

Tabatt: Friendship with Geray and mutual interest in horse pulling led to extended stay in Hillsboro

TABATT

Continued from page 1

“He would be working on Model A’s and Model T’s. I always like mechanics growing up.”

Tabatt’s family moved around a bit when he was young and he bounced from Barlow – which had its school destroyed by fire – to New Rockford to Courtenay, N.D., before settling in Jamestown.

Tabatt graduated from Jamestown High School in 1963 and he entered the military. He spent the next four years as a member of the U.S. Marine Corps., primarily stationed overseas.

His military service included a two-year stint in a base in Hawaii, although he also hunkered down in Vietnam for 10 or 11 months and visited other places such as Guam, Thailand and the Philippines.

Tabatt started his military career by attending classes at an aircraft mechanic school in Memphis, Tenn., although a leg injury forced him into office work during his time with the Marines.

He returned stateside in 1967 and settled in Fargo, where he worked for a couple small repair shops doing mechanic work be-

fore opening his own automotive repair business in Comstock, Minn.

“I thought I could go on my own and that’s when you find out how little you know,” Tabatt said.

But Tabatt had a 19-year run in Comstock working on trucks, tractors and cars in a small-town environment that, in many ways, seemed similar to his experience in Hillsboro, he said.

After Comstock, Tabatt was employed as a parts manager for a GM dealership in Pine River, Minn., before heading to Little Falls, Minn., for a time.

Later in his career, he joined OK Tire in Fargo before moving to OK Automotive in Grand Forks, where he managed the company’s parts warehouse until he retired – for the time being – at age 66.

“I was retired. But it turned out I didn’t know what the word meant,” Tabatt said.

Tabatt’s career trajectory changed after taking a phone call from Paul Geray of Hillsboro, the owner of Paul’s Hometown Repair, who was seeking an alternator for a vehicle.

Tabatt had been living in Moorhead and commuting to his job in Grand Forks prior to his retirement.

“I told Paul I could drop off the part for him and to be honest, I didn’t even know this place existed,” Tabatt said. “I had heard it was closed. But Paul and I hit it off.”

The meeting between Tabatt and Geray eventually led to a job offer as well as a shared interest in draft horse pulls, a hobby that deeply interested Geray and his late father, Hank.

“Paul conned me into getting a pair of black horses,” Tabatt said laughing. “But the three of us went and all owned horses together. We ended up having a lot of fun doing that over the years.”

Outside work, Tabatt and Geray crisscrossed around the Upper Midwest and Canada, making stops in places like Calgary and Regina to drive their teams in draft horse pulls.

Although he had reached his 70s, Tabatt said he kept up with the physical tolls of competition.

“Physically, I was in good shape so I didn’t have a problem handling the horses. But we always had horses that we could handle and that could be around kids,” he said. “It was never a problem but when you were driving and hooked onto a skid, you knew you had some power in front of you.”

During the work week, Tabatt

said he and Geray made a good team.

His background as a mechanic and his work history gave him an advantage when he needed to find replacement parts that were needed to get cars fixed and back on the road in the Hillsboro area.

“There was always a new challenge every day, whether that was trying to get a particular part or talking to a parts dealership to search for what you’re looking for,” he said.

Tabatt said he approached Geray about five or six months ago to discuss retiring at the end of the year. “I figured that would make it easier to figure out how our work relationship was going to be,” he said.

Tabatt said he’s still figuring out his post-retirement plans. He’d like to get back into golfing and visit a few of his relatives in the Little Falls area north of St. Cloud, Minn.

And although he isn’t planning on returning to full-time work, he said he remains open to popping into Hillsboro to help Geray on occasion if he needs a hand from time to time.

“I’m not going too far away. It’s not going to be an everyday thing, but if Paul needs help for a day or two I’ll still be willing to come in,” he said.



FILE PHOTO

MayPort-CG senior Hudson Zerface scored 11 points against Kindred Tuesday. The Patriots host Four Winds-Minnewaukan this coming Tuesday night.

Patriots, Indians to play Tuesday night in Finley

PATRIOTS GBB

Continued from page 10

few minutes of the quarter until senior Kiaza Carlson dropped a three for the Patriots.

But while the Patriots struggled to find the basket, the Vikings forged ahead to take a 58-47 lead going into the fourth.

The Vikings opened the final quarter with a three, which junior Kylie Kroepelin responded to with a two for MPCG.

Carpenter added another in short order, but Kindred hit a three to more than make up the difference.

The Patriots scored their final points of the game at the free-throw line on Kindred fouls, but the Vikings were well out of reach and took the win 69-55.

MPCG is set to host Four Winds-Minnewaukan on Jan. 6 before hitting the road to take on Benson County on Jan. 8.

Burros on the road facing Larimore Tuesday night

H-CV GBB

Continued from page 9

Despite its 2-6 record, Tuesday’s loss was just H-CV’s second loss by more than two possessions (six points).

“We played them a couple years ago in the tournament and I think they beat us by 50-something, and then last year I think they beat us by 30,” Connell said. “It’s slow baby steps to get closer to them.”

The Burros are 1-2 in Region 2 action, but will have a break from Division A opponents for a couple of weeks. H-CV takes on

Division B Larimore on the road Tuesday before hosting Drayton/Valley-Edinburg in Central Valley on Friday. Connell said the Burros look to take it to their upcoming opponents and get back in the win column.

“We need to play better defense, so right now we’re upset, we’re angry,” Connell said, “and that’s going to be our motivation going into the next week is taking it out on those teams.

“Hopefully we have a couple of good practices. The girls, they’re angry and we plan on putting it on these teams if we can.”



FILE PHOTO

Hillsboro-Central Valley senior Addison Saure and the Burros travel to Larimore Tuesday night to take on the Polar Bears.

USPS says mail-in ballots might not get postmark on same day they’re dropped off

By JONATHAN SHORMAN
NORTH DAKOTA MONITOR

The U.S. Postal Service has adopted a new rule that could create doubt about whether some ballots mailed by voters by Election Day will receive postmarks in time to be counted.

A USPS rule that took effect on Dec. 24 says mail might not receive a postmark on the same day the agency takes possession of it. The postal service says it isn’t changing its existing postmark practices and is merely clarifying its policy, but some election officials have looked to postmarks as a guarantee that mail ballots were cast before polls closed.

The new rule holds implica-

tions for 14 states and Washington, D.C., that count ballots arriving after Election Day if they are postmarked on or before that day — commonly called a “ballot grace period.” In these states, ballots placed in the mail by voters before the deadline may not be counted if the postal service applies a postmark after Election Day.

The USPS rule says that “the postmark date does not necessarily indicate the first day that the Postal Service had possession of the mailpiece.”

The USPS rule comes as the U.S. Supreme Court prepares to consider a case that could eliminate ballot grace periods nationwide. The court’s decision could

render the issues raised by the postmark rule moot.

Mail-in voting surged in 2020’s general election amid the COVID-19 pandemic, when 43 percent of voters cast their votes by mail. The percentage of voters mailing their ballots has fallen from that peak but remains above pre-pandemic levels. About 30 percent of voters cast mail ballots in 2024, according to data gathered by the U.S. Election Assistance Commission.

While the vast majority of mail ballots were successfully cast last year, hundreds of thousands weren’t counted. During the 2024 election, 584,463 mail ballots returned by voters were

rejected by election officials — 1.2 percent of returned mail ballots. About 18 percent of those ballots were rejected because they didn’t arrive on time.

The USPS defended the change in a lengthy response to criticisms published in the Federal Register.

The agency emphasized that it does not administer elections and doesn’t advocate for or against voting by mail.

The postal service repeated its advice that voters mail their completed ballots at least a week before Election Day.

And it noted that voters may request a manual postmark at their local post office free of charge.

North Dakota GOP sets date for state convention

By JACOB ORLEDGE
NORTH DAKOTA MONITOR

The North Dakota Republican Party has announced its state convention will take place at the state fairgrounds in Minot on March 28-29.

The two-day convention will determine the party’s endorsement for multiple statewide offices and North Dakota’s lone congressional representative.

“The NDGOP Convention is where grassroots Republicans from every corner of North

Dakota come together to shape the future of our party and our state,” said Matthew Simon, chair of the North Dakota Republican Party.

“It is where party business is conducted, our platform is debated and refined, leadership is chosen, and candidates earn the trust and endorsement of the people who power this party day in and day out.”

U.S. Rep. Julie Fedorchak, R-N.D., has not formally announced plans to run for reelection,

though she is expected to do so. Alex Balazs, who placed fourth in the 2024 GOP primary for the seat and was the Republican-endorsed candidate, has announced plans to run for the seat again.

The statewide offices on the 2026 ballot include agriculture commissioner, secretary of state, attorney general, tax commissioner and two seats on the public service commission.

The incumbents have not announced plans to run for reelection

as of yet.

The superintendent of public instruction will also be on the 2026 election ballot. The office is nonpartisan, though candidates sometimes seek letters of endorsement from political parties.

The convention agenda will include official party business as well as a social event the evening of March 27, Simon said in a press release.

STAY INFORMED
Read the news generated
at the Traill County
Courthouse
in the Hillsboro Banner

FORWARD
in **FAITH**
Pastor Ray Baker
Hillsboro United Parish UCC/UMC

Grace, Truth and the New Year

John 1:14 reminds us, “And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father’s only son, full of grace and truth.”

As we step into a new year, many of us naturally pause to reflect—on where we’ve been, what we’ve learned, and how we hope to move forward. A new year invites fresh beginnings, but it also challenges us to consider what we will carry with us and what we must leave behind.

Recently, I found myself in an online conversation with an old friend. We disagreed sharply about what is true. As you might expect, part of the discussion involved the outcome of the presidential election, but the deeper issue was not politics—it was truth itself. The conversation reminded me of two powerful forces shaping our world today: the influence of charismatic leaders and the impact of unfiltered information on social media. My friend has shared clearly false and harmful information online.

What troubles me most is not simply the disagreement, but the memory of who this person once was. When I first knew him, he was a respected leader in the Church—charismatic, persuasive, and influential. My fear is that he still holds that influence, and that others may continue to follow him without questioning what they are being fed. His statements ignore the greatest commandment (Luke 10:27); the sermon on the mount (Luke 6:17-49), or more specifically the beatitudes (Luke 6:24-26).

As we begin this new year, my deepest concern for our nation and our communities is this: too many people no longer seem to care about truth. Anger, frustration, and fear have made it easier to share misinformation than to take a few minutes to verify what we hear and/or read.

There is an old story of a grandfather who tells his grandson that inside every person are two wolves—one representing love, kindness, and courage, and the other representing fear, hatred, and greed. When the grandson asks which wolf wins, the grandfather replies, “The one you feed.”

A new year gives us a choice about what we will feed our hearts and minds. As followers of Christ, may we choose to feed ourselves with his teachings, for Jesus is “the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6). May this be a year in which we seek truth with humility, live with grace, and reflect the light of Christ in a world longing for both.

Together on the journey of faith,
Pastor Ray Baker

This message of hope brought to you by Hillsboro’s faith community.

Our Savior’s Lutheran Church	St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church	Hillsboro United Parish UCC/UMC	St. John Lutheran Church
------------------------------------	--	---------------------------------------	--------------------------------

**Rexine Family
EYECARE**
32 West Main Street
Mayville, ND 58257
701-786-2666
www.michaelrexine.com

**LIVE HERE.
SERVE HERE.**
SSG ELIJAH RUDE
(701) 226-4429
ELIJAH.J.RUDE.MIL@ARMY.MIL
GET STARTED AT
NDARMYGUARD.com

**FINLEY
MOTORS**
Used Superstore
701-786-2146
or toll free 877-346-4396
942 3rd St. SE – Mayville, ND

**Great Plains
Fireworks
& Sports
Collectibles**
SW Frontage Road
Hillsboro, ND 58045
Open Saturdays 10a-5p
or call 701-436-6140

thrivent
Jeremy P Strand,
FIC, RICP®, CLTC®
Financial Associate
701-788-2600
Mayville, ND