

# 'STRONGER TOGETHER'

Nonprofit founder invites F-M business leaders to discuss urban-rural collaboration, **BUSINESS**

# The Forum

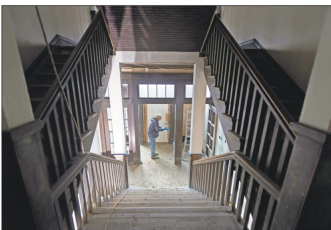
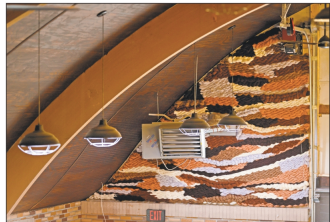
OF FARGO-MOORHEAD



SATURDAY EDITION

SATURDAY, JULY 3, 2021

►►► [INFORUM.COM](http://INFORUM.COM)



Photos by David Samson / The Forum

Clockwise from top left: Decorative roving by Libbie Perleberg covering the south wall, the building's original Lady Liberty statue, the stairwell that is likely to stir memories for visitors and the school's old fire escape offer unique touches to the new interior design in the former Nome Schoolhouse building.

## Nome is where the art is

Fiber artists transform ND schoolhouse into wool house

By **Tammy Swift**  
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Nome, N.D.

A beer salesman is delivering cases of beer and White Claw to the former Nome Schoolhouse, where a major renovation is underway. Contractors' trucks line the front parking lot, a giant blue construction dumpster sits off to the side and many windows are still boarded up.

"What is this place, a museum?" the salesman asks

Chris Armbrust as she holds the door open for him. When Armbrust informs him it will be a combination fiber-arts center, event center and boutique hotel, he looks amused. When she tells him they already have reservations from around the world to attend their fiber retreats, he smirks a little.

"So people are going to come all this way to be in Nome, N.D.?" he says, his voice barely hiding the sarcasm.

Armbrust's smile never wavers. She and business

partner Teresa Perleberg are used to the doubters. Since the fiber artists/business owners first launched plans to buy the derelict Nome Schoolhouse three years ago and give it new life, they've bumped into skepticism in everyone from lenders to engineers.

The naysayers don't understand that fiber arts have bloomed into big business. Fueled by visual platforms like Instagram, many young DIYers are embracing fiber arts like

**NOME:** Page A10

## Investigation confirms ex-bishop abused 2 boys

Middle school renamed after accusations deemed credible

By **April Baumgarten**  
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FARGO — A former Fargo bishop sexually abused two children in the 1960s when he was a priest in Michigan, church leaders said.

The accusations against former Bishop James Sullivan have been deemed credible by Catholic officials, the Fargo Diocese said in a statement issued Friday, July 2. An investigation found that Sullivan sexually groomed and inappropriately touched two boys when he was a priest living at the Church of the Resurrection Parish in Lansing, Michigan, according to a news release issued Friday by the Lansing Diocese.



**Bruce Crummy / The Forum**  
Fargo Diocese Bishop James Sullivan is seen in retirement June 2, 2005.

the reports concerning Bishop Sullivan, and I am sure the faithful of the Diocese of Fargo share in my disappointment," Fargo Bishop John Folda said. "I ask that we join in prayers

"I am saddened by **ABUSE:** Page A5



**Michael Vosburg / Forum Photo Editor**  
Sullivan Middle School, seen Friday, July 2, in south Fargo has been renamed to Sacred Heart Middle School. School officials are working to change signage.

## NDSU president's departure 'stings,' local leaders say



**April Baumgarten / The Forum**  
North Dakota State University President Dean Bresciani, right, attends class with electrical engineering student Robert Weisz as part of the Shadow a Student Challenge Wednesday, Oct. 23, 2019, in a Sudro Hall classroom.

### Higher ed chair defends decision as fair

By **April Baumgarten**  
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FARGO — News that the state higher education board asked North Dakota State University President Dean Bresciani to step down left several business and education leaders surprised and disappointed, though one board official defended the process as fair.

The State Board of Higher Education received several letters

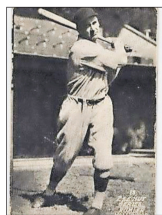
of support for Bresciani in the days leading up to a Tuesday, June 29, vote that asked the university head to leave the position by the end of 2022. Bresciani will continue at NDSU as a distinguished professor in human sciences and education after he steps down.

Erica Solberg, a former student board member whose last meeting was Tuesday, was the lone dissenting vote to the board's decision.

Former board chair Nick Hacker, who remains a member, acknowledged receiving letters in support of Bresciani from former NDSU Student Body President Matthew Friedmann, local Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Shannon Full and Steve Swiontek, who served as a co-chair of the NDSU Foundation's largest fundraising campaign in history.

**BRESCIANI:** Page A6

### INSIDE TODAY'S FORUM



**LIFE:** Minot provided opportunities to unjustly blacklisted MLB players.  
**PAGE D2**

## Striving for herd immunity

ND county meets Biden's COVID-19 vaccination goal, state data shows

By **Jeremy Turley**  
Forum News Service  
**BISMARCK** — Over the last six months, the pace of COVID-19 vaccinations in North Dakota has slowed from a sprint to a crawl as demand for

the shot leveled off.

Fifty-two of the state's 53 counties trail the nationwide adult one-dose vaccination rate of 67%, according to the North Dakota Department of Health's vaccine

dashboard. Dickey County, which lies south of Jamestown, is the exception.

With a 70.7% one-dose vaccination rate

**VACCINES:** Page A9



### Today's weather

Mostly Sunny Details, B12

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Opinion..... B4-5  
Sports..... B1-3

## FARMLAND FOR SALE

- SALE PENDING:** Clay County, MN Farmland, 240+- acres NW of Ulen, MN
- SALE PENDING:** Norman County, MN Farmland, 320+- acres NW of Ulen, MN
- SALE PENDING:** Clay County, MN, 10 acre building site NW of Ulen, MN
- SALE PENDING:** Norman County Farmland, 220+- acres SW of Twin Valley, MN.
- SALE PENDING:** Pennington County, MN Farmland, 148+- acres Southeast of Thief River Falls, MN
- SOLD:** Barnes County Farmland 134.6+- acres NW of Tower City, ND currently enrolled in CRP.
- SOLD:** Sargent County Farmland, 200.8+- acres SE of Rutland, ND.



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BRIEF

**Third crash in 2 days near GF airport results in death**

GRAND FORKS — A multiple-vehicle crash Friday morning, July 2, on U.S. Highway 2 in a construction zone about three miles west of Grand Forks resulted in one death and multiple injuries.

It was the third crash in just two days near the intersection of Highway 2 and Airport Road, after two incidents occurred

in a two-hour span there Thursday afternoon.

Friday's crash occurred shortly after 7:30 a.m. Among the vehicles was a semi, and authorities say an ancillary crash happened nearby at a railroad crossing shortly after the pileup. Grand Forks County Emergency Management Director Kari Goetz confirmed the fatality Friday morning. She said the number of vehicles involved could be up to 12; later, the chief deputy of the Grand Forks

Sheriff's Office said it was still difficult in the early stages of the investigation to determine how many cars were involved. Friday morning's crash came after two multi-car crashes were reported within hours of each other Thursday at or near the same location, where eastbound and westbound traffic are sharing the normal eastbound lanes. Both crashes involved vehicles that rear-ended each other. One minor injury was reported.

**ABUSE**

From Page A1

for healing and continue in our resolve and efforts to protect those whom we serve."

Sullivan did not face any credible allegations when he served as a bishop in Fargo from 1985 to 2002.

Still, his name will be added to the Fargo Diocese's list of clergy who have been credibly accused of sexually abusing children. He also was added to the Lansing Diocese list. Sullivan is the 32nd clergy member added to Fargo's list, and the 55th one for North Dakota.

"Bishop Sullivan's actions were gravely immoral, deeply scandalous and betrayed both the trust of the Catholic community within the Diocese of Lansing and, more significantly, the faith placed in him by the victims and their families to whom we say: 'This should not have happened to you and we are profoundly sorry that it ever did,'" Lansing Diocese spokesman David Kerr said in a statement. Sullivan is the only North Dakota bishop who has faced sexual abuse allegations that have been deemed credible.

The Lansing Diocese launched an investigation in July 2020 into Sullivan after the Michigan attorney general's office received a report of abuse against Sullivan. The first boy was 12 years old when Sullivan inappropriately touched the child and had "uninvited sexualized conversations" with the boy over a two-year period, according to the Lansing Diocese.

He also inappropriately touched a boy in 1966 who was 11 or 12, the Lansing Diocese said.

The Fargo Diocese was made aware of the investigation last year, spokesman Paul Braun said. When asked why the diocese didn't alert the public to the investigation earlier, Braun said: "The accused was deceased and there were no minors to protect, and so there was ample time to provide due process and complete a thorough investigation."

Sullivan served as an auxiliary bishop in Lansing from 1972 to 1985,

when he left for the Fargo position. He died June 12, 2006, in Fargo from complications of Alzheimer's disease, according to news archives.

He was ordained as a priest by the Lansing Diocese in 1955. In Michigan, he served as a priest in Flint, Lansing and St. Joseph, and was a private secretary for former Lansing bishops Joseph Albers and Alexander Zaleski.

**'We can't honor him'**

Sullivan Middle School, which is part of the St. John Paul II Catholic Schools network in Fargo, was named after Sullivan. Due to the allegations, Sullivan Middle School has been renamed Sacred Heart Middle School, the Fargo Diocese said Friday. The new name emphasizes a priority to protect and guide children through "safe environment" protocols and "circle of grace" education and training, according to a newsletter sent to students' parents.

The name change is effective immediately, said Mike Hagstrom, president of St. John Paul II Catholic Schools. Sullivan's portrait has been taken down, and the school is working to change signage. Other changes will include replacing sports jerseys. "We can't honor him," Hagstrom said.

It's unclear how long the changes could take and how much they will cost, but Hagstrom said he believes the school will be ready by Aug. 24, the

first day of class. "It's just going to be one day at a time," he said.

The school at 2720 32nd Ave. S. was dedicated Sept. 2, 1998. It replaced St. Anthony's Middle School, which was at 719 9th St. S. St. Anthony's has since closed.

Hagstrom said Sullivan did a lot of good. The bishop oversaw the formation of Fargo's Catholic schools network. He also improved the financial condition of the Fargo Diocese and parishes, according to his obituary.

He started the Walk with Christ for Life in 1992, an annual procession in downtown Fargo where participants pray to end abortion. The tradition of the procession continues, with the last one being held Oct. 4.

Still, the Lansing Diocese investigation was thorough and confirmed the allegations, Hagstrom acknowledged. "I'm really horrified that abuse occurred," he said.

If you or someone you know has been sexually abused by a clergy member, the abuse can be reported to local law enforcement authorities. The Fargo Police Department phone number is 701-235-4493.

The Fargo Diocese also can be contacted at 701-356-7945 or victimassistance@fargodiocese.org. Any report of sexual abuse by a clergy member can be made at Report-BishopAbuse.org or 800-276-1562.

Readers can reach Forum reporter April Baumgarten at 701-241-5417 or follow her on Twitter @aprilbaumaway.



**GOD BLESS AMERICA**

**REMEMBER THE 56**

*CELEBRATE THEM ON INDEPENDENCE DAY JULY 4TH*

Of those 56 who signed the Declaration of Independence, nine died of wounds or hardships during the war. Five were captured and imprisoned, in each case with brutal treatment. Several lost wives, sons, or entire families. One lost his 13 children. Two wives were brutally treated. All were at one time or another the victims of manhunts and driven from their homes. Twelve signers had their homes completely burned. Seventeen lost everything they owned. Yet not one defected or went back on his pledged word.

The 56 signers of the Declaration of Independence proved by their every deed that they made no idle boast when they composed the most magnificent curtain line in history. "And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor."

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