



# Lakota American

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## Two Nelson County 4-H'ers attend National 4-H Congress

National 4-H Congress was held November 28 through December 2 in Atlanta, Ga. Attending this year from Nelson County were Lily Donohue of Tolna and Laura Steffan of Michigan. Lily and Laura were selected to attend through an application process.

National 4-H Congress is for 4-H members between 14 and 19 years. The congress is a premiere, global-focused event filled with opportunities to make 4-H friends from around the country, explore Atlanta, give back through community service, attend powerful workshops and tours, and to head home to have impacts on one's community, country and world.

Lily stated, "Representing North Dakota at the National 4-H Congress was a wonderful opportunity. Throughout the conference, I was able to meet 4-H'ers from across the country, make friends and learn about 4-H in their states. I was also able to participate in fun workshops, and I learned how to use my ex-



perience in 4-H to serve others and improve my community. Overall, the 4-H Congress was a wonderful experience that allowed me to meet other 4-H'ers, make memories, and expand my knowledge of 4-H, other cultures and leadership."

Laura stated, "National 4-H Congress was full of experiences and life lessons from speakers,

workshops and fellow delegates from across the country. It was truly a once-in-a-lifetime experience . . . I recommend to any 4-H'ers to take advantage to learn about 4-H around the nation!"

Other delegates from North Dakota were from Ramsey and Adams counties. They were chaperoned by Becky Peterson of Mandan.

## Fundraiser for RWM cabin updates

Sundahl Lutheran Church of Aneta plans to satisfy your appetite for great dining and music with a Valentine's Day fundraiser for cabin updates at Red Willow Ministries (RWM). Sundahl sponsors "Esther," one of the cabins in need of insulation and a mini-split (ductless HVAC unit). These updates will create a warm, welcoming space for year-round Bible camp programming and user group rentals. Installation of one mini-split will cost \$4,100 per cabin. Thrivent Action Team funds are helping the church reach its goal. To give an individual donation for cabin mini-splits, send it to RWM, 1651 Jacob Dr., Binford, ND, 58416.

Sundahl's Valentine's Day Meal and Music will have something for everyone. The theme for the night is "Wear Love," which happens to be the theme for 2026 RWM summer camp program.

There will be spaces for gathering and sharing photo opportunities. At 5 p.m., seating with dinner salad leads into a savory, comforting meal of chicken breast with marsala sauce, twice-baked potato, and glazed carrots prepared by Chef Isan Adjari. Rolls, beverage and dessert are included for a unique dining experience. The spirit of community and fellowship will continue with young guitarist and vocalist Herlof Huso performing a variety of favorite tunes.

Organizer Joan Huso reminds the community, "Your support will make a lasting impression for RWM, celebrating their 100th anniversary in August 2026!"

Sundahl is planning for 60 guests, but please contact Joan at 701-371-0303 with RSVP before February 1 to confirm a place at the table. Later reservations will still be honored if room allows.

## Hoeven joins community celebration for acquisition of Devils Lake Hospital

On Monday, Jan. 19 Senator John Hoeven joined officials from Altru Health System and CommonSpirit Health for a community celebration to mark the acquisition of Devils Lake Hospital. Hoeven recognized Devils Lake Mayor Jim Moe, Altru CEO Todd Forkel and President Dr. Josh Deere, CommonSpirit Health Central Region President Tim Bricker, health care professionals and community members from the region for their work to advance this multi-year effort.

The agreement was approved by Pope Leo XIV, the first American Pope, in December and the final transition of ownership will occur on March 1, 2026.

"The acquisition of Devils Lake Hospital is a pivotal milestone in our efforts to bring the best possible health care to the Lake Region. I appreciate the hard work of Mayor Moe and the teams at Altru and CommonSpirit Health to advance this agreement, as well as all of the community members who provided feedback and input as we worked to identify the right solution," said Senator Hoeven.

Specifically, this effort sought to:

-- Identify and advance a community-led solution to address local concerns about health care access.

Hoeven arranged three community meetings across 2023 and 2024 with local residents, regional leaders and health care providers to gather feedback and address community concerns.

-- Secure commitments from CommonSpirit Health to make improvements to the hospital and work towards a long-term solution that benefits the entire region.

After the first community meeting, Hoeven met with CommonSpirit Health CEO Wright Lassiter III in Washington,



Senator John Hoeven joined area officials for a celebration on Monday, Jan. 19 at the Devils Lake Hospital.

D.C. to advance these priorities. CommonSpirit subsequently undertook a \$10 million renovation of the hospital's emergency department.

-- Bring a unified health care system to the Lake Region and ensure access to the best possible health care for local residents.

Hoeven worked to advance the acquisition agreement between Altru and CommonSpirit Health to the benefit of both patients and health care providers.

The timing of this acquisition is fitting, as North Dakota has just started moving on its plan to transform rural health care across our state. We've set a goal of securing \$1 billion for this initiative, and we're off to a strong start, having secured \$200 million in the first year.

Upgrading Critical Access Hospitals like Devils Lake Hospital is a central part of these efforts and one of the reasons our state has a head start, and I believe

that we can bring state-of-the-art health care to this region, just as we've done for communities like Rugby, Grafton, Hazen and Cando," said Senator Hoeven.

The efforts to improve health care in the Lake Region align with Hoeven's broader work to advance North Dakota's Rural Health Transformation Program. Earlier this month, Hoeven, along with Governor Armstrong, set a goal to secure \$1 billion of federal funding for this initiative. North Dakota has a head start in this competitive program due to its:

-- Statewide fiber optic infrastructure, which Hoeven has worked to advance both as governor and now as U.S. Senator, including through initiatives like the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) ReConnect Program.

-- Network of new, state-of-the-art Critical Access Hospitals (CAHs).

Hoeven worked through his role as Senate Agriculture Appropriations Committee chairman to advance USDA loans and grants, which along with CAH reimbursement, helped make the new facilities a reality. Hoeven believes a similar model could be used to bring additional improvements to the health care facility in Devils Lake.

-- Ability to leverage both telehealth and the CAHs to recruit and retain health care professionals and provide access to a comprehensive continuum of care.

That means patients have access to a full range of health care services through hospitals, nursing homes and home care that best meet their needs and individual situation.

## Lakota Cloverleaves 4-H Club news

BY MARGARET ESTVOLD

4-H Club Leader

On Jan. 11, 2026, Siena called the Lakota Cloverleaves 4-H Club meeting to order. Pledges were said. Roll call was: What is your favorite thing to do in the snow? Secretary and treasurer reports were given.

Old Business: No club members participated in the Nelson County 4-H project December 30. Laura Steffan helped members with the projects.

New Business: Please save vegetable-size metal cans for a project in February. Our next meeting will be February 8 at 2 p.m. The meeting was adjourned.

Gracie Schneider did a demonstration on "making a penguin on skis out of table napkins." We made stick ponies out of mops as our project. We finished the day with some tasty snacks.



Members working on their mop stick ponies.



Members with their mop stick ponies.