

## Dakota Gardener: Only constant is change (and powdery mildew)

BY EMILY HOW  
Horticulture agent,  
NDSU Extension,  
Ward County

While cleaning out a cabinet at my house, I stumbled across an old newspaper from the 1990s. I love finding things like this because it shows a glimpse of what was happening in the community at the time. As I paged through this paper, I found a Horticulture column written by Ronald Smith, a former NDSU horticulturist. Seeing the contrast between then and now is one of the most interesting things about looking back at those old columns.

In the early 1990s, a submitted question like "I sent you this leaf with weird dots -- what is it?" would be a one-on-one diagnostic. The value lives entirely with the person who mailed in the leaf. Without a photo archive, searchable database or instant image sharing, that exchange could not easily help anyone else who was facing similar problems. Today, that same interaction would look completely different. A single photo could be shared online, tagged and reused by thousands of gardeners dealing with identical symptoms. What used to be a private answer has become a public, reusable reference.

By contrast, questions like "How do I get rid of creeping jenny in my tree row?" have aged much better. The question describes a recurring problem rather than a single mystery leaf. The answer depends on things that still matter now -- the tree species, the age of the planting, soil disturbance, herbicide tolerance, mulch, mowing and how much labor someone can invest. Those kinds of questions do not go stale because they're really about management decisions, not just identification.

All of this led me down a rabbit trail, wondering what other kinds of horticulture questions were published in the past and what advice was given. The way we seek answers has changed, and we see that gardening practices have also changed.

## Nelson, Griggs tobacco retailers are in compliance

Nelson and Griggs counties had a 100% pass rate during a recent Synar Survey inspection conducted by the ND Department of Health and Human Services.

The purpose of the Synar Survey is to randomly survey licensed tobacco retailers across North Dakota to check compliance with laws that prohibit the sale of tobacco products to minors. The Synar Survey is a federal requirement conducted in all 50 states for the past 29 years.

Last summer, youth surveyors conducted compliance checks across the state. North Dakota's overall violation rate was 8.6%. Last year, North Dakota's violation rate was 14.4%. States that have a violation rate of 20% or greater risk losing



Treatment for powdery mildew is the same as it has been for decades. (Pixabay photo)

over time. New research and technologies change the advice offered. This can include something as basic as innovations in water practices, like drip irrigation, or something more complex, like soil sciences and no-till practices.

While meandering down the rabbit trail, I also discovered that some changes come out of pure necessity. In the '90s, green ash was a recommended tree variety in North Dakota as an excellent replacement tree for the elm trees plagued by Dutch elm disease. Today, neither of these trees is recommended because they're linked to the spread of a serious disease and invasive insects, respectively.

Practices also change due to new varieties being introduced into the market. Tomato varieties, for instance, change frequently. Advancements in disease research have led to more resistance, so varieties like the Big Beef Plus tomato is resistant to 10 different diseases, whereas the popular '90s tomato variety Fantastic is only resistant to three diseases. With these advancements, gardeners will often have better yields, fewer diseases and hopefully less need for pesticides, which is an all-around win, saving gardeners both time and money.

Some things never change, though. Take powdery mildew, for example. It is handled in the same way now as it was in the '90s. Also, the likelihood of someone over- or under-watering a houseplant is the same now as it was back then. Most (and best) of all, the connections we make with others through gardening remain constant.

A portion of their Substance Abuse Prevention and Control grant funding.

Of the 13 tobacco retailers in both counties, six were randomly picked and surveyed. The six tobacco retailers that were inspected and passed were: Miller's Fresh Foods in Cooperstown, Northern Plains Petroleum in Hannaford, Farmers Union Oil in Lakota, Farmers Union Oil in McVille, Michigan Hometown Foods in Michigan and Hamster Oil in Michigan.

Nelson-Griggs District Health Unit congratulated these businesses for passing the survey and keeping tobacco out of the hands of youth.

For more information, visit <https://www.hhs.nd.gov/events/public-notice-ffy-2026-annual-synar-report>.

## Weather report

### MICHIGAN

Reports from the NDSU ND Agricultural Weather Network station at Michigan for the 24-hour period each day.

Date	High	Low	Rain
Jan. 19	-1	-14	
Jan. 20	9	-12	
Jan. 21	14	-2	.04
Jan. 22	-2	-25	
Jan. 23	-14	-26	
Jan. 24	-2	-18	.01
Jan. 25	-11	-29	

## Weather report

### PEKIN

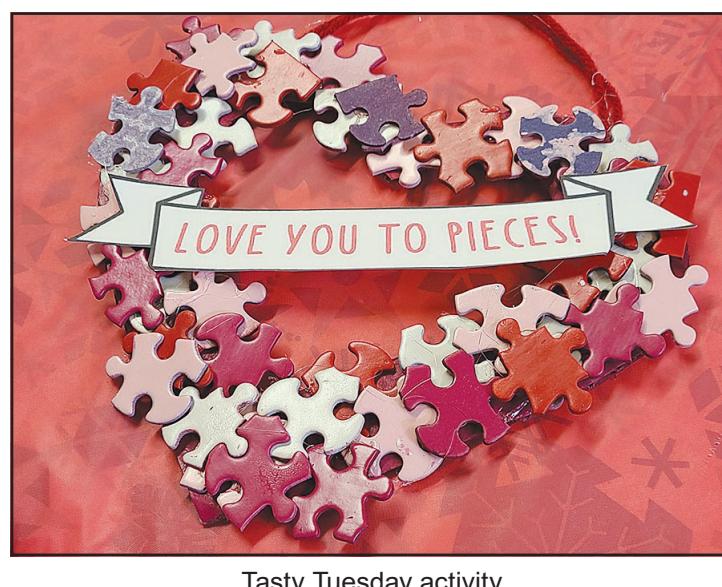
Reports from the NDSU ND Agricultural Weather Network station at Pekin for the 24-hour period each day.

Date	High	Low	Rain
Jan. 19	1	-12	
Jan. 20	10	-11	
Jan. 21	17	0	.03
Jan. 22	0	-23	
Jan. 23	-13	-24	
Jan. 24	-1	-17	
Jan. 25	-11	-25	

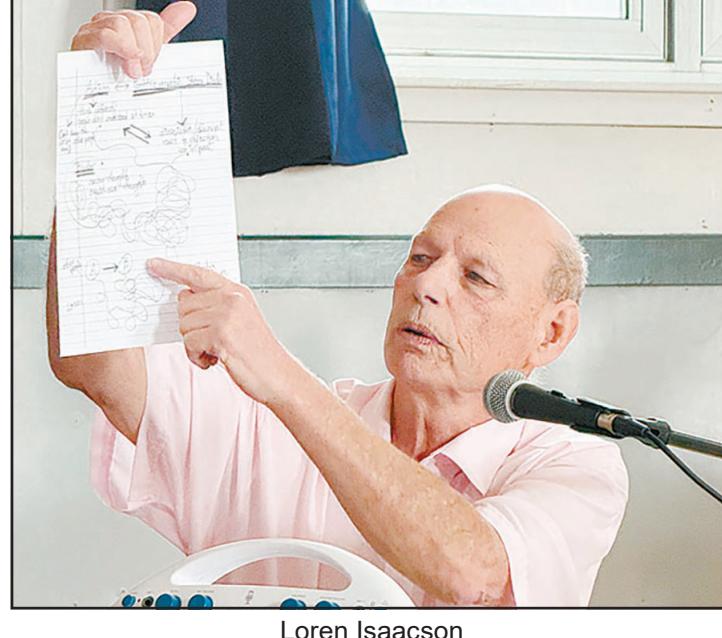
## McVille Community Library

Hours: T-F 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.; Sat. 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

701-322-5541



Tasty Tuesday activity



Loren Isaacson



BY RITA LOIBL

"Love You to Pieces" was the Valentine activity Mary Gleason shared with us at Tasty Tuesday. On a cold winter day we gathered around the "big" table in the library to create our own jigsaw puzzle hearts (pictured with this article). We were warm and cozy as we enjoyed munching on cream puff treats, socializing, and creating the festive Valentine. The next Tasty Tuesday will be on February 17, hosted by Marilyn Dehne. Please join us. It is a great way to chase away the winter "blahs."

The McVille Community Library hosted another in its series of Community Library Enrichment Programs which allow us to bring interesting and informative presentations to our patrons. On Saturday, Jan. 24, Loren Isaacson shared life through his eyes while dealing with autism, PTSD and brain injury, and some associated conditions such as flashbacks, dissociation and confusion. His positive attitude toward life in spite of his disabilities is remarkable. He said, "I declare my life to be essentially a good one. However, the mental illness throughout created a mystery that took me years to discover. In the throes of mental anguish, grief, abandonment and depression, I finally felt the pangs of a new personality as a saving touch to my life." Isaacson's memoir, *Will He Survive*, describes life as he lives it and is told with both humor and tragedy. Isaacson encourages us to read by saying, "Take the dip and experience the trek into a life with the unknown and the unpredictable." The library is truly happy that Loren Isaacson shared his life experiences and donated the royalties from the sale of his books to the library to help them continue the enrichment program. The library also acknowledges the public who came from their cozy homes out into the cold to hear this enlightening presentation.

### What's next

Kids' Reading Roundup: Saturday, Feb. 14, library (1 to 2:30 p.m.)

Tasty Tuesday: February 17 during library hours (10 a.m. to 2 p.m.) ,Marilyn serving

### New releases!

*The Quiet Librarian* by Allen Eskens (adult historical fiction)

*Family of Spies* by Christine Kuehn (adult nonfiction)

*Don't Trust Fish* by Neil Sharpson (children's fiction)

### New to the library

*The Memory Box* by Kathryn Hughes (adult historical fiction)

*Night Road: A Novel* by Kristin Hannah (adult fiction)

*Heidi* by Johanna Spyri (juvenile fiction)

*All the Living and the Dead* by Hayley Campbell (adult nonfiction)

*Great Short Books* by Kenneth C. Davis (adult nonfiction)

*Inciting Joy* by Ross Gay (adult nonfiction)

What's next

Kids' Reading Roundup: Saturday, Feb. 14, library (1 to 2:30 p.m.)

Tasty Tuesday: February 17 during library hours (10 a.m. to 2 p.m.) ,Marilyn serving

### New releases!

*The Quiet Librarian* by Allen Eskens (adult historical fiction)

*Family of Spies* by Christine Kuehn (adult nonfiction)

*Don't Trust Fish* by Neil Sharpson (children's fiction)

### New to the library

*The Memory Box* by Kathryn Hughes (adult historical fiction)

*Night Road: A Novel* by Kristin Hannah (adult fiction)

*Heidi* by Johanna Spyri (juvenile fiction)

*All the Living and the Dead* by Hayley Campbell (adult nonfiction)

*Great Short Books* by Kenneth C. Davis (adult nonfiction)

*Inciting Joy* by Ross Gay (adult nonfiction)

What's next

Kids' Reading Roundup: Saturday, Feb. 14, library (1 to 2:30 p.m.)

Tasty Tuesday: February 17 during library hours (10 a.m. to 2 p.m.) ,Marilyn serving

### New releases!

*The Quiet Librarian* by Allen Eskens (adult historical fiction)

*Family of Spies* by Christine Kuehn (adult nonfiction)

*Don't Trust Fish* by Neil Sharpson (children's fiction)

### New to the library

*The Memory Box* by Kathryn Hughes (adult historical fiction)

*Night Road: A Novel* by Kristin Hannah (adult fiction)

*Heidi* by Johanna Spyri (juvenile fiction)

*All the Living and the Dead* by Hayley Campbell (adult nonfiction)

*Great Short Books* by Kenneth C. Davis (adult nonfiction)

*Inciting Joy* by Ross Gay (adult nonfiction)

What's next

Kids' Reading Roundup: Saturday, Feb. 14, library (1 to 2:30 p.m.)

Tasty Tuesday: February 17 during library hours (10 a.m. to 2 p.m.) ,Marilyn serving

### New releases!

*The Quiet Librarian* by Allen Eskens (adult historical fiction)

*Family of Spies* by Christine Kuehn (adult nonfiction)

*Don't Trust Fish* by Neil Sharpson (children's fiction)

### New to the library

*The Memory Box* by Kathryn Hughes (adult historical fiction)

*Night Road: A Novel* by Kristin Hannah (adult fiction)

*Heidi* by Johanna Spyri (juvenile fiction)

*All the Living and the Dead* by Hayley Campbell (adult nonfiction)

*Great Short Books* by Kenneth C. Davis (adult nonfiction)

*Inciting Joy* by Ross Gay (adult nonfiction)

What's next

Kids' Reading Roundup: Saturday, Feb. 14, library (1 to 2:30 p.m.)

Tasty Tuesday: February 17 during library hours (10 a.m. to 2 p.m.) ,Marilyn serving

### New releases!

*The Quiet Librarian* by Allen Eskens (adult historical fiction)

*Family of Spies* by Christine Kuehn (adult nonfiction)

*Don't Trust Fish* by Neil Sharpson (children's fiction)

### New to the library

*The Memory Box* by Kathryn Hughes (adult historical fiction)

*Night Road: A Novel* by Kristin Hannah (adult fiction)

*Heidi* by Johanna Spyri (juvenile fiction)

*All the Living and the Dead* by Hayley Campbell (adult nonfiction)

*Great Short Books* by Kenneth C. Davis (adult nonfiction)

*Inciting Joy* by Ross Gay (adult nonfiction)

What's next

Kids' Reading Roundup: Saturday, Feb. 14, library (1 to 2:30 p.m.)

Tasty Tuesday: February 17 during library hours (10 a.m. to 2 p.m.) ,Marilyn serving

### New releases!

*The Quiet Librarian* by Allen Eskens (adult historical fiction)

*Family of Spies* by Christine Kuehn (adult nonfiction)

*Don't Trust Fish* by Neil Sharpson (children's fiction)

### New to the library

*The Memory Box* by Kathryn Hughes (adult historical fiction)

*Night Road: A Novel* by Kristin Hannah (adult fiction)

*Heidi* by Johanna Spyri (juvenile fiction)

*All the Living and the Dead* by Hayley Campbell (adult nonfiction)

*Great Short Books* by Kenneth C. Davis (adult nonfiction)