

NORTHERN VIEW

Marriages, Ukraine and happiness

I'm thinking about Ukraine as I write this. I'll explain later.



CHUCK HAGA

The bride was beautiful, the groom handsome. Both smiled throughout the ceremony, aiming the warmest smiles at

each other. In a lightly decorated meeting room in a downtown Grand Forks building, they held hands and exchanged vows, and after I declared them husband and wife they kissed. The wedding party, seven of us and a dog, smiled and cheered and headed to a table where a cake and a small bottle of champagne waited.

Yes, I declared them husband and wife, and as the officiant I signed the wedding documents. It was all done properly under the authority granted me by the Universal Life Church.

It was my second stint at officiating a wedding. I'm delighted to report that the first couple I married, nearly 12 years ago, remain married. Even better, they remain happy and in love.

So, I'm two for two, batting 1.000 in the marital officiating game. I made a point of stressing that to this second couple when they asked me to help them tie the knot. I've been proud of my spotless record and wanted assurances from them that they were serious about spending their lives together and being happy.

Tracy, the bride in that earlier wedding, was a friend and former housemate when she asked me to preside over her marriage ceremony. As I told the crowd at Bryant Lake Bowl in Minneapolis, where the vows were spoken over the crash of strikes and spares, I must have asked Tracy to marry me a half dozen times during the years we and another friend shared an apartment. She was much younger, way prettier and not at all taken by my charms, and she always laughed it off, knowing I was kidding. Mostly.

My heart jumped, though, when she called me one day in 2011 and said, "Chuck! I want you to marry me!"

There was a pause, and then: "... to this great guy named Johnny!"

She persuaded me she was serious, that she and Johnny preferred being married by someone they knew, someone they knew cared about them.

I said OK, but I had conditions. Most importantly, I wanted assurances from her parents that they were OK with such an arrangement. They were, so I set about getting myself ordained over the internet. It cost me about \$20 but no classes or lessons at all, and soon the mail brought a glossy certificate identifying me as an ordained minister of the Universal Life Church. I've since learned that several friends also are ordained in

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DNR commissioner pitches bonding plan

By Brad Dokken
Grand Forks Herald

ST. PAUL — How Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz's "public works" borrowing proposal for the Department of Natural Resources fares among lawmakers remains to be seen, but the need for the recommended funding definitely is there, DNR Commissioner Sarah Strommen told the Grand Forks Herald this week.

With a state budget surplus pegged this week at \$9.3 billion, the governor's proposal represents an opportunity to make a "once-in-a-generation" investment in



Michael Achterling / Grand Forks Herald

Sarah Strommen, commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, speaks May 15 during the opening ceremony of the 2021 Minnesota Governor's Fishing Opener on the shore of Otter Tail Lake.

DNR infrastructure and priorities, the commissioner said.

"It's an opportunity to do a couple things," Strommen said

in a phone interview. "One, to recognize how important our natural

resources and outdoor spaces and outdoor recreation experiences are to Minnesotans, and also to recognize that we haven't seen significant investment in those resources and spaces and experiences in quite some time."

Unveiled in January, Walz's \$2 billion bonding bill for capital improvement projects around the state includes \$316.8 million in proposed spending for the DNR.

The proposal includes \$221.4 million in capital bonding money for various construction projects, along with \$81.5 million in supplemental funding for DNR-managed public lands to address climate change impacts and an additional \$13.35 million to address effects of the

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Eric Hylden / Grand Forks Herald

Janet Holt, owner of Soholt Bakery in Mayville, stocks the front counter before opening Wednesday.

Bismarcks, doughnuts and coffee, anyone?

Mayville bakery opens under new owner, same recipes

By Ingrid Harbo
Grand Forks Herald

Mayville, N.D.

A typical day at Soholt Bakery begins at midnight. Dozens of doughnuts, loaves of bread and sweet rolls are waiting to be baked. For the team of three employees at the Mayville bakery, it is just the start of a long, busy day.

By 6 a.m., most of the baking is done, and Janet

Holt, her son, Tanner Holt, and employee Jessica Estrada are doing the final preparations for the busy day ahead — frosting the last doughnuts, slicing the final loaves of bread and filling display cases. It is a routine that is still new to the three of them, but one that they have started to get the hang of in the week and a half the bakery has been open.

After more than two

"I could not imagine the support that we received last week. It was really, really incredible."

JANET HOLT

months closed, Soholt Bakery reopened on March 7 under the ownership of Janet Holt. The former owners, Tom and Rick Soholt, retired in December 2021. With a 104-year history in Mayville

and with doughnuts that have become popular across the region, Janet knows she is continuing a legacy.

"I'm hoping that we can fill those shoes, or at least begin to put them on," said Janet.

She said the community support during her first week running the bakery was unbelievable.

"I could not imagine the

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North Valley receives \$4.8M from state for education projects

By Ingrid Harbo
Grand Forks Herald

GRAFTON, N.D. — The North Valley Career and Technology Center was awarded \$4,752,290 in matching funds by the North Dakota State Board for Career and Technical Education for an expansion project at the school's main location in Grafton, as well as three other projects

at member school districts. With local contributions, the grant will fully fund the \$9.4 million project.

Mike Hanson, director of the North Valley CTC, was at the meeting in Bismarck where grant recipients were announced. He described it as "stressful."

"I was very confident in most of our proj-

ect, but I was a little concerned they would cut out some spots in it, and those cuts would have been detrimental to our overall project," he said. "I was very, very elated when I heard the news that we were fully funded."

The state allocation will fund a 11,500-square-foot expansion of the North

Valley CTC facility in Grafton, a greenhouse renovation in Park River, new career and tech education classrooms and a greenhouse in Minto and a new satellite location of North Valley CTC at Cavalier Public Schools, which will serve all of Pembina County.

The expansion at the main location in Grafton will create space for

automated manufacturing, with machine tooling equipment, robotic welders and CNC mills and lathes.

"Manufacturing is a huge piece of northeastern North Dakota," he said. "It's been something we've heard a lot from the industry, that they need a lot more help."

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PROJECTS

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Classrooms, equipment and labs for precision agriculture and food processing also will be part of the expansion.

The grant required a dollar-for-dollar local match, and the state would potentially match up to \$10 million. In total, the North Valley CTC projects will cost \$9.4 million, with half the cost covered by the \$4.8 million in state allocations, and the remaining covered by district funds and donations from local businesses, community organizations and community members.

In Park River and Grafton, the local match comes primarily from Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Funds, and in Minto, North Valley CTC general funds. In Cavalier, most of the local match was raised by a fundraising team. The school district's goal was to raise \$1,305,500, and in just two weeks of fundraising, \$1.6 million was pledged toward the project.

"We really had this overwhelming response, and we put forth a good chunk from our school's own reserve fund," said Jeff Manley, superintendent at Cavalier Public Schools. "Anything over our goal

is going to be directly invested into the project, equipment or supplies."

The Cavalier satellite location portion of the project will make Cavalier Public Schools a member district of North Valley CTC. The state money and community contributions will fund the construction of four new classrooms and a greenhouse at the Cavalier school.

State funding comes from the Career and Technical Education Capital Projects Fund, a grant opportunity provided by the 67th Legislative Assembly to increase access to career and technical education by building or expanding existing career and technical education centers. The grant to North Valley CTC was one of 13 awarded this week. Others in the region included a \$10 million grant to the Career Impact Academy planned for Grand Forks and a \$1.2 million grant to the Lake Area Career and Technology Center in Devils Lake.

"I believe it's a huge job of the schools and career and tech centers to retain our youth in our region so we can help fill the workforce. That's the reason legislators wanted to invest in current tech ed," said Hanson. "It's a major piece of what we're missing in the workforce to make these industries thrive."

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the internet church, as this has become a rather common way for some in the younger generation to begin their married lives, for a variety of personal reasons.

Still, I told Tracy that I wanted this to be taken seriously. While I failed at marriage myself, and maybe partly because mine lasted just 17 years, I believe in the institution. It's a commitment not to be taken lightly, as they say.

I said as much to last week's celebrants, too, as I told them to love and honor each other, to listen to each other, to be tolerant and forgiving. Mostly, I said, it's about true, enduring love.

I've had reason lately to reflect on marriage, on the sharing of life's ups and downs. When I say my own marriage failed, that's not to say it was all a mistake, a waste, one great disappointment. My former wife and I have

remained close. As I've struggled recently with serious health issues, she has been the truest friend, honest and supportive, calling frequently to see how I'm doing. We don't waste time sifting over the past. What matters now is that we still care deeply for each other, and we celebrate the achievements and promise of our son and grandchildren.

On a recent visit, Marci brought a package of pictures from our wedding in 1970, thinking I might like to remember that happy time as I make my way through medical appointments and procedures. And they do make me smile: my best man, who was happy to be best man because it got him discharged from the Army a few days early; Marci's maid of honor, a treasured friend - my first sort-of girlfriend - who died tragically just a few years later. The guests, a hilarious blend of antiwar liberals and conservative fraternity brothers. The photos were taken by a

gaggle of characters - the photo staff of the Dakota Student, of which I was editor - and some are images of dear people no longer with us.

I have been looking at other pictures, images of the youth of Ukraine, including young couples getting married as they are about to separate or take up arms together. Young men in uniform touch hands with wives through windows of trains carrying them to safety.

It is one of the terrible costs of this senseless war, the interruption of hopes and dreams of a generation that came of age after the Cold War and grim, stultifying Communism. You see it in the faces of the youth of Ukraine - this was to be their time to fall in love and make lives together, to laugh with friends and travel and be free.

Their tears now are overwhelming.

Chuck Haga had a long career at the Grand Forks Herald and the Minneapolis Star Tribune before retiring in 2013. He can be contacted at crhaga@gmail.com.

BAKERY

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support that we received last week. It was really, really incredible."

Soholt bakery was opened in 1918 by Rick and Tom's grandfather, Ed Soholt. Jerome "Red" Soholt, Tom and Rick's father, and his brother, Arlin, joined the business after World War II. Tom bought the bakery in 1972, and Rick joined as a co-owner in 1984, making them the third generation of the family to run the bakery.

Janet, while not a Soholt, is loosely related to the Soholt family. She grew up in Hillsboro, and her late husband was one of the Soholt's cousins.

When Janet heard Tom and Rick were looking into retirement, she was living in Arizona, working as a nurse. She started considering buying the bakery in January 2021.

Tanner serves as the head baker at Soholt Bakery. He says his mother told him about her idea to purchase the bakery and asked him to join her there during a car ride.

"I was not really doing too much anyway, so I might as well give it a shot," he said. "That's kind of how it all started."

In July, she met with Tom and Rick to talk

about the bakery and what they hoped for its future. In Tom and Rick's final months at the bakery, Tanner came in a few times to learn their tricks of the trade. After Christmas in 2021, the bakery closed under Tom and Rick, and Janet officially took over.

After months of renovations, the bakery opened again on March 7. So far, Tom and Rick have kept coming in to help bake in the mornings.

"They're all in to make sure that we are as well-prepared as possible to continue the bakery," said Janet.

Not only will the bakery continue, but the recipes will too. On any weekday morning, the display cases are filled with the same baked goods they have been filled with since the bakery opened in 1918 - raspberry-filled Bismarcks, caramel and cinnamon rolls, cookies, cake doughnuts and freshly baked bread.

For the 104 years it has been open, the bakery has used Soholt family recipes, a tradition that Janet intends to continue.

"All the recipes that they use, we are going to continue, at least for now," she said. "We have several things that we are going to bring forward, but we're not going to change anything that they have done."

Her ideas for new recipes include croissants, muffins, coffee cake and savory breakfast foods, like egg bites.

While the family recipes remain the same, the bakery has seen physical changes in the months since it changed owners. Under the Soholt's, the bakery had always been just a bakery, with a counter in the front, and the bakery in the back. Now, the space in the shop has probably doubled, says Janet. She knocked down a wall between the bakery and the office space next door, and converted it into a seating area, with tables, chairs and a self-serve coffee bar. The front windows have tables made from shelves of the bakery's old oven. Everything received a fresh coat of paint.

"People have loved the concept of being able to just kind of hang out and enjoy their treat," said Janet.

Since opening last week, the doughnut demand has risen.

"Every morning, we've been making more and more doughnuts than we made beforehand," Tanner said.

Each tray holds approximately three dozen doughnuts.

"At the end of the week, we did five trays of each doughnut, and

that's doing this all by ourselves in the morning" he said.

At 6:30 a.m., the doors open for the day. It doesn't take long for customers to start filing in.

The first two in the bakery on Wednesday morning, March 16, were Kelly Archambeau of Mayville and Gloria Balboa of Portland. They get coffee together most mornings.

"... Now that they reopened, we come here because it's local. You have to support the local guy," said Archambeau.

Soon after came Adele Aasen, who drove 18 miles from Hillsboro to grab Bismarcks for her husband and carrot cake for herself.

"It's worth the trip," she said.

By 7 a.m., just 30 minutes after opening, nearly a dozen customers had stopped by the bakery for some doughnuts, coffee or sweet treats to go.

In these first few days since the bakery reopened, doughnuts are completely sold out

by the 1:30 p.m. closing time.

"The first few days I thought 'Oh, this is just the novelty of it,' and I think there's a little bit of that," said Janet. "People come in just to see what we're all about, and I'm hoping that it continues. I'd love to make it a destination."

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