



KIRSTEN FAURIE | TIMES

## Pretty crop makes sunny photos

Sunflower crops planted in a field along 200th Ave, Mora (the golf course road) near Zimmer Feed & Grain made a beautiful backdrop for family photos. This year the flowers were in peak bloom near the end of July. The flowers are planted by Don Olson and others who grow sunflowers to be used in Smude brand sunflower oil and microwave popcorn made in Pierz. To give people a place where they can take pictures without trespassing or harming the crop, the Olson family often places a hay wagon and sign at an easily accessible point on the field edge.

# KICKIN': 'I didn't know how far I'd get' — Retiree discovers new passion in martial arts

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he didn't have anything to prove here, and he knew his limitations," he said. "A lot of people don't."

Having his daughter taking classes at the same time was a huge help.

"Miss Becky has always been two or three belts ahead of me, so she would teach me at home," Molin said. In addition to Becky, Molin's son Mike and daughter Brook, along with her two children, practice Tae Kwon Do.

"I was excited when he started because he had been talking about it for quite a while," Becky Molin said in a text message. "I knew that I would get to be his teacher, and I was humored by that as well!"

But beginning did not come without its challenges. For one thing, Molin lacked flexibility; his roundhouse kick — a maneuver where the kicker's leg usually ends up almost parallel with the floor — was only about a foot off the ground. His other challenge? Handedness.

"Tae Kwon Do is basically a right-handed sport, and I'm left-handed," Molin said, with Ziegler adding that Evolution Tae Won Do is changing its curriculum to include instruction for different handedness.

Molin dedicated himself to the sport and earned his black belt in three years. Achieving this, however, involved more than just mastering that roundhouse kick. At each level in earning a new belt,

Tae Kwon Do students are tested on kicking, demonstrating proper hand patterns, breaking and sparring. They are also quizzed on their knowledge, including parts of the body, the history of Tae Kwon Do and terminology — much of it in the Korean language. Tests are cumulative, meaning that students are assessed not only on new knowledge, but everything they have learned since they started practicing the sport.

Although physically fit when he started, two years into his practice Molin suffered a minor setback.

"Earl called me up and said, 'I won't be in class tonight or tomorrow because I had a heart attack,'" Ziegler said. Three stents and a short hospital stay later, Molin was back in class.

"I went in the hospital on a Sunday," Molin said.

"And he was back here on Tuesday night," Ziegler said, who waited until Molin brought in a doctor's note to ensure he was safe to participate.

"I showed up on that Tuesday night, and I couldn't play," Molin said. "But one week later, I got the doctor's note."

He credits Tae Kwon Do — and especially Ziegler — with helping him bounce back quickly.

"Master Steve always made it very clear that nothing is given; you've got to earn it. And you make mistakes," he said. "If it wasn't for him, I wouldn't be here."

Now that he is a second-degree black belt, Molin assists with teaching younger students, some-

thing he enjoys. He also appreciates the camaraderie among the people at Evolution.

"It's like a family," Molin said. "If something goes haywire, you've got people who will stand beside you, talk you through things."

Three years ago, something did go haywire. While Molin was in Big Lake one day, the Molins had a fire at their home. When he made it back to his residence, Molin said, "Master Steve was already there."

The funds from Evolution's annual "break-a-thon" — an event where students get sponsorships to break boards — went to the Molins that year.

Because he has a "summertime job" testing aggregate for various gravel pits, Molin can't make it to the Evolution Tae Kwon Do as much as he would like. When winter comes, though, he'll be back with more regularity.

"I got to my second black belt, which I was surprised about. I still weigh going for my third. It depends on how physically demanding it is. I've got arthritis, aches and pains," Molin said. "If I don't get to the third one, I'm happy, because I've gotten farther than I ever thought I could."

Earning belts, though, was never the goal for Molin.

"I didn't know how far I'd get," he said. "I didn't know what I was capable of doing. I didn't do this with the intent to be the best, earn belts or win competitions: I did this for me. All my life I did things for everybody else. This, I did for me."

# Drought increases risk of fire on the farm

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Farms present many fire risks, and especially during drought it is critical to pay attention to these risks and take steps to mitigate them. An awareness of potential fire hazards on your farm as well as a plan to address them are key components in protecting your farm and your people. While these tips are particularly useful in times of drought (and increased fire risk), it's also helpful to keep them in mind all year and in all weather patterns.

### FIRE RISK: PEOPLE

The people in and around your farm—and their actions—may put your farm at risk for a fire. Make sure any tasks being performed that involve open flame, high heat, or flying sparks are completed by people who have experience with the task. In addition, ensure they are doing their work away from flammable materials, in a safe, well-ventilated area, and with a fire extinguisher nearby. Lastly, smoking around the farm should be discouraged, especially in areas with flammable materials and/or a lot of dust.

### FIRE RISK: EQUIPMENT

Farm equipment presents various fire risks. Improperly maintained equipment may send out sparks, overheat, or have an electrical malfunction. Properly maintaining equipment and having a fire extinguisher in every tractor and combine will help reduce fire risk. Additionally, be mindful of the conditions you are working in; dry field material can easily ignite from heavy friction and/or high heat. Also be aware of situations with heavy dust, which is also at risk of igniting.

### FIRE RISK: FACILITIES

The various buildings, barns, and bins around the farm can also pose fire risks. Like with equipment, proper and regular maintenance are crucial in reducing fire risk.

In older buildings especially, electrical wiring and hookups should be checked, and necessary fixes and replacements made. Storage areas for flammable materials should be kept cool and well-ventilated. Facilities should also be cleaned regularly to decrease dust and other dry residue that may catch fire easily. Fire extinguishers should be kept nearby at several locations around the farm.

### MITIGATING FIRE RISK

As stated above, fire extinguishers are critical on the farm to reduce fire risk. Being able to respond to fire situation quickly is key to preventing spread of the flames, especially in very dry conditions. Speaking of response, having an action plan in place should a fire occur is also crucial. Action plans should include emergency shut-off procedures, evacuation plans, and strategies for protecting livestock.

Having a clear plan will allow you to respond quickly, should a fire occur on your farm. Lastly, being a responsible manager of your people, equipment, and facilities will keep your fire risk low.

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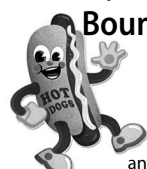
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