvest. His children knew they would always find his face in the crowd. He taught his children everything he knew about sports, driving, hunt-

ing, fishing, card playing and board games. There wasn't a family function that didn't include a game of cards. He wasn't someone who just told them how to do something, he was right there with them showing them and guiding them the entire time. He was an ever-present steady support in their lives. He gave them the tools to be successful adults and parents who now pass on those same lessons to their children. Garry was a wonderful dad who excelled even more as a grandpa. He spoiled his grandkids. They knew they could always count on him to pull a Dum-Dum from his front pocket. His grandkids found solace in the safe and loving home Garry created on the farm.

Garry will be remembered for his big personality, his sense of humor, and intelligence. He had a mind for math that served him well as a farmer and crop adjuster. He was a man who had an opinion and he wasn't afraid to share it in a good-natured debate. Garry will be remembered for his outgoing social nature. There wasn't a place where he went that he didn't know someone. Most of all, Garry will be remembered for the deep love he had for his family, and he will be incredibly missed.

His loving family includes: wife of 61 years, Elaine; children: Troy (Kathie) Jacobson, Tony Jacobson, Tammy (Dan) Lindahl; grandchildren, Amanda (Troy) Lang, Kailah (Hunter) Chavez, Mistie Chavez, Zane Chavez, Charlie (Allison) Jacobson, Lauren, Lexie, Leah and Tanner Jacobson, Colin (Katie), Emolee and Elyssa Lindahl; twelve great-grandchildren; two great-great-grandchildren; brother, Larry Jacobson; sisters, Neadene Schwoppe, Faye (Tony) Asmundson; and numerous nieces, nephews and cousins.

He was preceded in death by his parents; infant brother, Rodger Jacobson; brother-in-law, Neil Schwoppe; sister-in-law, Kay Jacobson.

A memorial service will be held on Friday, April 10, 2026, at 10:30 a.m. at Zion Lutheran Church, Berthold.

Interment will be at St. Olaf Cemetery, rural Tagus, ND.

Visitation will be held on Thursday from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. at Zion Lutheran Church, Berthold. Followed by a prayer service held on Thursday at 6:00 p.m. at Zion Lutheran Church, Berthold.

Memorials are preferred to St. Olaf Cemetery.

The service will be livestreamed for the public to view and can be accessed by going to the Thompson-Larson Funeral home website, www.thompsonlarson.com.

Those wishing to sign the online register and share memories may access the online obituaries section at www.thompsonlarson.com.

JoAnne Kerzmann

Feb. 11, 1956-Apr. 1, 2026

JoAnne Louise Kerzmann, age 70, of Upham, formerly of Minot, passed away on Wednesday, April 1, 2026, at her home in Upham.

JoAnne Kerzmann, a daughter of John and Doris (Jarmin) Ellis, was born on February 11, 1956, in Stanley. She later graduated from Tioga High School in 1974. On June 12, 1976, she married Mathew Arnold Kerzmann in Garrison, ND. They made their home in Minot and JoAnne worked as a waitress for several years before becoming a bank teller. She worked at Affinity First Federal Credit Union for many years until she retired in 2021. In 2011 after the flood, they moved to Upham, ND. JoAnne worked part-

time for the Merchant's Bank in Upham.

She was a member of New Hope Lutheran Church in Upham as well as a member of the Upham American Legion Auxiliary, Upham Quilters and the Goodwill Bible Study. JoAnne's faith was very important to her and she lived it every day.

She is survived by her husband, Mathew of Upham; daughters, Tracy Voeller, OK, Jessica (Tyler) Smette, Upham, and Jada (Tim) Kjonas; six grandchildren; siblings, Linda Fretland, Tioga, Larry Ellis, Minot, and Marshall Ellis, Fredrick, CO; as well as numerous nieces and nephews.

JoAnne was preceded in death by her parents and grandparents.

Arrangements were with Nero Funeral Home in Bottineau.

North Dakota Weekly Gas Price Update

Average gasoline prices in North Dakota are unchanged in the last week, averaging \$3.39/g Monday, according to GasBuddy's survey of 493 stations in North Dakota. Prices in North Dakota are 42.3 cents per gallon higher than a month ago and stands 30.9 cents per gallon higher than a year ago. The national average price of diesel has increased 20.7 cents compared to a week ago and stands at \$5.576 per gallon, the highest level since July 27, 2022.

According to GasBuddy price reports, the least expensive station in North Dakota was priced at \$3.19/g on Sunday while the most expensive was \$4.29/g, a difference of \$1.10/g.

The national average price of gasoline has risen 11.8 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$4.06/g on Monday. The national average is up 65.1 cents per gallon from a month ago and stands 85.0 cents per gallon higher than a year ago, according to GasBuddy data compiled from more than eleven million weekly price reports covering over 150,000 gas stations across the country.

Historical gasoline prices in North Dakota and the national average going back five years:

April 6, 2025: \$3.09/g (U.S. Average: \$3.21/g)

April 6, 2024: \$3.38/g (U.S. Average: \$3.59/g)

April 6, 2023: \$3.26/g (U.S. Average: \$3.55/g)

April 6, 2022: \$3.88/g (U.S. Average: \$4.15/g)

April 6, 2021: \$2.73/g (U.S. Average: \$2.87/g)

Neighboring areas and their current gas prices: Sioux Falls- \$3.53/g, up 31.8 cents from last week's \$3.22/g, Fargo- \$3.28/g, down 4.4 cents from last week's \$3.32/g,

South Dakota- \$3.52/g, up 17.2 cents per gallon from last week's \$3.35/g.

"Gasoline prices are poised for another jolt this week, with many inland states, including the Plains, Great Lakes, and parts of the Rockies, likely to see sharp increases as last week's surge in wholesale costs has yet to be fully passed through to consumers," said Patrick De Haan, head of petroleum analysis at GasBuddy. "In addition, some price-cycling markets could also see another round of increases. As a result, the national average could rise by double digits, potentially reaching the \$4.20 to \$4.35 per gallon range in the days ahead. Diesel prices continue to climb as well and now sit just twenty-five cents away from setting a new all-time record. Recent escalations between the U.S. and Iran have further intensified concerns about prolonged disruptions to global oil flows, keeping markets on edge. At this point, the trajectory of fuel prices remains highly uncertain and is largely contingent on the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz, until that occurs, the risk of further increases remains firmly in place."

GasBuddy®, a PDI Technologies company, is North America's trusted fuel savings platform, helping consumers fuel up for less for over twenty-five years. With over 100 million app downloads, GasBuddy delivers real-time prices at 150,000+ stations and tangible savings through Pay with GasBuddy+™. It is the most authoritative source of station-level fuel pricing data, updating averages 288 times daily from the broadest mix of inputs - spotter reports, direct station integrations, and transactional data. GasBuddy data is accessible at <http://prices.GasBuddy.com>.

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