

2026 FREE GUIDE

TO NORTH DAKOTA'S LAKE SAKAKAWEA REGION ▶▶

SAKAKAWEA

COUNTRY

EVENTS • ACCOMMODATIONS • AND MORE!



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TOWN HIGHLIGHTS • RECREATION • LOCAL FEATURES

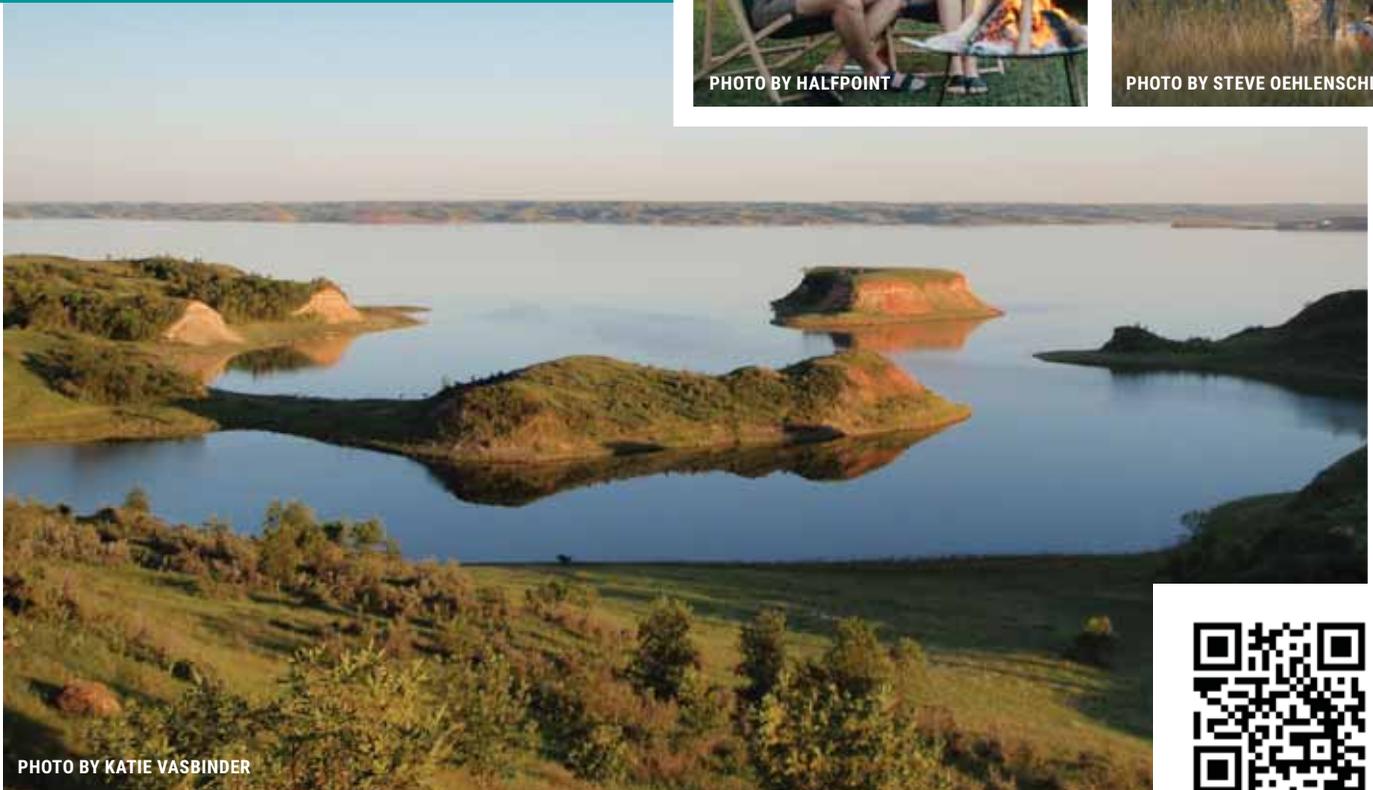


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WELCOME

from the publisher



Welcome to the Sakakawea County Visitors Guide! We are thrilled to introduce our 2026 edition, packed with expert tips on where to go and what to see in Sakakawea Country. Last year, we completely revamped the look of our guide, and included feature stories highlighting some of our communities. These stories showcase what we are most proud of, and we hope you enjoy exploring them. As you tour our area, we encourage you to support our local communities and take in all the unique experiences they have to offer during your stay!



Nestled in this beautiful region is the rugged landscape that Lewis and Clark, along with the Corps of Discovery, first explored over 200 years ago. It was here that their true adventure began, and where they met Sacagawea, who became a crucial part of

their journey westward.

Just as the Corps of Discovery experienced centuries ago, you too can immerse yourself in the rich history and adventure that Sakakawea Country has to offer. The area is home to Lake Sakakawea, a premier destination for fishing, hunting, camping and more. With 1,600 miles of shoreline, it's the perfect spot for a weekend getaway or a longer vacation, offering an abundance of recreational opportunities for visitors of all ages.

Whether you're looking to explore Native American history, learn about the historic trade and events at the confluence of the Yellowstone and Missouri rivers, or bike the Maah Daah Hey Trail in Theodore Roosevelt National Park, Sakakawea Country promises a legendary experience.

Come discover the region and take a step back in time, retracing the path of legends who shaped history.



Kelsey Majeske
Publisher
 NorDak North Publications
 Central NorDak Publishing

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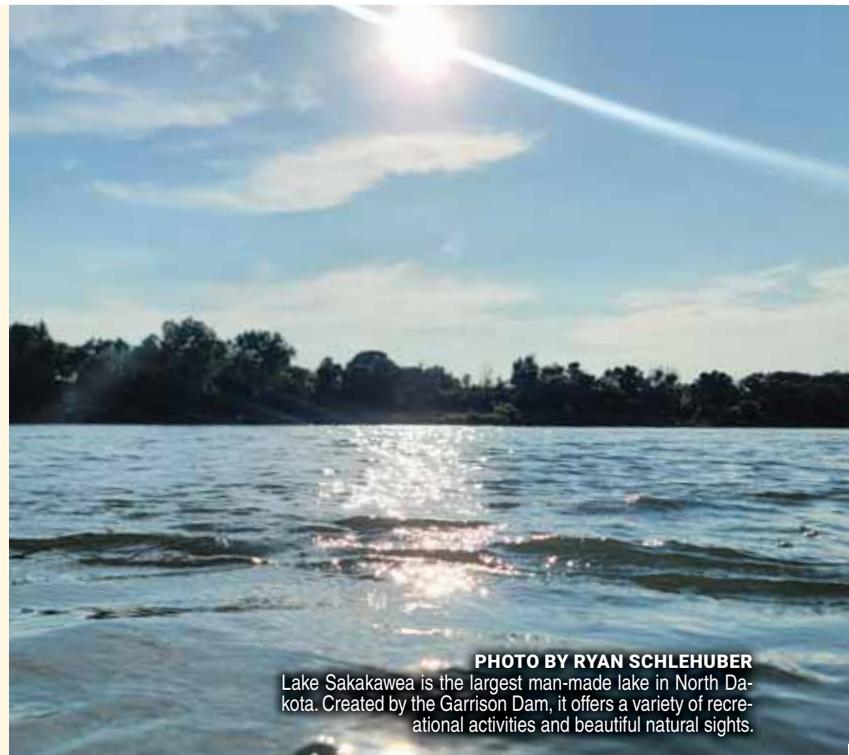


PHOTO BY RYAN SCHLEHUBER
 Lake Sakakawea is the largest man-made lake in North Dakota. Created by the Garrison Dam, it offers a variety of recreational activities and beautiful natural sights.



SAKAKAWEA COUNTRY BROUGHT TO YOU BY

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 Central McLean News-Journal | Leader-News | McLean County Independent





PHOTO CREDIT OF KAYLA DAWSON

Lake Sakakawea Passport Challenge

GETTING PEOPLE MOVING THROUGHOUT THE LAKE ▶▶

BY KELLI AMELING
NORDAK NORTH PUBLISHING

A new, fun way to see Sakakawea Country through a friendly competition is about to launch its second annual event for locals and visitors alike to participate in.

The Lake Sakakawea Passport Challenge will kick off its second year running from Memorial Day through Labor Day.

Challenge Organizer Kelly Sorge of Indian Hills Resort described the challenge as “simple fun.”

“Guests will collect stamps at participating recreation areas around the lake ...,” Sorge explained. “If they collect at least (five) stamps, they’ll be entered to win prizes donated by the locations involved.”

The Lake Sakakawea Passport Challenge started in the summer of 2025.

“I really think everyone loved it and will participate in 2026,” Sorge said, adding the goal for this year is to get more sponsors to increase the prize pool. “The goal is to get a substantial amount of cash and prizes built up and really get folks moving throughout the lake.”

Sorge said the challenge was a way to give people an additional reason to go somewhere they haven’t been before – to explore a little more.

“It was also a fun way for all the (businesses) to work together – it was kind of neat,” Sorge said.

One of the best parts, Sorge said, is people can participate by vehicle or boat.

In 2025, participating establishments included Beulah Bay, Brendle’s Bay Resort, Camp of the Cross ministries, Dakota Waters Resort, Hazen Bay, Indian Hills Resort, Little Mo Campground McKenzie Bay Marina, MHA Nation Interpretive Center, New own Marine Club, The Rooster bar and Grill, Tobacco Gardens, Van Hook and White Earth Bay. The challenge was also sponsored by Friends of Lake Sakakawea.

Participants were able to pick up a passport and one of the participating locations, and upon visiting a location, receive a stamp. Once all five stamps were collected, they could event drop off their passport at a participating location or mail it to Indian Hills Resort to be entered for prizes.

For those interested in participating in the Lake Sakakawea Passport Challenge and 2026 can get more information by visiting the “Lake Sakakawea Passport Challenge” social media page to see where to pick up the new passports to and a chance to win prizes!

ONE STOP SUMMER SHOP!!!

STORE HOURS:
 Mon-Fri 8am-7pm
 Sat 8am-6pm
 Sun 12pm-5pm

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 CHANNEL LOCK
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1900 HWY 49N BEULAH 873-4318





FISHING IN NORTH DAKOTA



* A fishing year is year-round from April 1, 2026 through March 31, 2027 of the following year.

* Residents and nonresidents 16 years of age and older must possess a valid fishing license for the current fishing year.

* Nonresidents under 16 years of age may fish if accompanied by a valid licensed angler. Go to the North Dakota Game and Fish Department website, (gf.nd.gov) or telephone, 701-328-6300, for residency qualifications, license fees, and additional details.

* No fish can be transported in water away from the water

body where it was taken.

* Only fathead minnows, creek chubs, sticklebacks, white suckers, or rainbow smelt are legal live baitfish. Leeches, native frogs, salamanders, and crayfish are legal live aquatic bait. No live aquatic bait can be imported into North Dakota.

* Some lake-specific regulations apply. The North Dakota Fishing Guide provides detailed fishing and aquatic nuisance species regulations and is available at vendors or online, (gf.nd.gov).



HUNTING IN NORTH DAKOTA

TENTATIVE 2026 SEASON OPENING DATES



SPRING TURKEY April 11

DOVE Sept. 1

**DEAR AND PRONGHORN BOW,
MOUNTAIN LION** Sept. 4

**SHARPTAIL, HUN, RUFFED GROUSE,
SQUIRREL** Sept. 12

YOUTH DEER Sept. 18

YOUTH WATERFOWL Sept. 19

EARLY RESIDENT WATERFOWL Sept. 26

PRONGHORN GUN Oct. 2

YOUTH PHEASANT Oct. 3

REGULAR WATERFOWL TBD

PHEASANT, FALL TURKEY Oct. 10

MINK, MUSKRAT, WEASEL TRAPPING Oct. 24

DEER GUN Nov. 6

DEER MUZZLELOADER Nov. 27



HUNTING CONTACT INFORMATION:

North Dakota Game and Fish Department headquarters, Bismarck 701-328-6300 or www.gf.nd.gov
 Game and Fish Department Riverdale office 701-654-7475
 Report All Poachers, toll-free telephone number to report game and natural resource violations: 800-472-2121 or 701-328-9921.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Garrison Dam Project, Riverdale office: Telephone 701-654-7441 or website (www.nwo.usace.army.mil/Missions/Dam-and-Lake-Projects/Missouri-River-Dams/Garrison/).

U.S. Forest Service Dakota Prairie National Grasslands (includes Little Missouri, Cedar River, and Sheyenne National Grasslands): www.fs.usda.gov/dpg. Link to information such as "Recreation", "Maps and Publications", or a specific National Grasslands for more hunting-related information.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Mountain-Prairie Region website (includes North Dakota): www.fws.gov/mountainprairie. Click on the link "Locate a Refuge", then click "Visit a Refuge or District" for contact information for major refuges in the state.





PHOTO BY RYAN SCHLEUBER

The Coyote Power Station Plant looms over the Prairies landscape and the city of Beulah, North Dakota. Beulah and Mercer County's economy is diverse, with a strong presence in power production, coal mining and the "high tech" industry.



BEULAH



visit Beulah



FOR AN HOUR

Learn about the roots of the Beulah community through its history at Mercer County Historical Society Museum. The 15,000-square-foot building holds an array of local historic artifacts, including perhaps one of the largest miniature farm toy collections in the country. It also has a collection of beautiful amethyst (purple) colored glassware, as well as several old-fashioned vehicles.

FOR A DAY

The Beulah Water Park is a unique feature for a small town in North Dakota, featuring a colossal water slide and lap swim area. It is a highly popular destination for both residents and visitors during the summer months and a great way to cool off from the summer heat. While the children enjoy the pool, other family members can walk right next door to the Energy Wellness Center and Sparks Dog Park to get some exercise in for you and your "best friend."

FOR A WEEKEND

Beulah Bay is perhaps one of the most beautiful sites the community of Beulah has to offer. With camping available, families, couples and individuals can enjoy the beach and waters of the bay, Lake Sakakawea and the Missouri River. The Beulah Bay Camp ground provides all the necessities for a fun weekend, from "glamping" and primitive camping sites, to outdoor sports like Frisbee golf and volleyball, to dirt trails and, of course, water for recreational play or fishing.

Beulah, North Dakota, is a wonderful place to visit whether one likes indoor or outdoor entertainment.

Settled in on the western side of the state, the community is close to Lake Sakakawea and the Missouri River, offering great beach-quality experiences at Beulah Bay. It also has its own water park in town.

As for those seeking a more relaxed experience, Beulah offers a variety of unique shops, a public library that is popular for its many events, Riverside Park and dining – from American favorite dishes to unique, German-based foods such as fleischkuekle, which is part of the local community's beloved heritage.

WELCOME from the mayor

DEAR VISITORS,

On behalf of my family and the citizens of Beulah, I am honored to invite you to discover our community.

Beulah is a hidden gem in the heart of Coal Country, offering natural beauty, rich history and a welcoming spirit that makes every visit unforgettable.

Here are some of the highlights that await you in Beulah:

- Beulah Bay Recreation Area – Boating, fishing, camping, and breathtaking views of Lake Sakakawea.
- Dakota Waters Resort – Cozy cabins, boat rentals, and excellent fishing opportunities.
- Black Sands Golf Course – A scenic nine-hole course for golfers of all skill levels.
- Beulah Aquatic Center – Pools, slides, lazy river, and splash pad for family fun.
- Mercer County Museum – Exhibits showcasing the heritage and culture of our region.
- Pfenning Wildlife Museum – North Dakota’s largest wildlife collection, featuring more than 175 species.
- Mercer County Fair – A cherished annual tradition with livestock shows, carnival rides, live entertainment, and local food.
- Local Dining & Shopping – Family-owned restaurants and charming boutiques offering unique flavors and treasures.
- Beulah Public Library – A welcoming space to read, learn and connect.

Beulah is more than a destination; it is a place where history, recreation, and community pride come together to

create lasting memories. My family and I are proud to call Beulah our home, and we are delighted to share its charm with you.

We look forward to welcoming you soon, and we are confident your visit will be filled with joy, relaxation and unforgettable experiences.

Sincerely,
Sean Cheatley
Mayor of Beulah and family

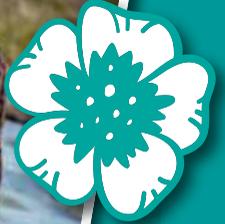
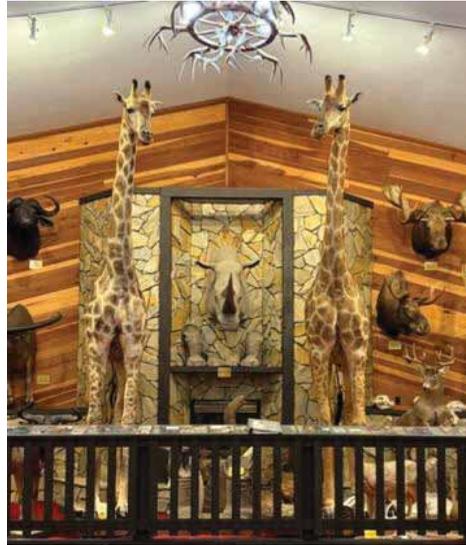


PHOTO PROVIDED BY SEAN CHEATLEY

JUNE 25-28, 2026 BEULAH, NORTH DAKOTA



RIDES - FOOD
SHOWS - MUSIC
FUN AT THE FAIR!



PHOTOS CREDIT OF KAYLEN KESSLER

Lea and Helmuth Pfennig were the founders of the Pfennig Wildlife Museum in Beulah, N.D. The museum, which opened in 1994, has more than 175 collections of animals mounts from across the globe, all from hunting excursions from the couple. Lea passed away in 2018 while Helmuth died in 2023.

Helmuth and Lea Pfennig traveled to Africa three times for trophy hunting excursions. They came back with exotic mounts that include a rhino and two giraffes, seen here, along with several other exotic African animals, which are displayed at the Pfennig Wildlife Museum in Beulah, N.D.

The polar bear, displayed at the Pfennig Wildlife Museum in Beulah, N.D., is perhaps the late Helmuth Pfennig's greatest hunt of his life. Pfennig successfully hunted the animal north of Pond Inlet, an Inuit community in the territory of Nunavut, Canada.

'Moose in the Living Room... It was Common'

BEULAH'S WILDLIFE MUSEUM A WONDER FOR VISITORS, MOMENTS FROZEN IN TIME FOR OWNERS ▶▶



**BY RYAN SCHLEHUBER
BEULAH BEACON**

When Kaylen Kessler was a young girl growing up on a farm in Beulah, N.D., walking past a bear, deer or elk was a normal thing in the Pfennig family home.

"We had a bear head in the kitchen and a moose in the living room," laughed Kaylen. "It was common."

Kaylen is the youngest of five children of the late Helmuth and Lea Pfennig, of Beulah. The family lived a good life on the family farm, working with grain and cows, near Lake Sakakawea. The wildlife in the Pfennig home were mounts that were the results of successful hunts by both Helmuth and Lea, avid outdoorspeople and hunters.

"Dad was a huge hunter," Kaylen said. "He always had been. He started out when he was little."

Helmuth was not only huge into hunting, he was really good at it, too. He collected so many mounts that he eventually added on to the house, building a trophy room to fit all of his mounts.

"But the animals kept coming," Kaylen laughed.

Eventually, the Pfennigs decided to create a building to house the growing collection, which, in 1994, the Pfennig Wildlife Museum was constructed along North Dakota Highway 49 in Beulah. It became the largest individual wildlife collection in North Dakota with approximately 175 animal specimens displayed from around the world.

"Half of these animals I grew up with because they were in our home," said Karen Pundt, of Dickinson, the second youngest of the five siblings. "Our house got so full with the more animals he kept getting, that they spilled over into the garage. After visiting with friends, my family decided they wanted to share the collection with other people because those who did see it, they were in awe."

Today, the museum is operated by Kaylen and Karen, which both keep the museum open year-around, by appointment only.

"It started out with deer and small game," Kaylen said of her father's collection. "He hunted around home; sometimes we went out with him."

Karen remembers those hunts with her father. She remembers her job was climbing the fence and running through bushes to flush small game out from hiding.

Once the children began moving out as they got older, Karen said her parents began traveling, going on hunting excursions, first to Canada, and then to more exotic places.

"He started going further out, across the U.S., then Canada and then he really got the bug. That's when he began trophy hunting," Karen said.

She said her father successfully hunted a polar bear north of Pond Inlet, an Inuit community in the territory of Nunavut, Canada, in 1984. He went on to travel to places like Russia, coming back with bears, Alaska, Costa Rica, Bulgaria, Australia, New Zealand and traveled to Africa three times, visiting Zimbabwe, Botswana, Mozambique and South Africa.

With those excursions, Helmuth brought back an exotic collection of animals, such as kudu, giraffes, rhinos, elephants, wolves and even a hippopotamus, which are all on display now at the museum.

Both Karen and Kaylen say stepping into the museum is like going back in time and revisiting all of the hunting stories their parents had.

"There were a number of great stories from Africa that they had. One involved my mom, where she ended up in a tree because of a cape buffalo that charged them," Karen laughed. "On another occasion, a rhino charged them after it was shot, but they were in a Land Rover then. But it hit the Land Rover."

Stories were never-ending – a row with a moose, a charging lion, and the great polar bear hunt, which Kaylen said was her father's favorite hunt.

"When walking into the museum now, it's kind of lonely, since I don't

see my parents when I walk in," Karen said. "But there is a flood of memories when I step in here."

Kaylen feels the same.

"Walking into the museum, it really hits because both of them are gone now," Kaylen said. "The fun they had when they were going here and there, it's all captured in this museum."

Lea passed away in 2018 and Helmuth passed in 2023.

Karen said her mother's love for hunting never waned, having hunted the year before she passed away. She still remembers a photo of her mother gripping her walker as she prepared to walk out the door for her next hunt.

"I remember my mother, the older she got, she would use an old, unused combine on a deer hunt near our house," Karen said. "She was just sit in there and hunt from there. Years later, she wasn't able to climb it, so she just sat in a chair in front of it and hunted."

Both Karen and Kaylen continue to run the museum with much pride, hosting a variety of people who make appointments to tour the museum. Many times is a group of school children, or residents from nearby Knife River Care Center, a military veterans group, a traveling tour bus or just curious travelers passing by. Whatever the case may be, both women enjoy showing off their parents' wildlife collection, which, they say, gives people the opportunity to see exotic animals that, in many cases, they'd never get to experience otherwise.

"You'd be surprised how jaw-dropping it is when you walk in the museum," Kaylen said. "For a small town, to walk in and be able to see an animal in almost every continent in the world, the fact that a dirt farmer did all this, it's amazing. This was his playground."

For more information on the Pfennig Wildlife Museum, or to book an appointment, call 701-873-4889.



PHOTOS CREDIT OF KAYLEN KESSLER

The Pfennig Wildlife Museum in Beulah, N.D., is the largest individual wildlife collection in North Dakota with approximately 175 animal specimens displayed from around the world.



Helmuth Pfennig, left, with a tracker, posing with a kudu he had recently hunted during one of his excursions in Africa. The kudu is now displayed at the Pfennig Wildlife Museum in Beulah, N.D., and is Karen Pundt's favorite mount in the museum. Pundt is one of five children of Helmuth and Lea Pfennig.



BEULAH
CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU



**DISCOVER BEULAH, ND:
YOUR NEXT WEEKEND GETAWAY**

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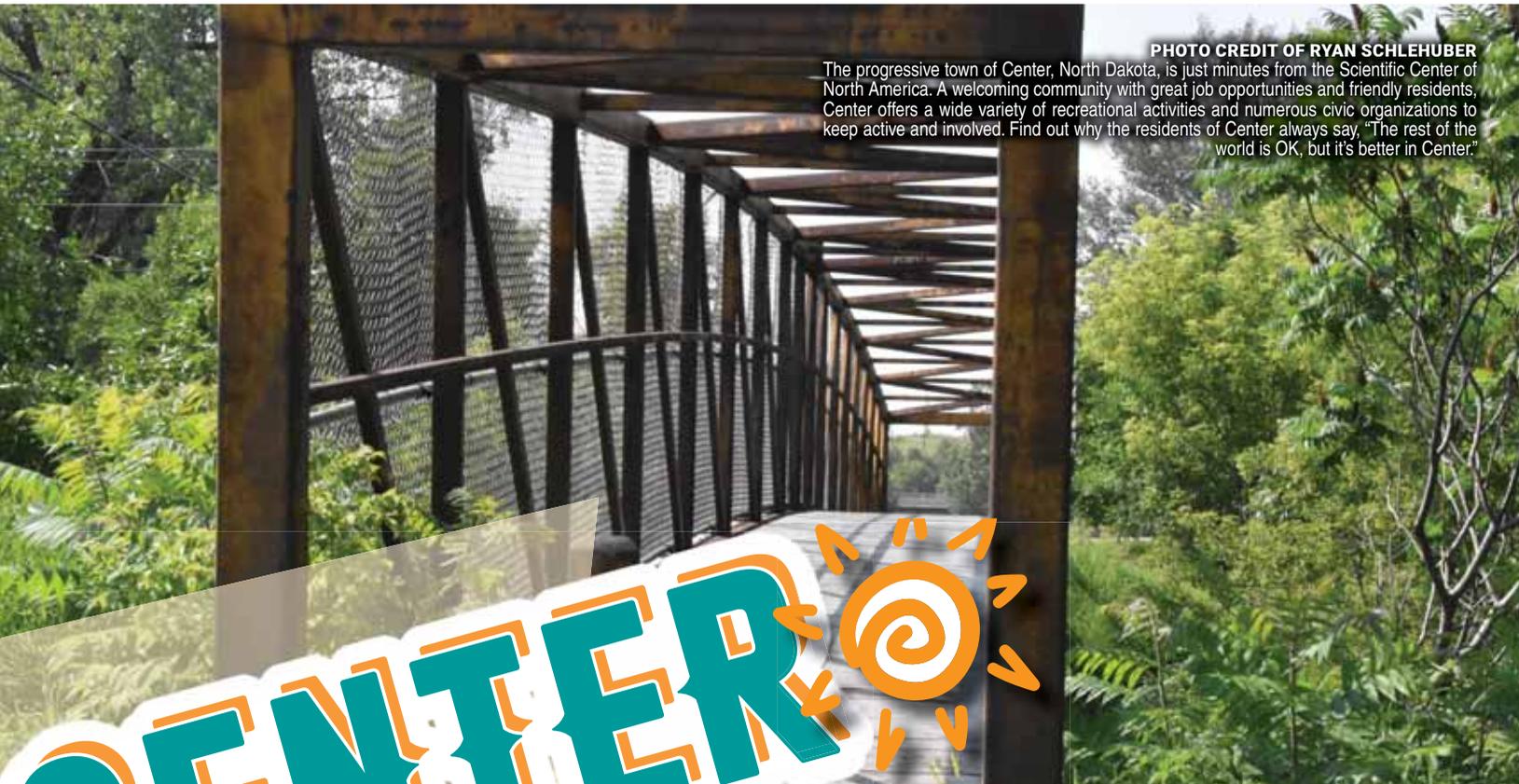


PHOTO CREDIT OF RYAN SCHLEUBER

The progressive town of Center, North Dakota, is just minutes from the Scientific Center of North America. A welcoming community with great job opportunities and friendly residents, Center offers a wide variety of recreational activities and numerous civic organizations to keep active and involved. Find out why the residents of Center always say, "The rest of the world is OK, but it's better in Center."

CENTER

A small, rural town with wonderful and interesting features, Center is a great place to insert yourself into serene nature, local history and an inviting community with several events visitors can enjoy. From North Dakota's heroic story of Hazel Miner, to the community indoor pool to annual events like Old Settler's Days, Center provides a unique experience, whether for an hour, a day or a weekend.

★ visit Center ✨

FOR AN HOUR

Make a meaningful stop at the Hazel Miner Monument, a tribute to one of North Dakota's most enduring stories of courage. On March 16, 1920, a sudden blizzard struck central North Dakota as 15-year-old Hazel Miner walked home with her younger brother and sister. She shielded them from the cold through the night, saving their lives at the cost of her own. Her bravery quickly became a symbol of prairie heroism. The monument sits in a park behind the Oliver County Courthouse and offers a peaceful place to pause and reflect.

FOR A DAY

Start your morning by exploring Cross Ranch State Park, choosing a short loop such as the Cottonwood or Matah Trail for a relaxed hike through river-bottom woods and open prairie. Afterward, head back into Center for lunch and a look around town. Spend the rest of your afternoon unwinding at Nelson Lake - a warm water lake kept ice-free year-round by the nearby power plant's cooling tower discharge - giving it quiet shorelines, open water, and a uniquely mild feel even in the colder months.

FOR A WEEKEND

Plan your visit around the Oliver County Fair in early August, and you'll catch Center at its most lively. The fairgrounds buzz with activity all weekend. 4 H exhibits, livestock shows, tractor pulls, carnival rides, live music and the kind of comfort food concessions that make a summer fair feel complete. Wander through the barns, cheer on a rodeo event or just soak up the easygoing, everyone knows everyone atmosphere that makes county fairs so charming.



PRAIRIE PRESERVE

Where river and grasslands meet

**BY PHAIDRA YUNKER
LEADER-NEWS**

Visitors to Center can make the 20 minute drive south to Cross Ranch State Park, where campgrounds, cabins and yurts line the Missouri River and nearly 17 miles of trails connect to the adjoining Cross Ranch Nature Preserve.

Managed in part by The Nature Conservancy, the combined lands protect more than 5,000 acres of prairie and forest while safeguarding the only free-flowing section of the river in North Dakota. The area offers opportunities for camping, hiking and river recreation.

Cross Ranch State Park and the adjacent Cross Ranch Nature Preserve protect more than 5,000 acres of prairie and forest along the Missouri River near Center, according to the North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department and The Nature Conservancy.

The Nature Conservancy manages the preserve, which sits next to the state park in Oliver County. Together, the two areas safeguard the only free-flowing section of the Missouri River in North Dakota.

The preserve was established to protect mixed-grass prairie, floodplain forest and wooded draws, according to The Nature Conservancy. The land supports native plants and wildlife, including a herd of American bison.

Bison graze across the prairie, maintaining grassland ecosystems. White-tailed deer, coyotes and numerous bird species also inhabit the area. Bald eagles are frequently seen along the river corridor. The Missouri River supports fish such as catfish and walleye, while migratory birds use the preserve as a stopover site.



Sandbars, backwaters and cottonwood forests along the river provide habitat for fish and waterfowl. The Nature Conservancy reports that management practices focus on protecting native species and habitats.

Native American tribes lived along the Missouri River for centuries, using the corridor for food, trade and travel, according to the Parks and Recreation Department. The Lewis and Clark Expedition passed through the area in the early 1800s.

The landscape today retains many of the same features recorded by early explorers. Cottonwood forests and prairie grasses remain prominent along the river.

Cross Ranch State Park offers camping, cabins and yurts. Two river-side campgrounds, including Sanger Campground, provide tent sites, RV sites and group camping areas. Facilities include modern restrooms and showers.

Cabins and yurts are available year-round for overnight lodging. Rustic cabins provide heating and electricity, while yurts offer a unique lodging option. Reservations are managed through the North Dakota Parks and Recreation system.

The park features nearly 17 miles of trails that wind through prairie, forest and river bottom areas, with access to the preserve. Trails are used for hiking, birdwatching and mountain biking in summer, and cross-country skiing and snowshoeing in winter.

Canoes and kayaks are available for rent, giving visitors access to the Missouri River. In winter, the park provides cross-country skis and snowshoes for exploring groomed trails.

Popular activities include camping, fishing, kayaking, birdwatching, picnicking and wildlife viewing.

The preserve and state park attract visitors to Oliver County and provide opportunities for recreation and education, according to the Parks and Recreation Department. Local residents use the area for outdoor activities, while conservation management aims to keep the Missouri River corridor intact for future generations.

Cross Ranch remains one of The Nature Conservancy's major projects in North Dakota. The organization works globally to conserve lands and waters, and the preserve continues to serve as a refuge for wildlife and a destination for outdoor recreation.

Head for the Hills!



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Weekly Fishing Report



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• **Brendle's Bay** •
Resort
 701-862-3611



www.brendlebayresort.com



PHOTO CREDIT OF ETHYN WILLIAMS-CALVERT
Coleharbors newly renovated city park offers a great opportunity for families in the area as well as those stopping by for the afternoon to enjoy some fun in the sun.

COLEHARBOR

visit Coleharbor

COLEHARBOR: A TINY TOWN WITH BIG CHARM

Located off Highway 83, just six miles north of Underwood, the town of Coleharbor is a quaint rural community with a population that fluctuates from about 70 in the summer to just a few dozen during the winter months.

Despite its size, Coleharbor offers unique experiences for visitors looking to explore its charm.

FOR AN HOUR

Enjoy one of many trails and scenic walks in the Audubon National Wildlife Refuge, with lake views and wildlife around it's the perfect afternoon getaway

FOR A DAY

Enjoy one of two local offerings for food and drink at either the Harbor Bar, with its weekend Steak Night's, or stop in at the Wolf Creek Winery for some local grown and made wine

FOR A WEEKEND

Enjoy easy access to Lake Audubon which during the winter offers wonderful ice fishing, bring your tent or drive your vehicle and ice shack right out onto the lake when it's cold enough and enjoy a weekend in the North Dakotan outdoors



AUDUBON REFUGE SHOWCASES VITAL PRAIRIE WETLAND HABITAT ▶▶

BY ETHYN WILLIAMS-CALVERT
CENTRAL MCLEAN NEWS-JOURNAL

Nestled along the southern reaches of Lake Audubon, the Audubon National Wildlife Refuge stands as one of North Dakota's most important natural sanctuaries for migratory bird species. Encompassing 14,739 acres of native prairie, planted grasslands, and pristine wetlands, the refuge draws waterfowl, shorebirds, songbirds, and countless other migratory species each year.

The refuge sits in the heart of the Prairie Pothole Region, a landscape named for its abundant small wetlands that dot the northern plains like shallow depressions.

These nutrient-rich potholes and surrounding grasslands provide crucial food, shelter, and nesting habitat for bird populations.

The region's biological significance is so well-established that it is often referred to as the "Duck Factory" of North America, producing more than half of the continent's waterfowl annually according to the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

But the impact extends beyond ducks and geese.

Hundreds of additional migratory species rely on the Prairie Pothole Region for breeding, staging, and feeding, making it the most productive migratory bird habitat on the continent.

Portions of this ecological powerhouse stretch across the Dakotas, Montana, Minnesota, Iowa, and into Canada, offering a continuous corridor for wildlife.

For visitors and residents alike, the Audubon National Wildlife Refuge offers scenic beauty, photography opportunities, and a first-hand look at one of North America's most vital ecosystems. Whether through wildlife observation, environmental education, or seasonal birding, the refuge continues to highlight the importance of wetland conservation across the northern prairie.



PHOTO CREDIT OF SANDER MEERTINS

Phone 701-462-8480



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PHOTO CREDIT OF TYSON MATTHEWS
Meet Stirling, one of the Northern Lights Ranch's reindeer. Northern Lights Ranch is located in Garrison, the their reindeer are available for special events wherever a little Christmas Cheer is needed.

GARRISON

visit Garrison

FOR AN HOUR

Check out Garrison's Talking Trail. Brochures, available at the North Dakota Firefighters Museum on Main Street, will guide visitors around the town's points of interest. This self-guided tour takes visitors around Garrison and Fort Stevenson State Park while sharing bits of the area's history via QR codes.

FOR A DAY

Every year in August, Garrison hosts its annual Awe Shuck Corn Festival & Party in the Park in Garrison City Park. During the day there will be a Car and Tractor Show, food, vendors, games and a free corn feed. Once evening rolls around, there will be live entertainment and a beer garden.

FOR A WEEKEND

Garrison hosts the most visited state park in all of North Dakota. Fort Stevenson State Park on beautiful Lake Sakakawea. FSSP has many outdoor activities to keep guests busy all day. Fish for walleyes off the dock at Fort Stevenson State Park, try and catch a glimpse of a prairie dog on the way to the marina, or take a ride on a fat tire bike or kick sled. Bring a tent, an R.V or rent one of the furnished cabin.

NORTH DAKOTA'S PLAYGROUND

Garrison is located halfway between Bismarck and Minot on Hwy 83, directly north of Fort Stevenson State Park.

Come stroll through downtown, check out to the state park or throw a line in the water and catch one of our award-winning wall-eyes.

There's always something to do in Garrison!



WELCOME

from the mayor

WELCOME TO GARRISON!

Garrison is in the heart of North Dakota, along the north shore of beautiful Lake Sakakawea.

The community features a variety of amenities to draw visitors and potential new residents to our fine community.

Garrison is a four seasons playground.

The Garrison area offers quick access to numerous outdoor activities from hunting, fishing, hiking and camping to boating, swimming and more.

If you have a mind to shop, Garrison has numerous businesses that satisfy any taste. And when you're on Main Street, stop at the City Park and say "hi" to Wally the Walleye.

Want something else to do? The community of Garrison has activities year-around, from the popular Garrison Fire Department's annual buffalo feed to Skyfest Sakakawea in the spring. For anglers, there's the state's longest running fishing tournament, the North Dakota Governor's Walleye Cup Tournament in July.

Step back in time at Fort Stevenson State Park and visit the historic guardhouse where you can learn all about Garrison's unique history.

Fall comes, activities continue with the Party in the Park and classic car show.

Ride the big double deck bus affectionately called the Queen Elizabeth, or the Wally Trolley during the popular Dickens Village Festival the last weekend of November and first two weekends in December.

These are just a few of the activities to draw you to our community.

Our schools are some of the best, and there are a number of denominations of churches available

As people say, "There's always something to do in Garrison!"

So, come, Get Hooked on Garrison!

Stu Merry, mayor, City of Garrison



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PHOTO CREDIT OF NORTH DAKOTA PARKS & RECREATION



The Christmas Capital OF NORTH DAKOTA

BY TYSON MATTHEWS
MCLEAN COUNTY INDEPENDENT

For three weekends between Thanksgiving and Christmas, Garrison transforms into a quaint Victorian village.

"Dickens has become more than a festival for Garrison," Garrison Convention and Visitors Bureau Director, Rachael Brown. "It's a time when families, friends and neighbors come together, traditions are shared, and local businesses and community groups feel the extra support that helps carry them through the quieter winter months."

There's a little something for everyone.

Many events are kid-focused, including top-hat decorating, visits with Santa and story time at the Garrison Public Library.

Street vendors keep visitors warm and well-fed with knoephla soup, buffalo meatballs, rice pudding and turkey legs as big as your head.

Most events are within three blocks on Main Street and easily walkable.

Visitors can also hop on the double-decker Queen Elizabeth for a ride to Fort Stevenson State Park for the Christmas geocache or arts-and-crafts activities.

Evenings at the festival are filled with musical performances and a new interpretation each year of Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol."

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NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGES

Content from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services

AUDUBON NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

WHERE: Lake Audubon's south shore, three miles north of Coleharbor, on the east side of U.S. Highway 83 between Lake Sakakawea and Lake Audubon.

WHAT: Audubon National Wildlife Refuge is a 14,739-acre refuge that attracts numerous species of waterfowl, shorebirds, songbirds and other migratory birds. The Refuge occupies the southern portion of Lake Audubon and adjacent lands of native prairie, planted grasslands, and wetlands. These wetlands and surrounding grasslands provide food, shelter and nesting sites for waterfowl and other birds.

MISSION: Migratory bird, endangered species, and resident wildlife habitat.

WILDLIFE: The majestic flights of thousands of ducks, geese, sandhill cranes, and shorebirds are visible on the Refuge during spring and fall migration. Endangered whooping cranes are often seen migrating in small groups or with sandhill cranes. Piping plovers, a threatened species, nest in the area each summer. Giant Canada geese, in addition to ducks such as mallards, gadwalls, blue-winged teal, northern pintails, and lesser scaup, are common nesters on the Refuge.

Other birds you may see include northern harriers, marbled godwits, upland sandpipers, western meadowlarks, bobolinks, and more than 200 other species.

Audubon National Wildlife Refuge also provides habitat for wildlife that make the prairie their year-round home. White-tailed deer, coyote, red fox, sharp-tailed grouse, and gray partridge are some of the hardier species that are adapted to North Dakota's climate. The ring-necked pheasant is also a Refuge resident whose numbers often decline during severe winters.

VISITOR OPPORTUNITIES: *Free public access. *Visitor Center and Exhibit Hall: A mile east of Highway 83 on the south shore of Lake Audubon. Open 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, except federal holidays, it features wetland and grassland, migratory birds, refuge history and wildlife exhibits, etc. *Prairie Nature Trail: Beginning near the Visitor Center, the mile-long, self-guided gravel walking path winds through native prairie, grasslands, and along wetlands, providing bird, plant, and animal viewing opportunities. *Auto Tour Route: Eight-mile gravel road starts near the Visitor Center, traveling along Lake Audubon's south shore. A brochure details the route's interpretive kiosks. *Wildlife observation: Spring and fall migration offers an array of migratory wildlife with best viewing opportunities in the early morning and evening. Bring binoculars for better viewing. Wildlife checklists are available at the refuge. *Hunting: The refuge's upland bird season begins the Monday after North Dakota's regular deer gun season closes. It's open for archery, gun, and muzzleloader deer hunting. Special regulations apply. *Ice fish-

ing: The refuge portion of Lake Audubon opens for ice fishing once the lake ices over. Special regulations apply. *Contact the refuge for additional public use opportunities and hunting and fishing regulations: Telephone (701) 442-5474, email Audubon@fws.gov, website (www.fws.gov/refuge/Audubon), or mail Audubon National Wildlife Refuge, 3275 11th St. NW, Coleharbor, N.D. 58531.

LAKE ILO NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

WHERE: A mile west of Dunn Center on N.D. Highway 200.

WHAT: Lake Ilo National Wildlife Refuge is one of over 560 refuges and 38 wetland management districts in the National Wildlife Refuge System—a network of lands set aside specifically for wildlife. Managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Refuge System is a living heritage, preserving wildlife and habitat for people today and for generations to come.

Lake Ilo National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1939 by Franklin D. Roosevelt as a breeding ground for migratory birds and other wildlife. The Refuge provides fish and wildlife-oriented recreational opportunities, conserves endangered species, and protects cultural and natural resources.

MISSION: Migratory bird breeding habitat.

WILDLIFE: The Refuge has 4,034 acres of native prairie, planted grasslands, and wetland habitat. These habitats provide a home for 227 bird, 36 mammal, 6 reptile, 3 amphibian, and 11 fish species.

VISITOR OPPORTUNITIES: *Free public access. *Open sunrise to sunset. Refuge headquarters along the southeast shore of Lake Ilo are open 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, except federal holidays. *Lake Ilo Park day use area offers fishing pier, charcoal grills, picnic tables, restrooms, and trash containers. *North Shore Nature Trail: A mile-long trail with benches and kiosks begins at Lake Ilo Park and winds along the lake's north shore. *Wildlife observation: Spring and fall migration offers an array of migratory wildlife. The best viewing opportunities are early morning and evening. Bring binoculars for better viewing. Wildlife checklists are available at the refuge. *Fishing: Parts of Lake Ilo are open to shore, boat, and icefishing. A boat ramp is west of the park on the lake's north shore. *Cultural interpretation: The refuge is a major archeological site providing insight into prehistoric Plains Indian dwellers. Interpretive kiosks near the North Shore Nature Trailhead explore its ancient cultural history. *Contact the refuge for more information about public use opportunities and fishing regulations: Telephone (701) 548-8110, email Lakeilo@fws.gov, website (www.fws.gov/refuge/Lake_Ilo), or mail Lake Ilo National Wildlife Refuge, 489 102 Ave. SW, Dunn Center, N.D. 58626.

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Journey to Fort Mandan in Washburn to see a larger-than-life statue of Seaman, Meriwether Lewis' Newfoundland dog, then visit the Lewis & Clark Interpretive Center. Keep traveling to Bismarck and stop at the North Dakota Heritage Center & State Museum to explore the state's rich history.

history.nd.gov/visit



HISTORY FOR
everyone.





PHOTO CREDIT OF ALAINA STANGLE PHOTOGRAPHY



GOLDEN VALLEY

visit Golden Valley ★

FOR AN HOUR

If heading to or going through Golden Valley, enjoy a stop at the Hay Bale People site or the large steel likeness of Golden Valley's own bull riding star Wayne Herman along North Dakota Highway 200. A great place to stretch your legs and snap some memorable photos.

FOR A DAY

★ Visit Golden Valley's recreational areas, including Log Cabin Park, where a historic log cabin was constructed in the 1940s by the Civilian Conservation Corps.

FOR A WEEKEND

Three in-town camping locations are available in Golden Valley, which are perfect for staying to enjoy the annual Golden Valley Rally, one of the town's biggest – and last – summer events of the year. For the past seven years, locals and visitors to the area have enjoyed a day of fun that includes a car show, poker run, vendor shows, street dance and a picnic, all put on by the Golden Valley Fire Department.

The Rally, which ends shortly before the fifth annual Golden Valley Shootout begins, starts includes a Firemen's Picnic, where firefighters and volunteers will be serving burgers, hotdogs and "all the fixings."

The existence of the community of Golden Valley can be contributed to George Bratzel, who decided to build a new town in 1908, though, by 1913, another town nearby, called Olanta, was established nearer the railroad system. Eventually, Bratzel moved his store and newly established post office to Olanta and, by 1914, renamed it Golden Valley.

Since then, the small community has moderately grown, specifically in farming and ranching.

Today, the community on the western side of Mercer County boasts several recreational areas and many annual events, including the Golden Valley Rally and the Golden Valley Shootout bull riding event and Wayne Herman Invitational Xtreme Bareback & Broncs.

WELCOME from the mayor



PHOTO PROVIDED BY KENTON RICHAU

HOWDY FROM THE CITY OF GOLDEN VALLEY!

Golden Valley, located in western Mercer County along the winding Spring Creek, was incorporated in 1914 as a stop along the now abandoned Northern Pacific Railroad. Even though the railroad tracks are long gone, two old grain elevators still stand watch over the town as a reminder of our city's strong ties to farming and ranching. The Hay Bale People along ND Highway 200 greet our visitors and provide photo opportunities to locals and passersby alike.

We take great pride in our city parks and recreation areas. They include two newly constructed playgrounds and the Log Cabin Park. The name refers to the historic log cabin which was constructed in the 1940s as a Civilian Conservation Corp project and sits under a canopy of large shade trees. Any of our parks make a great location for a family picnic. Other recreational facilities include basketball and tennis courts and a softball diamond.

If you are in need of an event venue, the Golden Valley Community Center boasts a full commercial kitchen and seating for 240 guests. Adjacent to the Community Center is the home of the Golden Valley Rural Fire Department. The department is comprised of 24 volunteer firefighters

and serves an area of 162 square miles including the city of Golden Valley.

In late summer, the Golden Valley Rural Fire Department hosts the annual Golden Valley Rally. In the past, this celebration has included a car show, vendor show, kids activities, car and motorcycle fun run and a meal served by our dedicated volunteer firefighters.

This event is held in conjunction with the Golden Valley Shootout bull riding event and Wayne Herman Invitational Xtreme Bareback & Broncs. These rough-stock events take place atop the old Golden Valley High School's track and field area, which adds nostalgia and small-town charm to the event. Spectators are greeted by a larger-than-life steel tribute to hometown cowboy, Wayne Herman, 1992 PRCA World Champion Bareback Rider. A good old-fashioned street dance takes place on Main Street as the Saturday festivities draw to a close.

Services offered in Golden Valley and surrounding area include U.S. Postal Service office, windshield and headlight repair, engine machining/rebuilding, licensed auctioneer/clerking, landscape photography, travel agency, tax preparations and many other home-based businesses.

Golgotha Lutheran Church-AFLC, is our local house of worship. Sunday school takes place after church service for children ages fourth through sixth grade, and youth groups grades kindergarten through 12th grade meet Wednesday evenings. All are welcome to attend services, fellowship and youth events.

As you travel through Mercer County, please feel free to stop in and enjoy a little bit of quiet, small town, county living.



Kenton Richau
Mayor of Golden Valley

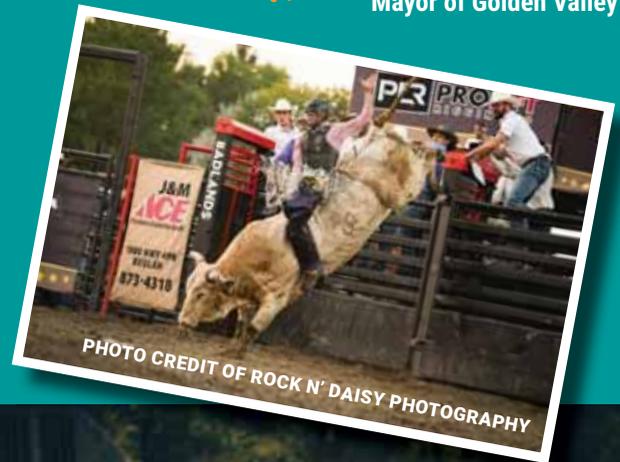


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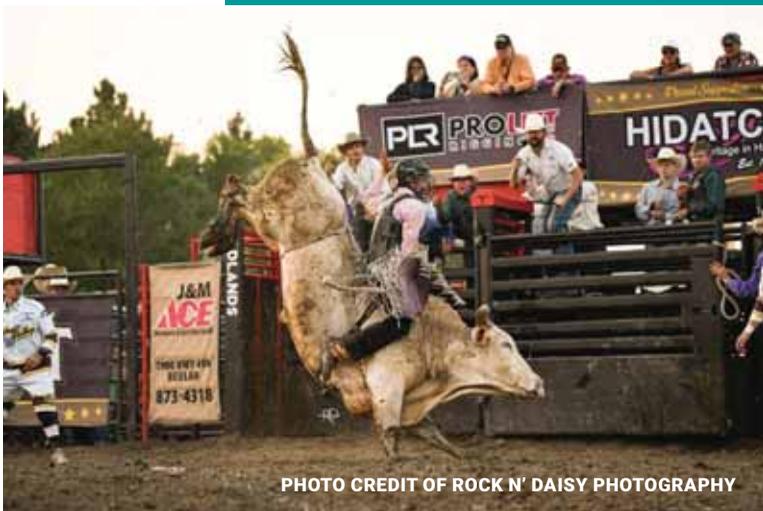


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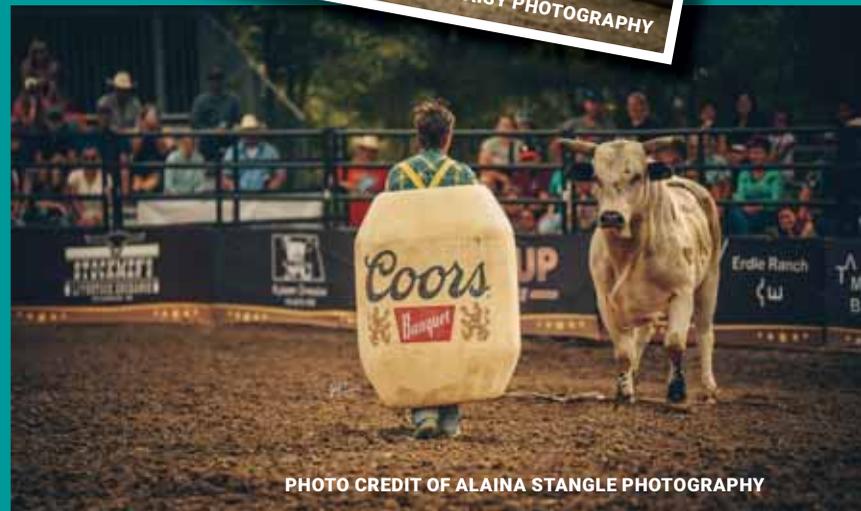


PHOTO CREDIT OF ALAINA STANGLE PHOTOGRAPHY

Putting a Small Town on the Map

GOLDEN VALLEY'S ANNUAL RODEO/BULL RIDING EVENT

CONTINUES TO PUT REGIONAL SPOTLIGHT SMALL TOWN ►►

BY RYAN SCHLEHUBER
BEULAH BEACON

Going into its sixth consecutive year, the Shootout and Wayne Herman Invitational Xtreme Bareback & Bronco continues to attract talent from across the country for an entertaining rodeo and bull riding excitement for all in the small town of Golden Valley, North Dakota.

Though set in a small North Dakota town, the creators of the shootout and invitational, Brent Schaff and Coleman Entze, are proud to have created the growing event, as it "puts Golden Valley" on the map. It embraces its small-town feel, too, as the event is held at the former Golden Valley High School track and field area, which, according to Golden Valley Mayor Kenton Richau, "adds nostalgia and small-town charm to the event."

Golden Valley prides itself on other annual events, such as the Golden Valley Rally, which is put on by the local fire department in the late summer, which is another local event that gathers residents and visitors alike, especially with its car show. But the "star of the Golden Valley show" has been the Shootout and Wayne Herman Invitational Xtreme Bareback & Bronco, bringing in nationally-coveted talented riders, which in turn attracts spectators knowing the events will provide high-level competition.

Traditionally held every mid-August, the bull riding event will fea-

ture 25 to 30 competitors, as does the rodeo event. Competitors from across the country flock to these events, with some coming from Canada, as well.

What sets the Shootout and Invitational apart from other similar events around North Dakota is the detail in which Golden Valley's event is done, Schaff said.

"We put in a lot of care and attention to what you see and hear there," he said. "I helped enveloped that stuff."

From a big 9-foot by 11-foot video screen installed at the competition ring for audience members to better see the action, to getting local and national sponsors involved, to even having volunteers helping out in a pinch during a rainy event last year, the Shootout puts in its work to give people the best show it can, Schaff said.

For the community of Golden Valley, the combination of the Rally, the Shootout and the Wayne Herman Invitational, it has become a signature weekend each August, offering something for everyone, whether their interest lies in shiny chrome, sizzling food, or the grit of professional rodeo. Not only do spectators and visitors see a great show both that Saturday and Sunday, they also see the fruits of labor by local volunteers and businesses that support it.

If you plan to travel to or near Golden Valley around mid-August, check out one of North Dakota's finest bull riding and rodeo events in Golden Valley.



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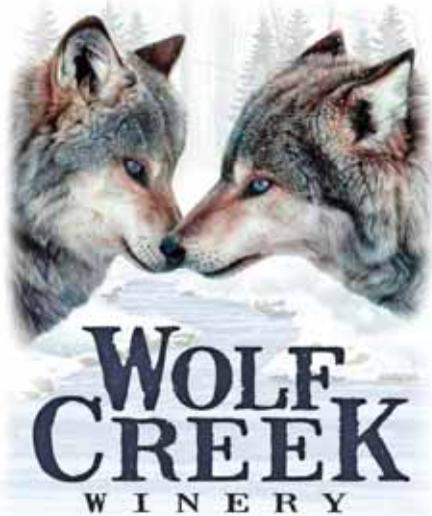


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PHOTO CREDIT OF DANIEL ARENS

Dancers move to the music during an outdoor concert at Hazen Chalkfest. This annual event in August draws hundreds of visitors to the community each year to take in incredible 3D chalk art, contribute their own artistic flair and enjoy music, food and other entertainment. This year's Chalkfest will be Aug. 12 and 13.

HAZEN

Hazen is a small, rural community with a vibrant lifestyle. The arts thrive in this town, from outdoor Music in the Park performances to monthly Jam Sessions in the warmer months to a concert series of national and international talent coming to town during the school year. There are major community festivals like Chalkfest in August and Harvestfest in September, drawing lots of visitors to town. With lots of city parks and a beautiful golf course, the town is also just 12 miles away from the Hazen Bay Campground on Lake Sakakawea.

* visit Hazen

FOR AN HOUR

Hazen thrives on parks and recreation, with over 4 miles of paved walking and biking trails. Besides parks and playgrounds in residential areas, the Paul Weiser Memorial Pocket Park and Sensory Garden can be found right in downtown Hazen, and further east along Main Street is the renovated Heritage Park, which includes outdoor instruments at the Musical Play Park. Wherever you go, you'll find a place you and your family are sure to enjoy.

FOR A DAY

Enjoy a morning out on Hazen's 9-hole golf course just east of town and take in a meal at Mulligan's while you are out there. During the summer afternoon, enjoy a refreshing drink from Groundation Coffee Shop or Urban Coffeehouse and relax in the sun at the pool outside the high school.

FOR A WEEKEND

Hazen Bay is located just a 15-minute drive north of town. Every kind of camping option from primitive to full hookup is available, with easy access to the lake.



WELCOME

from the mayor

Welcome to Hazen, North Dakota! We're delighted that you've chosen to explore our corner of the state. Nestled near the center of North Dakota and just a stone's throw from the Missouri River, Hazen offers a blend of rich history, small-town charm, and breathtaking outdoor beauty. Located just south of Lake Sakakawea, this area is a peaceful getaway where visitors can unwind, reconnect with nature, and enjoy life at a slower pace.

Hazen is also proud to be known as the Lignite Coal Capital of the World. Our coal mines and power plants play a major role in powering communities near and far—far more than most people realize.

For outdoor enthusiasts, Hazen and nearby Lake Sakakawea offer endless opportunities: fishing, boating, kayaking, golfing, wild-life watching, or simply taking in the wide-open views. Whether you're planning a quick weekend escape or a longer adventure, you'll find something here that speaks to you.

We hope your time in the Hazen area brings you relaxation, excitement, and memories you'll carry long after you leave. If you need assistance during your stay, feel free to stop by City Hall or visit visithazennd.com, where our Chamber of Commerce and Park Board teams are always happy to help.

Once again, welcome to Hazen! Enjoy your visit and experience all the beauty, hospitality, and charm our rural lake community has to offer.

City Council President/Mayor of Hazen
Jesse Schiferl



PHOTOS CREDIT OF DANIEL ARENS

Golfers of all ages enjoy taking to the greens at the Hazen Golf Course just east of town. The 9-hole course includes a recently-revamped clubhouse and restaurant.



Touch-A-Truck, sponsored by the local thrift store The Dash, brings all kinds of trucks (from emergency vehicles to mine machines to DOT plows) downtown, along with festival activities up and down Main Street. Started just recently, the event has exploded to become a staple part of mid-summer fun in Hazen.



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HISTORICAL BUILDING BRINGS NUMEROUS OPPORTUNITIES TO PEOPLE

BY DANIEL ARENS
HAZEN STAR

Hazen Public Library is more than just a place to read and check out books.

While it certainly is that, it also houses resources on the history and families of Mercer County, provides space for local groups to meet and encourages community engagement through a variety of activities during the year.

In addition, the library building itself is a staple element of Hazen's own legacy, dating back to early in the town's history, when it served as the depot building for the railroad. The current display cabinets are actually located where the freight door used to operate, and that door's imprint can still be seen from Main Street outside the building.

"The library moved around," Hazen Library Director Cindy Aaser said. "It went from the water treatment building to the city hall and then over here, which is where the old Cenex building used to be."

The library's current location is on East Main Street, just across and slightly east of the city hall. To its east is Heritage Park and the Children's Play Park.

For a time, the building also housed the Hazen Parks and Rec office as well, located on the east side of the building, where the computer lab and kids' room are now.

Over the last several years, the historic building has received several upgrades and renovations, from new flooring and new windows to a patio area outside the main entrance. All of these help the library with its wide variety of different activities.

"Well, we have over 15,000 items for checkout here, including books, DVDs and audiobooks," Aaser said. "And we have computers and copy/fax services for the public, as well as scanning capabilities. We have quite a few people utilize those services."

The Hazen Public Library is part of the McLean-Mercer Regional Library Consortium and the Central Dakota Library Network, which helps them access numerous other libraries and their products in those systems. It is also a member of the North Dakota State Library Program.

Along with the building's rich heritage in the community is the heritage of treasures from the area's past that it holds within.

"We do have a lot of archive stuff here," Aaser said. "We have the war biographies of veterans from throughout Mercer County. We have reference material for all of the county cemeteries. And we have some family histories."

The library includes a basement. One part of the basement is used by groups like the Hazen Art and Craft Association for meetings, while other areas are used for storage. This storage space includes notable historical documents, like the centennial and jubilee celebration documents from



PHOTO CREDIT OF DANIEL ARENS

The Hazen Public Library is a staple feature of the community. A historic building located in downtown Hazen, near the Heritage Park and across from the city hall, the library holds not only books and DVDs, but also lots of archive and reference material related to local history and genealogies and community events throughout the year.

those milestone events

"We have the microfiche, with all the old records of The Hazen Star. That goes all the way back to the Mannhaven Journal," Aaser said. "And we have access to online newspapers through the State Library as well."

The Hazen Library can also access genealogical information through the State Library and do digital archiving by scanning people's documents. The library also has the Libby App for people to listen to books online or read on a Kindle.

The library does not just offer books and resources to people. It is also a place for events and where people can gather together.

"We do Story Time for preschoolers on Tuesdays at 10 a.m.," Aaser said, with this happening during the school year. Each day includes a story time with a book around the program's theme and then some kind of craft or activity, along with snacks.

Then, in summers, the library holds its annual Summer Reading Program.

"This summer, we have a dinosaur theme and paleontologists' theme," she said. "We are going to have some pretty cool programs set up that will be open to any kids."

The Summer Reading Program is at 10 a.m. on Thursdays. Outsider presenters sometimes put on programs at the neighboring park, with a craft event incorporated into the day as well.

During the Summer Reading Program, there are also teen and adult elements to the program. At the end of the summer event, the library celebrates with a large bash.

Even during the colder months, the library keeps people busy. There are winter craft events in November and December, like decorating cookies with Santa.

A new event added last year is the Seed, Grow, Share program, in which people can take seed packets from a "share shelf" outside the library's entrance ramp, grow them at home, then share any extra produce on the shelf that other people can pick up.

"Usually, the produce that gets brought in was gone in less than a day last year," Aaser said. She said other organizations are interested in doing programs associated with Seed, Grow, Share and the library, including the Mercer County Soil Conservation District, Mercer County Extension and Kolter Karges with Little Greens.

Other benefits of the library include access to study guides for new drivers or motorcyclists, space where groups can gather to hold meetings and use of the library's Access Channel. Hazen Public Library participates in many community events throughout the year, including Hazen Walk Around before Christmas, the Taste of Hazen event in March, Flea Markets in the summer, a multi-day book sale at the city hall in July and Harvestfest in September.



This "doorway," sitting above the ground along the wall of the library facing Main Street, was once the freight door for the railroad depot building. This old building was moved away from its former location to become Hazen's library, with the library having previously been located in the city hall and city waterworks building.



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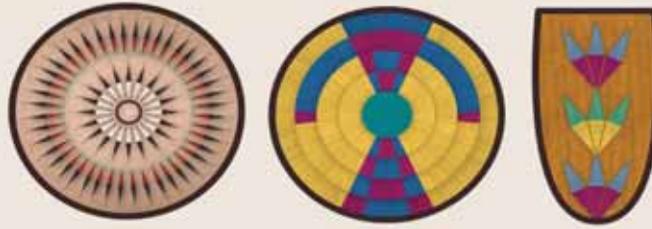
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MUSEUM & GALLERY

The MHA Interpretive Center features a world class museum exhibit, with interactive kiosks telling the story of the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara people's unique history through the perspective of the people themselves. The MHA Interpretive Center Art Gallery features artists from MHA, promoting and educating people on our traditional and contemporary culture and heritage.



AMPHITHEATER

The MHA Interpretive Center Amphitheater offers visitors a comfortable view of a stage area with the stunning backdrop of Lake Sakakawea. Guests can experience arts, dance and performances sharing the story of the Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara people.



The MHA Interpretive Center also brings the MiriShibisha (Black Water) Coffee Shop, and the Oak Tree Gift Shop, featuring authentic crafts, jewelry, books, clothing, and blankets!

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PHOTO CREDIT OF TYSON MATTHEWS



MAX

BUSTLING SMALL TOWN

Max may be small, but it still is mighty!
Each year it hosts the Max Rodeo during the last week of August.

visit Max

FOR AN HOUR

Check out one of the "Best Burgers" in North Dakota the Red Light Bar on Main Street in Max. The Red Light was nominated and is up for the "Best Burger in North Dakota" award which is sponsored by the North Dakota Beef Commission.

FOR A DAY

The Max Museum is only year-round. In the summer, check out the historic school room display and military paraphernalia and uniforms.

FOR A WEEKEND

The Max Rodeo is a weekend full of fun for people of all ages. Held on the last weekend of August each summer, the rodeo draws riders from near and far. With events like bull riding, team roping and barrel racing, there will be something for everyone. Back by popular demand, the rodeo even offers Mutton Bustin' for the little cow pokes.





**SO MUCH
MORE TO** ★
Max Museum
THAN JUST
Christmas ★

PHOTO BY TYSON MATTHEWS
The Max museum is open year-round, with a special Christmas displays throughout the holidays.

BY TYSON MATTHEWS
MCLEAN COUNTY INDEPENDENT

The Max Museum is known all around McLean County for its beautiful Christmas Display.

All three rooms of the museum are decorated from floor to ceiling with Christmas decor.

Museum director, Ray Iverson, meticulously curated his museum during switching from the holiday season to the regular Max Historical Museum.

FIRST ROOM

As you enter the museum, to your left you first see a display of antiques.

There are butter churns, scales, hairdryers, and so much more.

Around the corner, you come to the retro one-room schoolhouse display.

SECOND ROOM

On one side of the room, along the ceiling, is a row of Max School sports, letterman sweaters and cheerleading uniforms from many years ago.

“Would those (letterman sweaters) be something to wear today in the ninety degrees,” Iverson said. “They are made of very heavy wool.

School annuals from years past are displayed on a bookshelf.

THIRD ROOM

Moving towards the back of the museum, you have two different areas.

“I love this area, because I’m a veteran,” Iverson said.

He points to the museum’s most prized possession that hangs from the wall; a handmaid quilt from 1945. It was donated by Rhonda Trihub Kingman. The quilt was made by the “Max Mothers Club” to honor Max Servicemen at the end of World War II.

Along one wall, he has collected uniforms from all five branches of the United States military branches on mannequins.

He has a display of different antique military paraphernalia including MRE’s, boots, bags, and hats.

On the opposite wall are military jackets, some with photos of the owners while wearing them.

BACK ROOM

Located in the back room is the “famous” year-round Christmas area.

“Christmas is up in the backroom year-round,” Iverson said.

In this area, the tiny town is lit up with ceramic houses and stores as they are displayed as a wintery wonderland that an electric train

encompasses. Displays climb the walls surrounding the tiny town. Twinkle lights cast a glowing light over the whole display.

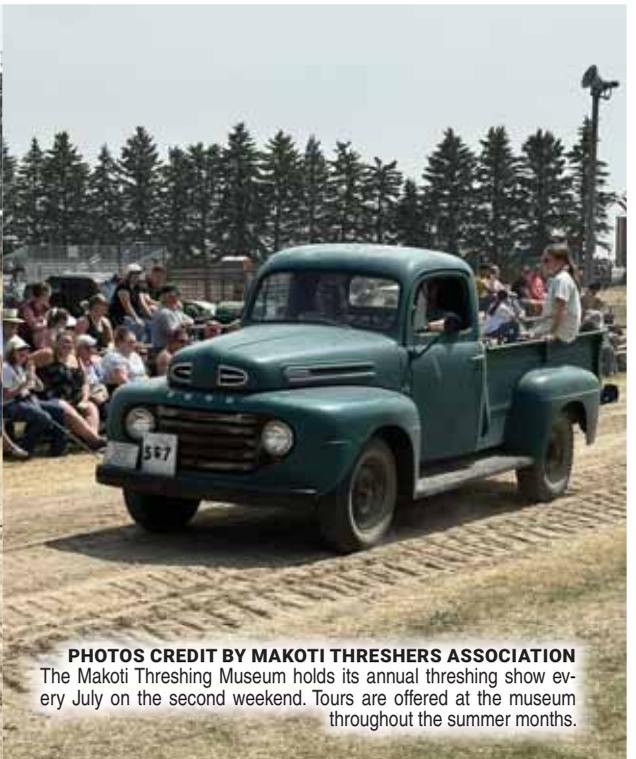
Iverson has been the director of the museum since it opened around eight years ago.

“These are old city council books from back in the 20s,” Iverson said. “There is some interesting stuff in these. Unbelievable. I could sit and look at these for hours.”

The Max Museum is open “year-round.”

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PHOTOS CREDIT BY MAKOTI THRESHERS ASSOCIATION
The Makoti Threshing Museum holds its annual threshing show every July on the second weekend. Tours are offered at the museum throughout the summer months.

MAKOTI

Makoti Threshing Museum

A SOME SHOW HIGHLIGHTING THE AGRICULTURE HISTORY

BY KELLI AMELING
NORDAK NORTH PUBLISHING

Every second weekend in July, the Makoti Threshing Museum brings the annual Makoti Threshing Show to highlight the agriculture history in Sakakawea Country.

According to its website, the threshing

show offers a collection of antique machinery, which includes a steam-powered threshing machine, vintage tractors, trucks and farm tools.

"The museum immerses visitors in the sights, sounds and history of early agriculture," the Makoti Threshers' Museum website stated.

The museum itself is open for tours during the summer months, and operates on a free-will donation admission fee.

For more information, or to set up an appointment for a tour of the museum, contact the Makoti Threshers Association at 701-726-5200.

visit Makoti



FOR AN HOUR

Local eateries like the Makot Café, offer classic American homestyle cooking and becomes a gathering spot for those visiting the area.

FOR A DAY

The Sakakawea Fence Stretchers is a local trail celebrating the history of early homesteaders and ranchers in the Makoti Region. Using for both walking in the summer and snowmobiles in the winter.

FOR A WEEKEND

There are longs of lakes and campgrounds for those visiting Makoti to explore including Makoti Lake and Hiddenwood Lake. Mokoti Lake is described as peaceful, and use for fishing, boating and picnicking. Hiddenwood Lake is where most can find avid anglers and nature lovers.

"Home of Sakakawea"

STANTON

North Dakota



It's Mercer County's oldest city and serves as its county seat, nestled at the confluence of the Knife and Missouri rivers.

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It's a community surrounded by agriculture and industrial opportunity in the heart of Coal Country, yet bordered by untouched prairie waving in the North Dakota wind. It's a community blessed with access to unparalleled hunting grounds and unmatched lake and river fisheries. It's neighbor to Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site, the home of Lewis and Clark's famed Shoshone guide, Sakakawea.

It's a friendly community with plans for the future, but whose heart lies deeply entrenched in the area's rich historical significance.

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PHOTO CREDIT OF MARY FREDERICKS
Established in 2023, the Three Affiliated Tribes National Park near Mandaree, North Dakota, is open year-around and offers up to 10 miles of hiking trails, showcasing the Badlands territory.

MHA RESERVATION

visit MHA Reservation

FOR AN HOUR

The Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara Nation, also known as the Three Affiliated Tribes, is located on the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation in central North Dakota. The reservation is located on the Missouri River in McLean, Mountrail, Dunn, McKenzie, Mercer and Ward counties, consisting of 988,000 acres, of which 457,837 acres are owned by Native Americans, either as individual allotments or communally by the tribe.

MHA Nation provides several locations and events for visitors to enjoy and explore, including a museum in New Town, the reconstructed Earthlodge Village on the shores of Lake Sakakawea near New Town, its famed Buffalo Ranch, which provides tours and viewing of buffalo in their natural habitat, a new Three Affiliated Tribes National Park and the 4 Bears Casino and Lodge, located near the Missouri River and access to Lake Sakakawea.

One of the newest additions to the MHA Nation is its Three Affiliated Tribes National Park, which offers roughly 2,100 acres of land that was once part of the Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara tribes' original treaty lands. Located just south of the Missouri River, adjacent to the Fort Berthold Reservation, the new park is an excellent spot for outdoor hiking with as many as 10 miles of trails to explore.

The park is still being developed, with more trails being groomed, a visitors center in the works to be built and with plans to create a seasonal river trail soon for kayaking. Nearby campsites are also planned to be updated. In the meantime, the park is an excellent day trip destination, which visitors can learn and appreciate the beauty of the landscape, its ecosystem and its direct connection to MHA Nation's history and heritage.

FOR A DAY

Three Affiliated Tribes Museum in New Town serves as a heritage center to display and preserve the history and culture of the Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara people. In addition, the new MHA Interpretative Center at New Town, North Dakota, will open in the fall of 2020, and dedicated to the Arikara people. The center features ten offices, a 250-seat event room, gift shop, coffee shop, kitchen for preparing traditional meals at events, and a classroom for cultural educational classes such as traditional food, beading, and tanning hides. An outside amphitheater with 500 seating is also under construction.

FOR A WEEKEND

MHA's 4 Bears Casino and Lodge, in New Town, North Dakota, is a wonderful "base camp" for visitors wanting to explore the area of includes the waters of Lake Sakakawea over a weekend. 4 Bears Casino & Lodge operates a yacht charter for public tours and private events, and Mossett Bay features boating, camping and swimming. The 760-acre McLean National Wildlife Refuge, managed as part of the Audubon National Wildlife Refuge Complex, is also within reach from the casino for visitors to enjoy over a weekend.

WELCOME

from the chairman

Dear friends,
On behalf of the Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara peoples, welcome to our home in the Missouri River Basin.

We have cared for these lands and waters for thousands of years. Today, we're known as MHA Nation, or the Three Affiliated Tribes.

We hope you enjoy the vast richness of this part of the country. Our lands on the Fort Berthold Reservation take in nearly 1 million acres, and you're visiting in one of the most exciting chapters of our history.

Recently, we opened Three Affiliated Tribes National Park, where trails wind through colorful prairie landscapes, and you might see elk, eagles, moose, deer, big horn sheep, and other wildlife foraging and more. We're committed to preserving the natural beauty and cultural heritage of this area—and providing education, inspiration and fun along the way.

As a sovereign nation, we incorporate the traditional values of our elders and ancestors, including responsibility and self-sufficiency, into all we do. Those values are woven through projects like Native Green Grow, which will soon be one of the largest greenhouse operations in the world. It exemplifies our vision for renewable, forward-thinking economic development.

We hope you take in the wide array of things to do here—from the views and foods, to the 4 Bears Casino and River Willow gaming boat, to the 4 Bears Water Park and our brand new Thrill & Chill Zone Family Fun Center in New Town.

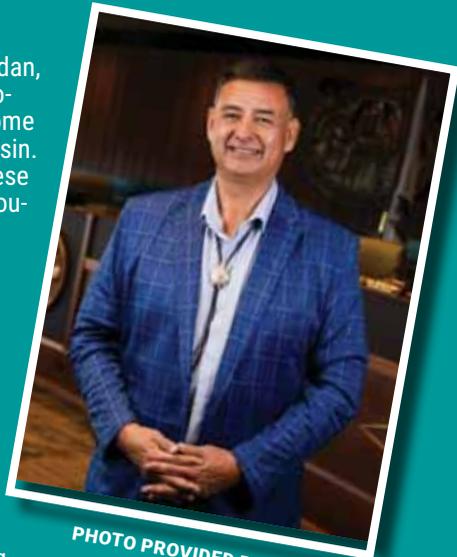


PHOTO PROVIDED BY MARK FOX

Mark N. Fox
MHA Nation Tribal Chairman

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PHOTOS CREDIT OF MARY FREDERICKS

The Three Affiliated Tribes National Park, so far, has 10 miles of hiking trails established, but will be working to add more this spring and summer, along with a river trail for kayaking and will be constructing interpretive signs along the trails and a visitors center.



Since 2023, the Three Affiliated Tribes National Park has been developing new trails that showcase the Badlands landscape, its wonderful geological features and diverse ecosystem and allows visitors to harken back to the heritage days of Native Americans.



The 2,100-acre land of the Three Affiliated Tribes National Park holds significant cultural importance for MHA Nation, as its tribes have inhabited the land for thousands of years, using the land as foraging areas, a place the Hidatsa describe as "Awa-shee-bitz," or the "place of many thickets."

Into the Great Wide Open

NEW THREE AFFILIATED TRIBES NATIONAL PARK CONTINUES TO GROW, OFFERING WONDERFUL HIKING EXPERIENCE ▶▶

**BY RYAN SCHLEHUBER
BEULAH BEACON**

"A walk in nature walks the soul back home. – Mary Davis

Located just south of the Missouri River, adjacent to the Fort Berthold Reservation, lies roughly 2,100 acres of land that was once part of the Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara tribes' original treaty lands.

Today, that area, formally known as the Fettig ranch, serves as a newly popular destination area for avid hikers and those who love the outdoors, with as much as 10 miles of trails available.

What's more exciting is that this is just the tip of the iceberg ... nay ... the landscape.

Since 2023, the Three Affiliated Tribes National Park has been developing new trails that showcase the Badlands landscape, its wonderful geological features and diverse ecosystem and allows visitors to harken back to the heritage days of Native Americans.

The Three Affiliated Tribes National Park, which is located nearby to Mandaree, North Dakota, and 30 miles north of Killdeer, North Dakota, was established by the MHA (Mandan-Hidatsa-Arikara) Nation, which has put much investment into the park for conservation, preservation, educational and recreational purposes, according to Mary Fredericks, the administrator for Three Affiliated Tribes National Park. The park is accessible to people through a free special use permit, which is available on the park website, www.tatnationapark.com.

Fredericks has been with the TATNP since Day 1 of its construction, which now has 10 miles of trail mapped out, so far. More trails are expected to be added this spring and summer, as well as establishing a seasonal river trail for kayaking and installing signs along the many trails.

The focus for the west side of the park is designing and developing a visitor center as well as planning more trails and possible traditional garden plots on the river bottom.

"We're open, just not fully open or fully staffed yet," Fredericks said. "However, we're working through it and we have the National Park Service to thank because they've helped us a lot in developing trails," Fredericks said.

The park is also looking to upgrade the nearby camping site, which, right now, is a rustic set-up across the river.

The park has collaborated with several state and national entities to develop the land, including with the National Park Service's Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program, which has provided expert help in developing trails within the 2,100-acre land.

While developing the first 10 miles of trail, Fredericks and her staff have walked every step of them and sees the attraction of the land, not just for visitors, but for residents and members of MHA Nation, as well.

"I really love the landscape because it's beautiful, for one thing, but it's also precious to me because it's my home, too," Fredericks said. "There's a certain quality of peace about it. It's not a huge park, but what I like about it is each area feels so much different from the others. There are a lot of unique areas, such as the river area."

The land holds significant cultural importance for MHA Nation, as its tribes have inhabited the land for thousands of years, using the land as foraging areas, a place the Hidatsa describe as "Awa-shee-bitz," or the "place of many thickets." Fredericks said the acquisition of the land allows tribes to reconnect to their ancestors and gives them the ability to share that culture and history with visitors.

According to the Three Affiliated Tribes National Park, "The park is special because it's a culturally significant place to the MHA people that we can reclaim and utilize as a bridge to connect people to place on a deeper level while promoting wellness and healing."

Fredericks said the Three Affiliated National Park's land borders the Little Missouri State Park, which visitors are able to access both parks easily. Also nearby are the MHA Interpretive Center, the 4 Bears Casino and Lodge and the MHA's Earth Lodge Village.

Upcoming events this season at Three Affiliated Tribes National Park include – but are not limited to – a hiking series (spring hike, summer hike and fall hike), a photography workshop and veterans ruck walk. The park is also providing "sweat equity" opportunities by hosting volunteer in the park events throughout the summer. Soon, visitors will also have access to fishing, cross country skiing and snow shoeing.

For more information, email mhaparksandreserve@mhanation.com, or call 701-627-2036.

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PHOTOS CREDIT OF CUTLINE MEGHAN MATHIES, ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT AT LAKE SAKAKAWEA STATE PARK

Pick City is the western terminus of the North Country Trail, the longest unpaved hiking trail in the United States, continuing east through eight states before ending in Vermont.



Pick City is an excellent lake community, with a population that swells in the summer as boaters look to take advantage of all the warm and sunny days they can get out on the waters of Lake Sakakawea.

Lake Sakakawea State Park provides a great lakeside location to stay at or visit, with excellent views of the wide waters and breathtaking bluffs surrounding them.



PICK CITY

visit Pick City



FOR AN HOUR

Pick City has a beautiful playground on the north side of town. The kids will have a blast with a variety of enjoyable options at the park, while parents can spend their time having good conversations in the lakeside breeze.

FOR A DAY

The Garrison Dam is located just east of Pick City. Travelers will want to check out this historic site, including tours of the actual plant powering the dam

FOR A WEEKEND

Take a full week up to the lake and enjoy Lake Sakakawea State Park. Just east of city limits, the state park offers boating, fishing, swimming and camping recreation for all ages.

In summertime, the population of Pick City suddenly explodes. The reason is simple: few places in North Dakota can rival the lake feel of this small town. Situated just west of the Garrison Dam, Pick City is embedded in the heart of both North Dakota history and North Dakota recreation. Indeed, it might be said to be as much a large resort as it is a small city.

WELCOME from the mayor



Pick City is the small town with a big reputation. Ideally located just west of Garrison Dam near Lake Sakakawea and Missouri River, Pick City is a perfect destination for a day-trip, or a longer adventure.

Pick City businesses provide all necessary amenities when you visit the Pick City area. From Pick City's lovely city park to the abundance of public lands and facilities complementing Lake Sakakawea's allure,

recreational fun is almost limitless. See you at "the Lake".

**Pick City Mayor,
Arvid Anderson**

CELEBRATING HERITAGE, SERVING A NEED



PHOTOS CREDIT OF DANIEL ARENS

Carol Galvin prepares lefse for the big Norwegian Lutfisk and Lefse Meal at her home each year. The meal celebrates both the local Scandinavian heritage and the Pick City community, as residents and volunteers come together to prepare, serve and share a large meal that helps to raise money for a good cause through giving to local hospice programs in Mercer and McLean counties.

**BY DANIEL ARENS
HAZEN STAR**

Mercer County has a rich heritage, steeped in the immigration of Germans from Russia families, a small Swedish community and the culture of the Three Affiliated Tribes that preceded them all.

One heritage that is not as prevalent is the Norwegian culture. However, each September, Pick City holds an event that celebrates this unique aspect of Mercer County's history.

The annual Lutfisk and Lefse is held on a Saturday in September at the Dam Bar in Pick City. Besides these classic Norwegian dishes, there are meatballs, potatoes, rømmegrøt, rice pudding and numerous dessert options.

Carol Galvin is at the heart of this event. Her homemade lefse is a primary draw for people each year. Besides making the lefse, a major endeavor requiring help from about a dozen people in the Pick City area for rolling, buttering and packaging prior to the meal, Galvin also helps steer the supper towards serving a particular worthy cause.

Starting in 2010, the proceeds after expenses from the yearly supper began going towards local hospice programs. This began after Galvin's husband Pat was put on hospice care and has continued to be a charitable function of the event ever since. Every alternate year, the funds go either to the Mercer County Hospice Program in Hazen or the McLean Hospice Program in Garrison. This year, the proceeds will benefit McLean County Hospice.

For Galvin, making lefse has always been a part of her life.

"Well, I helped my mother growing up, but when my mother wasn't able to do it anymore, that's when I really started doing it," she said.

The process of preparing lefse takes Galvin two days. On the first day, she prepares and boils the potatoes. In order to get the potatoes ready, they are first put through the mixer and then the ricer.

"The ricer gets them nice and fine, finer than you can get them in the mixer," Galvin said, adding the process actually involves using the

ricer twice. She then rolls them into balls and freezes them overnight, allowing her to roll them out and complete the dish the next day.

Besides the potatoes, the only other ingredients that go into the lefse preparation are cream, real butter, a little sugar and flour. After the lefse are rolled out and heated on the grill, Galvin then adds butter, sugar and even cinnamon to them before folding them up, ready to eat.

Galvin prepares both frozen lefse in advance as well as hot lefse during the day. She said she makes at least 150 fresh lefse for the event, although she wants to make sure she's well prepared each year. Frozen lefse will also be available for purchase at the event, with this money also going towards the hospice programs.

Over the years, more than \$50,000 has been raised by the event for the two hospice programs. For the most part, Galvin said there is a slight increase from year to year in the number of people that come out for the event.

The only part of the meal that is brought in from an outside source at the expense of the event is the lutfisk. The meatballs, potatoes, and everything else are all made by local residents in Pick City.

The September meal is by no means the only time Galvin makes lefse. She can produce the food throughout the year, although she is most busy in the fall and the Christmas season, preparing for those who bring her requests.

"I make several thousand lefse every season, about 10 lbs. of potatoes at a time usually," she said, although she also stressed the amount of help she gets from friends in the area, especially prior to the September event.

Galvin said the key is to make sure the process of making the lefse remains enjoyable, and this is done by pacing herself from day to day.

"I never do it all day long, because I like doing it," she said. "When it starts to be a chore, that's when I stop."

Everyone is welcome to come to Pick City on Sept. 19 and experience the full gamut of Norwegian cuisine, including Galvin's homemade lefse.



The Dam Bar in Pick City hosts the annual Lutfisk and Lefse feed, drawing out both residents and visitors to enjoy a full meal of favorite Norwegian cuisine. Even the lutfisk has a special place in the minds (and stomachs) of many of these attendees.



PHOTO CREDIT OF EMILEE FRANKLIN, NPS
Keith Bear performs at a July event at Knife River Indian Villages, a mile north of Stanton. The National Historic Site recognizes the rich historical and cultural significance of the Three Affiliated Tribes to local and state history, putting on educational seminars and interactive activities for visitors. The visitor center, earth lodge and trails are open year-round.



STANTON



visit Stanton



FOR AN HOUR

Situated on the banks of the Knife River, Stanton's large city park boasts an impressive playset, numerous shelters and open access to the river, just above the meeting with the Missouri River. The park is an ideal place to take in the summer sunshine.

FOR A DAY

Located at the confluence of the Knife and Missouri rivers, Stanton provides residents and visitors with ample opportunities to get out on the water, including a boat ramp on the Missouri River, donated by Great River Energy and located northeast of town.

FOR A WEEKEND

Knife River Indian Villages is a National Historic Site at the heart of local Native American culture. Check out the gift shop and visitor center for books and souvenirs, along with a museum of artifacts. You can also attend programs put on by experts in a number of different fields and get out on the hiking trails to see the old village sites for yourself.

Stanton is a small town with a rich legacy for Mercer County and the United States. A turning point for the Lewis and Clark Expedition, it was at this point along the mighty Missouri where the explorers met the Shoshone woman Sacagawea, who became their guide. The heritage of that journey and the history, culture and craft of the Native tribes they encountered in this region is preserved at the Knife River Indian Villages. The town itself serves as the county seat, preserving a rich legacy of settlers from diverse backgrounds. The Stanton Civic Club works hard to bring out community spirit through their annual Knife River Days festival in August, as well as new activities throughout the year.





COMMUNITY FESTIVAL CELEBRATES SMALL-TOWN SUMMERS ▶▶

BY DANIEL ARENS
HAZEN STAR

Looking for a place with lots of activities and adventures the whole family can enjoy?

Make sure you add Knife River Days to your summer plans this year.

This annual festival is held in a small town with a big legacy. The county seat of Mercer County, Stanton has a population of between 300 and 400 people, yet its significance in the history of the region is large. The Three Affiliated Tribes of the Mandan, the Hidatsa and the Arikara nations long lived in the area here, where the Knife River joins the Mighty Missouri, and it was near Stanton that Sacagawea joined the Lewis & Clark expedition as it traveled up the Missouri River. Years later, the town saw an increase in settlers in the early 1900s and then a boom in the 1970s as coal power plants brought many jobs to the region.

Knife River Days is a chance for this town to celebrate its rich identity while also drawing in visitors from around the area and beyond. The festival is an all-day event drawing people of all ages together for music, games, shows, sales and more.

This year, Knife River Days will be held on Aug. 15 and 16. The event primarily takes place in and around the Stanton Civic Center on Main Street (also called Harmon Ave.), or further down the street closer to the Summit Counseling building and the city park on the east side of town.

The event is a blend of a vibrant and active festival with the laid-back spirit and community-minded focus characteristic of small-town life. The Stanton Civic Club, which hosts the event each year, is composed entirely of community volunteers, whether lifelong Stanton residents or newer residents that fell in love with the town.

"As a transplant from South Florida, I'm new to Stanton and the small-town feel," Stanton Civic Club Vice President Karen Petti said. "The city I'm from in Florida has a population of around 170,000 people, so coming to a town with over 300 was quite the culture shock."

It is this contrast that makes events like Knife River Days particularly special to people like Petti. While there are similarities in bringing fun activities, lots of food and lively programs to town, festivals in larger cities often feel like you are one small dot in a massive crowd, with few people you know (if anyone).

"Growing up, we did not have any small-town festivals where 'you know everyone', where you can mingle, fellowship, eat, drink and dance with, literally, your neighbors," Petti said. "Seeing neighbors at

the Knife River Days event talking about the old times, dancing with each other and hanging out is something special that you don't get with thousands of people in attendance."

In small-town festivals, residents are all likely to know one another quite well, so that the event feels more like a kind of extended family reunion. And for visitors who come by to check out the event, that same warm family vibe and welcoming community spirit will quickly make you feel at home as well.

Knife River Days is a staple part of the Stanton community lifestyle, a major highlight of the summer season for Stantonites and for visitors from Hazen, Center and other surrounding towns. And it is fresh with some new spirit and a bright new spark.

In the late 2010s, the festival went through some changes in its shape and format in order to try and draw out more people to participate. Then the pandemic came in 2020, and for the next couple of years there was no summer festival in town.

That changed in 2024 and 2025. In 2024, the Stanton Civic Club came back to life with new leadership determined both to bring new attractions to the community and to revive old events that were special to the people and history of the town.

"Ever since we took over, we have just heard so many people say, 'Bring back Knife River Days!'" Stanton Civic Club Treasurer Destiny Chapman said. "So we did that."

Chapman said the first Knife River Days festival of the 2020s had a strong turnout, exceeding the club's expectations and galvanizing them to plan an even bigger event for 2026. To that end, they are still finalizing plans for this year's event, gathering input from residents and visitors during other events throughout the year, like community meals at the civic center in town.

Last year's event included a street dance, line dancing class, food trucks, a car show (with both a motorcycle and a bicycle show held in conjunction with it) and a farmer's market. It also saw the Stanton Civic Club partner with other groups like Summit Counseling Solutions for worship events and music and the Stanton Fire Department for a cornhole tournament.

This year's event will include many of these elements but will also use those elements as a springboard to bring more activities to town during the festival. At the same time, it will continue to shine a spotlight on the benefits of small-town living in a close-knit community.

"It's a family vibe in Stanton and with the Knife River Days, and the experience for me made me realize I never want to live in a big city again," Petti said.

PHOTO CREDIT OF DESTINY CHAPMAN

Stanton kids proudly show off their bikes during a combined car, motorcycle and bicycle show, one of many different elements of the Knife River Day celebration in August. This year's event will be on Aug. 15 and 16, with plans to include even more activities and events in the festivities for this celebration of a historic North Dakota community.

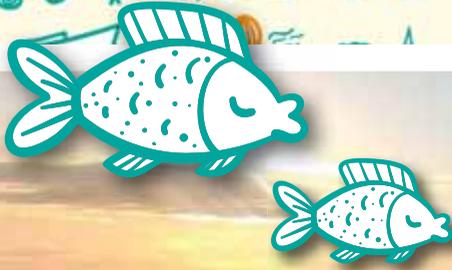


PHOTO CREDIT OF BIG LAKE GUIDING SERVICE
The sun sets near Riverdale after a day of fishing through Big Lake Guiding Service on Lake Sakakawea.



RIVERDALE

visit Riverdale 

FOR AN HOUR

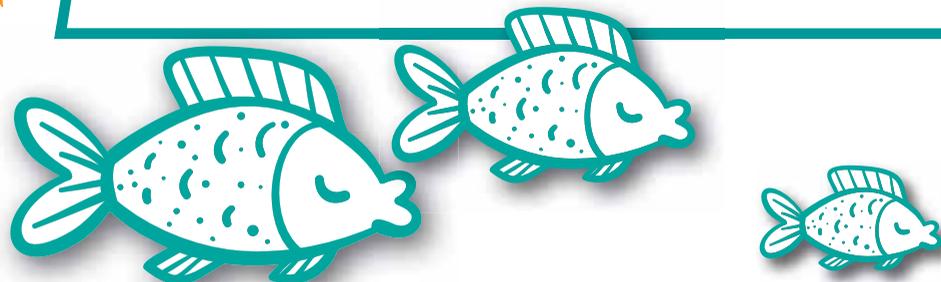
Misty the Mermaid can be found in Riverdale. Misty is a metal sculpture created by Tom Neary, which had stones donated by each county in North Dakota that line the pathway.

FOR A DAY

Government Bay Recreation Area is a popular day use recreation area for boaters to easily gain access to Lake Sakakawea. The area has a boat ramp, bathroom facilities and fish cleaning station.

FOR A WEEKEND

Riverdale offers many options for camping, which brings easy access to Lake Sakakawea and local trails like the North Country National Scenic Trial, and a variety of establishments to eat at.



Big Lake Guide Service

RIVERDALE'S ONE-STOP SHOP FOR GUIDING, LODGING

BY KELLI AMELING
NORDAK NORTH PUBLISHING

A thin line of morning light breaks over Lake Sakakawea as Aaron Hayden eases his boat from the dock – another day of chasing walleye, another day doing what his family has built their life around.

Big Lake Guide Service is now in its 10th year of operation, and so far business owner Aaron Hayden said things are going “pretty good.”

The business is run by Hayden and his wife, Stephanie, along with their daughter, Hope.

Located in Riverdale on Lake Sakakawea, the family strives to give visitors and an “unforgettable day on the water.”

Big Lake Guide Service gives anglers access to trophy walleye, hard-fighting salmon and smallmouth bass, to northern pike, catfish and more.

“We put you on the fish with expert local knowledge and top-tier equipment,” Hayden said on the website.

Because the guiding service is a year-round job, and one that the Haydens feel passionate about, Hayden said even if they do have a day off, he is still working for his customers.

“I guide every single day, but even if there is a cancelation, I am out fishing,” Hayden said, explaining he has to stay on top of the fish to make sure the customers he takes on the water have a productive trip.

Since opening the business 10 years ago, Hayden said they have grown the business to also accommodate lodging for visitors.

Over the years, as people have begun visiting the Riverdale area, Hayden said lodging had become harder and harder to find.

To address the issue, he said they bought a house to start accommodating those who booked their guiding services. Then, over the years, one house turned into two.

“We are a hardworking family business,” Hayden said, adding he does what he can to be a one-stop shop for his customers.

Overall, Hayden said his goal is “simple.” He wants every client to have a great experience and a reason to come back to Riverdale.

“Big Lake Guide Service began with a simple passion: time on the water.

After years of fishing Lake Sakakawea and the Missouri River, I realized one thing never changed—every trip created memories worth sharing,” according to Hayden’s website. “Friends, family, and fellow anglers were always asking when they could tag along, learn more, or experience a day of fishing the way I saw it. That passion eventually grew into something bigger, and Big Lake Guide Service was born.”

For this interested in booking Big Lake Guide Service, they can find information at biglakeguideservicend.com, call Hayden at 701-799-0213 or email at biglakeguideservicend@gmail.com.



PHOTO CREDIT OF BIG LAKE GUIDING SERVICE

Aaron Hayden describes Big Lake Guiding Service as a “hardworking family-run business” that works year-round to help provide the best guiding service possible.



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794-8748 or Find us on
Facebook - Oliver County Fair**



PHOTO CREDIT OF CITY OF TURTLE LAKE
Turtle Lake's iconic turtle statue sits at the edge of town welcoming all who drive into the small community

TURTLE LAKE



visit Turtle Lake 

FOR AN HOUR

Visitors to Turtle Lake looking to spend an hour or two enjoying the outdoors have six lakes to choose from dotted around Turtle Lake; Strawberry Lake, Brecken Lake, Camp Lake, Crooked Lake, Holmes Lake, or Lightning Lake.

FOR A DAY

Those looking for a bit more intense of an outdoor experience can take a walk on the North Country National Scenic Trail, hikers could travel west and end up in Riverdale or head east and hike all the way to Lisbon.

FOR A WEEKEND

There's no better time for a weekend in Turtle Lake than during their annual Turtle Days Festival, visitors of the community will see it at its liveliest as the entire main street is shut down for the food, fun, and games the festival offers.

Nestled along ND 41, the City of Turtle Lake is a small rural community of about 575 residents.

Known for its welcoming spirit and natural beauty, Turtle Lake offers visitors a variety of ways to enjoy its charm, whether you're here for an hour, a day, or an entire weekend.



Turtle Days: A SUMMER TRADITION THAT BRINGS TURTLE LAKE TO LIFE ▶▶



PHOTO CREDIT OF ETHYN WILLIAMS-CALVERT

Turtle Lake's annual Turtle Days Festival always draws a crowd, leaving Turtle Lake's sidewalks bustling with crowds eager to watch the parade.

BY ETHYN WILLIAMS-CALVERT
CENTRAL MCLEAN NEWS-JOURNAL

Each summer, Turtle Lake sheds its quiet, everyday rhythm and embraces a burst of color, energy, and hometown pride during its beloved Turtle Days Festival.

For one weekend, this rural McLean County community becomes the center of cheerful celebration, drawing families, former residents, and curious travelers who come to experience one of the region's most charming small-town traditions.

Visitors arriving in Turtle Lake are always welcomed by the town's unmistakable symbol, the giant turtle statue standing guard along the highway.

It's a familiar roadside sight for anyone passing through.

But during Turtle Days, that sense of identity and whimsy expands far beyond the statue itself. The town turns wholeheartedly toward its namesake, layering turtle-themed touches across storefronts, gathering spaces, and community events.

What sets Turtle Days apart is the way the entire festival leans into its theme with creativity.

Decorative turtles appear in windows and along streets, transforming the town into a playful celebration of the animal it's known for.

That sense of enthusiasm continues into the festival's activities, where longtime staples invite participants of all ages to join in.

Among the most cherished traditions are the Turtle Races, a light-hearted event that manages to be both amusing and surprisingly suspenseful.

Spectators crowd in to watch turtles inch their way toward victory, cheering their chosen champion with the same excitement you'd find at far larger sporting events.

It's a simple idea, yet it captures everything that makes Turtle Days memorable: togetherness, laughter, and a shared willingness to em-

brace small-town fun.

But the festival is far more than one attraction.

Throughout the weekend, Turtle Lake buzzes with activity.

Visitors wander between food vendors offering local favorites, chat with residents who embody the friendliness the town is known for, and enjoy a relaxed atmosphere that encourages lingering on the sidewalks.

Families gravitate toward the games and activities scattered throughout the event, while others take their time browsing booths or simply enjoying the familiar comfort of a community gathering.

What keeps people returning each year is the festival's ability to make everyone feel like part of something special.

Turtle Days isn't built on spectacle but on community connection; neighbors catching up, children discovering new favorites, and visitors discovering why this small town leaves such a big impression.

Whether someone is making their first trip or returning as part of a family tradition, Turtle Days delivers the same rewarding experience: good food, genuine hospitality, and a joyful celebration of what makes Turtle Lake unique.

It's a summer highlight that continues to reflect the heart of the community, offering a warm invitation to anyone looking to share in its spirit.



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PHOTO CREDIT OF ETHYN WILLIMAS-CALVERT
Underwood's Welcome to Underwood sign sits right at the entrance to town as you turn off highway 83, welcoming you to the small community immediately



UNDERWOOD

visit Underwood 

FOR AN HOUR

Come down to Underwood and see the chasms and pits created by the coal mining that helps power North Dakota and Minnesota. Located just off the west side of highway 83 the work can be seen from your car as the earth is turned over for the coal we use.

FOR A DAY

During the summers in Underwood residents and tourists can head on down to the McLean County Speedway located at the fair grounds for weekly races and excitement. With races running throughout the entire summer there's plenty of action to come out and cheer on.

FOR A WEEKEND

Held in June every summer Underwood also plays host to the McLean County Fair. Come down for a weekend in the sun, ride the rides, see the animals and enjoy a slice of McLean County fun.

EXPLORE THE HIDDEN GEMS OF UNDERWOOD

Located just off Highway 83, north of the Falkirk Mine, the City of Underwood is a quaint rural community of 775 residents, known for its welcoming atmosphere and serene surroundings.

Whether you have an hour, a day, or a weekend to spend in Underwood, there's something for everyone to enjoy.



McLean County Fair: A SUMMER SHOWCASE OF SMALL-TOWN SPIRIT IN UNDERWOOD ▶▶



PHOTO CREDIT OF ETHYN WILLIMAS-CALVERT

Underwood plays host to the McLean County Fair annually, drawing in hundreds of local and traveling residents for some fun in the summer sun

BY ETHYN WILLIAMS-CALVERT
CENTRAL MCLEAN NEWS-JOURNAL

Each summer, Underwood becomes the gathering place for families, exhibitors, and fairgoers from across the region as the McLean County Fair brings its signature blend of tradition, entertainment, and community pride to town.

For a long weekend, this friendly McLean County hub transforms into a lively destination that welcomes newcomers and longtime fair lovers alike.

When fair weekend arrives, that quiet small town backdrop shifts into a vibrant landscape of activity.

The fairgrounds fill with the unmistakable sights and sounds of summer: laughter drifting from the midway, the hum of conversation under the grandstands, and the steady rhythm of families moving from one attraction to the next.

What sets the McLean County Fair apart is the way it reflects the character of the county itself. Agriculture, youth involvement, and rural heritage all take center stage, giving visitors an authentic look at

the traditions that shape daily life here.

From livestock barns showcasing the hard work of area 4-H and FFA members to displays highlighting local craftsmanship, the fair is as much a celebration of dedication as it is entertainment.

Throughout the grounds, guests discover the classic charm of a small-town fair.

Food vendors serve up summertime favorites that encourage visitors to stroll, snack, and take in the atmosphere at a relaxed pace.

Families gravitate toward the games and attractions, enjoying simple, timeless fun that has connected generations.

Whether you're taking in a friendly competition, wandering through exhibit halls, or simply soaking up the sunshine, the fair offers a welcoming space to unwind.

The McLean County Fair also provides one of the best opportunities to meet the communities that make up the region.

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PARKS & TRAILS

CROSS RANCH STATE PARK

Cross Ranch State Park is located along some of the last free-flowing and undeveloped stretches of the Missouri River. While exploring Cross Ranch State Park, visitors may find themselves traveling back in time, catching a glimpse of the landscape as it appeared to Native Americans inhabiting the area hundreds of years ago, or hearing the echoes of the Lewis and Clark Expedition making its way to the Pacific coast along the Missouri River.

Cross Ranch has nearly 17 miles of trails that cater to the adventurer all year long. This extensive trail system can be explored either on foot or cross-country skis during the winter months. The trail system allows access to a 5,000-acre nature preserve with mixed prairie grass, river bottom forests, woody draws, and roaming bison.

Cabins and yurts are all available for overnight lodging along with two different campgrounds. A boat ramp is available for those wishing to explore this scenic segment of the river. An-

glers will find walleye, trout, catfish, salmon, pike and bass in its waters.

LOCATION: Cross Ranch State Park is located 12 miles southeast of Hensler via paved roads, or 6 miles by gravel. For paved access roads follow the brown park directional signs located on Hwy. 200 or Highway 25.

FEES: Entrance fees can be found at parkrec.nd.gov.

CAMPING: Main campground has electrical, group, primitive and backcountry campsites with vault toilets nearby. Restrooms and showers at Visitor Center. Sanger Campground has electrical and primitive campsites with vault toilets only.

CABINS: Various cabins and yurts are available for overnight stays year-round. Amenities range from full-service to primitive. A vault toilet is located nearby, and shower facilities are available year-round at the Visitor Center.

For more information, visit parkrec.nd.gov or call 701-794-3731.

FORT STEVENSON STATE PARK

Fort Stevenson State Park is nestled in the bluffs along the north shore of Lake Sakakawea. With miles of trails, a wide variety of rental equipment, breathtaking views and year-round special events, there is always something fun to do.

Fort Stevenson is three miles south of Garrison, the “Walleye Capital” of North Dakota, and is a preferred spot to experience a great day on the lake. Boaters will find excellent facilities, including two marinas with boat ramp access, boat rentals and fish cleaning facilities. Kayaks, fat tire bikes and pontoons are available for rent.

The park is named after a late 1800s fort that served as a supply depot for other military posts in the Dakota Territory. Park visitors can learn about the military past by visiting the park museum or by attending the Frontier Military Days event in June.

LOCATION: 3 miles south of Garrison on 41st Ave. NW.

FEES: Entrance fees can be found at parkrec.nd.gov.

CAMPING: Premium campsites (water, sewer & electric), modern campsites (water & electric) and walk-in tent campsites are available in addition to group campsites. Comfort stations and vault toilets nearby.

CABINS: One premium, full-service cabin available for year-round stays with the option to add an adjacent campsite. Seasonal camping cabins are also available and located near a comfort station.

For more information, visit parkrec.nd.gov or call 701-337-5576.

LAKE SAKAKAWEA STATE PARK

On the south shore of the third-largest man-made reservoir in the nation, lies Lake Sakakawea State Park. The park is surrounded by miles of lakeshore, providing stunning views. Visitors can spend time at the swim beach, camping beneath the trees, hiking on the trails, or out on the lake. Sail boaters and windsurfers can take advantage of North Dakota’s fabled wind on this 368,000-acre lake. Lake Sakakawea is known for its premier fishing. The lake is home to walleye, northern pike, and chinook salmon. Anglers can find a full-service marina, a convenience store, and a fish cleaning station. Boat ramps in the park offer deep water access to some of the best salmon

fishing on the lake. The park is also home to the Western Terminus of the North Country National Scenic Trail, a trail stretching 4,800 miles over eight states from Lake Sakakawea State Park in North Dakota to Vermont. The trail also passes through Fort Ransom State Park. For information on marina services, contact Lake Sakakawea State Park Marina at 701-487-3317 or the park’s main office at 701-487-3315. Two large boat ramps serve the park for access to the best salmon fishing on the lake. The park hosts several fishing derbies throughout the summer.

LOCATION: 1 mile north of Pick City.

FEES: Entrance fees can be found at parkrec.nd.gov.





PHOTO BY KATIE VASBINDER

LAKE SAKAKAWEA

CAMPING: Modern campsites (water & electric) and primitive campsites are available in addition to group campsites. Comfort stations and vault toilets nearby.

CABINS: Seasonal camping cabins are also available and lo-

cated near a comfort station.

For more information, visit parkrec.nd.gov or call 701-487-3315.

LEWIS AND CLARK STATE PARK

Lewis and Clark State Park is situated on one of the upper bays of Lake Sakakawea. The park features miles of shoreline with picturesque views of towering buttes and rolling hills that provide a rugged backdrop for the park.

Modern boating facilities, including a marina with slip rentals and boat ramps, are major attractions. Anglers will find excellent fishing for walleye, sauger and northern pike.

Lewis and Clark State Park is home to a large native mixed-grass prairie and unique geological formations. Visitors can become acquainted with the natural communities associated with the park by hiking a self-guided nature trail.

Visitors can also enjoy the swimming area and a day-use beach located along the east shore of the campground near the

camping cabins. Kayaks, canoes, stand-up paddle boards, fat tire bikes and snowshoes are available for rent.

LOCATION: Lewis and Clark State Park is located 19 miles southeast of Williston on Highway 1804.

FEES: Entrance fees can be found at parkrec.nd.gov.

CAMPING: Premium campsites (water, sewer & electric), modern campsites (water & electric) and a primitive campsite are available. Comfort station and vault toilets are nearby.

CABINS: Seasonal camping cabins are also available and are located near a comfort station and vault toilet.

For more information, visit parkrec.nd.gov or call 701- 859-3071.

KNIFE RIVER INDIAN VILLAGES

In 1804, the Lewis and Clark Expedition traveled through the area and were greeted by the Mandan and Hidatsa as they spent a winter at Fort Mandan. Among those living in the villages at the time was the Shoshone native Sacagawea, who ultimately joined Meriwether Lewis, William Clark and the rest of the expedition on their journey west, acting as a guide and an interpreter as the explorers entered unfamiliar territory and encountered new Native tribes.

For the next couple decades after the Lewis and Clark Expedition passed by, the Knife River tribes continued to live autonomous lives in the area, but smallpox epidemics later weakened the Mandan and Hidatsa and caused them to remove upstream. Knife River Indian Villages is now a national park that aims to preserve both the history and the native landscape of the area. Several depressions in the ground, bearing witness to the sites where the buildings of the tribal villages once sat, are still preserved, with three village sites part of the park.

The national park strives not only for preservation, but also

public awareness and education. Numerous interactive programs allow people from around the state, the nation and the world to learn about Native practices and try their own hands at specialized skills. Other programs and tours allow interested visitors the opportunity to learn not just about the tribes, but about the Knife River valley and the original flora and fauna of the land. Many programs are geared toward kids, like summer camps and the addition of the ArcheoBlitz. This latter event pairs students with archeologists to learn skills and techniques related to locating, studying and sorting artifacts. The park includes three trails hikers can take, many of them associated with the sites of the villages.

There is also a full-scale earth lodge replica just outside the visitor center, which showcases better than any screen the challenges, opportunities and lifestyles of the land's original inhabitants, as well as traditional gardens just outside the lodge. The visitor center itself includes a gift shop, a museum and a small theater where presentations are offered.

THREE AFFILIATED TRIBES NATIONAL PARK

The TAT National Park welcomes enrolled and members and visitors alike to its three affiliated Tribes National Park. The MHA Nation has acquired about 2,100 acres for the expressed intention of conservation, preservation, recreation and education. The

park was put into trust, marking the expansion of the Fort Berthold Reservation, and is developing recreational opportunities to include hiking trails.

For more information, visit www.tatnationalpark.com.



PHOTO BY PHAIDRA YUNKER
A band plays while many dance in the street during the annual Riverboat Days in Washburn.

WASHBURN

visit Washburn



FOR AN HOUR

Get an ice cream dish from a local shop, or visit one of many active restaurants throughout Washburn before taking a walk along the walking paths near the Missouri River.

FOR A DAY

The city is packed with museums to satisfy every one's needs. From the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center to Fort Mandan and the McLean County Museum, there is information for all to enjoy!

FOR A WEEKEND

During many months of the year, Washburn is bustling with festivals and events like Riverboat Days, Taste of Washburn, Lunch with Santa and many, many more. Check the local calendar of events to plan a weekend stay in Washburn at the local camping/RV parks.



Main street magic

WASHBURN'S RIVERBOAT DAYS CELEBRATES SMALL-TOWN LIVING ▶▶

BY PHAIDRA YUNKER
LEADER-NEWS

On a warm June weekend along a wide, unhurried bend of the Missouri River, Washburn feels a little bigger than its 1,300 residents. The town's annual Riverboat Days celebration draws families, former locals and curious travelers to Main Street for a festival that blends prairie tradition with the easygoing charm of a river community.

Founded in the late 1800s as a riverboat stop and trading hub, Washburn still carries the imprint of its past. The town sits just a few miles from the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center and Fort Mandan, where the Corps of Discovery spent the winter of 1804-05. Travelers who come for Riverboat Days often find themselves lingering to explore the area's deep ties to history and the Missouri River itself.

The festival typically opens with the kiddie parade, a procession of decorated bikes, wagons and costumed children that sets the tone for the days ahead. Parents line the sidewalks, cheering as kids pedal past in bursts of color. A community burger or brat feed follows, the kind of neighborhood gathering where no one leaves hungry and everyone seems to know someone.

By Friday evening, the sounds of laughter and splashing drift from the Washburn Fire Department's water rodeo, a signature event that turns hoses and hydrants into playful competition. Kids dart through arcs of spray while firefighters coach them through challenges that are equal parts skill and spectacle.

As the weekend unfolds, families fan out across town to take in the lineup of activities. Saturday morning begins with the parade, a small town staple that draws people to the curb long before the first siren sounds. Local businesses and community organizations roll by alongside class reunions waving from trailers and a mix of old tractors and shiny new farm equipment. Kids dart forward to scoop up candy tossed from the floats, while parents and grandparents watch from lawn chairs as the parade winds its way through town.

Afterward, downtown Washburn fills with kids' attractions (Touch-a-Truck and the climbing wall are usually big hits) while classic-car enthusiasts wander the rows of polished chrome at the car show. Food vendors line Main Street and a fashion show adds a splash of flair to the afternoon. Out on the trails, runners tackle the Coulee Trail Classic, a nod to the region's rolling coulees and river bluffs. By Saturday night, Main Street becomes the center of it all as a block is closed to traffic and turned into an open-air dance floor, where neighbors, families and visitors jam to familiar tunes under the summer sky.

Beyond the festivities, Washburn offers a quiet, scenic backdrop that surprises many visitors. The Missouri River curves gently along the town's edge, drawing anglers, kayakers and sunset watchers. Cottonwoods line the banks and the prairie stretches out in soft waves just beyond the last row of houses. It's the kind of place where a traveler can wander from a festival crowd to a peaceful river overlook in a matter of minutes.

What makes Riverboat Days stand out isn't any single attraction but the way the town comes together. Local businesses and organizations



PHOTO BY PHAIDRA YUNKER

Children were led down Main Avenue in Washburn during the bike parade at the Riverboat Days in 2025.

sponsor meals and host gatherings. Old friends reconnect. Travelers find themselves welcomed into conversations as easily as they're handed a plate of food.

For visitors, the festival offers a glimpse of life in a small community. A place where the pace slows, the horizon stretches wide and summer feels like something to savor. Whether you come for the parade, the water rodeo or to watch the sun set over the river, Riverboat Days delivers the kind of authentic small-town experience that's increasingly hard to find.

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Williston

Population: about 29,000
 PO Box 1306, Williston, ND, 58802
 701-577-8100

Williston, the county seat of Williams County, grew tremendously between 2010 and 2020 after it nearly doubled in size credited largely in part to the North Dakota oil boom

Epping

Population: less than 100
 PO Box 44, Epping, ND, 58845
 701-859-5555

Known as the "second biggest little town" in North Dakota, founded along the Transcontinental Rail Line of the Great Northern Railway.

New Town

Population: 2,764
 PO Box 309, New Town, ND, 58763
 701-627-4812

Known as "the heart" of Lake Sakakawea, New Town is located on the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation and is known for its hunting and fishing spots.

Alexander

Population: 319
 PO Box 336, Alexander, ND, 58831
 701-828-3461

Named after its founder, Alesander McKenzie, in 1905, Alexander is located in McKenzie County. The town grew by more than 100 people between 2010 and 2020.

Watford City

Population: about 6,200
 213 Second Street Northeast, PO Box 494
 Watford City, ND, 58854
 701-444-2533

Founded in 1914, Watford City is the county seat of McKenzie County and is the 13th most populous city in North Dakota.

Arnegard

Population: 282
 211 Frontage Road, Arnegard, ND, 58835
 701-586-3453

Located in McKenzie County, Arnegard was founded in 1913 and is considered a "bedroom community" to Watford City, the county seat.

Killdeer

Population: 908
 165 Railroad St., PO Box 270, Killdeer, ND, 58640
 701-764-5411

Known for its scenic beauty, Killdeer has a rich history and lots to do with outdoor recreation and "Western Excitement."

Dunn Center

Population: 227
 3 Main Street West, Dunn Center, ND, 58626
 701-548-8130

Founded in 1914, Dunn Center is located along Highway 200 in Dunn County – roughly centered between four of North Dakota's largest populations.

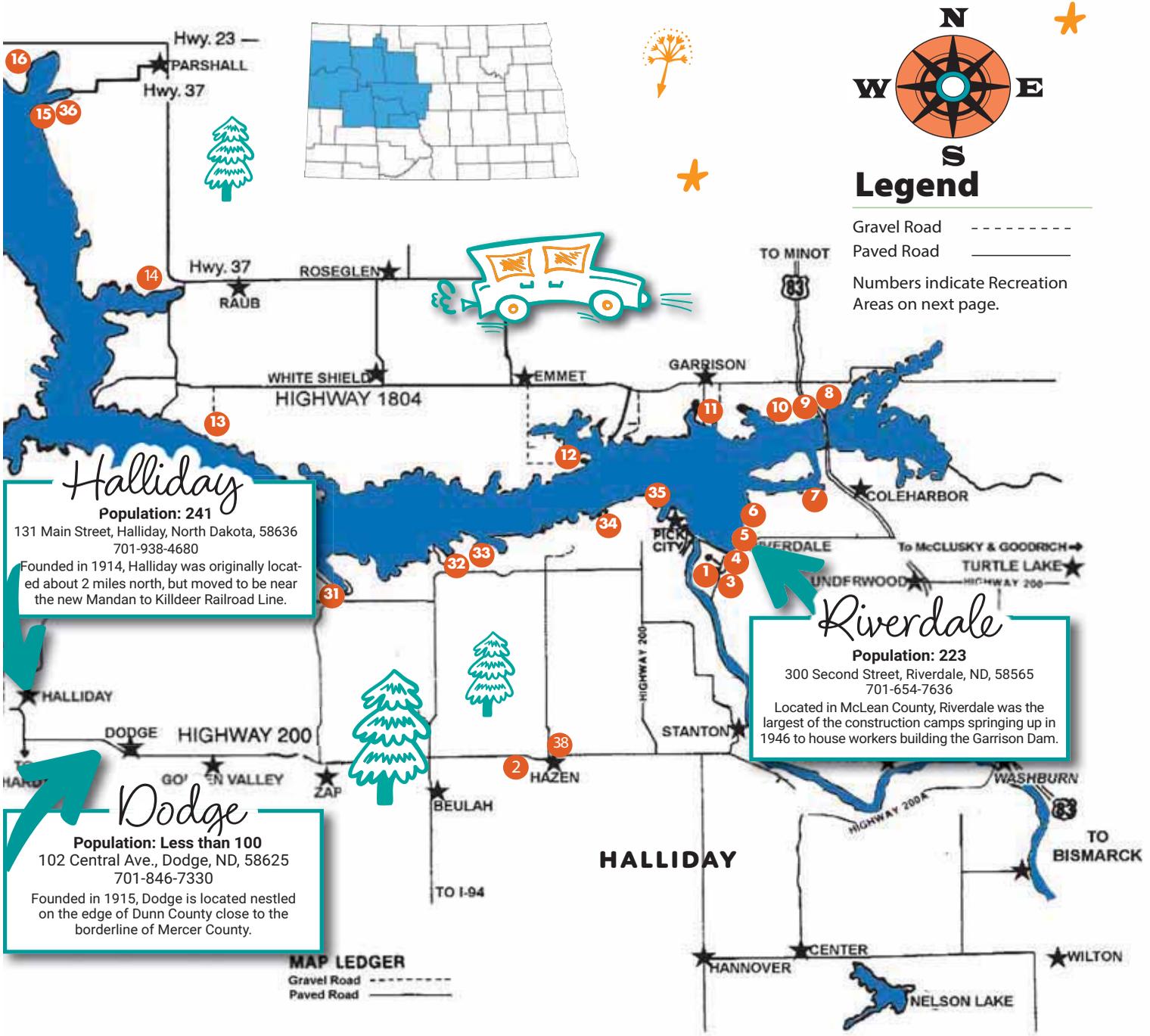
1. Downstream Campground
2. Lewis and Clark RV Park
3. Spillway Pond Rec. Area
4. Spillway Overlook
5. Riverdale Overlook
6. Government Bay
7. Wolf Creek
8. East Totten Trail
9. West Totten Trail
10. Sportsmen's Centennial Park
11. Fort Stevenson State Park
12. Douglas Creek
13. Indian Hills Resort & Campground
14. Deepwater Bay
15. Parshall Bay Recreation Area
16. Van Hook Recreation Area
17. Pouch Point
18. New Town Marina
19. White Earth Bay
20. Little Beaver Bay
21. Little Egypt
22. White Tail Bay (Lund's Landing)
23. Lewis & Clark State Park
24. Lake Trenton
25. American Legion Park

26. Tobacco Gardens
27. Four Bears
28. Skunk Creek
29. McKenzie Bay
30. Little Missouri Bay
31. Beaver Bay
32. Lake Shore Park (Dakota Waters)
33. Beulah Bay
34. Hazen Bay
35. Lake Sakakawea State Park
36. Brendle's Bay Resort
37. Long Creek (Chris Cove)
38. Antelope Creek



SAKAKAWEA COUNTRY

Small Town Roundup



Legend

- Gravel Road - - - - -
- Paved Road ————
- Numbers indicate Recreation Areas on next page.

Halliday
 Population: 241
 131 Main Street, Halliday, North Dakota, 58636
 701-938-4680
 Founded in 1914, Halliday was originally located about 2 miles north, but moved to be near the new Mandan to Killdeer Railroad Line.

Riverdale
 Population: 223
 300 Second Street, Riverdale, ND, 58565
 701-654-7636
 Located in McLean County, Riverdale was the largest of the construction camps springing up in 1946 to house workers building the Garrison Dam.

Dodge
 Population: Less than 100
 102 Central Ave., Dodge, ND, 58625
 701-846-7330
 Founded in 1915, Dodge is located nestled on the edge of Dunn County close to the borderline of Mercer County.

MAP LEDGER
 Gravel Road - - - - -
 Paved Road ————



PHOTO CREDIT OF ETHYN WILLIAMS-CALVERT
White Shield's annual Powwow brings in family of all ages to honor and continue the traditions of the Arikara tribe.

WHITE SHIELD

GROWING COMMUNITY

White Shield is part of the Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara Nation located on the Fort Berthold Reservation and was named after an Arikara chief.

In the past decade, White Shield has grown extensively adding a clinic, elders center, recreation center, school and restaurant.

visit White Shield

FOR AN HOUR

Grab a bite to eat Old #8 Diner, White Shield's full-service restaurant. This three-meal restaurant serves everything from omelets to sandwiches to steaks. The hours of operations are Monday to Thursday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Fridays and Saturdays 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

FOR A DAY

Hit the Ralph Wells Jr. Community Center. Start with some gym time shooting hoops. Grab a snack at the snack bar, then play on the golf simulator, watch a movie, or take a dip in the pool. Hours vary, call for more information at 701-743-4798.

FOR A WEEKEND

Every July, White Shield hosts the Arikara Celebration at the Pow Wow Arena. The celebration and dancing are spread out over three days, culminating with the announcement of winners on Sunday afternoon.



RALPH WELLS COMMUNITY CENTER OFFERS SWIMMING, MOVIES, ATHLETICS AND SO MUCH MORE ▶▶

BY TYSON MATTHEWS
MCLEAN COUNTY INDEPENDENT

The Ralph Wells Jr. Community Center in White Shield, was built for the three affiliated tribes of the Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara Nation, or otherwise known as the MHA Nation.

The community center holds a fitness center, movie theatre, a swimming pool with a slide, an indoor running and walking track, basketball courts, a movie theater, snack bar and indoor golf simulator.

One can also reserve the facilities for birthday parties, get-togethers and family reunions.

Community groups also hold basketball tournaments and other sports-related activities throughout the year.

It's located conveniently next to the White Shield School to the new school. The staff are all highly trained and professional in all areas of the community center.



PHOTO BY TYSON MATTHEWS

The Ralph Wells Community Center in White Shield has something for everybody, like swimming, basketball, a golf simulator and so much more.

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in Sakakawea Country

BLACK SANDS GOLF COURSE

1130 Highway 49 South, Beulah
701-873-2929

blacksandsgolfclub.com
blacksands09@gmail.com

Holes on Course: 9 • Par: 35 • Carts Available • Club Rentals • Putting Green • Driving Range • Pro Shop • Snack Bar • Lessons Available • Meeting Space

SQUARE BUTTE GOLF COURSE

2230 36th Ave. SW, Center
701-794-3623

Pro shop – carts and clubs available for rent – full-service bar and restaurant. Call to confirm eligibility.

GARRISON GOLF COURSE

3976 16th St. NW, Garrison
701-337-5420

Carts Available • Club Rentals • Putting Green • Driving Range • Full Service Restaurant • Golf Simulator • Meeting Space

HAZEN GOLF CLUB

5168 Highway 200, Hazen
701-748-2011

www.hazengolfclub.com

Carts Available • Club Rentals • Putting Green • Driving Range • Pro Shop • Snack Bar • Tee Time Required • Meeting Space

PAINTED WOODS GOLF COURSE

1156 Highway. 83 SW, Washburn
701.462.8480

www.paintedwoodsgolf.com

Holes on Course: 9 • Par: 36 Carts Available • Club Rentals • Putting Green • Driving Range • Pro Shop • Snack Bar • Lessons Available • Meeting Space

WESTRIDGE GOLF COURSE

2848 Highway 14 W, Underwood
701-442-5555

westridgegolfcoursend@gmail.com

9 or 18-hole course (18 tees), three water hazards, 25 sand traps. Club house/Bar -- Cart rentals – driving range.

RIVERDALE GOLF COURSE

3821 10th St NW, Riverdale
701-654-7607

9-hole, Par 36 overlooking Lake Sakakawea

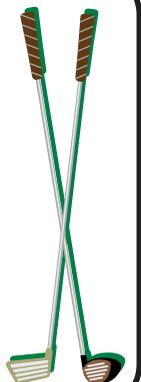


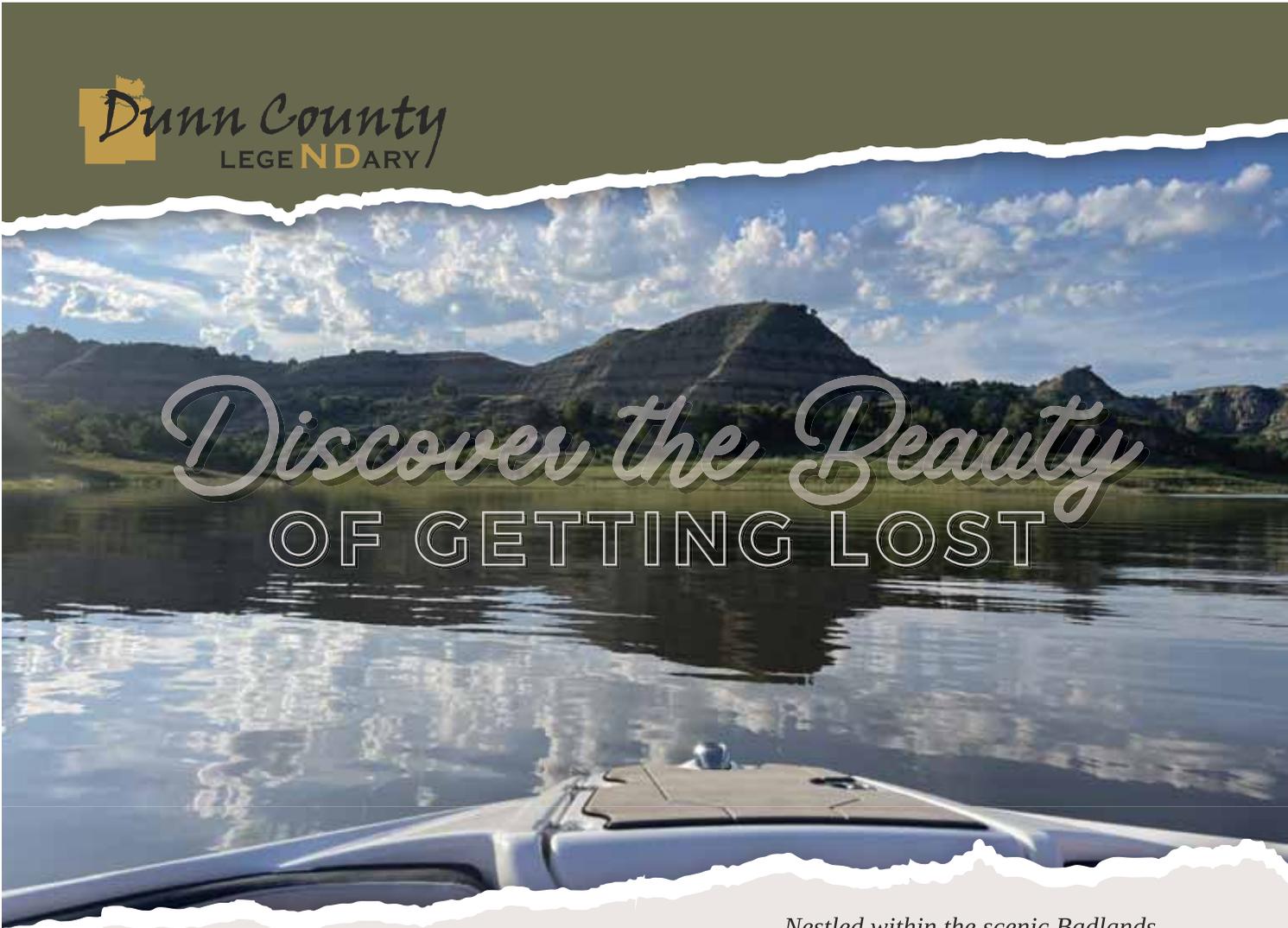
1 Mile East of Garrison on Hwy 37
(701) 337-5420

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Senior Day (Tues. A.M.)

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- RV Dump and Filling Station

Nestled within the scenic Badlands, Little Mo Campground offers a distinctive landscape that sets it apart from other bays and campgrounds along Lake Sakakawea. A Great Way to Find Yourself!



Want a little "mo" info?

WEBRESERV.COM/LITTLEMOCAMPGROUND





PHOTO BY PHAIDRA YUNKER
A "Greetings from Wilton" mural welcomes people to the community in the city of Wilton.



WILTON



visit Wilton



FOR AN HOUR

Make a quick stop at Wilton Centennial Park, a quiet green space perfect for stretching your legs, letting kids run or enjoying a few minutes of small-town calm. Walk the short paths, check out the veterans' memorial or get a scoop of old-fashioned Maple Nut ice cream at the nearby Cenex before continuing your drive.

FOR A DAY

Head to Sportsmen's Bar & Grill for lunch. It's a relaxed, family friendly spot during daytime hours, so kids fit right in. Afterward, take a short drive to Square Butte Creek for a scenic wander through rolling farmland and open sky. The creek winds gently through the prairie, offering glimpses of cottonwoods, open water and the kind of rural landscape that defines this part of North Dakota. End your day with a relaxed stroll around Wilton's quiet neighborhoods or a stop at the park to watch the sunset settle over the grain elevators.

FOR A WEEKEND

A weekend in Wilton gives you time to enjoy the town and the surrounding prairie. Start with a visit to the Wilton Heritage Center & Museum, where local history, mining stories and small town artifacts set the tone for your stay. Explore the town and enjoy the historic buildings. Set up camp at the local RV park or find a primitive campsite at nearby New Johns Lake for an incomparable stargazing experience.





Winding Waters

NEW JOHNS LAKE OFFERS A QUIET PRAIRIE ESCAPE

PHOTO BY PHAIDRA YUNKER

What makes New Johns Lake unique is its shape. Rather than a single round basin, it's a connected system of reservoirs formed along Painted Woods Creek.

BY PHAIDRA YUNKER
LEADER-NEWS

On the prairie northwest of Wilton, New Johns Lake stretches out in a long, bending chain of water that locals know by heart. Many grew up learning to swim at its sandy beach, fishing from its quiet coves or camping along its shoreline on warm summer weekends. For generations, the lake has been a steady presence. Familiar, reliable and woven into the rhythm of life in this part of central North Dakota.

What makes New Johns Lake unique is its shape. Rather than a single round basin, it's a connected system of reservoirs formed along Painted Woods Creek. The creek feeds the lake from the north, slipping through narrow channels, under causeways and into wider southern basins. Each section offers something a little different: open water for boating, sheltered bays for fishing and quiet stretches where the prairie almost meets itself across the water.

In summer, the lake becomes one of the region's most dependable recreation spots. Families gather at the designated swimming beach, while anglers drift along the edges in search of walleye, northern pike and perch. Boaters take advantage of the long, open runs, and kayakers slip into the narrower arms where cottonwoods lean toward the water.

Camping is part of the culture here, especially at the primitive shoreline sites scattered around the lake. They're first-come, first-served and simple by design: no hookups, limited facilities and a "pack it in, pack it out" expectation that keeps the area clean. Nights are often the highlight: with little light pollution and wide, unobstructed horizons, New Johns offers some of the clearest stargazing in the region. Campers settle in beside quiet water as the Milky Way stretches overhead and the prairie sky turns into a dome of stars.

New Johns doesn't go dormant when the seasons shift. Fall brings crisp mornings and some of the best fishing of the year, especially around the connecting channels where fish concentrate. Migrating waterfowl follow the same north-south corridor carved by Painted Woods Creek, turning the lake into a seasonal rest stop. In winter, when the ice sets in, the lake becomes populated by ice fishing houses and crisscrossed by snowmobile tracks.

Wilton is just a few miles away, close enough that the lake and the town naturally overlap. Visitors often stop in for supplies or a meal before heading back to the water and many Wilton residents consider New Johns an extension of their own backyard.

New Johns Lake isn't flashy, and that's part of its charm. It's a place where people return year after year, where the landscape shifts with the seasons and where the water reveals itself slowly, one winding stretch at a time.



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CAMPING ▶▶

Beulah

BEULAH BAY CAMPGROUND

701-873-5916 or 701-870-0602

Located 18 miles north of Beulah on Lake Sakakawea, offers camping grounds with tent sites, three cabins, RV sites with full hookups, RV sites with electrical hookup, pavilion, two lane boat ramp, playground, fish cleaning station, horseshoes, volleyball courts, on-site caretaker, coin operated bathhouses/showers and flush restrooms.

BEULAH EAGLES RV PARK

701-873-5852

Located on N.D. Highway 49 South are tent sites and RV sites with picnic tables, plus electrical and water hook-ups. The site is within walking distance of the Black Sands Golf Course, Riverside Park, showers and convenience stores.

RECREATION AREA

701-870-0602

Features camping by permit only in either RV sites with electricity, showers and flush restrooms or primitive sites; playground, horseshoes and grills on the south side of Beulah.

GARDEN COURT ARDEN COURT

Offering mobile home and RV sites with water, sewer, cable, garbage and telephone on N.D. Highway 49.

SUN VALLEY RV PARK

Located off Second Ave. NE offers more than RV sites with electricity, water, sewer and garbage, while cable and telephone are available in select sites. A newly built comfort station has laundry, wireless internet, kitchen

facilities, large screen television and showers. Handy to everything in the area.

Coleharbor COLEHARBOR CITY PARK

701-442-3454

100 Block, Main Street, City Park, Primitive camping.

WOLF CREEK RECREATION AREA

701-654-7411

Large US Army Corps of Engineers primitive campground on the shores of Lake Sakakawea. There are several campsites located on the water. Campground is 100% reservable by calling 1-877-444-6777 or going online at www.recreation.gov

Located four miles west of Coleharbor, has a boat ramp, courtesy dock, primitive campsites, restroom vaults, picnic shelter, fire rings, drinking water, fish cleaning station and RV dump station. The area also features a playground, volleyball and horseshoe pits.

Garrison FORT STEVENSON STATE PARK

1-800-807-4723 or 701-337-5576

1252A 41st Ave. NW three miles south of Garrison has modern unit campground featuring showers, playground and picnic areas. The campground area features a pull-through camper area with electricity and sewer hookups. A concession stand and marina add to a great lake experience. Three camping cabins, with electricity and refrigerators. Two-year round family cabin units full service are also available. Boat and pontoon rentals are available as are slips in the marina.

Parshall BRENDLE'S BAY



701-862-3611

Located 9-1/2 miles west of Parshall, cabins – some open year-round, RV sites with water, sewer and electric; shower facilities, convenience store, bait, boat and camper storage, fish licenses, daily, weekly and monthly rates.

NORTH CITY PARK

701-862-3459

Near the Broste Rock Museum in Parshall, overnight tenting only, parking spaces, picnic shelters and playground walking path.

PARSHALL RV PARK

701-212-2289

On North Dakota Highway 37 in Parshall, has lots and a commercial building with washing machines, showers, a small kitchen, vending machines and five shop bays. 24/7 on site manager.

PARSHALL BAY RECREATION AREA AND CAMPGROUND

701-862-3362 in-season or 406-377-5067

Nine miles west of Parshall on paved road, tents, full-service RV sites, RV with sites elec. and water, RV sites with electrical and some with boat ramps with complimentary docks, showers, vaulted toilets. Two fish cleaning stations, dump station, and large pavilion available for group parties. Do not take reservations. First come-first served.

Pick City LAKE SAKAKAWEA STATE PARK MARINA STORE

701-487-3317

Located inside Lake Sakakawea State Park – Offers services including paddleboats, paddleboards, kayaks, and canoes. Slippage for vessels up to 70 feet. Also included in services are camper seasonal dry storage, store concessions, bait and tackle, and daily slip rentals.

LAKE SAKAKAWEA STATE PARK

800-807-4723

Offers 150 modern campsites complete with water and electricity, primitive camping sites, and camping cabins available for rent. Each sleep five, bunk bed-style. Each is equipped with lights, heat, fan, air conditioning and a deck. No cooking is allowed inside, but a grill, picnic table and fire rings are located outside of each cabin. The cabins do not have showers, sinks or toilets, but most are within a short walk to a campground comfort station.

PICK CITY MINI-MALL

701-487-3490

Offers RV lot rentals that include full hook-up of water, sewer, electricity and garbage just minutes away from the lake, picnic grounds and boat docks. Mini-mall also includes open bay car wash, Laundromat and Crab Apple Ice Cream and Yogurt Shop.

Ryder RYDER CITY PARK

Primitive camping available.

Riverdale MORNING STAR CAMPGROUND

Consists of more than developed sites. Sites are only available for rent for the ENTIRE season.

Stanton SAKAKAWEA CITY PARK

701-745-3202

RV pads, four of which have electricity hookups available for campers/motor homes. RV dump, fill station and fish cleaning station on Harmon Ave. Boat ramp available in the park, with access to the confluence of the Knife River and Missouri River. Many primitive camping sites available.



HIGHWAY 31 RV PARK

701-745-3535

Complete hookups for RV trailers and two cabins available for rent. Boat ramp on the Missouri River located five minutes southeast of Stanton at the Great River Energy Power Plant.

STANTON MOBILE HOME PARK

Complete hookups for mobile homes and RV trailers.

Turtle Lake LAKE BREKKEN

Open camping and electrical hookups at picnic shelters, baseball diamond and softball complex with restroom facilities, playground.

BREKKEN, HOLMES AND LIGHTENING LAKES

Set up with boat docks and boat landings for fishing enthusiasts.

TURTLE LAKE CITY PARK

Eight camping sites with electric and water hookups and dump station. Picnic shelters, playground, and softball/ baseball diamond.

Underwood EMBERS ESTATE AND RV PARK

701-663-0996

RV sites with full hook ups. Located off County Road 14. Reservations preferred but not needed.

MCLEAN COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS

701-442-5481

Electrical hook ups, no water or sewer. Shower building available.

Washburn WASHBURN RV PARK

701-462-8635 or 701-315-0034

Close to restaurants and downtown, this RV park has water, sewer and electrical hookups.

RIVERSIDE PARK (WASHBURN CITY PARK)



701-462-8558.

Primitive camping w/access to indoor bathroom. Located along the Missouri River near the Washburn Discovery Trail. Located just a short walk from the downtown, with restaurant, museum and shopping.

PARKWAY ESTATES RV AND MOBILE HOME PARK

701-315-0011

Located along US Highway 83 frontage road in Washburn, five RV sites w/ full hookups, mobile home sites. Close to restaurant, grocery store and school.

NORTHVIEW RV PARK

701-462-3709 or 701-462-8374

Large sites with full accommodations, including water, electrical, sewer and refuse. Restaurant within walking distance.

CROSS RANCH STATE PARK

701-794-3731

Primitive, tent, RV sites, showers, two cabins, two yurts, sewer and electrical hookups at Sanger campsite (for campers 35 feet or longer).

Wilton EAST PARK RV PARK

701-734-6707

Located on the east side of town, near the Wilton Farmers Union Elevator. Signs, located near Hwy. 83, will lead you to the park, which includes campsites and four electrical hookups. Water is available.



MAKING MEMORIES ONE BASS AT A TIME



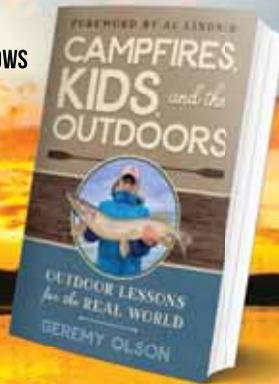
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- Fish Cleaning Station
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For Information Contact:
Dakota Waters Resort
701-873-5800

Email: amber@dakotawatersresort.com
www.dakotawatersresort.com