

northern sentry

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WHATS INSIDE THIS WEEK:



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91 OSS Shares the Spirit of Giving!

Capt Jake Jones, Capt Austin Dean, spouse Amanda Dean, Capt Soon Tri, Capt Shane Knowles, Capt Margarita Knowles and Capt Joshua Watson volunteered at the Lord's Cupboard Food Pantry last week. See more on page A2.

COURTESY PHOTO



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91 OSS Weapons Flight Sorts a TON of Food

ERIN BEENE, NORTHERN SENTRY

The Holidays are more than commercialism and there really is more to Christmas than buying and spending endlessly. Proof of the true spirit of the Holidays comes from the 91st Operations Support Squadron (OSS) Weapons and Tactics Flight who spent hours of their time helping to sort and distribute the massive amounts of food donations at the Lord's Cupboard Food Pantry on Dec 10.

A Facebook post from the Lord's Cupboard stated, "...a big 'Thank You' to the Minot AFB 91st Operations Support Squadron members...for sharing your time with us today! They efficiently sorted and organized a couple of our recent food drives totaling 1,944 lbs. And in record time!! We appreciate all of you for helping us feed our neighbors!!"

Captain Joshua Watson led up the volunteering effort and explained that he had previously worked with the Lord's Cupboard in another capacity. He asked the Volunteer Coordinator Representative, Vickie Phippins, to reach back out to him if they were ever in need of specific assistance. Vicki took him up on that offer when they were in need of people to help sort food and contacted Capt Watson, who then gathered up some of his flight to come help out. Capt Jake Jones, Capt Austin Dean, spouse Amanda Dean, Capt Soon Tri, Capt Shane Knowles and Capt Margarita Knowles joined Capt Watson and spent a few hours helping those who needed a little extra support this season.

Capt Watson has been stationed

at Minot for five years and explained that his motivation behind his volunteerism is because he wanted to find a way to help others in what has become his own community. He also mentioned that his drive to help with this particular organization stems from a background of falling on hard times in his childhood. On a personal level, he felt compelled to serve in this specific capacity the Food Pantry when he could.

Capt Watson said he will absolutely volunteer in the future and he encourages everyone in the military community not to be afraid to use their time to help others out. He mentioned that people should look for an organization that means something to them specifically or helps in a way that has meaning

for them.

If you are struggling with food scarcity this season, the Lord's Cupboard Food Pantry is open Mondays 11:00am - 2:00pm, Tuesdays 5:30pm - 7:00pm, Wednesdays 11:00am - 2:00pm, and Fridays - 11:00am - 2:00pm. Their website states: "Our food pantry is available to anyone who is in need and is solely operated by 100% donations from the Minot community and various local and national grants."

Everyone needs a little extra support from time to time, help where you can and remember the reason for the season. As Capt Watson and the OSS show, even actions that seem small, and take only time, can have a lasting impact on others.



91 OSS Weapons and Tactics Flight lends a hand.

COURTESY PHOTO

Oh, It's GAME ON.
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MAFB Housing Rumored to Fill Outdoor Rinks Soon

NATALY ZARRELLA, , NORTHERN SENTRY

Big news for Minot Air Force Base Housing this winter! Minot AFB Homes is re-opening its very own outdoor ice rinks right in your on-base neighborhood. Whether you're excited about ice skating, hockey, or just soaking in the winter air, the rinks will be open exclusively for residents, providing the perfect way to enjoy the colder months. The Minot Housing Office has been working with the MAFB Fire Department to get everything ready, and once the temperatures drop and conditions are right, the rinks will be ready for action. Although MAFB Homes has not yet set a specific date when Northern Sentry reached out for information, they did confirm that they are working on the very likely possibility of it happening soon. The logistics regarding the locations and number of ice rinks are also being finalized. Based on the trends from 2019 to 2023, the outdoor ice rinks on Minot AFB were filled between January and February, so you can expect to hit the ice soon!

The rinks aren't just about ice skating, they're all about bringing the community together. It'll be a great place for families to glide across the ice, enjoy a friendly hockey game with neighbors, or just relax outdoors. The rink will also offer an opportunity for residents to connect with each other, make new friends, and enjoy time with family in a fun and active way. This addition will enhance the sense of community within MAFB Housing, providing a fun and inclusive space for everyone to enjoy the winter season together.



Minot AFB Housing Ice Rink 2020 picture shared on the MAFB Hockey & Skating Club.

AARON MCCLELLAN PHOTO

While Minot AFB Housing and the Fire Department work together to make the outdoor ice rinks possible, they are not responsible for the maintenance of the rinks. The responsibility falls to the residents who use the rinks, as they are the ones who conduct the necessary upkeep. MAFB Hockey & Skating is a Facebook page designed for all enthusiasts, providing a space for people utilizing the outdoor ice rinks to come together and share information. Whether you're looking for updates on rink conditions, maintenance tips, or just want to connect with fellow ice skating and hockey fans, this page serves as a valuable resource for the community.

The Northern Sentry will continue working with MAFB

Housing to keep everyone updated but you can also stay in the loop about rink openings and events by following the Minot AFB Homes and Minot AFB Resident Advocate Facebook pages. These pages will keep you informed about all the details, from rink schedules to exciting community events throughout the winter. Whether you're looking for a casual skate or a special event to join, these pages will help you plan your visit and get the most out of the ice rinks.

With the ice rink coming to Minot AFB Housing, this winter is shaping up to be one to remember. Get ready to skate, have fun, and make lasting memories right outside your door! Stay tuned for more updates, and we can't wait to see you on the ice!



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Eastern Star - 1st and 3rd Tuesdays at 7:00PM

Prince Hall - 2nd Saturday at 9:00AM

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**A VIEW FROM
OUR SIDE**

ROD WILSON

northernsentry
MINOT AIR FORCE BASE NEWSPAPER | WWW.NORTHERNSENTRY.COM

It is the time of the year when we often reflect on memories from past Christmas seasons. These reflections can be both positive and of course negative. What I have found over the years is that some of those memories that once brought tears to my eyes, can now bring smiles. I hope that by sharing a few of my Christmas memories, you too, will remember some of those times and events from past Christmas seasons. I can't guarantee that some of the memories won't be sad, but I can guarantee that there will be just as many happy memories as sad, because when you combine kids, presents and family there is no choice but to remember those special moments in a positive way.

I can start my Christmas memory list with a story about my Dad, and his quick wit. I had wanted a new bike for Christmas, but something told me that if Santa were to deliver a new bike to every kid in the world that wanted one, he would have a pretty full sleigh. But my determination to have the shiny new bike, or one that was just like it, from the hardware store window in Maddock, was pretty focused. I would ask my Dad almost daily if he thought that I was being good enough to get a new bike from Santa. Of course, he would play the trump card pointing out that washing dishes, hauling out the garbage and keeping my room clean would go a long way towards guaranteeing that Santa would at least consider my request. "BUT??? You know that not fighting your brother and sister is pretty important, too"

I had resigned myself to the

fact that if there was one thing that would jeopardize my new bike it would be the fight I could not walk away from with my siblings. "But can't Santa see that I am trying hard not to fight with my sister?" I asked my Dad. He would smile and say "remember, Santa sees everything". Yep, the bike was in jeopardy.

As it got closer to Christmas my resolve seemed to increase. The garbage was out the door without a second reminder. I lined up and took my turn wiping the dishes. And yes, I even was nicer, albeit not completely nice, to my siblings. I even remember bargaining with Santa. We'll finish the Santa story in a minute after we share what happened to my wish for a new bike.

The hardware store was on my way home from school and I would walk by the window just to remember exactly how that bike looked, down to the last bolt. It was a couple of days before Christmas, and I could sense something was different. From a distance it appeared that someone had moved the bike out of the window. Getting closer I could see that there was now a small tricycle in the window, not a bike. Was it inside the store? The answer from the clerk was "no Rod. Someone came and bought the bike." No problem I said to myself. Santa knows what bike I want. Some other lucky kid will have a bike just like mine.

Fast forward a couple of days to Christmas. In my opinion I had done what it took to get a new bike. I had a "it's gotta be now or never Santa" attitude. And then I started to think about not getting a new bike, you know, prepare yourself for the worst so it doesn't surprise you. It got dark, and Mom sent us upstairs to watch for Santa. Downstairs there was a Ho Ho Ho (kind of sounded a lot like my Dad) and down the stairs we all bolted. There it was, the Christmas presents of all Christmas presents. A new bike. The same exact bike as the one in the window at the hardware store. I could hardly

**UPSIDE DOWN
UNDER**

MARVIN BAKER

Could Ellendale, North Dakota become the next Silicon Valley?

There's a new and interesting development happening there that could completely transform the entire community and all of Dickey County.

A Dallas company called Applied Digital is in the process of building a data center just south of Ellendale, near the South Dakota state line that is expected to bring as many as 85 new jobs to this community of 1,000 and use a whopping 100 megawatts of electricity to power the facility.

There are two issues with this, housing and power, and apparently both are being addressed.

Recent reports on Fargo TV have indicated that 20 new, pre-fab homes are coming to the area known as Ellendale Acres, because, as you might imagine, there isn't a lot of available housing in a

Christmas Memories

wait to ride it, but I would have to.

The story does not quite end there. Because of my excitement to try to ride the bike, it was a short night. I was up the next morning to make sure that it wasn't a dream. The bike was still there. Right in front of the tree where I left it. As the sun came up and when it got to be light outside I noticed that there was a set of bike tire tracks from the front door of our house around the corner and directly across the front yard to our detached garage. I had noticed the tires on the new bike were snowy when I found it in front of the tree on Christmas Eve. There just were too many things to think about. The bike disappearing from the hardware store, the tire tracks to the garage, Santa sounding a lot like Dad. I had heard rumors but refused to believe that every present did not come from the North Pole. I had to ask. Dad why was my new bike in the garage. Didn't Santa bring it? Well Rod, Santa had so many bikes I gave him permission to store it in the garage for a while, until he had room in the sleigh. Made perfect sense to me. Why wouldn't we help Santa? But Dad, I noticed, because I knew every part of that bike, that there was a little scratch in the fender of the bike at the hardware store, and it's the exact spot where my new bike has a scratch. Without hesitation my Dad explained that Santa knew he had a bike like I wanted in Maddock already. So, he just used that bike. And...Dad...is that why I saw the bike in the back of your work truck one afternoon at the back of the hardware store? The answer? Rodney, you ask too many questions. I could tell from his look, that the conversation was over.

Lying in bed that night I reconstructed the events over and over. My older brother finally rolled over (we shared a room) and explained. "Little brother, if you quit believing in Santa Claus, where will the presents at Christmas come from?" Good point, I thought, I ask too many

questions.

In Maddock there was only one special "Santa Claus day". It was the day that Santa showed up in Maddock at the grocery store and we would sit on his lap and in a minute or so attempt to convince him that we were, and were going to be, good little boys and girls. One Santa Claus day I noticed that Santa kept looking at his watch. I am thinking "Santa has all the time in the world". It got to be 3 PM, and with a final Ho Ho Ho, Santa waived good-bye. As fate would have it, I had to use the restroom. It was locked. I knocked really hard only to hear a "out in a minute". Sure enough, an older gentleman came out of the bathroom, and I saw Mr. Johnson hand him a check and say, "thanks for coming over." I bolted into the bathroom and slammed the door. The light was off and so I turned it on. There at my feet was a Santa Claus suit that had fallen off the hanger on the back of the door. Could it be? My Dad's explanation? "Santa hires helpers because he just can't be everywhere at once...and by the way...you ask too many questions.

BEST KEPT SECRETS

If you haven't been able to catch the new electronic Christmas Tree in downtown Minot, it's worth a few minutes to watch the show. And then, check out the fountain on Main Street and 1st Avenue. One of the downtown elves has decorated it for the season. And finally, take an evening stroll or drive through downtown Minot. Some of the store windows are spectacular. Thanks, Downtown Minot! You make the season special.

TODAY'S CHUCKLE

(From a lady at the mall who shared it with us when we were ringing bells for the Salvation Army)

How much did Santa pay to park his sleigh? Nothing, it was on the house!

A shot in the arm for Ellendale...

community of 1,000, with 227 students attending Trinity Bible College with some renting in city limits.

The city of Ellendale built the infrastructure at Ellendale Acres about 15 years ago, thinking it would become a "suburb" of Aberdeen, given its proximity to South Dakota's third largest city. That didn't happen, but when Applied Digital made its pitch, one major hurdle was already crossed.

The other issue is power, lots of electrical power. MDU supplies electricity to Ellendale, but it's unclear at this time if MDU will service Applied Digital.

To give you an idea of the scope of 100 megawatts, that amount of power can generate electricity for 60,000 homes in one day. That's the equivalent of power for every home in the city of Fargo for one day.

Part of Applied Digital's business plan is to use renewable energy. There are several wind farms near Ellendale that are expected to produce a lot of the energy needed for this project.

According to the North Dakota Public Service Commission, there are six wind farms close enough with a capacity of 651 megawatts. They include ND Wind I and II near Edgeley, Tatonka in both

Dickey and McIntosh counties, Foxtail Wind Energy in Dickey County, Emmons/Logan Wind Energy and Merricourt Wind Power Project in Dickey and McIntosh counties.

Two pending wind farms include Just Wind in Logan County and Dickey County Wind Farm near Ellendale. If and when they come to fruition, that would be an additional 418 megawatts of electricity.

So what is Applied Digital? According to a company press release from October 2023 announcing the groundbreaking, it's a designer, builder and operator of next-generation digital infrastructure designed for high-performance computing applications.

The Ellendale facility is designed and purpose-built for artificial intelligence workloads such as generative AI, natural language processing and machine learning. The facility is a gargantuan 342,000-square-foot building.

The Ellendale facility is said to be the first of its kind to meet the demand of evolving AI and high performance computing.

Fully operational, the employees who work in this facility will completely transform the state of the economy of downtown

Ellendale. After years of businesses slowly closing their doors and the school getting smaller because of shrinking population, it is expected to be a major shot in the arm.

But as anyone in a small, North Dakota community knows, it's hard to find enough employees locally to fill jobs, so it's anticipated that some of the employees will come from nearby Oakes, Fullerton, Edgeley, Ashley, Aberdeen and even Jamestown.

Applied Digital hasn't specified what kind of payroll it will have, but did indicate some of the positions will be high-level information technology professionals most likely from Dallas and elsewhere.

The housing project, meanwhile, is the first to use North Dakota's R-WISH program (Rural Workforce Initiative to Support Housing), a program designed for rapidly growing communities and is a partnership between the Bank of North Dakota through Starion Bank and Applied Digital.

There's already talk on Ellendale's Main Street about new businesses coming to town and the school making room for additional students because of Applied Digital's intent. However, many other local residents are approaching this with cautious optimism.

A Seat at the Table: Finding Connection This Christmas



SHE'S NOT FROM AROUND HERE
AMY ALLENDER

by one, the students introduced what they had brought to share.

Here, in this unassuming place, in a town filled with folks not from around here, gathered another kind of "not from around here." Individuals and flavors from far-off places—brought together in this place, at this time. Food has a way of doing that.

I shared a table with women from Mexico, Venezuela, and Indonesia, and men from Mexico, Nigeria, and the son of a missionary raised in Costa Rica. We ate fried tacos, steamed rice, arepas, naan buns, German noodles, and others that were too numerous to fit on one plate. Some of us had been in Minot for several years, others only several months. I wasn't sure what to say, so I listened and offered a simple, "If there's ever anything you need..." After all, what can you say to someone who is far from their version of "familiar," especially at a time of year when nostalgia and togetherness reign supreme?

The humanness of it all was striking—in a beautiful, complicated way.

Several days later, I walked into Thompson-Larson Funeral Home downtown. A different smell greeted me: one of floral arrangements, perfume, and stillness. A staff member met me and pointed ahead to a different meeting room. "They're straight ahead," she whispered.

A different crowd was assembled. Different sounds filled the air. Different memories were shared. Instead of recalling life in another country, the recollections were of life in another time. Again,

I didn't know what to say. Again, there was the "If there's anything you need..." After all, what can you say to someone whose version of "familiar" and "Christmas" has just been changed forever?

The humanness struck me again—beautiful, complicated, heartbreaking, hopeful.

The two gatherings have left me thinking hard about the holidays. No matter where we go, there will be people who are not from around here, people grieving, people feeling lost or the sting of loss as the world around them celebrates.

For me, it's been a reminder to open my eyes. Not only to those around me and what they are experiencing—but also to those in the community I may never have noticed before.

If you're established in Hotdish Land, I challenge you to be brave enough to draw someone into your holiday plans who needs a little more togetherness this year. Maybe it's an international individual, a newly PCS'ed airman, or someone grieving.

If you're new, or not from around here, I challenge you to be proactive. I've spent holidays feeling lonely and sad because I wasn't invited into a celebration. Those moments left me feeling isolated and bitter. Everything changed when I got intentional and proactive. Instead of waiting for the invite, I started inviting. We filled our home with friends, old and new, who needed togetherness—and traditions and community grew. Maybe this is your year to do the inviting, to take charge of the togetherness, and craft the cozy you're craving.

Either way, the challenge is the same. Can we set aside the comfort of how we "always" celebrate to set one more place at the table? Or save one extra seat in the pew?

Our community is bigger and more dynamic than we often realize. This year, I hope you'll stop to appreciate the beauty of

being human together—and find a way to connect with someone new, in a new way.

For more stories of Hotdish Land, or to connect with me, visit amyallender.com. Or head to @HeyMinot or @amy_allender on Instagram or Facebook.

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A LOOK BACK THIS WEEK IN USAF HISTORY

LT. COL. EMIL BEAUDRY RESCUES 12 AIRMEN STRANDED ON THE GREENLAND ICE CAP
DECEMBER 28, 1948

On December 7, 1948, a United States Air Force C-47 crashed on the Greenland Ice Cap. The seven passengers survived, but were stranded in temperatures of minus 45 degrees for nearly three weeks. Several rescue attempts were thwarted in the weeks after the initial crash, resulting in two downed aircraft, two crashed gliders, and a total of 12 people stranded in the remote Arctic wasteland.

Lt. Col. Emil Beaudry (Air Force Mag Photo) Lt. Col. Emil Beaudry, a USAF Arctic Rescue Operations expert, decided to take advantage of a break in the unpredictable Greenland weather and try for another rescue attempt in a ski-equipped C-47 with jet assisted takeoff. On December 28, he landed the plane on the ice cap and was able to bring the 12 stranded passengers to safety at Bluie West 8, an air base in central Greenland. For his heroic efforts, especially in the wake of other attempts, Beaudry was presented with the Mackay Trophy.

Photo of BW-8, Greenland. (Richard Rybak, 1942)

Information courtesy of: media.defense.gov/airforcemag.com

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Holiday Traditions Run Deep

ERIN BEENE, NORTHERN SENTRY

The drill is familiar. Another holiday season away from extended family and figuring out new short-termed Holiday traditions. Military families don't always get the luxury of doing the exact same things year after year. With frequent moving, even during the holidays themselves or with a deployed spouse, Christmas is sometimes spent in TLF, or in a lonely house, or in the company of the friends made at the current station. Like all seasons in life, holiday seasons can end up being a little sad, but they can also end up bringing lasting memories that bring smiles to faces along with new traditions throughout the years.

Minot can be hard and cold but the traditions we all create over the years help bring warmth and joy to the Holiday season. Families all over base have taken advantage of new ways of life and merging them with old traditions to create joyful ways to celebrate the season. Here are the ways several of the MAFB families celebrate the season.

Tabitha Bennett: We open one present on Christmas Eve and it is always matching Christmas pajamas. We all wear them to bed and all our photos on Christmas morning are so cute with our matching PJs. The family also enjoys many fun and silly holiday games together.

Cheyenne Butler: Since our family is all military we all video chat with making gingerbread

houses Sunday before Christmas and have a contest.

Tena Holmgren: Christmas Eve every year we "dip in the pot." It's a Swedish tradition. Back in the day they used to have a huge Christmas Eve meal, and while preparing that meal the servants would have a basic meal of meat, broth and rye bread and "dip in the pot." My husband's family has done it for Christmas for generations, and we've adapted it as our own. So Christmas Eve before we go to candlelight service at church our family eats a simple meal of roast, broth and rye bread. A way to simplify the holiday and bring us back to what's important. If you drop the meat and bread in the broth you have to kiss your neighbor on the cheek. And then on Christmas Day we make a small birthday cake and sing for Jesus.

AC Williams: [We] leave a quiet toy wrapped outside the kids doors on Christmas Eve. When they wake they have a gift to open and keep them busy and it lets Mom and Dad sleep a bit!

Chandler Ncha: We make a big pot of wassail the night of the 24th. Before we drink it we get into the car and drive around town looking at all the decorations and light displays people have put up while listening to carols (our modern-antisocial way to go Wassailing). We then come home and watch The Muppet Christmas Carol while sipping on wassail and singing along while

Michael Caine gets roasted by muppets.

Jillian Cangealose: We open a few gifts, stop and make a HUGE Christmas brunch together for our family of 4, open a few more gifts, stop and watch a Christmas movie together (usually Elf or A Christmas Story), then finish opening the rest of our gifts, then call family. It's a whole day for us!

Karin Jung: Since 2011, during Christmas, we have hosted someone who doesn't have a place to go. This year we hosted 4 people from two countries. The American teen is Jewish so it might be a Happy Hannuka on top.

Jesse Little: Although we just started growing our family, we make ornaments with our daughter each year. Also, we wear matching pajamas on Christmas Eve to wake up on Christmas Day!

During the holidays, sometimes more than any other time of year, that special connection to our roots and holiday traditions often shines brightly, despite where we live. Thanks for sharing your holiday traditions with us! Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays to all the Team Minot Airmen and families!



The Bennett family playing one of their traditions: the Saran wrap game! Mom wraps gifts cards, cash, candy and small items. Then the kids have to open the gifts as fast as they can before the next person rolls doubles. Then they have to pass it along to the next player!

COURTESY PHOTO



The Holmgren Family celebrating their Christmas Eve "dip in the pot" Swedish tradition.

COURTESY PHOTO



The extended Butler Family in 2021 showing off their gingerbread houses.

COURTESY PHOTO

MERRY Christmas and Happy New Year

 Ted & Margie Bolton <i>Publisher/Owner</i>	 Rod Wilson <i>Sales/Marketing</i> Rod, Sue and grandchildren	 Nikki Greening <i>Creative Services</i> Nikki, Brad, Ava and Ellie	 Erin Beene <i>Editor/Media Management</i> Sienna, Erin, Lt Col. Jeffrey Beene & Max
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Fact File

Life Span	10 - 14 years
Weight	300 - 600 pounds
Height to Shoulder	4 feet
Body Length	8 - 9 feet
Tail Length	26 - 39 inches
Top Speed	50 mph
Wild Diet	Omnivore (Carnivore) Herbivore Antelope, Giraffe, Zebra, Wildebeest, Impala

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	72		74			79
81			85		88	
		93		96		100

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GETTIN' AROUND DOWNTOWN MINOT

Food Equals Love



HOPE ANDERSON

This past week, I began my yearly holiday baking and it really got me thinking about the nostalgia that comes with baking. There is truly something magically about the passing down of recipes from generation to generation and baking heritage recipes for the holidays. These foods become a part of our traditions and bring back the memories of years gone by. This past year, I found a 1985 cookbook from my mom's hometown featuring recipes from community members. As I was flipping through the cookbook, I ran across a recipe that was submitted by my great grandmother and I just knew that I had to make the cookies this year for Christmas.

Minot is lucky enough to have a store located right in our downtown core that sells kitchen wares and food items that can help any cook or baker, whether just starting out or an advanced maker. Located at 122 Main St S, Gourmet Chef is your go to place for all things food related. Open since 1993, Gourmet

Chef has been providing cookware, cutlery, and kitchen tools for over 30 years, but they really offer so much more. They offer a community and a place to go for great customer service, a friendly staff, and advice to help customers make exactly the recipe they would like to tackle.

One of the people you will likely meet at Gourmet Chef is Olivia, the store manager. She is a wealth of knowledge and can help you find just what you need for your baking or cooking needs. She mentioned that people shopping for holiday gifts can find many North Dakota items like juneberry and chokecherry jellies, pepper jellies to use with cream cheese, and cheese ball mixes. These make great stocking stuffers and gifts for people who want a touch of North Dakota.

If you are looking to bake some heritage family recipes this year, Gourmet Chef has lefse starter kits, spritz cookie presses, pizzelle makers, krumkake irons, and more to get you started with a new tradition or carry on a long time family classic. Olivia shared with me a family recipe that her dad, Dan, has been making for decades. She even remembers her dad making these cookies for cookie decorating at her preschool. These soft sugar are easy to roll and hold up nicely during the baking and decorating process.

ungreased cookie sheets.

Bake in a preheated oven until cookies are lightly browned, 6-8 minutes. Carefully transfer cookies to a wire rack and cool completely before decorating.

Stop into Gourmet Chef this holiday season. You will find a friendly environment, knowledgeable staff, and every single kitchen gadget you could possibly ever need. Don't forget to check out their food and oils section where you can get a variety of gourmet foods to serve for Christmas or even New Years.

Nostalgia baking during the holidays truly brings back memories of days gone by and makes you feel a connection to family, who may be spread far and wide. It may even make you feel like someone you are missing during the holidays is right there with you while you celebrate the season. The sharing of food is truly an act of love that can be passed on from generation to generation.



Dan's Cream Cheese Sugar Cookies

- 2 cups white sugar
- 1 cup butter, softened
- ½ cup cream cheese, softened
- 4 large eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 5 cups all-purpose flour
- 3 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt

Beat sugar, softened butter, and cream cheese in a large bowl with an electric mixer until smooth. Beat in eggs and vanilla. Stir in flour, baking powder, and salt. Cover, and chill dough for at least an hour (or overnight).

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F. Lightly dust a work surface with flour. Roll out dough to ¼ to ½ inch thickness. Cut into shapes with any cookie cutter. Place cookies 1 inch apart on



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DOWNTOWN MINOT

Preparing for The Prairie Warrior Auction

\$111,000 Raised Last Year

ROD WILSON, NORTHERN SENTRY

For Keli Roselli-Sullivan plans for the 2025 Prairie Warrior Auction are well underway. “The date is April 25th at the North Dakota State Fairgrounds” according to Roselli-Sullivan “and our goal is raising one dollar more than last year’s record of \$111,000!”

Of the \$111,000 that was taken in at last year’s auction “\$57,000 was donated to Home for The Holidays to send first year Airmen home during the holiday season, and \$54,000 was given to Team Minot for various other promotions” continues Roselli-Sullivan.

Tickets for the Prairie Warrior Auction will be \$25.00, the same as they were last year. “We’ll start the evening at 5:00 PM with a taco bar being catered by Qdoba. And as was the case last year we will have corporate tables available for purchase. If any business or corporation is interested in purchasing a corporate table or donating they can contact me at 852-6000” says Roselli-Sullivan.

As per the events’ name, the Prairie Warrior Auction features

a number of items that the over 400 attendees can bid on at a silent or live auction “and like last year we’ll have an online auction that we will open on Friday, April 18th”.

Of the \$57,000 donated to this year’s Home for the Holiday’s promotion, Hess Corporation contributed \$20,000 and

Verendrye Electric Cooperative donated \$10,000.

“The Prairie Warrior Auction will be much the same as before, including giving Airmen free admission” says Roselli-Sullivan “and if people have questions about the event they can certainly call me at the Minot Chamber/EDC”.



Over 400 people attended the Prairie Warrior Auction. In total the auction raised over \$111,000.00



Hess General Manager Brent Lohens poses with former 91st Missile Wing Commander Kenneth McGhee and former 5th Bomb Wing Commander Daniel Hoadley and after presenting a \$20,000 donation to Home for the Holidays campaign.



Verendrye Electric Manager Brad Doll, Verendrye Electric Member Services and Communications Manager/Military Affairs Committee Chair Tom Rafferty pose with former 91st Missile Wing Commander Kenneth McGhee and former 5th Bomb Wing Commander Daniel Hoadley after presenting a donation \$10,000 to Home for the Holidays campaign.

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The holiday season is up on us again! That time of year when friends and family travel, decorations are hung and festive meals are prepared. In the mist of the holiday cheer and sprit, let us not forget about safety. This is something that must be on the forefront of the activities we have planned and are engaged in. When comes to lights and decorating; inspect the condition of the electrical cords for frayed wires, kinks and cracked sockets. Only use appropriate replacement light bulbs. Do not over load wiring with more than three light strands connected together unless the safety label for the lights states otherwise. Overloaded and poorly maintained electrical circuits and cords present a serious fire hazard.

Decorations should be non-flammable or flame resistant and placed away from heat, electrical or ignition- source. Paper chains, strung popcorn garland, homemade or crafted items are great. However, this is could become a problem is not displayed and cared for properly!

Live trees should be freshly cut and not dried out. Once your tree is in place, away from a heat source, ensure that it is kept well hydrated and the needles are hard to pull out of the branch. Should a tree catch a fire, it can quickly engulf a room and fill the air with toxic smoke and fumes.

One more tip to leave you with, scented candles fill the room and air with smells that places you

in a cheerful mood. Never leave a burning candle unattended. Unattended candles have been the cause of many house fires. According to the United States Fire Administration, each year fires claim the lives of over 400 people, injure 1,650 more, and cause over \$990 million in damage over the holiday season

alone. Sure this is the time to have fun and enjoy the current holiday season, let’s do our part to reduce these figures and the chances of an incidents occurring. By taking an extra second to practice personal risk management, this can mitigate a lot of these avoidable incidents.



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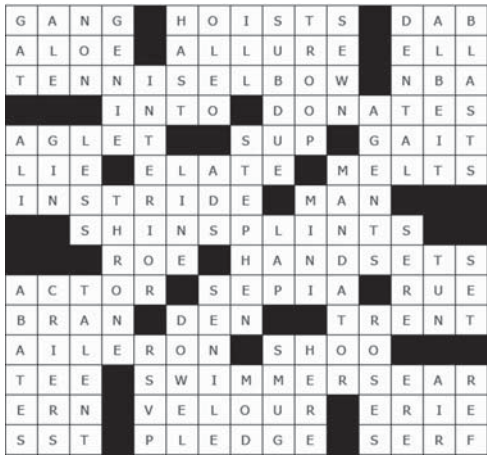


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CROSSWORD SOLUTION

Solution to last week's Crossword puzzle.



SUDOKU

Solution to puzzle on page B9

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		5	6		7			
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	5	8			6	2		
2				7		3	9	
	9		1		2			
	8		5				9	
			8				6	

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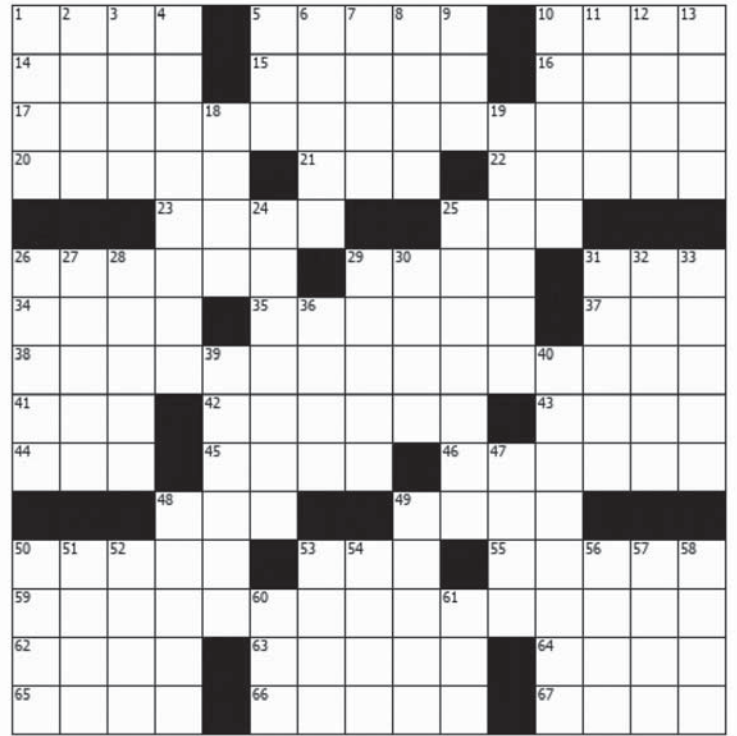
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CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Across

- 1. Makes a mistake
- 5. Dominican Republic neighbor
- 10. Bride's dress
- 14. Airplane stunt
- 15. Zeal
- 16. A great lake
- 17. Much-welcomed words
- 20. Shorthand pro
- 21. Cunning
- 22. South Pacific spots
- 23. Slangy refusal
- 25. Wide shoe width
- 26. Elate
- 29. Ewes' mates
- 31. Denver clock setting: Abbr.
- 34. Ore deposit
- 35. Magic charm
- 37. Doctors' org.
- 38. Compliment a person
- 41. Magazine execs.
- 42. Except if
- 43. Young horse
- 44. Father's Day gift
- 45. Danson and Turner
- 46. Not in secret
- 48. Kept out of sight
- 49. Be confident about
- 50. Brother of Moses
- 53. Questionnaire info
- 55. Piece of stationery
- 59. Alters an opinion
- 62. Patronize a pawnshop
- 63. Doesn't go
- 64. Nickname for Ireland
- 65. Looks at
- 66. Carbonated drinks
- 67. Start over with



Down

- 1. Shade trees
- 2. Defeat soundly
- 3. Red flower
- 4. Twirling around
- 5. Derby, e.g.
- 6. Got up
- 7. Revered figure
- 8. Broadway award
- 9. Anger
- 10. Swans' relatives
- 11. Spoken
- 12. Send a telegram to
- 13. Loch __ monster
- 18. Great, to teens
- 19. Snooze, in Mexico
- 24. Made preparations
- 25. Writer Ralph Waldo
- 26. Den appliance
- 27. Swiss miss of fiction
- 28. Washing-machine step
- 29. Ploys
- 30. Swiss mountains
- 31. Brick worker
- 32. One of the senses
- 33. Delicious
- 36. Playing-card combo
- 39. Day trip
- 40. Freebie restaurant drink
- 47. Balloon-bursting sounds
- 48. Sounds from 10 Down
- 49. Nairobi's nation
- 50. Muscle soreness
- 51. Sailor's greeting
- 52. Speed contest
- 53. Concerning
- 54. Ultimate objective
- 56. Not diluted
- 57. City in Oklahoma
- 58. City in Nevada
- 60. Upper-left keyboard key
- 61. Letter after ar

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Contemporary Worship Service 11:05 a.m.
Children's Church 11:05 a.m.
Wed. AWANA (Sept. to May) 6:30 p.m.
Fridays, Celebrate Recovery 7:00 p.m.

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Children Worship (Wed).... 7 p.m.
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MINOT AFB HOSTS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PANEL

Civic and community leaders pose with Team Minot leadership at the community leader engagement panel at Minot Air Force Base, North Dakota, Dec. 12, 2024. The panel provided an open forum for questions and answers, fostering collaboration and understanding between the base and the Minot community.

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Upcoming Events

27 DEC **GRINCH LABS MINI CAMP**
12:00 PM - 4:00 PM
Magic City Discovery Center
1545 1st St NW, Minot

Join us for this mini camp where we dive into the science behind the classic holiday movie, "How the Grinch Stole Christmas!" Kids will snuggle up and watch the beloved Grinch movie, while engaging in exciting science experiments inspired by the film's whimsical world. Bring some comfy PJ's and a blanket, and we will provide all the rest!
Ages: Ages 4 - 9
Class Size: Max of 20
Location: Community Rooms (Both)
Cost: \$48 for Non-Members, \$43.20 for MCDC Members, \$38.40 for Military Members. Sign up at <https://www.magiccitydiscoverycenter.com/>



For more information:
Facebook/ Magic City Discovery Center/ Events

30 DEC **CRAFT NIGHT**
7:00 PM - 10:00 PM
Blue Rider
118 1st Avenue SE, Minot

We're hosting a weekly bring-your-own Crafting Night! We invite you to bust out your needlepoint, sketchbook, journal, yarn, or any other hobby you've been itching to get done and come on down!



For more information:
Facebook/ Blue Rider/ Events

UNTIL 31 DEC **SERTOMA CHRISTMAS LIGHTS IN OAK PARK**
5:30 PM OPENING
Minot Oak Park, 19th Ave SW, Minot

Take a drive through Oak Park this holiday season. \$5/car \$20/bus. Enjoy the lights while supporting our community. All proceeds from this event are invested back into our community.



For more information:
Facebook / Minot Sertoma Club / Events

07 JAN **FUN ZONE**
9:00 AM-NOON
Minot Auditorium-Old Armory (east side of the building) - 420 3rd Ave SW

The Minot Fun Zone is being provided free of charge to all area residents through the Minot Park District. The bouncy castles are provided in partnership with the Minot Area Community Foundation. Fun Zone is for children 10 & under. Children and adults will enter facility and play at their own risk. Children must be supervised at all times. They are not to be dropped off. There must be at least one adult present for every 4 children. YOU are responsible for the kids that you bring. You must maintain a close physical presence at all times. No outside equipment/toys will be allowed. Individuals will be responsible to clean up any mess made. All equipment will be shared equally among those present.



For more information:
Facebook/ Minot Parks/ Events

14 JAN **MIDWEST MURDER LIVE**
7:00 PM
Oak Park Theater
1500 4th Ave. NW Minot

The best way to experience Midwest Murder is to attend a live podcast taping. With only about 25 live shows a year, these events are rare, captivating, and unforgettable. Don't miss this chance to join co-hosts Jonah Lantto and Dawn Palumbo as they bring their riveting storytelling to the stage for one night only in Minot! For mature audiences only. Concessions and Atypical available for purchase at the event. All tickets are general admission and \$35 each. Proceeds will benefit your Minot Symphony Orchestra. TICKETS: <https://app.arts-people.com/index.php?ticketing=mso>



For more information:
Facebook/ Midwest Murder Podcast/ Events

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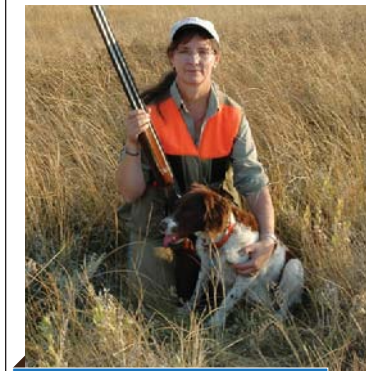
For more events visit our online Community Calendar at www.northern Sentry.com/calendar/

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by Patricia Stockdill

Fishing:
 Lake Sakakawea elevation, Dec. 16: 1,835.92 feet above mean sea level (MSL); 16,000 cubic feet per second (CFS) Garrison Dam average daily releases.
 Devils Lake elevation: 1,449.37 feet above mean sea level (MSL).
 Stump Lake elevation: 1,449.35 MSL.
 •N.D. Game & Fish Dept. game wardens: Mobility still somewhat limited yet on Devils Lake with varying ice conditions. No vehicles recommended. More anglers going to Lake Irvine with fair walleye success. No reports from north-central area lakes or Lake Audubon.
 •Devils Lake, Ed's Bait Shop, Devils Lake: No new reports.
 •Devils Lake, Woodland Resort, Devils Lake: Some activity on Devils Lake but ice depth varies. Check conditions as you travel along. Try Lake Irvine or west side of Devils Lake for perch.
 •Lake Darling, Karma C-Store, Ruthville: Increasing activity on Lake Audubon with fair walleye success. Look for some walleye activity around Grano on Lake Darling.
 •Lake Metigoshe, Four Seasons, Bottineau: A few bluegill starting to show up but they're schooled and anglers need to move around and drill a lot of holes. Try wax worms. Continued fair walleye success. Continued pike spearing activity and water clarity remains good.
 •Lake Sakakawea/Lake Audubon, Cenex Bait & Tackle, Garrison: Lake Audubon producing a few walleye along the 9-Mile Bay or the south shore but ice depth varies even in the bays.
 •Lake Sakakawea/Lake Audubon, Hwy. 83 Lawn & Leisure, Garrison: Increasing activity on Lake Audubon with best success in dark hours. Use extreme caution when traveling on the ice, though, especially at night.
 •Lake Sakakawea, New Town: No reports with limited activity on the Van Hook Arm as anglers generally wait for better ice conditions.
 •Lake Sakakawea/Missouri River, Scott's Bait & Tackle, Pick City: Weather permitting anglers are working from boats down river on the Missouri River tailrace for walleye using jigs and minnows and finding numbers of small fish. Also try casting crankbaits off the rocks at night from shore but use caution with slippery conditions from water and ice on the rocks. Use caution at the ramp

Thanks to Woodland Resort, our Outdoors Report sponsor, for helping keep readers up-to-date on happenings throughout the region. For complete details about fishing Devils Lake and its array of recreational opportunities visit their website, (www.woodlandresort.com), Facebook at (facebook.com/woodlandresortDL), telephone (701) 662-5996, extension 1, or email (woodlandresort@gondtc.com). They're located at 1012 Woodland Drive, Devils Lake, N.D. 58301.

- Stump Lake near Devils Lake has extremely variable and dangerous ice conditions due to scattered open water patches. Beware of dangerous thin ice in places, especially if lake gets any snow cover.
- Ice is never completely safe. Avoid areas with vegetation, moving water, pressure ridges, and springs. Check conditions as you go along on the ice and don't move around at night.
- Registration now open for Wild Outdoor Women Winter workshop Feb. 7 - 9, 2025, Lake Metigoshe State Park, Bottineau. Go to (<https://bit.ly/LMSPShowClix>) for more information and to register.
- Dec. 21: Western Canada Goose Zone closes.
- Dec. 21: Year-end 50th anniversary celebration, 4 p.m., Fort Stevenson State Park, Garrison.
- Dec. 22: Movie Skate, animated "A Christmas Carol" movie sponsored by Minot Parks & Recreation Dept. \$5 to skate and \$5 skate rental. Pepsi Rink, 6:30 p.m.
- Dec. 22 - Jan. 1, 2025: Audubon Nat'l. Wildlife Refuge 12 Days of Christmas self-guided holiday hikes along refuge interpretive trail, a mile east of Lake Audubon on the south shore.
- Dec. 27: Missouri River Canada Goose Zone closes.
- Dec. 27: Light goose and tundra swan seasons close.
- Dec. 28: Holiday Mystery Star family puzzle search with hot chocolate, Lewis & Clark State Park east of Williston, 10 a.m.
- Dec. 29: High Plains duck, merganser, and coot seasons close.
- Dec. 29: Audubon Nat'l. Wildlife Refuge North Country Trail guided holiday hike. Meet at the log Educational Center building, 1:30 p.m. a mile east of Lake Audubon on the south shore. Sponsored by Central Flyway North Country Trail chapter. Free bear paw snow shoes to use, snow conditions permitting.
- Dec. 30: Nerf Battle, ages kindergarten through 8th grade sponsored by Minot Parks & Recreation Dept. Municipal Auditorium. Participants must pre-register. Contact (701) 857-4136.
- Dec. 31: Last Day Hike, Cross Ranch State Park, south of Hensler, 4 p.m. with winter campfire and hot chocolate to follow.
- Jan. 1: First Day Hike, Fort Stevenson State Park, Garrison, 6 p.m.
- Jan. 3: MAFB Extra Curl Curling League coaches meeting, McAdoo Fitness Center, MAFB.
- Jan. 5: Pheasant, turkey, grouse, partridge, and archery deer seasons close.

with potentially icy conditions.
 •Lake Sakakawea/northwest N.D. lakes, Scenic Sports, Williston: Continued walleye activity around Lund's landing and Long Creek in 15 to 20 feet on the upper end of Lake Sakakawea. Try rattling jigs with minnows. Also try across on the south side at Tobacco Garden. Blacktail and Epping-Springbrook dams have nice water quality for pike spearing. Trenton Lake remains fair for croppie.
 •North-central/central N.D. lakes, Townner Hdwe. Hank, Townner: Buffalo Lodge Lake producing pike with water clarity good for spearing as well as hook-and-line. Not much activity on other area lakes.
Hunting:
 •Pheasants: Work heavy cover but some birds are becoming flighty.
 •Predators: Good coyote numbers but fur prices are low.
 •Waterfowl: Good numbers of Canada geese remain on the open water of the Missouri River below Garrison Dam and open water of Lake Sakakawea on the east end. Some lingering Canadas along some remaining open water of the

Yellowstone River west of Williston.
Downhill skiing. Trail conditions and open dates can vary due to weather. Contact the ski area for updates:
 •Big Sky Ski Area, Big Sky, Mont. (www.bigskyski.com): 134 trails, 20 lifts, and 1 Terrain Park open.
 •Bottineau Winter Park, Bottineau, (www.skibwp.com): 12- to 24-inch base with good conditions. 6 runs, tubing hill, Terrain Park, 2 carpets, T-bar, and 1 lift open.
 •Frostfire Ski Area, Walhalla, (www.frostfirepark.org): 8 runs and Terrain Park open for weekend skiing, weather permitting.
 •Huff Hills Ski Area, Mandan, (www.huffhills.com): 12-14-inch base with packed powder conditions. 3 runs and 1 tow and 1 lift open. Small Grom Terrain Park open on Blue Lift.
 •Terry Peak Ski Area, Leads, S.D. (www.terrypeak.com): 3 runs, 2 lifts, and carpet open.
Numbers to know:
 •N.D. Game and Fish Dept., main Bismarck office: (701) 328-6300, website: (<http://gf.nd.gov>).
 •Report All Poachers: (701) 328-9921.

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YOUTH IN ACTION

Winter Bussing Reminders

JOY-NICOLE SMITH
 SCHOOL LIAISON PROGRAM MANAGER, GS-12
 DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE SCHOOL LIAISON PROGRAM

Safety reminders for Minot Air Force Base Parents and Guardians during parent drop off and pick up at Minot AFB Schools during Winter Busing:
 The bus lanes and areas are designated for the safe drop off and pick up of students at each school. At Memorial Middle School - Minot AFB, the main parking lot in front of the school is designated for bus drop off and pick up. As buses are staged in this area, please do not drive around the bus. This results in serious safety concerns especially if a child exits the bus. At North Plains Elementary and

Dakota Elementary, as buses are pulling into the schools, please wait for buses to be staged before crossing the road to enter the school. Our goal is to ensure the safe arrival and departure of all students. Alternatives include utilizing the parking lots and parents/guardians escorting students to the school outside of the designated bus lanes. Please be sure to use the cross walks outside of the designated bus lanes for students to cross safely. Please share for increased awareness and assurance of the safety of students at Minot AFB.

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MINOT NORTH BOYS BASKETBALL PHOTO

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01-03-25	7:45pm	Mandan High School	Minot North High School
01-07-25	7:45pm	Away vs. Bismarck Century	Bismarck Centry High School
01-10-25	7:45pm	MHS	Minot North High School
01-14-25	7:45pm	Away vs Bismarck St. Mary's	Bismarck St. Mary's Central High School
01-17-25	7:30pm	Bismarck High	Minot North High School

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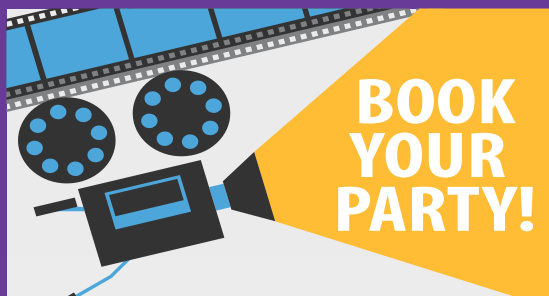
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PUBLIC AFFAIRS VISITS THE PRESS



The Northern Sentry hosted the Minot Air Force Base Public Affairs team for a tour of the newspaper printing press at NorDak North in Garrison. They spent time learning about the ins and outs of the press and how their stories and photos go from digital to newsprint, and the process in which the Northern Sentry gets to the doorsteps of our readers on base.

NORTHERN SENTRY PHOTO

Hispanic Allies Council translation team builds community bonds

AIRMAN 1ST CLASS WESLEY DAVIES, 5TH BOMB WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

MINOT AIR FORCE BASE, N.D. --

The Hispanic Allies Council at Minot Air Force Base has founded a translation team in July 2024 to support the diverse community of service members and their families.

The initiative aims to provide crucial support for individuals facing language barriers, whether it's navigating military paperwork, engaging with the local community or simply communicating with others. The team, made up of volunteers from the HAC, is available to help both military personnel and their families who may not be fluent in English.

According to Airman 1st Class Diego Colon-Santos, an HAC member assigned to the 5th Logistics Readiness Squadron, this initiative was born out of both the need for better inclusion and accessibility and a desire from the volunteers to give a community to those that might be far from home, thus ensuring that all members, regardless of language proficiency, can fully participate in the military and local community.

"As I got better at the English language, I was able to help transfer students back in high school," said Colon-Santos. "I related to their situation and it sparked a flame in me in terms of being dedicated to helping people."

Tech. Sgt. Ashley Villegas-Miller, the community relations officer of the HAC, mentioned how it's also a vital tool for fostering a sense of community among Hispanic families, many of whom may be stationed far from

home and unfamiliar with their new surroundings.

In addition to paperwork and official communication, the translation team also provides support in more informal settings, such as helping families connect with local organizations, understanding base services and participating in social and community events.

"As the HAC itself was coming together, it was crucial for us to make a team for the purpose of translating," said Colon-Santos. "We knew that it is one of the most important parts of what we are, a way to communicate and

connect with others."

The initiative has not only helped improve the daily lives of non-English speaking service members and their families, but has also fostered greater understanding and cooperation across cultures within the base. As the program continues to grow, it is expected to serve as a model for other military bases with similarly diverse populations.

For Minot AFB, the translation team represents a key effort in building a more inclusive, supportive and connected base where every member can thrive.

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6	1	4	7	2	5	9	8	3
8	2	7	1	9	3	5	4	6
9	3	5	4	6	8	1	7	2
4	7	9	2	3	6	8	1	5
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2	6	1	8	5	7	4	3	9
7	9	3	6	1	4	2	5	8
1	8	6	5	7	2	3	9	4
5	4	2	3	8	9	7	6	1

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MINOT STATE UNIVERSITY – Minot State University is excited to again offer face-to-face classes at the Minot Air Force Base. There is no application fee for active-duty military personnel. Military personnel can complete their Community College of the Air Force (CCAF) degree and earn a bachelor’s degree from Minot State. For more information, contact Brigitte Mikula at 701-727-9044 or by email at Brigitte.mikula@minotstateu.edu

PARK UNIVERSITY MINOT – Your degree, Your way. Park University is enrolling now. Earn your CCAF credits, AU-ABC, and your Bachelor’s degree with PARK. Let’s maximize your military experience! Find how many credits you can get from your military experience by going to military.park.edu. and confirmed your credits Or Ask Alexa! Enable the Park University skill on your Alexa device and say “Alexa, ask Park, How many credit hours can I get from my military experience?” She’ll even tell you your graduation date! Minot AFB @ the Education Center RM 222 | 844-884-8612 | mino@park.edu PARK. YOU

TITUS & PHILEMON *Everyday adventures of Titus and Philemon and their owner Joe.*



Timothy Timm of Minot currently attends Minot State University, is a Minot High School graduate, artist, cartoonist, author and illustrator. Timm has also created other works of art that are on display in his art studio downtown located at 201 Main St. S. in Minot.

TIMMOTHY TIMM



RESTAURANT & ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE



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FB: Atypical Brewery & Barrelworks

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www.applebees.com

Badlands Restaurant & Bar

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www.bonesbbqminot.com

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www.culvers.com

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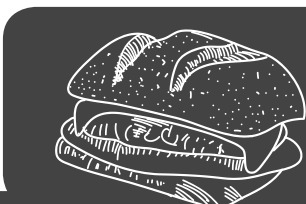
102 128th Ave NW, Minot
Phone: 701.852.2385
FB: PinksBarGrill

The Blue Rider

118 1st Avenue SE, Minot
Phone: 701.852.9050
www.theblueriderbar.com

The Starving Rooster

30 1st St. NE, Minot
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www.starvingrooster.com



Weddings for Warriors

Revel Hotel, a newly renovated hotel next to Dakota Mall, will be giving away use of the Pilot's Bar and adjoining banquet space at its venue to Airmen.

The new giveaway, **Weddings for Warriors**, will honor the men and women who serve the United States by giving away use of the Pilot's Bar and banquet space once every month.

At least one partner must be serving or must be an active member of the U.S. Air Force.

For further information, please send a message to the hotel at revelnd.com or contact Chelewa Springs or Ashley Cutler at 701-607-4557 or 701-306-3338.

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WINTER? IT'S TIME TO CELEBRATE

Patricia Stockdill

Hunker down, it's winter. Cold, windy and snow that's guaranteed to blow around.

Yup, time to hunker down.

Or maybe not.

It's actually a time to celebrate, especially at Fort Stevenson State Park near Garrison, Lewis and Clark State Park east of Williston, and Audubon National Wildlife Refuge, which laces along the southern shores of what is now thoroughly ice-encased Lake Audubon.

Both state parks celebrated their 50th anniversaries in 2024.

However, neither one is quite ready to call it quits on the year without one last celebratory send-off.

Here's what is on tap at Fort Stevenson:

Santa Claus' reindeer will make a pre-holiday stop at the park Dec. 21 at 4 p.m., described park manager Chad Trautman. The park culminates its Golden Anniversary with a fireworks display after Rudolph and Company hitch up and head back north in preparation for their busy Christmas Eve activities.

The folks over at Lewis and Clark State Park have a mystery to solve as they tie a ribbon around their anniversary celebration: Their Christmas star went missing.

The park staff has enlisted Mr. and Mrs. Claus to help in the search and they, in turn, are asking visitors for their assistance – the more help, the merrier in their efforts to return the Golden Star.

An abundance of puzzles and clues abound and they're wondering who will solve the conundrum to help bring their star back home. Activities take place Dec. 28 beginning at 10 a.m. Hot chocolate will be served at the Visitor Center after the mystery search.

Audubon National Wildlife Refuge is part of the National North Country Trail (NCT), which covers about 4,800 miles of non-motorized hiking trails across eight states, including its culmination in North Dakota.

As part of their Christmas celebration, Audubon Refuge Partners, the refuge's volunteer support organization, and members of the Central Flyway Chapter of the NCT created a self-guided holiday-

themed hike featuring "The 12 Days of Christmas" on the trail segment adjacent to refuge headquarters.

Anyone can hike the segment from Dec. 22 through Jan. 1, 2025 and enjoy entertaining and educational wildlife themes featuring each of the 12 days. For example, at the Day 6 stop along the trail – Six Geese A-laying – the display has six Canada goose decoys set up to provide a perfect winter selfie opportunity.

Central Flyway members host a guided hike along the North Country Trail segment Dec. 29 at 1:30 p.m. Meet at the log Educational Building east of the Visitor Center with hot chocolate and treats to follow, described chapter member and Audubon Refuge Partners volunteer Glee, Mayer, Minot.

Several bear paw snowshoes are available for people use at no charge if snow conditions permit, she added.

Cross Ranch State Park south of Hensler along the Missouri River is gearing up for its Dec. 31 Last Day Hike at 4 p.m. Plan to enjoy a winter campfire and hot chocolate after the evening adventure to close out 2024.

While the year-end activities at the three North Dakota state parks are free, there is a \$7 daily entrance fee. People can also purchase their 2025 annual pass, which provides entrance to all of North Dakota's state parks in the coming year.

Yes, there really are outside things to do yet this year – go celebrate at Fort Stevenson, Lewis and Clark, and Cross Ranch state parks, hike – or maybe snowshoe – and check out the 12 Days of Christmas at Audubon National Wildlife Refuge from a wild critter point of view. Enjoy hot chocolate and friends and family.

And celebrate life in North Dakota, the end of one year, and the coming of a new year.

And speaking of a new year, Fort Stevenson kicks off 2025 with its annual First Day Hike. Meet at the Visitor Center Jan. 1 at 6 p.m. to hike – or snowshoe and cross-country ski adventures if snow conditions allow –one of the park's laminated trails. It's also traditional to gather back at the Visitor Center for hot chocolate.



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WHAT'S GOING ON MINOT AFB

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- FTEC, 0730-1600, Professional Development Center
- TAP (DOL) Employment Track Workshop, 0800-1600, M&FRC
- Bootcamp, 0900, McAdoo Fitness Center
- Family Bootcamp, 1000, Turf, hosted by McAdoo Fitness Center
- Grinch Day, 1500-1700, Youth Center
- Zumba, 1630, McAdoo Fitness Center
- Friday Flicks, 1630-2200, Rockers Bar & Grill
- Single Airman End of Year Bash, 2100-2400, Rough Rider Bowling Center

TUESDAY 24

WEDNESDAY 25

- Christmas Day
- For a full listing of Christmas Day holiday facility hours, visit 5thforcesupport.com
- Holiday Special Lunch, 1030-1330, Dakota Inn Dining Facility

FRIDAY 27

- Family Bootcamp, 1000, Turf, hosted by McAdoo Fitness Center
- Family Zumba, 1000, McAdoo Fitness Center
- Tabletop Gaming, 1600-2200, Rough Rider Lanes Bowling Center
- Friday Flicks, 1630-2200, Rockers Bar & Grill

SATURDAY 28

- Zumba, 0800, McAdoo Fitness Center
- Winter STEAM Challenges, 1000, Minot AFB Library Facebook Page
- Free Bowling, 1400-2100, Rough Rider Bowling Center
- Airman Free Bowling, 2100-2400, Rough Rider Bowling Center

SATURDAY 21

- Zumba, 0800, McAdoo Fitness Center
- Free Bowling, 1400-2100, Rough Rider Bowling Center
- Airman Free Bowling, 2100-2400, Rough Rider Bowling Center

THURSDAY 26

- AFGSC Family Day
- For a full listing of Christmas Day holiday facility hours, visit 5thforcesupport.com
- AFFT, 0530, McAdoo Fitness Center
- Family Zumba, 1000, McAdoo Fitness Center
- AFFT, 1100, McAdoo Fitness Center

SUNDAY 22

MONDAY 23

- AFFT, 0530, McAdoo Fitness Center
- Moving Out of the Dorms Budget Class, 0900-1100, M&FRC
- Family Bootcamp, 1000, Turf, hosted by McAdoo Fitness Center
- Reintegration Briefing, 1000, M&FRC, Zoom Meeting
- AFFT, 1100, McAdoo Fitness Center
- Cycle, 1700, McAdoo Fitness Center
- Zumba, 1800, McAdoo Fitness Center

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