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Contributed / Women Empowering Women

Lay Health Ambassadors during training, Fowzia Adde, Alondra Lopez, Monica Soto, Iiulia Kravchuk

Breaking healthcare barriers for women in western North Dakota

Women Empowering Women and Immigrant Development Center initiative boosts preventive healthcare for low-income women in ND, tackling language barriers with Lay Health Ambassadors.

BY MANUEL HOLGUIN JR
The Dickinson Press

DICKINSON

Women Empowering Women (WEW), an organization located in Dickinson, has partnered with the Immigrant Development Center in Fargo to launch an initiative aimed at improving healthcare access for women aged 18-44 in western North Dakota. This collaboration seeks to address healthcare challenges within communities characterized by language barriers, limited knowledge of the healthcare system and cultural distinctions.

The initiative's primary objectives include enhancing preventive healthcare services and promoting healthcare literacy among low-income and minority women in the region. By removing language and cultural barriers, the organizations aim to empower women to make informed healthcare decisions.

Since 2020, WEW has actively addressed the challenges of accessing healthcare for women with language or cultural barriers. This initiative began with Health Fairs and Women's Health Circles, expanding in 2023 with the introduction of five Lay Health Ambassadors in the Dickinson community.

Iiulia Kravchuk, working with the Ukrainian community, finds navigating the healthcare system challenging due to cultural differences. "It's different and complicated here compared to what we are used to," Kravchuk explained.

Ambassador Jana Jenkins, who was born in West Africa and has lived in East Africa and Uganda, brings a unique perspective to the program. "While I'm not fluent in many African languages, I use tools like Google Translate. Most Africans I meet have a good grasp of English, but they need help understanding medical terms and the healthcare system," Jenkins explained. "My role extends beyond translation; it's about making healthcare less intimidating and encouraging them to ask questions."

Jenkins further elaborated on her approach, stating, "I start by asking basic questions like whether they have a primary doctor. Many don't, so I explain the health

AMBASSADORS on A4

CITY GOVERNMENT

Dickinson City Commission approves grants to support law enforcement

BY MANUEL HOLGUIN JR
The Dickinson Press

DICKINSON — Tuesday's City Commission meeting encompassed discussions on critical matters, including updates on the upcoming State of the City and State of the State Addresses, grants supporting law enforcement officer retention and wellness, the appointment of a new Public Works Director, and a significant concession liquor license decision related to Legacy Square.

STATE OF THE STATE AND CITY ADDRESSES

Mayor Scott Decker spoke about the importance of the State of the City Address scheduled for Feb. 1 at 11:30 am at the Astoria, saying, "We're going to talk on our financial standing as a city, how much debt we have, how our retirement funds stand, revenues, and during the panel, the discussion will be about the property tax initiative."

Decker also highlighted key projects for 2024, including the museum expansion and ongoing collaborations with the Federal government, such as Paterson Lake and the Dickinson-Theodore Roosevelt Regional Airport terminal.

In regard to the State of the State Address on Jan. 23 at 10:00 am, Mayor Decker expressed his appreciation for the choice of Dickinson as the location.

"I think it's great that the Governor has chosen Dickinson as the location for his visit," Decker said. He emphasized Dickinson's significance as a regional center for shopping and hospitality and its role as a hub for the energy-producing sector, particularly referencing the Prairie Horizon Hydrogen project.

BACK THE BLUE GRANT

Police Chief Joe Cianni discussed two grants aimed at law enforcement. The "Back the Blue" grant, totaling $61,742 from North Dakota legislators, aims to address law enforcement recruitment and

GRANTS on A4

Contributed / City of Dickinson YouTube

A photo of city commissioners and the Southwest Giving Hearts Day Group was taken during the Jan. 9 commission meeting.

Dickinson Press File Photo.

North Dakota Stockmen's Association to award ten students with scholarships this year.

North Dakota Stockmen's Foundation offers scholarships to support cattle industry education

BY HARRISON L. PARRISH
The Dickinson Press

DICKINSON, ND — The North Dakota Stockmen's Foundation, established in 2008, aims to support the beef industry by providing scholarships and assistance to cattle farmers.

The Foundation, through various donors, has awarded over 60 scholarships to students and helped cattle farmers affected by natural disasters for more than a decade.

In the upcoming year, the Foundation will continue its philanthropic tradition by offering five pairs of scholarships to students interested in cattle industry education at North Dakota universities. The deadline for these scholarships is Mar 1, 2024.

The first pair of scholarships is the Endowment Scholarships, available to students pursuing degrees related to the beef industry within North Dakota universities. Eligibility includes North Dakota residency, high school seniors, or

SCHOLARSHIPS on A2

Stark County Commission reinstates leadership in 2024

Key agenda items include leadership reinstatements, county roadwork plans, Sheriff's report and fire restrictions implementation.

BY HARRISON L. PARRISH
The Dickinson Press

James B. Miller / The Dickinson Press

Stark County Commission room.

DICKINSON, ND — In the first Stark County Commission meeting of 2024, the agenda encompassed several significant topics, commencing with the unanimous reinstatement of Chairman Dean Franchuk and Vice-Chairman Neal Messer, both receiving high praise from fellow commissioners.

Al Heiser, Stark County Road Superintendent, discussed ongoing road work, particularly focused on rural access road improvements south of Richardton. The department plans to utilize scree, a type of broken rock, to repair potholes and enhance road surfaces, with further grading and packing scheduled when ground moisture permits.

The Road Department aims to conclude these tasks before entering the winter maintenance phase, which entails comprehensive vehicle maintenance, including brake replacement and fluid checks, to ensure optimal functionality for the forthcoming spring workload.

Sheriff Corey Lee received a Certificate of Recognition for his five years of "exceptional service" in maintaining law and order in Stark County. Subsequently, he presented an overview of the Stark County Sheriff's Department activities in December 2023.

MONTHLY STARK COUNTY SHERIFF'S NUMBERS

In December, the Sheriff's Department responded to 1,486 service calls, an increase from the previous year. They conducted 189 traffic stops, an increase from the prior year's statistics. K-9 units were deployed 32 times for various purposes, including vehicle checks, property drug searches, and arrests.

There were 24 reported accidents in December, with one fatality, three hit-and-run incidents, two injuries, and 18 accidents resulting in property damage. The department conducted 314 public relations stops, more than double the previous year's count.

Additionally, they handled 35 transports, including prisoner, court, medical, juvenile, assisting, and mental health transports. The Civil Division served 157 papers, comprising subpoenas, civil papers (including divorce and court summons), and criminal papers. The Sheriff's Department also made 91 arrests, 63 of which were warrant-related.

Another key topic addressed in the meeting was the implementation of fire restrictions in

COMMITTEE on A4

Dickinson Press File Photo
Press Photo by Ashley Martin Al Heiser, Stark County road superintendent speaks at a Stark County Commission meeting on Jan 4.

COMMITTEE
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Stark County, aligning with statewide fire restrictions to ensure uniform regulations across the state.

The complete committee meeting will be available for on-demand viewing on the Stark County official Youtube page, offering convenience to those interested in reviewing the proceedings.

Photo courtesy of Corey Lee for Stark County Sheriff
Sheriff Corey Lee received a Certificate of Recognition for five years of faithful service as the Stark County Sheriff.

AMBASSADORS
CONTINUED from A1

system and discuss insurance options. A significant concern is that they often don't seek preventive care and only visit doctors when extremely ill."

Ray Ann Kilen, president of WEW, emphasized the pivotal role trust plays in these efforts. "We're in our fourth year of working with the Hispanic community now, and this is the first time we've implemented a health ambassador model," Kilen said. "Building trust with the community and the system is paramount. We've been trying to reach the African American community for a couple of years, and it's all about fostering that trust and understanding."

Alondra Lopez, the ambassador working with the Hispanic community, highlighted some specific challenges. "Many in the Hispanic community self-medicate due to a lack of insurance or access to affordable medication. Mental health is another significant issue; it's often seen as a taboo, and there's a fear of being labeled as 'crazy' or facing consequences like losing custody of children," Lopez shared. She also mentioned that there's a reliance on natural remedies over conventional medicine, which can be challenging to address.

This new proposal extends previous efforts, focusing on reaching non-English speaking and foreign-born African American women. The organization has established strong ties with the Hispanic community and has made significant progress connecting with the African American community and other low-income women.

THE PROJECT ENCOMPASSES SEVERAL KEY COMPONENTS:

• Community Education: Organizing outreach events to educate women on the importance of preventive health screenings, facilitated by lay health ambassadors from the Hispanic and foreign-born African American communities.

• Translation Services: Focusing on translating content that addresses comprehensive health needs, ensuring cultural appropriateness and relevance.

• Healthcare Navigation Assistance: Help navigate healthcare services, including translation and transportation, when necessary.

• Training of Lay Health Ambassadors: Empowering individuals to provide ongoing support, assist in navigating the healthcare system, and aid in data collection.

• Developing Resources for Providers: Creating materials to help healthcare providers overcome barriers and adopt more inclusive practices.

The program targets various health topics, including cancer screenings, heart health, mental health, diabetes prevention, and more. The initiative aims to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate care by expanding collaboration with new partners. Regular data collection and analysis will monitor the project's effectiveness in promoting women's health.

The significance of the program is underscored by its impact on the community's health, as Jenkins articulated, "And I think the reason I'm excited about this program is I believe it will allow more people, especially new Americans, to access healthcare. And I think that will improve the overall health of our community."

Kilen added, "By helping them navigate their day-to-day needs, we're not just supporting their health but also enhancing their ability to thrive in our community."

This initiative led by Lay Health Ambassadors is a step toward ensuring that all community members, regardless of language or cultural background, can access and understand the healthcare available.

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2023-24 NORTH DAKOTA GIRLS PREP BASKETBALL

Raiders roll to win over Warwick, 84-44

Richardton-Taylor improves to 5-5 with home victory

BY GAYLON WM. PARKER
The Dickinson Press

RICHARDTON — Generally, when a team has four players in double-figures they have a solid chance at victory, and Richardton-Taylor's Raiders improved to an even-.500 with a resounding 84-44 win over Warwick at home on Monday, Jan. 8 by doing just-that. It's a second-consecutive victory for the Raiders, who now stand at 5-5 on the 2023-24 season.

The game was never in doubt as RTHS locked down on the District 4 Warriors (1-8) and held them to a remarkable 3 points in the first quarter, while taking a 19-point lead on 4 points from up-and-coming junior guard AshLynn Christensen and forward Kiera Kitzan, with 6 from Chesney Gjermundson, which included a 3-pointer.

Gaylon Wm. Parker / The Dickinson Press
Richardton-Taylor junior guard AshLynn Christensen drives the lane versus Belfield on Jan. 4. Christensen scored a team-high 18 against Warwick at home on Jan. 8 to pace the Raiders.

It was more of the same as the teams headed into the break, with the Raiders extending their lead on 18 second-quarter points and holding a 40-16 advantage at the half with nearly as many points as they would need on the night. Junior forward Jenna Schutt was steady at the free-throw line, shooting 5-of-8 in the first half, while Christensen added 5 more to her team-high 18.

Richardton-Taylor came racing out of the gate after the teams hit the floor after halftime, breaking loose for 24 points and never looking back the rest of the way. Junior forward Mariska Krank poured in 8 of her 13 points in the third period to end up in double-digits along with a shot from behind the arc for Christensen.

Guard Evelyn Kuntz scored 7 points in the final frame to wind up with 9, while Schutt scored 7 in the second half to finish off in double-digits with 12 and Kitzan dropped in 4 in the second half for 12 total.

Next-up for Richardton-Taylor will be a Tuesday, Jan. 9 home game versus Glen Ullin-Hebron in Division B/Region 3-District 5 action, which will be followed up by a district road game at Solen on Jan. 11.

For more information about prep basketball in North Dakota, please keep reading your Dickinson Press and/or visit the websites at https://ndhsaanow.com/teams/basketball-boys and https://ndhsaanow.com/teams/basketball-girls.

2023-24 NORTH DAKOTA GIRLS PREP BASKETBALL SEASON

Bowman County clobbers Nighthawks, 76-42

Raiders rout Glen Ullin-Hebron, 62-32

BY GAYLON WM. PARKER
The Dickinson Press

SOUTHWEST NORTH DAKOTA — Now that the Division B/Region 3-District 5 schedule is fully underway, the heat is officially on and the Bowman County Bulldogs bounced Hettinger-Scranton for their fifth win in the district to move to 8-1 overall on the 2023-24 season. Meanwhile, Richardton-Taylor is showing signs of significant improvement and the Raiders almost doubled-up the Glen Ullin-Hebron Bearcats, 62-32, to improve to 6-5 with a mid-table 2-2 record in DB/R3-D5.

Bulldogs 76, Nighthawks 42

In what was a dominating performance for the home-standing Bowman County team, the 'Dawgs chomped down on Hettinger-Scranton (4-5 overall, 0-2 district) and held the Nighthawks to a single-digit 7-point second quarter en route to a 33-21 halftime lead, while junior forward Raegen Honeyman raced to 11 of her team-high 18 points in the first half to pace BCHS.

Hettinger-Scranton put up a decent first-half fight as junior guard Monica Morris drained a pair of 3-pointers — on her way to a double-digit total of 14 — and classmate Laela Jensen poured in 6 of her game-high 20 points in the first half. Jensen was all over the place in the second half as well, dropping in four tres in the third and fourth quarters, but the Nighthawk offense was limited to 10 points in the third quarter and 11 in the fourth, regardless.

Bowman County, meanwhile, was as steady as a metronome, with junior forward Sophia Headley coming to life for 14 of her double-digit 16 in the second half and senior guard Jaci Fischer hitting big from behind the arc for four 3-pointers in the game, two of which came in the fourth quarter on her way to 14 points.

Six other Bulldogs got onto the scoresheet in the game, with Julie Sarsland and Landyn Gerbig scoring 7 apiece.

Next-up for BCHS will be a Jan. 11 road-trip to face DB/R3-D5 rivals Grant Co./Mott-Regent (10-3 overall, 4-0 district), while the Nighthawks will host Flasher (8-5, 4-1) on Thursday, Jan. 11.

Raiders 62, Bearcats 32

While neither team lit up the scoreboard in the first quarter, deadlocking at 9-9, the Richardton-Taylor Raiders went off for 17 points in the second and declawed the Bearcats (2-7 overall, 1-2 district) to the tune of a single-digit 6 to head into the locker rooms with a 26-15 halftime advantage.

Gaylon Wm. Parker / The Dickinson Press
Senior forward Jaci Fischer (12) scored 14 points against Hettinger-Scranton on Tuesday, Jan. 9 to help the Bulldogs improve to 5-0 in the district. Here, she goes up for a shot at home versus the Flasher Bulldogs on Dec. 15.

Junior forward Jenna Schutt and sophomore guard Chesney Gjermundson both dropped in 3-pointers in the first quarter and Mariska Krank scored 6 of her double-digit 15 in the second quarter to pace RTHS through the first half, while Cassie Christensen drained a tre and ended up with 4 points in the first half for the Bearcats.

The Raiders plundered the scoreboard for a combined 36 points in the second half, with Krank drilling a pair from behind the arc and RTHS's AshLynn Christensen continuing her recent court-dominance with 11 points in the final frame — including a 3-pointer — on her way to a game-high 20 points.

Cassie Christensen was the leading scorer for Glen Ullin-Hebron with 17, but no other Bearcat came close to double-figures.

Next-up for Richardton-Taylor will be a road-date with Solen (0-7) on Jan. 11, while the Bearcats will square off with Belfield (7-3, 4-1) at home the same day.

For more information about prep basketball in North Dakota, please keep reading your Dickinson Press and/or visit the websites at https://ndhsaanow.com/teams/basketball-boys and https://ndhsaanow.com/teams/basketball-girls.

GRANTS
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retention.

Cianni recommended using the funding for retention, proposing distributing it equally among 33 officers who did not receive a sign-on bonus, amounting to approximately $1,870 pre-tax per officer.

Regarding this grant, Mayor Decker commented, "Chief Cianni's hands are tied by legislation," confirming the plan aligns with legislative intentions.

Cianni also secured a Resiliency grant of nearly $50,000 to support the wellness of North Dakota law enforcement personnel.

"This grant will subsidize family memberships at the West River Community Center for all sworn staff and their dependents over five years," Cianni explained. He highlighted the potential long-term benefits of this initiative, saying, "I believe this will have a lasting positive impact on overall officer and family wellness."

NEW PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

City Administrator Dusty Dassinger announced the appointment of Aaron Praus as the new Public Works Director, effective Feb. 1, noting that Praus brings extensive experience and knowledge to his new role.

"His commitment to the city's infrastructure and strategic vision for the department's future aligns with our community's needs," Dassinger said.

Mayor Decker commended the thoroughness of the selection process.

"The process was possibly the most thorough some applicants, even those from out of state, have been through," Decker said. He also recognized the effort of the staff and HR in ensuring a welcoming and comprehensive interview process.

Decker agreed with Dassinger's recommendation, noting, "Mr. Praus is the individual we need in that position to continue the good work being done."

After a discussion and a call for any further questions, Decker moved for a motion to approve Praus's appointment. The Commission voted unanimously in favor.

SPUR BAR SECURES LEGACY SQUARE LIQUOR LICENSE AS SOLE BIDDER

Dassinger announced that the City received a single bid for the 2024 Concession Liquor License for Legacy Square. The Spur Bar and Lounge submitted this bid at the minimum amount of $3,000.00, a 70% reduction from the 2023 bid, which was won by JK3S, LLC, who own The Spur Bar and Lounge.

Although the bid arrived on the morning of Dec. 28, before the opening time, it was after the Dec. 27, 5 p.m. deadline. The bidding requirements allow the city to reject any bids, waive irregularities in the bidding process and accept any proposal deemed in the city's best interest by the Board of City Commissioners.

The City staff recommend approving the Spur Bar's bid.

Commissioner Jason Freidrich asked if the late submission required restarting the bid process.

City Attorney Christina Wenko explained the decision, stating, "Our code particularly states we have the right to reject any and all bids."

Wenko further clarified, "In this particular situation, it was received after [the deadline], but because it was the only bid received, I'm more comfortable moving forward with it."

The motion for approval was unanimous, concluding the Commission's decision on the matter.

For a comprehensive review of the meeting and access the full recording, interested parties can visit the City of Dickinson website.