



Vegetables can be integrated into flower gardens. (NDSU photo)

Dakota Gardener: Victory gardens are trending

BY ESTHER E. MCGINNIS
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Three people contacted me over the last two weeks and inquired about victory gardens. At my age I am not very trendy, but this wartime concept seems to be gaining traction in 2026.

Victory gardens originated during World War I to encourage homeowners, schoolchildren and others to grow fresh food in backyard gardens, containers and other small plots. The purpose of these gardens was to offset domestic produce shortages as the United States shipped food to allied troops and countries. The concept was revived during World War II and, more recently, during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Victory gardens are trending on social media for several reasons. An NDSU Extension Master Gardener explained that she wanted to plant a victory garden to commemorate the 250th anniversary of our nation's founding. In keeping with this historical celebration, heirloom seeds can be a relevant and fun choice. Online seed vendors sell vegetable varieties that were grown in George Washington's and Thomas Jefferson's gardens.

With high fuel costs and rising prices squeezing budgets, many people plan to plant a victory garden to save money. Growing fresh vegetables at home can reduce grocery costs and be very satisfying for those seeking greater self-reliance. Potatoes, winter squash, onions, carrots and beets are nutritious, high-yield choices that can be

stored to provide food beyond the growing season.

You don't need a large yard to plant a victory garden. Ornamental gardeners can integrate perennial vegetable crops such as asparagus and rhubarb into existing flower gardens. The delicate asparagus foliage could provide an interesting backdrop for flowers. Similarly, red-stemmed rhubarb can add color to a flower garden. I have been known to tuck radishes, Swiss chard, carrots and beets in between rows of flowers.

Apartment dwellers, do not despair! Tomatoes, bell peppers, basil, parsley and cilantro can be grown on sunny apartment balconies. Most vegetables need six or more hours of direct sunlight. For areas that receive less sunlight, consider growing leafy greens such as lettuce and spinach that thrive with three to five hours of sunlight. Leafy greens grow best in spring and fall.

Victory gardens can be planted to benefit those who are less fortunate. Plant an extra row or container of vegetables to donate to local food pantries. Food pantries expect increased demand this year due to economic conditions. Before donating, check to see if your local food pantries accept fresh produce. Not all food pantries have enough refrigeration space to accept and store produce donations. If donating produce, keep food safety principles in mind. Wash your hands before harvesting and use clean bags or containers to transport items to the food pantry. Also, exclude animals from the garden.

Two injured in crash near Pekin

A rollover crash near Pekin the afternoon of April 25 resulted in serious injuries to two Linton residents.

According to a report by the ND Highway Patrol, a Chevrolet Suburban driven by 44-year-old Meagan Wirkus was traveling northbound on Highway 1 at mile marker 140.5. The Chevrolet left the roadway and overturned. The driver was transported by ambulance to

Grand Forks for suspected serious injuries. The passenger, 48-year-old Josh Steen, was also transported by ambulance for suspected minor injuries.

This crash remains under investigation by the ND State Patrol. Other agencies involved were the Nelson County Sheriff's Office, McVillage Fire Department, Pekin Fire Department and Lakota Ambulance Service.

McVillage Community Library

Hours: T-F 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.; Sat. 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
701-322-5541

BY RITA LOIBL

Libraries are magic! Last week was National Library Week (April 19-25). It is a time to celebrate the joy and value libraries bring to a community, and WOW did our patrons help us celebrate! A record 35 people came to the library on Tasty Tuesday to socialize and enjoy a sweet treat. Tasty Tuesday is held each month on the third Tuesday. The next one will be held on May 19. Picnic in the Park will take the place of Tasty Tuesday beginning Monday, June 1. Mark your calendars.

And the fun continues. The American Library Association has named May as "Get Caught Reading Month!" The library association has set aside this special month to remind us of the pleasure of flipping through a good book's pages. Reading is a fantastic way to entertain ourselves, improve our memory and make us a world traveler through the written word, so stop in and peruse the selection. We are sure you will find something to check out to begin/continue your reading journey. Let's celebrate the month.

Once again, our community has been very generous to the library with memorials. Mary Wall and Peggy Ruud gave in memory of Marian Hendrickson, and Don and JoAnn Stein donated in memory of Joan Bakke and Tam Czarnik. We welcome these donations that allow us to update and add to our collections.

New releases!

Hope Rises (Walter Nash #2) by David Baldacci (fiction)
Reasonable Suspicion: A Legal Thriller (Sam Johnstone #8) by James Chandler (fiction)

New to the library:

Body of Evidence: A Scarpetta Novel by Patricia Cornwell (adult fiction)

First Family (King and Maxwell #4) by David Baldacci (fiction)

Cruel Intent (Ali Reynolds #4) by J. A. Vance (fiction)

The Terror by Dan Simmons (adult fiction)

Unlucky 13 (Women's Murder Club #13) by James Patterson (adult fiction)

Garden of Beasts: A Novel of Berlin 1936 by Jeffery Deaver (adult fiction)

Bones (Alex Delaware #23) by Jonathan Kellerman (adult fiction)

The Murder House by James Patterson and David Ellis (adult fiction)

Mac Undercover (Mac B, Kid Spy #1) by Mac Barnett (junior fiction)

Captain Underpants and the Retaliation of the Turbo Toilet 2000 (Book #11) by Dav Pilkey (junior fiction)

Captain Underpants and the Sensational Saga of Sir Stinks-a-Lot (Book 12) by Dav Pilkey (junior fiction)

Diary of an Awesome Friendly Kid: Rowley Jefferson's Journal by Jeff Kinney

Ballot measure guide being sent to ND voters

The ND Office of the Secretary of State will be mailing out a pamphlet with information regarding statewide Measure #1, which will appear on the June 9, 2026 primary election ballot. The ballot measure guide will be mailed to the households of 450,000 active North Dakota voters. An active voter is a person who has voted in a North Dakota election in the last four years.

The ballot measure guide will also be posted at all voting locations and on the ND Secretary of State website. It can be viewed or downloaded at www.sos.nd.gov/sites/default/files/documents/elections/2026-primary-measure-guide.pdf.

The new ballot measure guide was mandated by the ND Legislature in 2025 as a result of the passage of Senate Bill 2230, which instructs the Office of the Secretary of State to create and mail out information regarding statewide ballot questions 45 days prior to a statewide election. This guide includes:

- An objective summary of

the measure

- The anticipated fiscal impact of the measure

• Whether the measure was approved by the Legislature or originated as an initiated or referred petition

- An objective analysis of a vote in favor and a vote opposed

"The next election is always the most important election. Our office is a resource for voters seeking a sample ballot, polling location information, and information about the security, accuracy and timeliness of North Dakota's election process," ND Secretary of State Michael Howe said. "The new ballot measure guide provides a way for voters to learn more about what will be on their ballot during this June's primary election."

The ND Office of the Secretary of State will also provide a ballot measure guide before the November 3, 2026 general election. For more election information, Secretary Howe encourages all North Dakotans to visit www.nd.gov ahead of each election.

Apply for Lakota Community Foundation scholarships

Lakota Community Foundation Scholarship Fund application forms are currently available for the upcoming 2026-27 academic year. The scholarship application can be downloaded from the Lakota Public Schools website: www.lakota.k12.nd.us/page/scholarships-opportunities. Applications are also available at the State Bank of Lakota.

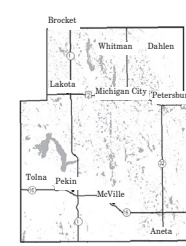
The deadline date for submission of a completed scholarship application is Friday, May 29, 2026. The submitted application

must be postmarked on or before May 29, 2026 to meet eligibility requirements.

The Lakota Scholarship Fund is part of the Lakota Community Foundation and is a local volunteer-operated scholarship program organized to provide financial aid for Lakota High School graduates who choose to further their education. These scholarships are made possible by the generosity of the community. For questions regarding our scholarships or organization, please inquire at the high school or call Lori Anderson at 247-2446.

Enterprise Finnish Cemetery donations

Memorials and donations are always welcome to assist with the upkeep of the Enterprise Finnish Cemetery. They may be sent to Candy Hess, PO Box 24, Lakota, ND 58344.



The Nelson County Calendar of Events

- May 1-2: St. Mary's Annual Rummage Sale, Lakota
- May 2: Lakota Citywide Rummage Sales
- May 2: NCHS Denim and Diamonds Gala, Lakota Community Center, 5 p.m.
- May 19: Tasty Tuesday, McVillage Community Library
- June 27: Lakota Turkey BBQ

Brought to you by the State Bank of Lakota



Lakota recognized as Tree City USA for 2025

The Arbor Day Foundation has named Lakota a 2025 Tree City USA in honor of the city's commitment to plant, grow and maintain trees to benefit its community.

The Arbor Day Foundation is a global nonprofit with a mission to inspire people to plant, nurture and celebrate trees. Its network of more than a million supporters and partners has helped the organization plant more than 500 million trees in forests and communities across more than 60 countries. The foundation's Tree City USA program is now celebrating its 50th recognition season. The anniversary underscores the program's history of growing healthier, greener and more resilient communities through urban forestry.

"For five decades, Tree City USA has rallied passionate local leaders to enhance the livability and sustainability of their communities. Tree champions like Lakota are leading the way in a growing movement to shape a better future with trees and action," said Michelle Saulnier, vice president of programs at the Arbor Day Foundation.

"Trees are critical infrastructure, building resiliency and fostering good health in our nation's cities. We're proud Lakota is among the Arbor Day Foundation's growing network of communities dedicated to creating positive impact through trees."

In cities and neighborhoods, trees are proven to help mitigate the urban heat island effect, reduce storm water runoff, improve air quality, and boost mental and physical health. When the right trees are planted in the right places, they can also reduce traffic noise, increase property values and lower energy costs for homeowners.

To earn Tree City USA recognition, a city must uphold four core standards including maintaining a tree board or department, having a community tree ordinance, spending at least \$2 per capita on urban forestry, and participating in an Arbor Day celebration.

The Arbor Day Foundation's Tree City USA program is operated in partnership with the National Association of State Foresters and the USDA Forest Service. To learn more about the program or how to apply, visit arborday.org.

Tribal liaison and rural health care advisor join HHS program

North Dakota Health and Human Services (HHS) announced Monday, April 27 that Vincent Roehr and Douglas A. McMillan have joined the agency to help guide the Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP). This program is a five-year statewide investment to strengthen rural health care and help make North Dakota the healthiest state in the nation.

"We are building a high-impact team to transform health and wellness throughout North Dakota. These leaders bring the vision, expertise and commitment needed to strategically improve rural health care," said HHS Commissioner Pat Traynor. "Their depth of experience and passion for serving tribal and rural communities will help us drive meaningful, lasting change across the state."

As tribal liaison for the RHTP, Roehr will help ensure tribal perspectives, priorities and sovereignty are meaningfully integrated into the program, helping advance rural health care in tribal communities. He will help tribal nations successfully access multiple funding opportunities available through RHTP over the next five years.

Roehr has spent many years serving tribal communities through nonprofit leadership, higher education and state-level appointments.

Before joining HHS, Roehr served tribal communities in the private nonprofit sector with the Casey Family Foundation. As an enrolled citizen of the Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara Nation, he served his community as the executive director of the Child Safety Center for Chairman Fox of MHA Nation and taught social work classes as an adjunct professor at Nueta, Hidatsa, Sahnish College. He also served as a board director with the Mountrail McKenzie Human Service Zone and was appointed by Gov. Doug Burgum to the Children's Cabinet as the tribal nations representative.

Also joining the team is McMillan, a seasoned health care executive known for leading rural hospital systems and driving organizational transformation. As a RHTP advisor, McMillan will lead efforts serving North Dakota rural health care facilities assessing their current operations and building effective pathways from "survivability to thrive-ability."

With McMillan's experience he will work with rural critical access hospitals to improve fiscal operations, workforce recruitment, retention and improve use of technology and health outcomes for North Dakota residents.

McMillan has more than 40 years of leadership experience in health care administration, focusing on physician recruitment, financial stability, operational excellence and patient-centered care.

For more than 28 years, McMillan served as chief executive officer of Cody, Wyoming Regional Health, a rural health system with more than 145 beds and annual revenues exceeding \$100 million. Under his leadership, the organization saw substantial revenue growth, expanded service offerings and major capital projects.

As a transformational and people-first leader, McMillan emphasizes lean process improvements, governance relations, physician recruitment and workforce engagement. McMillan received his master's in health care administration through the University of Colorado.

He received the American Hospital Association Rural Healthcare Leadership Team Award, a testament to his ability to transform hospitals into high performing organizations.

"We are excited to have both Vincent and Douglas join our team. Both will help tribal and rural health organizations successfully access multiple funding opportunities available within the RHTP," Traynor said.

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