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photo | Jill M. Friesz

MEMBERS OF THE CLASS OF 1976 COLLETTE (STECKLER) WIEDMANN AND NANCY (STECKLER) SCOTT WORE THEIR CLASS COLORS WITH PRIDE IN THE PARADE as they gathered with several other classmates to celebrate their 50th Class Reunion over the weekend. More Celebration photos on pages 6-7.

June 16 election addresses ambulance service

By Luann Dart

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Following community meetings across Grant County, the Western Grant Ambulance District now awaits a special election to map the future of the local ambulance service.

The district is seeking voter support for a mill levy increase and the annexation of the remainder of the ambulance service area into the taxation district.

The special election will be held from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. MT Tuesday, June 16, for any qualified elector residing in the existing and proposed territory. The polling location is the New Leipzig EMS Building, located at 18 First St. SE, New Leipzig. The election is being held in New Leipzig as the official headquarters of the district.

As in all elections, a valid form of identification is required to vote and poll workers will have poll books to identify those who are qualified to vote in the special election.

The first ballot question asks voters to consider annexing a sliver in eastern Grant County and portions of townships in Hettinger County and Adams County, which are currently in the ambulance's service area, but aren't in the taxation district.

The question states: "Shall the remainder of the service area be annexed into the existing taxation district of the

Western Grant Ambulance District?"

The ambulance service area, which is assigned by N.D. Health and Human Services, does not match the taxation district's boundaries, meaning some areas are receiving ambulance services without providing tax support.

"When Carson was no longer an ambulance service, at that point, this annexation process should have occurred and it did not," said Julie Goeres, a board member of the Western Grant Ambulance District.

The second ballot question asks voters to consider a tax levy not to exceed 15 mills for the purpose of operating a rural ambulance district.

With the existing 2 mill levy, the Western Grant Ambulance District currently generates an estimated \$24,562. The proposed 15 mill levy, which is the maximum the district can request, along with the annexation is estimated to generate \$248,876 in annual revenue.

Impact on taxpayers

For the average property owner, a 15 mill levy cost is:

- Residential (\$150,000 value): Approximately 31 cents per day (\$112.50 annually).
- Commercial (\$225,000 value): Approximately 46 cents per day (\$168.75 annually).
- Agricultural: Approximately 23 cents per acre if a quarter of land is assessed at \$50,000.

What it means

Legislation passed in 2023 mandated the formation of ambulance taxation districts for rural ambulance services. The Western Grant Ambulance District formed last year with a seven-member board, which oversees the tax dollars and budget for the New Leipzig-Elgin Ambulance Service, which is the only ambulance service operating within the taxation district. The Carson quick response unit (QRU), which cannot transport patients, operates

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Flasher graduate answers the call to serve

By Riley Dahl

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A Flasher High School graduate, Jenna LaDuke attends Trinity Bible College in Ellendale, North Dakota. There, she has found herself on journeys only God could provide and guide her through.

Every spring, Trinity Bible College closes its classrooms, shuts down campus, and sends its students on nothing short of an adventure. Students attending Trinity are required to participate in a mission trip of their choosing. From Las Vegas, Nevada, all the way to the United Kingdom, students get the opportunity to see a different part of the world.

LaDuke traveled to England last year for her mission trip, but this year, God placed another overseas journey on her heart.

"I just prayed and asked the Lord which one He wanted me to go on, and I really felt that He put South Africa on my heart," LaDuke says. "So, I raised the funds and went to South Africa with seven other students from Trinity."

After two very long travel days, the group arrived safely in South Africa and made their way to their destination. Being in the Southern Hemisphere was an experience in itself.

"It was their fall when we were there, and it was still very warm," explains LaDuke. "It was in the 60s and 70s every day and sunny."

The group stayed at Shikwaru Lodge during their weeklong mission trip. LaDuke shares that the resort was nothing short of beautiful.

Their days began early at 5:30 a.m. with breakfast at the resort, followed by time spent in schools preaching the Gospel and visiting with students. One story LaDuke says they acted out for the elementary-aged students was the story of Jesus' baptism by Peter. In high schools, team members shared their personal testimonies.

"That was really powerful for the high school students because they're going through a lot, so to hear somebody else's testimony really built up their faith," she says.

School sizes in South Africa are similar to those in North Dakota, with roughly 300 to 500 students.

Through the organization Reaching a Generation, the goal is just that, to reach the next generation of South Africa through schools and churches in the community where LaDuke and the rest of her team served.

For safety reasons, the specific location is

SEE LADUKE, PAGE 4



photo | submitted by Jenna LaDuke

JENNA LADUKE stepped out of her comfort zone to preach during the Mission Trip.