

## Along the way | Gust of gratitude

By Christine Jensen



Walking through the shadows of life's ever-changing tapestry, there is a gust of gratitude that envelops the saturating creation of time's transformations. In those moments of pause and dissection, we often become aware of our own resilience on the ladder of learning and the steps of strength.

It is a beautiful spring day outside as I write. There are blue skies, sunshine, and warmer temperatures in our area. Two small squirrels are busy scurrying along the branches of our majestic trees in the front yard. I watch them for a time, pausing for a moment from a busy week of appointments and responsibilities. I take in a couple of deep breaths, allowing myself to just breathe as I contemplate my thoughts and what to bring you in words this week.

Gratitude rushes in as I find myself flowing through the challenges that arise and at the same time, I am restless about the list of things I need to get done. We rush through life a lot I think, not stopping to enjoy the present moments

when we fully understand they are absolutely fleeting in terms of memory and movement. We don't stop to listen and find in those "coincidental" exchanges the truth and meaning of it all. We sort of hurry through the good moments when we should be stopping to enjoy them with all we have in us.

My very independent cat, Onyx, who rarely comes to me for attention as he is an alpha and spends a great deal of time doing his own thing, is currently lying between my arms as I type. For some reason, he has been sticking very close to me lately and has started developing the habit of lying down on my desk directly in front of my keyboard. He is fast asleep and purring with contentment. As the years pass, not only am I getting older, but my beloved animals are as well. I don't know why he has found comfort lately in my presence, but I know as I get older, I too have found comfort in the friendships and companionship developed through the good times and the difficult ones.

My beautiful mother had another chemo treatment this past week and it hit her pretty hard. She has been very tired and weak for a few days. A dear friend of ours, whom we have known for years and who tends to usually be the life of the party, came to sit with us during her treatment. He brought laughter and lightness to the moments and I was grateful he was there with us. We shared lunch prior to mom's treatment as well. Life gets so busy that we don't get to see some of our long-time friends very often, so it was good to spend a little time with him.

Not too long ago, we did a small revamp of one of the rooms in our home. We looked for reasonable flooring and paint. On the sliding wooden closet door, we put a large mural. On it is a beautiful, picturesque scene. On one side, there is the colorful shore, complete with large pine trees overlooking a small lake. In the background are towering mountains, with a few clouds gracing the peaks. In the center, there is a small stream flowing from the tips of the mountains, into a waterfall and eventually pouring into the lake. I gaze at it often. It reminds me that in life, there will always be mountains to climb and moments we must try to float through when things get overwhelming and we feel like we are drowning. But with every mountain we must climb and every river we have to swim through, staying above the surface as best we can, grace floats in when we least expect it to.

I have no doubt we have all had those moments when we are struggling through various things going on in our lives and in the world around us; days when it is hard to wake up and have faith through the difficult times in life. I try my best, when I open my eyes and the negative thoughts roll in like an angry storm, to flip the script and think about what I am thankful for. And yet, some days, I cannot help the constant bereavement that piles up. I had one of those days this past week. I didn't even leave my house that day. I had been to appointments for both mom and I for two days, and that day, I just needed to hermit for a time. But the

next day, I woke up ready to start the day and dive into the work I needed to do, which always seems to pepper hope into my existence.

Sunday evening, a dear friend of mine decided she was going to make an extra pan of lasagna for us to share with my mom. She messaged me and said she was also going to make extra garlic toast because you can't have lasagna without garlic toast. Her gesture was so thoughtful and we enjoyed a delicious meal because of her grace and generosity. Those little acts of kindness can absolutely make a person's day. I think we should share kindness like that wherever we go because there are so many people struggling lately through various circumstances and one simple act of kindness can absolutely make a difference.

Catherine DeVrye once wrote, "Like tiny seeds with potent power to push through tough ground and become mighty trees, we hold innate reserves of unimaginable strength. We are resilient."

As we come into the Easter holiday, I hope there will be moments of joy and togetherness as people gather. Sometimes along the way, the best medicine is spending time with the people we love and finding our strength in the bonds that sustain and nourish us. May we remember the reason for the holiday and the resilience we all carry with faith and focus on each precious present moment and on the beauty of the unity we share with each other and the world.

*"When we learn how to become resilient, we learn how to embrace the beautifully broad spectrum of the human experience." - Jaeda Dewalt*

## SENIOR MEALS MENU

**Friday, April 3**  
Egg Salad on WW Bun  
Tatertots  
Carrots  
Fruit

**Monday, April 6**  
Swiss Steak  
Baked Potato  
Buttered Beets  
Grapes

**Tuesday, April 7**  
Sloppy Joe on WW Bun  
Vegetable Soup  
Carrots  
Angel Food Cake w/  
Berries and Topping  
No extra bread

**Wednesday, April 8**  
Beef Stroganoff/Noodles  
Romaine Salad w/Dressing  
Mixed Vegetables  
Mandarin Oranges  
WW Bread

**Thursday, April 9**  
Chili w/Beans  
Baked Potato  
Carrots  
Pears  
Cornbread  
No extra bread

This is a menu for the Drayton Title III Older Americans Act Food Program. The full cost of the meal is \$13.00. Suggested donation for those 60 and older is \$4.00. EBT/SNAP accepted. Under 60 are required to pay \$10.00. Meal site is Sugar Bowl Senior Citizens.

**Call 701-454-6586 before 10:00 a.m. to place an order for congregate, pick up, or home-delivered meals.**

All meals served with whole wheat bread, margarine, and 1% milk.

## Echoes from the past | April 2- April 8

A look back at national, state and local history from this week in years past.

By Emily Carpenter, Pembina County Historical Society

### National history

April 2, 1513 - Spanish explorer Juan Ponce de Leon spotted land which he thought was an island, naming it "La Florida." He landed near present-day St. Augustine, Fla., and claimed it for Spain.

### Civil War history -

- April 7, 1862 - The Battle of Shiloh ended. It was a two-day battle that resulted in over 23,000 casualties.
- April 6, 1865 - Confederate President Jefferson Davis and his Cabinet fled Richmond, V.A., which was the capital of the Confederacy.
- April 7, 1865 - Union Troops occupy Richmond, V.A.
- April 9, 1865 - Confederate General Robert E. Lee formally surrendered to Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox Court House in Virginia.

April 2, 1917 - President Woodrow Wilson asked for a formal declaration of War against Germany. On April 6, Congress would formally declare war on Germany and the United States would enter World War I.

April 4, 1968 - Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated in Memphis, Tenn.

### State history

April 7, 1805 - Lewis and Clark continued on their westward journey after spending the winter at Fort Mandan, near present-day Washburn, on the banks of the Missouri River.

April 4, 1951 - Oil was discovered on a farm near Tioga, N.D. North Dakota would become the 27th state with this commodity, and this would be the first oil well in North Dakota, according to the State Historical Society.

April 4-7, 1997- Blizzard of the Millennium, also known as Blizzard Hannah. President Bill Clinton would issue a Major Presidential Disaster Declaration due to the impact of the storm. This storm would cause massive power outages, damage to electrical systems and would greatly impact flooding in the Red River Valley. Ask anyone where they were during this blizzard and they can probably tell you exactly where they hunkered down and how they helped in the ensuing flood fight.

### Local history

April 3, 1885 - A notice in the "Pioneer Express" asked for sealed bids by April 15, 1885, for material to build and paint a schoolhouse in District number 1, Drayton Township, by July 1, 1885. Plans could be viewed at H.L. Crandell's residence in Drayton.

April 3, 1908 - The following two tidbits can be found in the "Pioneer Express". The first is that the stage between Hamilton and Drayton did not miss a trip all winter and the second is that a gentleman from Minnesota has decided to open a drug store in Drayton.

April 3, 1914 - O.C. Olson of Drayton announced his candidacy for the Office of Treasurer of Pembina County on the Republican Ticket in the "Pioneer Express" out of Pembina. In the same issue, it is made known that O.C. Olson is active in Drayton, his hometown and has a large circle of acquaintances county-wide and should make the race interesting for his opponents, whomever they may end up being.



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