

Three Sentenced For Scheme To Steal Money From Tribal Members

United States Attorney Nicholas W. Chase announced that on June 16, 2026, Ranita Lynn Freeman, age 32, Minot, North Dakota (and a member of the MHA Nation), appeared in the United States District Court for the District of North Dakota and was sentenced before Judge Daniel L. Hovland to serve 42 months in federal prison, followed by three years of supervised release and ordered to pay \$51,500 in restitution, for the offenses of Wire Fraud and Aggravated Identity Theft.

Between 2020 and 2023, Freeman stole \$51,500 from two MHA Nation tribal members' Individual Indian Money (IIM) accounts. The Bureau of Trust Funds Administration (BTFA) manages the financial assets of American Indians held in trust by the Department of the Interior and an IIM account is an interest-bearing account managed by the BTFA on behalf of an individual who has money or other assets held in trust for them by the Federal government. Between August 2020 and January 2021, Freeman stole \$42,000 from one tribal member's IIM account and, again between January and April 2023, she stole \$9,500 from a second tribal member's IIM account. Throughout these two separate schemes, Freeman placed multiple calls to the BTFA, Fort Berthold Agency, where she fraudulently pretended to be these tribal members. During these calls, Freeman provided the BTFA with the names, dates of birth, and other identifying information of the tribal members to access, and obtain money from, their respective IIM accounts. Department of the Interior Office of Inspector General special agents identified Freeman as the caller when she called into the BTFA posing as one of these tribal members and they compared the caller's voice to Freeman's voice.

Additional Individuals Sentenced in a Separate BTFA IIM Fraud Scheme

Between November and December 2022, Wareagle Rollingthunder Martin and Samantha Lynn Rebold stole \$11,695.92 from an MHA Nation tribal members' IIM account. To accomplish this theft, Rebold took photographs of the tribal member's personal identifying information, including his social security card and tribal identification card. Thereafter, Rebold provided these photographs to co-defendant Martin who then called the BTFA, Fort Berthold Agency, pretended to be the MHA Nation tribal member and fraudulently requested that the BTFA send two monetary disbursements from this individual's IIM account (in the amounts of \$1,510.40 and \$10,185.52) to a bank account that he controlled. Thereafter, Martin and Rebold spent the money that they fraudulently obtained from this tribal member's IIM account. When Martin called the BTFA, he falsely used the MHA Nation tribal member's name, date of birth, social security number, and tribal identification number to obtain money from this IIM account.

Wareagle Rollingthunder Martin: Age: 39. From: Fargo, North Dakota. Sentenced on October 21, 2025, before Judge Daniel M. Traynor, to 24 months' imprisonment, 1 year of

supervised release, and payment of restitution of \$11,695.92 on a charge of Aggravated Identity Theft.

Samantha Lynn Rebold: Age: 38. From: Fargo, North Dakota. Sentenced on June 18, 2025, before Judge Daniel M. Traynor, to time served (7 days), three years of supervised release, and payment of restitution of \$11,695.92 on a charge of Wire Fraud.

"Fraud is especially sinister because it hurts victims in many ways", said US Attorney Nicholas W. Case. "As this case shows, when criminals steal money through fraud schemes, they often steal something even more personal, the identities of innocent people whose names, financial accounts, and personal information are exploited for criminal gain. Prosecuting fraud and identity theft offenses remains one of the highest priorities of this office because these crimes can cause lasting financial and emotional harm to victims. Today's sentence reflects our commitment to holding fraudsters accountable and protecting the public from those who seek to profit through deception and the misuse of others' personal information."

"These sentences should serve as a deterrent to those who seek to exploit vulnerable account holders by stealing funds that are intended to support thousands of Native Americans and their communities. These funds, held in trust, are vital to the many individuals who rely on them as their sole source of income," said Special Agent in Charge Jamie DePaepe. "We will continue working with the BTFA and our prosecutorial partners to protect account holders and hold those responsible fully accountable."

This case was investigated by the Department of the Interior - Office of Inspector General, and prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jonathan J. O'Konek, District of North Dakota.

On April 7, the Department of Justice announced the creation of the National Fraud Enforcement Division ("Fraud Division"). The Fraud Division is investigating and prosecuting those who commit fraud against the American people. The Department's work to combat fraud supports President Trump's Task Force to Eliminate Fraud, a whole-of-government effort chaired by Vice President J.D. Vance to eliminate fraud, waste, and abuse within Federal benefit programs.

VCSU Names Spring 2026 Honor Rolls

Valley City State University has released its President's Honor Roll, Dean's Honor Roll and Honor Roll for Spring 2026 semester. The President's Honor Roll recognizes students who completed twelve semester hours or more of VCSU classes for which grade points are earned with a 4.0 grade point average. The Dean's Honor Roll recognizes students who completed twelve semester hours or more of VCSU classes for which grade points are earned with an average grade point of at least 3.50.

The Honor Roll recognizes students who completed six to eleven semester hours of VCSU classes for which grade points are earned with a grade point average of at least 3.50.

Students from the area named to the President's Honor Roll: Larissa Tallmadge, New Town; Alyssa Haakenson, Parshall; and Logan Neset, Ross.

Students from the area named to the Dean's Honor Roll: Gretchen Deaver, Berthold.

Students from the area named to the Honor Roll: Sierra Overton, Casey Rasmussen, Jacinta Steinberger and Richard Thomas, all of Kenmare.

Fedorchak To Host Forum Ahead Of America 250

Congresswoman Julie Fedorchak (R-ND) will host her next Fedorchak Forum on Thursday, June 25 at 6:00 p.m. CT/ 5:00 p.m. MT. The forum will focus on America's upcoming 250th birthday, the principles that have guided our nation, and legislative ideas to strengthen our nation.

"As we approach America's 250th birthday, I'm looking forward to hearing from North Dakotans about their hopes for the future of our country and state. Our nation's success has always been rooted in freedom, personal responsibility, and strong communities. This

forum is an opportunity to discuss how we can strengthen those principles," Fedorchak said.

North Dakotans who want to participate in the conversation must sign up on Representative Fedorchak's website by noon CT on Thursday, June 25. Participants will receive a call from Minto, ND at the start of the event inviting them to participate. Those who miss the call can join by dialing 833-305-1701 and pressing star three (*3) to ask a question. For those who prefer to listen in, the forum will be broadcast on Fedorchak's website.

North Dakota Weekly Gas Price Update

Average gasoline prices in North Dakota have fallen 9.7 cent per gallon in the last week, averaging \$3.70/g Monday, according to GasBuddy's survey of 493 stations in North Dakota. Prices in North Dakota are 48.3 cents per gallon lower than a month ago and stand 77.7 cents per gallon higher than a year ago. The national average price of diesel has decreased 19.2 cents compared to a week ago and stands at \$4.990 per gallon.

According to GasBuddy price reports, least expensive station in North Dakota was priced at \$3.37/g Sunday while the most expensive was \$4.15/g, a difference of 78.0 cents per gallon.

The national average price of gasoline has fallen 14.1 cent per gallon in the last week, averaging \$3.85/g Monday. The national average is down 67.2 cents per gallon from a month ago and stands 67.3 cents per gallon higher than a year ago, according to GasBuddy data compiled from more than 11 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:

- June 22, 2025: \$2.93/g (U.S. Average: \$3.18/g)
- June 22, 2024: \$3.17/g (U.S. Average: \$3.43/g)
- June 22, 2023: \$3.42/g (U.S. Average: \$3.58/g)
- June 22, 2022: \$4.72/g (U.S. Average: \$4.95/g)
- June 22, 2021: \$2.89/g (U.S. Average: \$3.07/g)

Neighboring areas and their current gas prices: Sioux Falls- \$3.62/g, down 14.0 cents per gallon from last week's \$3.76/g, Fargo- \$3.50/g, down 13.8 cents per gallon from last week's \$3.64/g, South Dakota- \$3.78/g, down 14.3 cents per gallon from last week's \$3.92/g.

"Average gasoline prices declined in nearly every state over the last week, while all 50 states saw average diesel prices move lower," said Patrick De Haan, head of petroleum analysis at GasBuddy. "However, the outlook is far from settled. New uncertainty has emerged after Iran suggested the Strait of Hormuz was closed, along with fresh warnings that the U.S. could again strike Iran, developments that could push oil prices higher in the days ahead. Despite this, gasoline prices aren't yet at significant risk of a spike, as some vessels have continued to move through the Strait. Still, should the situation worsen or escalate further, motorists could see that risk change quickly."

GasBuddy®, a PDI Technologies company, is North America's trusted fuel savings platform, helping consumers fuel up for less for over 25 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.

Free K-12 School Meals Could Cost ND Up To \$134 Million

By Judith Ruiz-Branch, Prairie News Service

North Dakota lawmakers have finalized an official estimate for how much a ballot measure to provide free K-12 school meals would cost the state.

The Department of Public Instruction estimates the price at \$124 million to \$134 million every two years.

Amy Jacobson, executive director of the nonprofit Prairie Action North Dakota, said one critical component of the proposal requires the state to maximize federal reimbursement to supplement the program's funding, adding the measure allows lawmakers discretion on funding sources.

"It is something that is going to be funded by the state," Jacobson asserted. "But if there's ever a point in time where they find difficulty in doing that, we do direct them to use our state legacy fund, a pot of money that's meant to be there for the future of North Dakota, and we think if it ever needs to be tapped, this would be the perfect match."

Voters will consider the measure on the November ballot. If passed, public schools would be required to provide one free breakfast and one free lunch to all students, starting in the 2027-28 school year.

Critics argued the state should not have to pay for free meals for families who can afford them. They also worry if fewer families apply for traditional federal free and

reduced-price meal programs, the state could lose federal funding and face even higher costs.

Jacobson pointed out polling data consistently shows about 80 percent approval for universal school meals across diverse economic, political and ideological backgrounds.

"What we're talking about is a policy that is important, really almost universally, that really is unifying people and bringing people together," Jacobson explained.

Jacobson stressed the program would save North Dakota families an average of about \$1,000 per student each year.

Nine other states have adopted statewide policies to offer free breakfast and lunch to all public school students, including Minnesota.

Sons Of Liberty Expands Scholarship Opportunities In NW North Dakota

Sons of Liberty has expanded its scholarship program from Tioga, Stanley and Powers Lake to include Divide County, Burke Central and Bowbells. The scholarships, in the amount of either \$1000 or \$500, were recently awarded to area graduates who are attending vocational or trade programs this fall. Scholarships are awarded through each school's Dollars for Scholars program.

This is the second year scholarships have been offered and the members of Sons of Liberty would like to congratulate all recipients: Trevor Kreklau, Bowbells; Logan Heinrich and Nate Evenson, Burke Central; Stockton Nelson, Divide County; Italia Rodriguez, Stanley; Braden Bohjanen, Powers Lake; and Wyatt Rice, Tioga.

ND Newspapers work for YOU!
Community newspapers are the most TRUSTED SOURCE of information for North Dakotans.
NDNA
NORTH DAKOTA NEWS PAPER ASSOCIATION
NEWSPAPERS: Yesterday, Today, & Tomorrow

NDSCS Announces Spring 2026 President's Honor Roll

North Dakota State College of Science has recognized 595 students on its President's Honor Roll for the spring 2026 semester. This distinction is awarded to students who have earned a 3.5 grade point average or higher while completing twelve or more credits with traditional letter grades.

Congratulations to: Clay Fegley, Caterpillar Dealer Service, Berthold; Jenilyn Hanson, Precision Agronomy, McGregor; Emma Kinney, Dental Hygiene, Powers Lake; and Griffin Wilhelm, Diesel Technology, Stanley.

Stanley Commerical Club Meeting
Wednesday, July 1 at Noon
at Microtel Inn and Suites
901 Jarard St. SE, Stanley

Oil, Gas & Mineral Law
PRINGLE & HERIGSTAD, P.C.
SCOTT M. KNUDSVIG
ATTORNEY AT LAW
2525 ELK DRIVE
PO BOX 1000 · MINOT, ND 58702
Phone (701) 852-0381
1-800-735-4064
www.pringlelaw.net

Mountrail County Medical Center Clinic is starting to give the annual flu vaccine.
Everyone ages 6 months and older should get an annual flu vaccine. A flu vaccine is especially important if you have a chronic health condition such as heart disease or diabetes
Get Your Flu Shot
Please call today to get your annual flu vaccine - 701-628-2505.
The regular flu vaccine will be \$35 and High Dose will be \$90 at time of visit or billed to your insurance at the same rate.
We have the higher-dose flu vaccine specifically designed for ages 65 and older.
Mountrail County Health Center
Many Avenues - One Goal... Your Health

Palermo Bar & Grill will be closed Thursday, July 2 through Sunday, July 5
We will reopen on Monday, July 6 at 11 a.m.
Palermo Bar & Grill

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC DISCHARGE OF FIREWORKS
The discharge of fireworks is permitted in Stanley from Friday, June 26, 2026 through Sunday, July 5, 2026 between the hours of 9 a.m. and 12 midnight.
BY ORDER OF THE STANLEY CITY COUNCIL

PINNACLE AGRONOMY
Located Just South of the Pinnacle C-Store Travel Plaza
8147 Hwy 2, Stanley, ND
We carry a full line of Canola, Soybean, Corn, Sunflower, Wheat, and Pea seed as well as Seed Treatments and Inoculants, Fertilizer, Crop Protection Products, and Custom Application. Ask which options are best for your farm today!
Fall Seed & Fertilizer Bookings Happening NOW!
Contact Adam with any questions at 701-629-1210
Or Drew Larsen at 701-609-7509
Office Number 701-628-3277
We also carry Custom Livestock Feeds, Crystalx Brand Supplements, Famo Feeds Mineral, Hubbard Products, Total Feeds Products, Salt/Mineral Blocks, Fencing Supplies, Panels & Gates, and Twine for all your livestock needs!
Call or stop in today to learn more!

30% OFF Select Seasonal Items
Dakota Drug Co. of Stanley
107 S. Main St., Stanley

Gilbertson CPA LLC
✓ Income Tax
✓ Resolving IRS Issues, Back Taxes
✓ Bookkeeping & Payroll Services
✓ Financial Statements
✓ Business & Tax Planning
✓ Software Setup & Training-Quickbooks
✓ 40+ years Established CPA Firm
✓ Forensic Accounting Services
✓ New Clients Welcomed
✓ Member AICPA & ND Society of CPAs
✓ Offices in Stanley & Minot
✓ Personalized Service
Bruce Gilbertson, CPA
Stanley: 3 blocks north of Mountrail County Courthouse
Minot: 3500 N. Broadway, (Just north of Minot Intl Airport)
701-509-0339
www.gilbertsoncpa.com

SHS CHEER TEAM INVITES YOU TO JOIN US
FOURTH OF JULY PANCAKE BREAKFAST
FREE WILL DONATION
JULY 04 8:30-10:00
JOIN THE SHS CHEER TEAM FOR A FREEWILL DONATION PANCAKE BREAKFAST!
PRAIRIE FORD PARKING LOT
ALL PROCEEDS WILL GO TOWARDS CAMP FEES AND COMPETITION/TRAVEL EXPENSES