

northern sentry

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WHAT'S INSIDE
THIS WEEK:



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No matter the forecast, the mission comes first. Snow, wind, and freezing temps won't stop our Minot AFB maintainers from keeping the mission going.

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WINTERY PHOTO CONTEST

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MINOT AIR FORCE BASE NEWSPAPER



Framed by frost.

STACI HAYNES PHOTO

Hadley taking out her new ATV for a spin in the snow!

JESSE LITTLE PHOTO

Souris Valley United Way Enters Final Weeks of Campaign After a Year of Local Impact

SOURIS VALLEY UNITED WAY

As the new year begins, Souris Valley United Way is entering the final weeks of its annual fundraising campaign, and reflecting on the meaningful impact local dollars made throughout the community in 2025.

This year's campaign goal is \$625,000, funding programs that support children, families, and individuals across the region. With the campaign now 80% funded, Souris Valley United Way leaders are encouraging the community to help carry the effort across the finish line before the campaign concludes at the end of January.

"Our work continues year-round, but the annual campaign determines how fully we're able to support local needs," Christy Miller, Souris Valley United Way Executive Director shared. "The generosity we've seen so far is so encouraging, and these final weeks are critical."

Funds raised through the annual campaign stay local and support a combination of United Way-led initiatives and grant funding for partner organizations. In 2025, Souris Valley United Way provided grant funding to 10 local nonprofit agencies, helping sustain programs that address food insecurity, safety, education, and family stability.

One of the most visible internal programs supported through the campaign is Backpack Buddies, which provides weekend meals

to students who may otherwise go without food when school is not in session. Throughout 2025, the program served more than 620 students each week, ensuring children had consistent access to nutrition beyond the classroom.

Early childhood education and literacy also remained a focus. Through its free book distribution program, Souris Valley United Way provided monthly books to more than 2,000 children ages 0-5, helping foster early literacy skills and support families during a child's most formative years.

In addition to these initiatives, campaign funds helped provide hygiene items, emergency assistance, and support services for individuals and families facing difficult circumstances. These services often go unseen but are essential in helping neighbors maintain stability during times of need.

One of the strengths of the Souris Valley United Way model is how individual contributions translate directly into measurable local impact. Donations of all sizes play a role in sustaining programs, including:

\$8 feeding a child for an entire weekend through Backpack Buddies

\$32 buying one year's worth of books for a local child

\$65 providing one night of safe shelter for a family escaping

domestic violence
\$203 covering one hour of trauma therapy for a child who experienced abuse

Each contribution helps ensure services remain available and responsive to community needs.

With the campaign now in its final weeks, Souris Valley United Way leaders are emphasizing the importance of finishing strong.

"As we approach the end of our campaign season, every gift helps close the remaining gap," organizers said. "Reaching our goal means stability for local programs and the people who rely on them."

Community members and businesses are encouraged to make a donation, fulfill pledges, or learn more about workplace giving opportunities before the campaign concludes on January 31st.

Souris Valley United Way remains focused on its mission of bringing people together to create lasting change. As the campaign enters its final stretch, supporters are reminded that when a community unites around shared goals, the impact extends far beyond the campaign itself.

To learn more about the work done in our area or to make a donation, visit svunitedway.com or follow Souris Valley United Way on social media.

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Souris Valley United Way



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A VIEW FROM
OUR SIDE

ROD WILSON

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My newspaper roots, or newspaper routes, go back to when I was about 7 years old. The town of Maddock, North Dakota had a hometown newspaper, The Standard, but it was not delivered by carriers, instead it came in the mail. We once did a tour of the Maddock Post Office and Postmaster Irv Pritchard explained that it was easier to mark the boxes that did not receive The Standard in the mail. If they weren't marked, they received the paper.

I remember that once every year The Standard delivered a newspaper to every kid in school to take home and read. It was great public relations for the newspaper and every kid held on to that paper and took it home. It was kind of like gold. Even though we had received that paper in our post office box, this paper was ours, and on the front page was a photo of the paper being printed and a story about National Newspaper week.

For those too young to remember a hometown newspaper, it was a bit of a newspaper, and a lot of a gossip paper, as my Dad used to say. Each entity in the county, whether it be a local township, a non-profit organization like the Kiwanis club or the Boy Scouts, or even a church would have a representative who wrote and article. And perhaps that is where the moniker of "gossip paper" came from. It was a who visited who, or where Mr. & Mrs. traveled for their vacation, and of course the local hospital would have admissions and discharges. That was the content of The Maddock Standard and every other small town paper.

I am going to date myself a bit, as if my articles haven't already done that, and talk about printing the paper. Each page had to be type set, and that is where my brother and I started our newspaper careers. If you think of each letter in

Continuing a Conversation

a word, it had to be placed in order on a rack. If you wanted to say, "Maddock Wins!", that is how you would type set it. (space) M-a-d-d-o-c-k (space) W (note: capital W)-i-n-s! (space). Headlines took larger letters, and you really needed to look at all of those letters to find the exclamation point. There weren't a lot of exclamation points, so if you couldn't find one the headline didn't include an exclamation point, it was just that simple.

The closest game I can equate typesetting to is Scrabble, except you had to place words in several lines. Yep, it took forever to typeset an article...and then you had to carry it to the editors' desk. It was kind of like carrying a dozen eggs and hoping not to drop them. Everyone, and I mean everyone would eventually drop a rack of typesetting, and there went your work all over the floor. No choice, start again.

When I was a bit older we had a fortunate stroke of luck. The Minneapolis Tribune and the Fargo Forum both wanted to deliver Sunday papers to the small town of Maddock. It took a train, a truck and several bikes to get the Sunday papers delivered. If the train was late getting to a larger town about 40 miles away, the paper was late getting delivered to Maddock and thus folks didn't get their Sunday morning paper until Sunday evening, or in worst case scenario Monday morning...or later.

I would have to deliver about 45 papers for both the Forum and the Tribune, and at some point I would stop and rest on someone's front step and at least read the headlines of each section. The Sunday papers had at least 4 sections plus the comics. The sections would come separate and we had to assemble the papers at home before we headed out on our routes.

So why I am taking you on a trip down memory lane. Well for no other reason than to explain why the Northern Sentry continues to exist and has even grown in popularity. Our journey is a bit different, but still a pretty well-oiled process. By Monday at Noon, we like to have most of our content to our graphics editor, Nikki. That gives Nikki, albeit she starts thinking about the current edition at least a week in advance, about a day to graphically (no type setting any more) compose

each section of the Northern Sentry. Her unwavering goal is to compose the paper and get it out to those of us who proof the paper by mid-Tuesday afternoon. And from there, well we all proof the paper to the best of our ability and get Nikki any changes. By Wednesday at Noon, we have to send the completed paper to Garrison, North Dakota, where it is printed on Wednesday afternoon. Thursday morning the paper is assembled and goes by courier to Minot and the Minot Air Force base. A majority of the paper is hand delivered, whether it be one paper or a bundle of papers, to each of our locations. We still have carriers delivering to each home in the residential areas of the Minot AFB, and sometimes they endure some pretty extreme conditions.

A local small town paper editor who coached me along my journalism path told me that in order to be good at the newspaper business, you had to have ink running in your veins. I've never forgotten that statement, and to be very honest, the Northern Sentry we deliver today is a bit of the old and a bit of the new.

Old...there will never be a replacement for local journalists

covering local stories, there just won't. New...but we now have access to a myriad of stories that are of interest to our readers. We use them when we can, and when we have space.

There are those of you who read the Northern Sentry cover to cover, every week, and there are those who read the Northern Sentry sporadically, and finally there are those who pick it up once in a while. But as we prepare to print each edition of the Northern Sentry our promise to try and make it as much of a hometown newspaper as we can. And that of course, is what is most important.

LOOKING AROUND

I would certainly be remiss not to mention the other local North Dakota ski areas that are just as happy to treat you to a great time on the slopes. There is Huff Hills in Bismarck, about a 2 hour drive, and Frost Fire Park in Walhalla. Looking for a daycation. Either is a great family outing.

TODAY'S CHUCKLE

You know you've reached middle age when the only time you want to live life in the fast lane is at the grocery store.

It isn't all doom and gloom

UPSIDE DOWN
UNDER

MARVIN BAKER

Driving through western South Dakota is like taking a space flight to Mars. You don't think it's ever going to end. There are vast stretches of nothing more than ranch land and long distances between communities.

For our travel itinerary, it was go to Dickinson, then south on N.D. Highway 22 to Reeder and on into Harding County, South Dakota. If you think North Dakota is dull, take this trip from south of Reeder on S.D. Highway 79 to Newell, then Rapid City. I guarantee you won't think that way about North Dakota in the future.

Approximately 35 miles south and west of Reeder is the town... or outpost called Reva. It's actually an unincorporated community, but only a couple of people live there. They operate a small convenience store and gas station, as well as the post office. It's kind of crazy. When you drive past there or pull in, there's always vehicles there unless it's late at night.

After another 35 miles of open country, you come upon Hoover, another unincorporated village that has a small convenience store and gas station. Hoover never really was a community, but started out as a trading post and essentially got frozen in time.

Drive another 35 miles and you come to Newell, a community of about 500. It's the first place with any services between there and Reeder. After that, Sturgis is a quick drive and Rapid City, even quicker on Interstate 90.

On Dec. 24, my wife and I were on our way to Rapid City somewhere between Hoover and Reva. Because we had been driving since a gas stop in Dickinson, we decided to find a wide approach, pull in and go walkabout to stretch our legs and get some fresh air.

Wouldn't you know it, a man of



Although I wasn't around when this edition of The Maddock Standard was printed, it is typical of hometown newspapers published in that era.

the first thing he said to me is, "You must watch Red Green." That started a long conversation about Canadian TV, duct tape and handyman repairs.

On the way home, we stopped in Reva to take a bathroom break and get a snack. The guy looked out the window and said, "I see you have North Dakota license plates. Where are you headed?" We told him we live near Minot and that started a conversation about the Minot Air Force Base, fishing on Lake Sakakawea and deteriorating weather conditions.

Maybe it's because we aren't from western South Dakota, maybe it's something else, but the people we met opened up and so did we. I'm sure we could have forged some friendships had we had more time.

It wasn't all doom and gloom. Underneath all that sage brush, sheep and pronghorns, there were some really nice people and they helped make it a memorable Christmas week.

What It Means to Be a Reporter for the Northern Sentry

NATALY ZARRELLA, NORTHERN SENTRY

The Northern Sentry is searching for new reporters, but what does it truly mean to be a reporter for the Northern Sentry?

When I first saw the advertisement looking for reporters in the fall of 2024, I wasn't entirely sure what to expect. I had no prior experience in journalism, but the opportunity immediately caught my attention. I knew I enjoyed writing, and I genuinely liked interacting with people and hearing their stories. At the time, we had been stationed at Minot Air Force Base for about a year and a half, had finished my master's degree just six months earlier, and felt like I was searching for something more. I realized I needed to do something for me, something that would disconnect me from my "regular" full time job and allow me to focus on the good happening in Minot and within the base community.

Applying for the reporter position felt like stepping outside my comfort zone, but it turned out to be one of the most rewarding decisions I've made.

Being a reporter with the Northern Sentry has given me the opportunity to become part of the Minot AFB community in a way I never experienced before. The newspaper exists to inform people about what is happening on base and within the greater Minot community, but it also serves a much bigger purpose. It brings people together through storytelling and highlights the individuals who make this community thrive.

One of my favorite parts of the job is highlighting military members and military spouses who are doing amazing things, both in uniform and outside of it. There are so many people here doing meaningful work that often goes unnoticed. Many individuals come to Minot knowing it may not have been their first-choice assignment, but they choose to make the best of it anyway. They build connections, volunteer, create opportunities, and support one another. I love being able to show that side of Minot AFB and remind people that there is so much to be proud of here.

Journalism has also given me something I didn't realize I was missing: the chance to understand people's "why." In previous jobs, I rarely had the opportunity to learn what motivated people or what inspired them to do what they do. As a reporter, I get to ask questions, listen carefully, and learn what drives individuals. I get to hear their stories, understand their purpose, and then share that with others. That human connection has been one of the most meaningful parts of this role.

The Northern Sentry has also allowed me to go places and experience things I never would have on my own. I've traveled into the middle of the woods to observe how military members train for their mission. I've attended large-scale events like the North Dakota State Fair as press, along with other community events and concerts. Being a reporter provides access not

just to the news, but to moments and experiences that help tell the full story of life at Minot AFB.

Beyond the experiences themselves, being a reporter has helped me grow both personally and professionally. It has given me a creative outlet separate from my regular job and a chance to focus on the positive stories unfolding around me. I've developed stronger communication skills, learned how to ask better questions, and gained confidence in telling stories that matter.

Being a reporter for the Northern Sentry isn't just about writing articles, it's about listening, learning, and giving a voice to the people who make this community what it is. For anyone who enjoys writing, meeting new people, and wanting to focus on the good in Minot, this role offers an incredible opportunity. For me, the Northern Sentry has been more than a newspaper; it has been a way to find purpose, connection, and meaning through storytelling.

If you are interested in writing for a newspaper that serves the Minot community, military members, and their families, please reach out to the Northern Sentry via Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/NorthernSentry> or by emailing the NS Editor, Erin Beene, at Erin.beene@willowtreemarketing.com. Whether you have prior journalism experience or are simply passionate about writing and sharing meaningful stories, there is an opportunity to make a difference through the Northern Sentry.



Northern Sentry Reporter Nataly Zarrella enjoying some local coffee while capturing images at the North Dakota State Fair.

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The Lofts at Frost Fire Park

A Luxury Mountain Escape

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NATALY ZARRELLA, NORTHERN SENTRY

This article originally appeared in the Northern Sentry 2025-2026 Winter Guide, available at numerous locations throughout Minot Air Force Base, and packed with winter safety tips and seasonal activities designed to keep the community informed and entertained all winter long.

Nestled in the scenic beauty of Walhalla's Frost Fire Park, The Lofts, a collection of luxury cabin retreats are officially open and welcoming guests year-round. The Lofts at Frost Fire Park, located just 200 miles from Minot Air Force Base and they are quickly becoming one of North Dakota's most captivating year-round getaway spots.

These thoughtfully designed cabins offer an elevated getaway experience with direct access to the beloved Frost Fire Ski Resort and the breathtaking natural surroundings of the Gorge River. These luxury cabins were intentionally crafted to give guests not just a place to stay, but a place to unwind, reconnect, and create unforgettable memories.

From the moment guests arrive, The Lofts promise comfort, convenience, and unforgettable adventure. Each cabin features a stunning loft-level king bedroom overlooking towering mountain pines, paired with a private queen bedroom on the main floor. The interior ambiance is warm and inviting, highlighted by a corner fireplace perfect for winding down after a day outdoors. A private Juliet balcony, personal veranda hot tub, and carefully curated décor add touches of luxury to the rustic setting.

Travelers will find all the essentials for an effortless stay, including a fully equipped kitchen, cookware, linens, and everyday necessities. Modern amenities such as Wi-Fi, air conditioning, heating, a TV, and in-cabin laundry ensure the comforts of home are always within reach. The cabins include self check-in via keypad for a smooth and flexible arrival.

Traveling with a pet? No problem, The Lofts are proudly pet-friendly, welcoming four-legged adventurers with open arms.

For groups, The Lofts offer even more possibilities. Guests may book a single cabin or reserve all three for family gatherings, reunions, or group retreats. A shared outdoor fire pit and grill



The Lofts at Frost Fire are now open and taking reservations.

area gives visitors additional space to gather, relax, and enjoy the crisp mountain air.

With true ski-in/ski-out access, outdoor enthusiasts will appreciate the ability to glide directly to their cabin after a day on the slopes. Frost Fire Park offers far more than winter sports. Visitors can explore miles of hiking trails, take in the splendor of the Gorge River, enjoy fly fishing, hit the local golf courses, or kayak through one of North Dakota's most scenic natural areas. The region has become a favorite for travelers who love the outdoors but want the comfort and style of a luxury stay.

At just 200 miles from Minot Air Force Base, The Lofts are an ideal destination for service members and military families looking for a weekend escape or extended stay. With long-term stays allowed, military personnel can enjoy peaceful nature retreats, mini-vacations, or memorable family getaways without traveling far from base.

The Lofts are now live on VRBO, Airbnb, and Booking.com, making it easier than ever to find dates, compare options, and secure the stay that fits your needs.

Whether you're craving powdered ski slopes in the winter, vibrant green scenery in the summer, or a cozy mountain escape in autumn, The Lofts at Frost Fire Park deliver a one-of-a-kind experience unlike anything else in North Dakota.

The Lofts are now open, book your stay and discover the memories waiting to be made at



Unforgettable place to relax and make memories, The Lofts under the Northern Lights.



Make memories at The Lofts at Frost Fire this Winter season.

GORGE RIVER RESORT FACEBOOK IMAGES

Frost Fire Park.

Contact Information:

Gorge River Resort
Michelle@Oxfordrealtynd.com
(701) 730-0100
11950 County Highway 55
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SrA Andrew Islas

5th Operations Group

Hometown: Imperial, California

Senior Airman Andrew Islas has established himself as a subject matter expert on 112 Air Traffic Control Radar, Airfield and Weather systems ensuring aviation safety for Minot Air Force Base's B-52 fleet and all commercial flights at the Minot International Airport. Recently, he liaised with technicians from the National Weather Service and resolved a major 7-day outage on Northwest North Dakota's only weather radar. His efforts returned weather forecasting capabilities for 125 thousand square miles and ensured real-time weather updates for 84 thousand residents. His efforts were key in his team being recognized as the 2025 Air Force Global Strike Command Radar, Airfield and Weather System Team of the Year.



SALUTED ON SATURDAY, JANUARY 3

A1C Mario Cordon

791st Missile Security Forces Squadron

Hometown: Marin County, California

A1C Mario Cordon has served in the Air Force for two and a half years. He is a member of the 791st Missile Security Forces Squadron as a Missile Security Operator on Bravo Flight. A1C Mario Cordon was part of the team that won the Defender Challenge and will represent Minot AFB vs all AFGSC Security Forces Squadrons. He brought back crucial skills to the 791st Missile Security Forces Squadron and won the Saber Cup Award. A1C Cordon also attended Pre-Ranger training and is awaiting a seat for Ranger School sharing and honing leadership skills and sharing them with future participants and his wingman. His skills were critical to the 791st Missile Security Forces Squadron and 91st Missile Wing as he assisted in the NSI resulting as the "Best NSI in over 6 years".



GAME SALUTE: FRIDAY, JANUARY 9

SSgt Carlos Bustos

5th Security Forces Squadron

Hometown: Los Angeles, California

Sergeant Bustos was selected by his leadership to fill the role as Central Security Controller; he guides the defensive posture for \$5.8 billion in PL-1 assets supporting the 5th Bomb Wing and 91st Missile Wing Nuclear Enterprise. He is responsible for managing security for 27 B-52s, 150 ICBMs, and the Department of War's largest Weapons Storage Area. Additionally, as Security Forces Patrolman, Carlos demonstrated sound judgment in response to two domestic violence incidents. His actions reflected a strong understanding of protocols and a commitment to providing immediate assistance to victims. Finally, Carlos led a four-member alert fire team during USSTRATCOM GLOBAL THUNDER 2026 exercise. His efforts demonstrated Minot Air Force Base's capabilities to provide global strike options for the President of the United States.



GAME SALUTE: SATURDAY, JANUARY 10

Recipients of the Northern Sentry Salute will be honored at the respective Minot Minotauros home game. In recognition, each recipient and three guests will receive V.I.P. seating to the noted home game, a \$25.00 Gift Certificate good for concessions at the game, and during the game they will be recognized by the Minotauros public address announcer as well as having their photo and nomination published in the Minotauros Magazine.

Pentagon Releases Cost of Living, BAH Rates for 2026

MATTHEW COX, AIR & SPACE FORCES MAGAZINE

The Pentagon will pay cost of living allowances to 127,000 service members in 2026, an increase of 66,000 members over 2025, according to updated cost of living rates from the Defense Department. DOD will pay a total of \$99 million for COLA compared to \$51 million paid last year.

Airmen and Guardians assigned to duty stations where the non-housing cost of living is at least 7 percent above the national average are eligible for the continental United States COLA. They can calculate their COLA rate by visiting the Defense Travel Management Office's site.

The military housing areas with the highest COLA rates in the U.S.: San Francisco – 8 percent Oakland, Calif. – 6 percent Santa Clara County, Calif. – 5 percent Staten Island, N.Y. – 5 percent Seattle, Wash. – 5 percent

Of the 18 areas designated to receive COLA payments, one features a sizable presence of Airmen and Guardians: Los Angeles, home of Los Angeles Air Force Base, which houses Space Systems Command. Personnel serving there are poised to receive a 3 percent COLA rate in 2026.

The supplemental allowance is intended to help offset non-housing living expenses in pricey areas, though the allowance did come under scrutiny during the recent 14th Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation, which found that it is sometimes thrown off by inaccurate triennial Living Pattern Surveys. The review, finalized in early 2025, called for the Pentagon to conduct the Living Pattern Survey every year and including additional data to make them more accurate.

NEW HOUSING ALLOWANCE RATES

The Pentagon has also released 2026's Basic Housing Allowance rates, which feature an average increase of 4.2 percent compared to the 5.4 percent boost service members averaged in 2025, according to a Dec. 11 Pentagon release.

The new rates become effective Jan. 1, 2026, and increases vary by location. BAH is paid based on the service member's paygrade, location, and the number of dependents an individual has. Visit the Defense Department's BAH calculator to determine your rate.

On average, the four Air Force and Space Force locations that received the highest increases at six percent or more were:

Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo.

Holloman Air Force Base, N.M.

Moody Air Base, Ga.

Malmstrom Space Force Base, Mont.

Another 27 Air Force and Space Force bases ranged anywhere from increases of 5.9 percent down to minus-2.26 percent.

Airmen and Guardians who maintained BAH eligibility in locations with decreased rates will not face cuts. They will continue to receive the same BAH as 2025, ensuring that those "who have made long-term commitments in the form of a lease or contract are not penalized," the Pentagon said in the release.

The Pentagon is slated to pay about \$29.9 billion to roughly 1 million service members in 2026, according to the release. The 2026 rates continue to require service members to pay 5 percent of the national average housing cost by pay grade.

BAH is intended to cover 95 percent of housing costs, that means troops' out-of-pocket expenses for housing range from \$93 to \$212 per month.

BAH rates are more generous in some areas and for some pay grades than others, which can

lead to confusion and frustration when troops change stations and find themselves with less spending power. Nationwide housing trends can also lead to discrepancies, such as when three-bedroom townhouses are more expensive on average than three-bedroom single-family homes.

Troops are seeing some relief this year thanks to President Donald Trump's Dec. 17 announcement that roughly 1.5 million service members will receive a \$1,776 "warrior dividend" check. Congress appropriated \$2.9 million of the Trump's One Big Beautiful Bill to supplement BAH. The Pentagon spent \$2.6 billion to cover the one-time supplemental allowance—that leaves \$300 million that could be used to cover additional housing costs for troops.

As a permanent fix, the military compensation system review recommended that Pentagon should replace BAH calculations with a better model that will lead to more reliable, accurate, and stable BAH rates over time. It also recommended dumping the current housing profile system—which breaks up housing into apartments, townhouses, and single-family homes with a set of number of bedrooms each—in favor for one that just focuses on the number of bedrooms, which will better keep pace with housing trends.

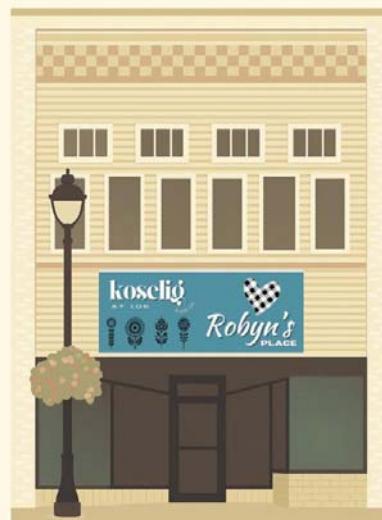
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A LOOK BACK THIS WEEK IN USAF HISTORY

B-52 STRATOFORTRESS FROM MINOT AFB PERFORMS RECORD-BREAKING OPERATION "PERSIAN RUG"

JANUARY 11, 1962



Col. Clyde P. Evely with the crew of the record-setting B-52 from Minot AFB, ND.
(USAF Photo)

On January 11, 1962, an eight man crew from Minot Air Force Base's 4136th Strategic Wing flew a record-breaking flight from Kadena Airbase, Japan to Torrejon Air Base, Spain. The flight, which was nicknamed Operation Persian Rug, broke several non-stop distance and speed records, some of which are still active. The B-52H Stratofortress and crew completed a nearly 22 hour non-refueled flight that spanned about 12,500 miles across the globe.

It traveled at approximately 604

miles per hour. This historic flight, which took place nearly a year after the B-52 Model H was first unveiled, demonstrated the continual power and mission-ready capabilities of the bomber. The crew received awards for their accomplishment and were invited to Washington D.C. to be personally congratulated by President John F. Kennedy.

Information courtesy of: Minot, North Dakota and Area History by Bruce Anderson / thisdayinaviation.com / defencetalk.com

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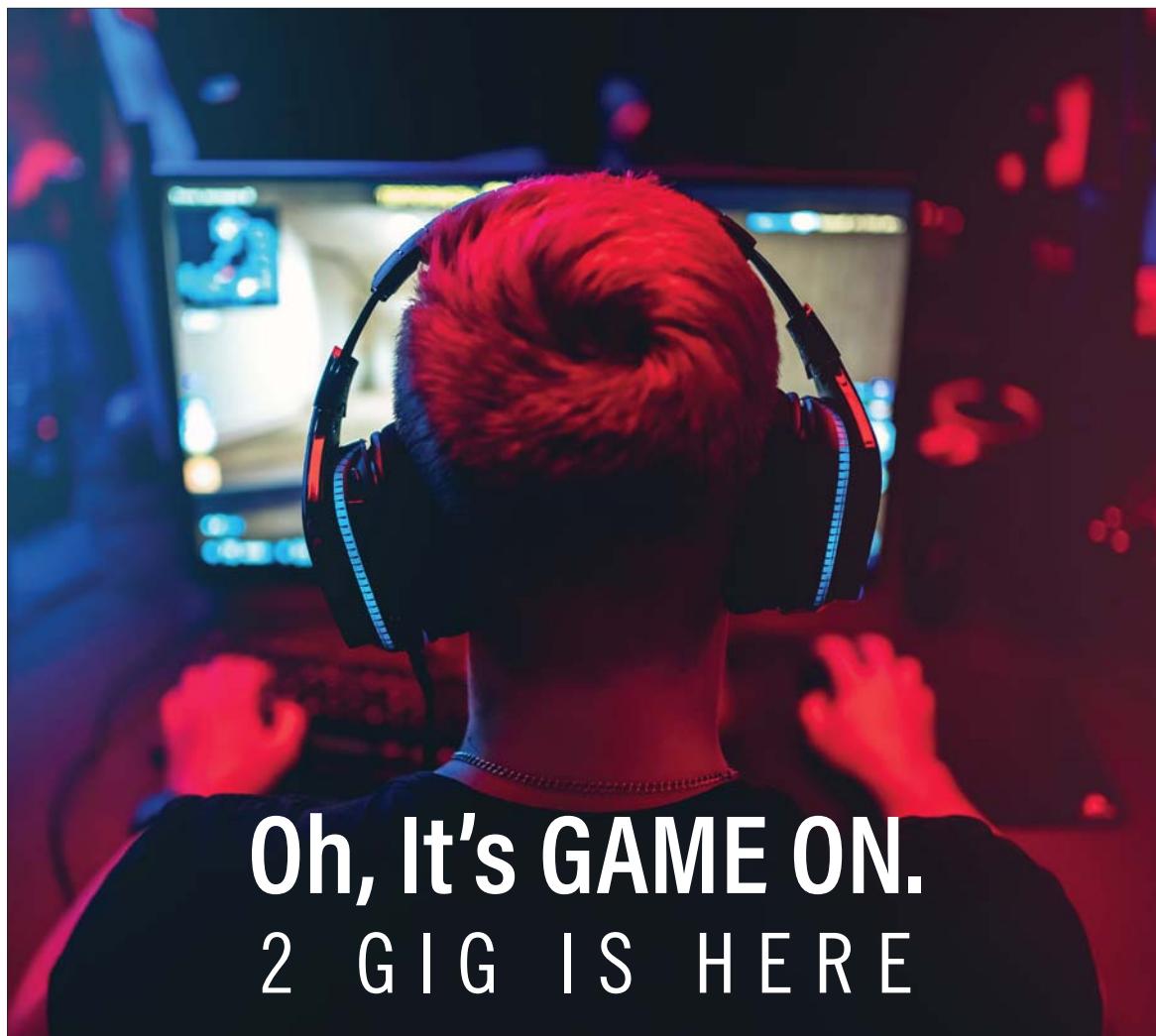
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Dean M. Seelig, Lisbon Veteran, participated on recent Honor Flight

JEANNE SEXTON-BROWN

Dean M. Seelig grew up in Lisbon, the oldest of five boys and one girl, the children of Duke and Lorraine Seelig. Dean was drafted by the Army in February, 1966 and sent to basic training at Fort Ord, California. He served as a communication specialist/teletype IBM specialist with the 69th Signal Company. He saw time at Tan Son

Nhut Air Base in Saigon. Seelig served until November, 1967.

The Tet Offensive began in January, 1968. He was located just three blocks from the Palace occupied by the President of South VietNam in Saigon, which was one of the main targets of the Tet Offensive.



Dean Seelig, Lisbon is pictured in Washington, DC during the Honor Flight September 28th through September 30th. Seelig served in the Army in VietNam February 1966 through November 1967 with the 69th Signal Company.

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"I was very proud that all my messages went to the Army, Special Forces, Air Force, Marines, and Navy went through the 69th Signal Company," said Seelig. "Those messages saved lives."

Seelig went on to say, "My clearance was Top Secret. I couldn't write home about it or call home. All correspondence home was censored. We couldn't even talk to each other, for fear of a plant by the military to make sure we weren't talking about what we did with the military secrets. I kept all those messages in my head. It took a terrible toll on my health over the years. The trauma has affected everything from my feet up to the top of my head."

Seelig is on total disability due to the war. He suffered from night terrors among other things.

"I saw the Viet Cong coming in under the house," recalled Seelig. "My first marriage ended due to the suffering of my mind and the things I just couldn't get over. I finally found a doctor that found the right medications to fix my mind, but I deal with issues in the rest of my body. It has caused problems with all of my organs."

While serving in VietNam, Seelig was allowed two R and R (Rest and Recreation) in country trips. One for each year he was in-country.

"I never took any trips," said Seelig. "My Commander wanted me to reenlist, but I wouldn't. Just before I got out, he offered me my own helicopter to take me to Camron Bay for R and R. I wouldn't take it. There is no way I could have gotten out once the Tet Offensive started."

Seelig said he was lucky because he was drafted and only spent two years in the service. He was sent to all of the training that others received only if they were in for four to six years. His Commander wanted him to stay in and use all that knowledge.

Seelig has a letter of appreciation from his Commanding Officer,

John H. Capicik written on 10 November 1967. In part it said: "Your dedication to duty, technical knowledge, sound judgement, and outstanding soldierly bearing have been of great consequence in the successful accomplishment of the missions of Company A."

"Two of my brothers were drafted as well," said Seelig. "Boyd was already in-country up north of where I was stationed, when our next younger brother, Darrell, was drafted, he wanted to come to VietNam also. He was off the coast on an island."

Seelig went on to say he was in his Commander's office when the message came through that his younger brother wanted to come to VietNam. Seelig said he thought about it and he remembered the Sullivan brothers from Iowa.

(All five Sullivan brothers from Waterloo, Iowa brothers George, Frank, Joe, Matt and Al enlisted in the US Navy less than one month after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. All five brothers died when the Japanese torpedoes sank the USS Juneau in 1942, according to the US National Archives. Smithsonian National Postal Museum copyright USPS, all rights reserved.)

Knowing about the Sullivan brothers he told his Commander not to let his brother come in country with him or Boyd.

"I had to make that decision," said Seelig. "I just had to."

The aftermath of war haunted Seelig.

"The boys knew not to come into my room at night or there would be a battle," remembered Seelig. "I would throw beds, bunks, anything. At night, I was still in the war. Still in VietNam."

After his time in the Army was up, Seelig worked in retail management, then at an ADM plant. Followed by working as a security guard at Bobcat, and ultimately as the State Security Officer for the ND Veterans Home.

Seelig married his wife Doris in 1995. They have one daughter, Dean'a.

"Who we just love to pieces," Seelig says. "Our grandson is Ezra Dean Murphy, not quite a year old, his dad, Jordan Murphy and Dean'a live in Gwinner."

The Honor Flight was very important and special for Seelig who, like most VietNam Veterans, was never properly welcomed home following their time of service.

"Groups would sing religious songs and then spit on us," recalled Seelig. "There was a big billboard along I-94 outside of Bismarck that called us 'baby killers'."

The Honor Flight did not cost the Veterans anything for travel, meals or lodging. There was a volunteer who trained by walking her dog three miles a day for weeks in order to push Seelig's wheelchair during their time in Washington, DC.

The two planes from North Dakota flew out of Fargo on Sunday, September 28. They stayed two nights and three days touring the monuments in Washington, DC.

Many things stood out to Seelig, Fort McHenry where the battle that inspired The Star Spangled Banner was fought; the Army museum which is the largest of all military museums in DC; and the VietNam Wall Memorial.

"I couldn't get all the way through it," recalled Seelig. "I just couldn't quit crying. It broke me. I even had my volunteer and my roommate crying."

The flight was an honor for Seelig that meant the world to him. He is proud of his service and to be recognized in this manner was a wonderful experience.

"I'm not telling my story to bring notoriety," said Seelig. "So many people don't understand, you don't have to have wounds on your body to be wounded in war. They just don't realize that some injuries leave invisible scars."



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- As a herd animal, they prefer companionship (safety in numbers).
- The main difference between a llama and an alpaca is their size and hair fiber.

Fact File

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Life Span | 18 – 20 years |
| Weight | 150 – 185 pounds |
| Height to Shoulder | 3 feet |
| Height to Shoulder | 4 1/2 feet |
| Wild Diet | Omnivore Carnivore Herbivore Grasses, Shrubs, Weeds, Trees |

Photo by Doug Kjaer

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More event photos can be found on Minot AFB PA Flickr page.

U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTOS | MINOT AFB PA

NOTES ON BEING SAFE

DON'T FORGET ABOUT YOUR PETS!

BY ROD KRAUSE



Pet owners should be made aware of winter's dangers, which include harsh weather; leaked antifreeze and road salt. Following are recommendations on steps you can take in order to ensure that the season is not marred by disaster.

One of the hazards a pet may face in winter is exposure to extreme cold. A pet's feet, ears and other areas of the body not covered by much hair get cold and can very well become frostbitten. Signs of frostbite include skin that is pale and cool to the touch and decreased sensation in the affected area. After thawing, there may be pain and the skin may look as though it was burned. If frostbite is suspected, gently thaw the area with warm water; then take your pet to a veterinarian.

The National Humane Education Society agrees with other humane organizations in advising owners of cats to keep them inside all year round. The cat can get enough exercise inside and won't get lost or injured. An enclosed "outdoor" environment such as a screened porch is certainly ideal for fresh air and sunshine but windows with a ledge or built-on perch can also provide much all-season pleasure.

During the cold weather, it is a good idea to knock on your car's hood or sound the horn before starting the engine, as cats permitted to run free can climb up inside the engine seeking warmth.

Deciding on whether to keep your dog outdoors depends largely on the dog's coat and the outside temperature. Ideally, the dog should live indoors, as part of the family. However, if the dog must live outdoors, adequate preparation for the cold months is essential. Be aware that large, long-haired dogs fare better outside during the winter than others.

HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

Ethylene glycol, the major ingredient in antifreeze, attracts both dogs and cats because of its sweet taste. But it is extremely poisonous. A tablespoon can kill a cat, and half a cup can be fatal to a 25-pound dog. Within two days, a fatal dose will cause prolonged vomiting, severe kidney pain, ulcers in the mouth and excruciating death from kidney failure. If your pet should swallow any antifreeze, call your veterinarian at once.

ROCK SALT UNDERFOOT

Rock salt is another substance to be wary of in winter. As it is abrasive,

it may cut into an animal's paws and burn their mouths. Dogs may eat rock salt which will cause vomiting. When bringing in a pet from the outside during an icy-cold day, check its feet. Remove ice balls between the animal's toes and wipe its feet with a damp towel, especially after walking on heavily salted pavement.

Never let your dog off the leash on snow or ice, especially during a snowstorm--dogs can lose their scent and easily become lost. More dogs are lost during the winter than during any other season, so make sure they always wear I.D. tags.

Thoroughly wipe off your dog's legs and stomach when he comes in out of the sleet, snow or ice. He can ingest salt, antifreeze or other chemicals while licking his paws, and his paw pads may also bleed from snow or encrusted ice.

Own a short-haired breed? Consider getting him a coat or sweater with a high collar or turtleneck that covers the dog from the base of the

tail on top to the belly underneath. While this may seem like a luxury, it is a necessity for many dogs.

Never leave your dog or cat alone in a car during cold weather. A car can act as a refrigerator in the winter, holding in the cold. The animal can freeze to death. If your dog is sensitive to the cold due to age, illness or breed type, take him outdoors only to relieve himself. Never shave your dog down to the skin in winter. Leave the coat longer for more warmth. When you bathe your dog, completely dry him before taking him out for a walk. Make sure your companion animal has a warm place to sleep away from all drafts and off the floor, such as in a dog or cat bed with a warm blanket or pillow in it.

Taking good care of your pets in winter and protecting them from the hazards of the season will bring a little warmth into the long, cold days of your own hibernation.



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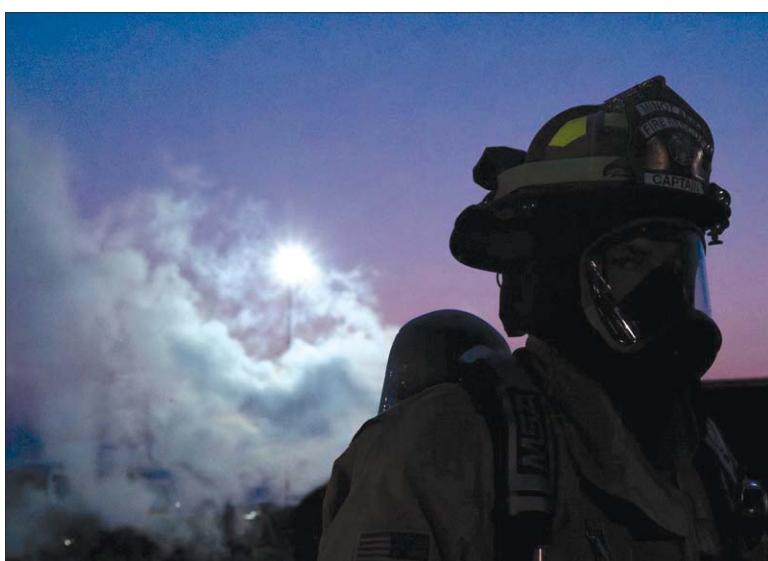
B-52 Stratofortresses have projected American power and deterrence across the globe for decades. That global reach is only possible because firefighters stand ready to protect the aircrews, infrastructure, and weapons systems that make the mission real. At Minot AFB, ND, firefighters from the 5 CES conducted live aircraft and structural fire training to ensure combat operations can continue under the most demanding conditions.

Inside the aircraft fire training facility, teams aggressively attacked sustained flames while others prepared for structural fire scenarios nearby. Helmet colors—white for chief, red for crew chief or captain,

black for lieutenant, and yellow for firefighter—clearly identified authority and enforced disciplined command and control in high-risk, high-stress environments. These live-burn scenarios replicated real-world threats ranging from brush fires to incidents involving rocket fuel and hazardous materials, sharpening decisive response skills.

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CORNERSTONE Map Out The Road To Good Health

January, when your body tells the truth

By the time Christmas break ended, I was in pain—though I'm not sure I fully realized it at the time.

December has a way of masking things for me. There's so much fun and merriment to experience—I kind of float from festivity to festivity. I spent hours on my feet baking endless batches of cookies, hauling heavy grocery bags through icy parking lots, carrying bins of decorations up and down stairs, and sitting awkwardly on the floor wrapping piles of presents.

Then the new year rolls in and I rush headlong into clearing the tinsel and tree away, ready to "start fresh." More bins to haul. A few more get-togethers.

Add in festive junk food, less movement, and late nights, and it was the perfect recipe for a stiff, achy body. I realized I was uncomfortable, but on the holiday high, I pushed through.

January—the real January that begins when the holidays end—has a way of forcing my body to tell the truth.

With holiday buzz quiet, suddenly my body was much louder. Subzero windchills set in. The sugar hangover lingered. And without the distraction of celebrations and schedules, the stiffness and inflammation were impossible to ignore.

Cold weather often reveals what busy seasons conceal. Muscles tighten. Inflammation feels sharper. Old aches resurface. When we're no longer running on adrenaline, our bodies finally get a word in. For many people, January flare-ups aren't a sign that something suddenly went wrong—they're a signal that the body has been keeping score all along.

For me, that realization has

changed how I approach care. Instead of reacting to pain once it reached an unbearable level, I have learned to see these natural cycles in the season, in the body as an invitation. A chance to reassess and listen before discomfort became the headline.

At Cornerstone Chiropractic, that's where adjustments and SoftWave therapy have made a noticeable difference for me. After weeks of awkward positions and physical strain, gentle chiropractic adjustments helped realign what had quietly shifted out of place. Inflammation has a way of pulling the body off balance, and addressing alignment early has helped prevent small issues from turning into bigger ones.

SoftWave therapy has been another key piece. It targets inflammation directly, encouraging circulation and healing in areas that feel chronically tight or sore. In winter—when cold weather and reduced movement can make everything feel more rigid—that really matters for patients like me. It's not flashy or dramatic. It's steady. And that steadiness is exactly what January calls for.

What I appreciate most is that care at Cornerstone isn't treated as an emergency fix. It's practical and realistic. Treatment plans are tailored, manageable, and designed to fit into real life—even during seasons when motivation is low and routines feel off. That matters, especially for people who are already stretched thin or easing back into structure after the holidays.

This kind of approach is relevant for anyone whose body has worked hard for years—parents, professionals, and yes, military families too. Long hours, physical



AMY ALLENDER

demands, stress, and unpredictable schedules all leave a mark. Winter simply makes those marks easier to feel.

January doesn't need to be about overhauling everything at once. It doesn't require grand resolutions or drastic changes. Sometimes it's just about paying attention. Noticing patterns. Responding with care instead of criticism.

After the noise of December quiets, our bodies speak honestly. The question is whether we're willing to listen.

For me, January has become less about fixing what's wrong and more about renewing what's already there—mobility, comfort, and the ability to show up fully for the life I'm living. Small, consistent steps have made a difference. And having support that meets me where I am has made those steps easier to take.

If December is about celebration, January is about clarity. It's an invitation to care for ourselves with the same intention we pour into everyone else—one realistic step at a time.

For more on living well in North Dakota, join me online at amyallender.com or on social media @heyminot.



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The Air and Space Forces Association is working hard for the Airmen of the Minot Air Base, and we are looking for new members and new community sponsors for the David C. Jones 135 chapter in Minot.

Membership in the AFA is easy to accomplish. You can go to our site, jones.afa.org and click on the "Join" link at the top of the page. This will take you to the national AFA membership link and give you a choice of many levels of membership.

Why should you join AFA? I probably asked that question a couple of years ago. I joined the AFA because of their commitment to sponsoring the Commander's Choice Awards at Minot Air Force Base. These awards are truly a Commander's choice. Each squadron will submit a name for one of these awards. The recipient is invited to a special Commander's Choice banquet and given a plaque to commemorate their accomplishment. It is often explained throughout the banquet that the recipients of these awards are often the Airmen, or civilian, that goes above and beyond...takes on a task that no one else would...or helps out above and beyond what is expected of them. Although not entirely unique to Minot AFB, not all bases and not all AFA chapters have the Commander's Awards banquet. It is a great experience to be in the audience and watch as 46 recipients walk to center stage and receive their plaque.

Beyond the Commander's Choice Awards, our local AFA stays quite active in supporting our active duty and retired Airmen in a lot of different ways. We helped sponsor an MSU Military Bowl by handing out free popcorn and soda tickets to the first 50 military folks who asked. We were in downtown Minot sponsoring the pony rides and stage during the Downtown Fall Festival. As our goal as an AFA chapter is to advocate, educate and support our Air Force, we spent an afternoon in Washington, D.C. in September visiting with our congressional offices and advocating for the military in general, and more specifically to garner support for continuing to fund the Wedgetail program and asking for support for additional F-135 aircraft.

In the education arena the AFA has 2 exciting programs that support STEM in our school systems. They are Cyberpatriots and Stellarxplorers. The goal of our chapter is to fund these 2 great programs in area schools. But in order to accomplish that goal we need volunteers and funding resources.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS CREATE OPPORTUNITY

In January we will embark on retaining and recruiting new Community Partners. There are several levels of involvement, and we will visit and discuss these levels with businesses in and



ND State AFA President Jim Simons presents George Masters, Chairman of the Commanders' Choice Awards with AFA recognition plaque.

around Minot. The partnerships help us to fund programs like the Commanders Choice Awards, and events like the MSU Military Bowl. The community of Minot benefits from the Minot Air Force Base in numerous ways. Most recently the Commanders of the 5th BW and 91st MW, Col's Lamarand and Schlabach, reported that once again the Minot Air Force Base contributed over 650 million dollars to the region's economy. We look at the AFA as a way to give back and support those who served, and continue to serve, their country.

CIVIL AIR PATROL

The AFA is also very supportive of the Civil Air Patrol, and we were able to arrange for a group of their

cadets to present the colors at a recent Military Affairs Committee meeting. These young people work hard and are proud to be part of the Civil Air Patrol and someday may serve their country as a member of the U.S. Air Force or other military branch.

In closing, I would like to encourage you to visit the Air & Space Forces web site at afa.org, or the Jones Chapter web site at jones.afa.org, and learn about the AFA, and hopefully you will click on the link to join. Our meetings are the 3rd Tuesday of every month at Rocker's on MAFB. We look forward to seeing many new members as we continue to Advocate, Educate and Support our Air Force.



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AFA Mission

Our mission is to promote dominant U.S. Air and Space Forces as the foundation of a strong National Defense; to honor and support our Airmen, Guardians, and their Families; and to remember and respect our enduring Heritage.

MONTHLY MEETING (Third Tuesday of Each Month)

Tuesday, January 15

1200, Rockers Bar & Grill, Minot AFB

Looking for all AFA members, and potential AFA members.

For more information contact:

Jim Bowman- nd135.president@afa.org

AFA.org



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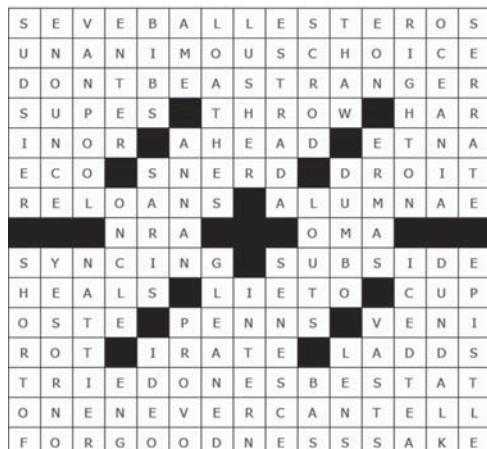
Come learn about Freemasonry and its community of appendant organizations by attending a meet-and-greet session with our members before one of our regularly scheduled business meetings!

Monthly Business Meeting Schedule • Meet-and-Greets

Blue Lodge - 1st and 3rd Mondays at 6:00PM
Shriners - 2nd Wednesday at 6:00PM
Scottish Rite - 1st Wednesday at 6:00PM
Eastern Star - 1st and 3rd Tuesdays at 7:00PM
Prince Hall - 2nd Saturday at 9:00AM

CROSSWORD SOLUTION

Solution to December 19
Crossword puzzle.



SUDOKU

Solution to puzzle on page B9



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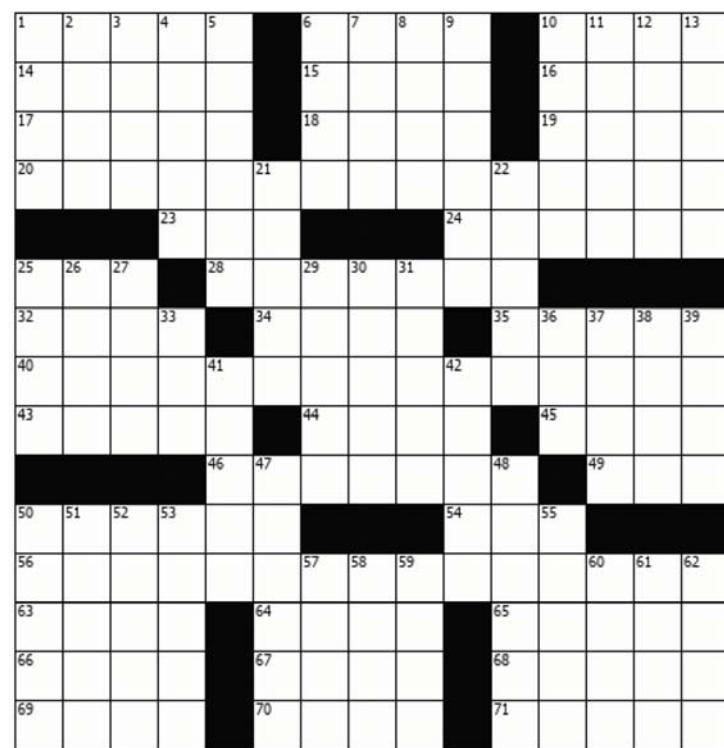
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CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Across

1. "Trolley Song" sound
6. Critical remark
10. One-half fl. oz.
14. Nighttime quaff
15. Phone letters
16. Sing soulfully
17. Nullifies
18. Sweeney of "Anything Goes"
19. A fan of
20. Nonpartisan celebration?
23. Mule of song
24. Oxford adjuncts
25. "Nova" network
28. Editor, often
32. Tiny amount
34. Fruit center
35. Any Sha Na Na song
40. Reagan's jelly beans?
43. Unaggressive
44. City of Peru
45. Bygone person of Peru
46. Speaks freely
49. Cal. column
50. Yom Kippur instrument
54. "Da __ Ron Ron"
56. Statehouse collection?
63. Quite a while
64. Ground grain
65. Bracelet attachment
66. Segment
67. Not very bright
68. Red dyestuff
69. Pitchers' concerns
70. Prehistoric menace
71. Caravan stops



Down

1. 206
2. __ Lake" (Doctorow novel)
3. Scathing, as criticism
4. Geometric points
5. Travelmate of Melchior
6. Natural
7. Sounded like
8. Glassmaker Lalique
9. Rochester's creator
10. Plot device
11. Monopoly railroad
12. 18- or 19-string instrument
13. Sneaky maneuvers
21. Campaign-poster word
22. "Reversible Errors" author
25. Painter Mondrian
26. Not very sleek
27. Choreography unit
29. Plain-woven fabric
30. "Empire Strikes Back" director Kershner
31. Looks to be
33. Old pro
36. Ring of flowers
37. Small measure of progress
38. Wanderlust, perhaps
39. "Hairy man" of the Bible
41. WWII vessel
42. King Abdullah, e.g.
47. On time
48. Over-the-head cloak
50. Land ender
51. "Horrible" cartoon character
52. La Scala offering
53. Symbols of strength
55. "Waking Ned Devine" character
57. Big name in small planes
58. Strong wind
59. The A in A-Rod
60. Prepares leather
61. "Comus" composer
62. 12/25



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Minot United Wrestling Sees Strong Finishes at December Tournaments

FATIMZAHRA ELBOUAB, AGE 16

On December 6, the Minot United Girls Wrestling Team traveled to Turtle Mountain High School for their second tournament of the season: Thunder on the Mountain. With a variety of placements across several weight classes, the team earned multiple podium finishes across December tournaments. Girls Varsity Results - Thunder on the Mountain: 100: Brooklyn Ost, 2nd; 112: Khylie Schlotz, 4th; 118: Fatimazahra Elbouab, 3rd; 124: Aaliyah Laboy, 5th; 130: Madisyn Racine, 1st and Kierstyn Nevels, 6th; 142: Payton Russell, 2nd and Sava Nelson, 6th; 148: Riley Hansen, 2nd; 155: Maycee Boyce, 1st; 190: Jade'ence Fletcher, 2nd. Later, on December 12, the team competed at the Al Larson - Carrington tournament.

They placed 2nd as a team with 157.5 points. Girls Varsity Results - Al Larson: 100: Brooklyn Ost, 3rd; 106: Ella Brown, 2nd; 118: Khylie Schlotz, 2nd; 130: Madisyn Racine, 1st; 155: Maycee Boyce, 1st; 190: Jade'ence Fletcher, 2nd. Meanwhile, the Minot United Boys Wrestling Team placed 3rd with 173.5 points at the Al Larson - Carrington tournament. Boys Varsity Results - Al Larson: 107: Jack Combs, 4th and Gavin Herseth, 8th; 114: Rowen Risbrudt, 6th and Kohen Merkel, 7th; 121: Eliah Rogers, 3rd and Ian Halseth, 8th; 127: Tayven Blackaby,

4th; 133: Jaxson Schumann, 3rd; 145: Korbin Kraft, 1st; 152: Landen Silvis, 8th; 160: Gavin Tanberg, 5th; 215: Tucker Nelson, 3rd and Evan Berg, 5th; HWT: Kale Risbrudt, 5th.

On December 18, at the Valley City Tridual, Minot United defeated Kenmare. Later that evening, the girls team lost to Valley City 36-34, with Valley City winning seven matches to Minot United's six. The next day, on December 19, the team placed 2nd with 136 points. Despite their loss, the girls team had multiple individual placers. Girls Varsity Results - Valley City Holiday Tournament: 100: Brooklyn Ost, 2nd and Raylin Crieghton, 7th; 112: Ella Brown, 1st and Khylie Schlotz, 2nd; 118: Fatimazahra Elbouab, 5th; 124: Aaliyah Laboy, 7th; 136: Payton Russell, 3rd; 142: Sava Nelson, 7th; 148: Riley Hansen, 6th; 170: Tori Llamas, 4th; 190: Jade'ence Fletcher, 2nd. On December 20, the Minot United Boys Wrestling Team also traveled to Valley City for their tournament. They placed 9th as a team with 109.5 points. Boys Varsity Results - Valley City Holiday Tournament: 107: Jack Combs, 3rd; 127: Tayven Blackaby, 4th; 133: Jaxson Schumann, 8th; 139: Korbin Kraft, 1st; 152: Landen Silvis, 7th; 160: Gavin Tanberg, 8th; 215: Tucker Nelson, 3rd and Evan Berg, 4th. Throughout December, both the boys and girls teams have

maintained strong performances and look ahead to carrying their momentum into upcoming tournaments including the Rumble on the Red in Fargo, the Rotary tournament in Bismarck, and eventually, the state tournament.

The Minot United Girls Wrestling Team after the Al Larson - Carrington Tournament.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MINOT GIRLS WRESTLING



Brooklyn Ost ties up with her opponent at the Thunder on the Mountain Tournament.



Jade'ence Fletcher pins her opponent at the Valley City Holiday Tournament.

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Sentinel Surge: Minot North's Winter Sports Rise Since Mid-December

BRYLEIGH MCBRIDE, STUDENT JOURNALIST

Since December 15, Minot North athletics has been defined by grit, growth, and moments that have kept fans on the edge of their seats. Across courts, mats, and ice, the Sentinels have navigated a demanding winter schedule, blending standout victories with hard lessons that fuel their competitive drive.

The girls basketball team has balanced dominating performances with lessons learned against top competition. A 85-46 home win over Grand Forks Central showcased balanced scoring and lockdown defense, while a 53-72 setback at Bismarck Legacy tested the team's resilience in the face of elite pressure.

The Sentinels also grabbed an 80-78 thrilling road victory at Devils Lake, and a 78-45 triumph at Dickinson, highlighting their ability to execute in tight and comfortable games alike. Despite a tough

87-52 loss at Mandan, the squad has steadily refined tempo control, defensive rotations, and rebounding awareness.

The boys team has faced a rugged winter stretch, including a 100-49 loss to Bismarck Legacy and a 68-82 defeat at Bismarck High. Each matchup has offered opportunities to build chemistry, sharpen ball movement, and improve late-game composure. Coaches emphasize shared scoring and aggressive perimeter defense as keys to closing the gap in upcoming conference play.

Minot North wrestlers have pushed through tournament-heavy weekends and dual meets, showing progress in technique, conditioning, and strategy. Local coverage highlights strong performances at regional tournaments, with athletes turning narrow losses into hard-fought victories as the season progresses.

On the ice, Minot North athletes competing with the city program have leaned into defensive structure and precise puck movement. Goaltending has kept games competitive, while sustained forechecking and quick transitions are creating scoring chances. The team's confidence grows with each matchup, positioning them for a strong second half.

Across every program, Minot North athletes share a commitment to improvement, teamwork, and mental toughness. With midseason evaluations behind them and conference play underway, the Sentinels are poised to challenge opponents, chase postseason success, and define a winter season marked not just by scores, but by progress, resilience, and the drive to rise.



Senior MNHS Basketball Boys- Left to Right: Tradon Bachmeier and TJ Hjelmstad

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ALYSSA KELLY
SCHOOL LIAISON PROGRAM MANAGER, GS-12
DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE SCHOOL LIAISON PROGRAM



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I am the point-of-contact for our Child and Youth Behavioral Military and Family Life Counselors (CYB-MFLCs). We currently have three on Minot Air Force Base: Ms. Thelma Watkins, Ms. Megan Armenta, and Ms. Erin Park. They assist children and youth up to age 18 in groups and individually with free, confidential non-medical counseling. They also support families and staff. The goal is to help students improve behavior and performance in school and relationships. Ms. Park arrived last month, and we welcome her to Minot AFB!

Erin is a Licensed Professional Counselor, who earned her Master's degree in Clinical Psychology from Augusta University, and has experience supporting the social and emotional needs of children and adolescents. She primarily uses a strength-based, solution-focused approach to help military-connected youth build resilience and successfully navigate challenges related to school, family, and military life. Erin is committed to creating a safe, supportive environment where the youth can feel heard, valued, and empowered.

The information in this article is provided as a resource and does not constitute endorsement by Minot AFB, the United States Air Force, or the Department of War of the external website, or the information, products, or services contained therein.

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OUR WILDLIFE REFUGES

Kim Fundingsland

Minot is situated within a short drive of several National Wildlife Refuges, each with their own diversity of habitat. They are managed for wildlife and for compatible public use.

Upper Souris NWR has public use areas for shore fishing, maintains boat ramps for open water fishing on Lake Darling, allows for ice fishing and dark house spearfishing. There's a canoe route below Lake Darling Dam, hiking trails and, when the season allows, a scenic auto tour route that offers excellent views of the refuge and river valley.

While Upper Souris is the nearest NWR to Minot, others within an hour drive are Audubon, J. Clark Salyer, and Des Lacs. All have opportunities for public use, summer and winter. Hunting, fishing, hiking, driving are all ways to enjoy what our NWR's have to offer.

One of my "never forget" moments happened on a marsh below Lake Darling Dam on the Upper Souris NWR. I was doing a story for television on the purpose of marsh management on the refuge. A biological technician used an airboat to take me on a tour, to show me life on the marsh.

It was fascinating. We encountered birds I never knew were in North Dakota. I saw my first, and only, Virginia rail. I was introduced to black-crowned night herons too and numerous other residents of the marsh.

Then, as the airboat turned toward an elevated nesting basket, we could see a Canada goose lying flat on top of it. We approached slowly. The goose stood up, then dropped down onto the water below. It feigned injury, an act we knew meant she hoped to divert us from the nest.

A moment later we stood up in the airboat to see inside the nesting basket. A couple of young geese had just hatched. More were pipping their way out of their eggs. Momma goose stayed with a few feet of us.

We watched as a yellow gosling, wet and soggy appearing, worked to remove the top of an egg and enter the world. The gosling did so. To our astonishment, still seated inside the bottom half of the shell, the gosling, not a minute old, snatched up a bug that was crawling on a piece of eggshell.

As we backed away after watching for only a few minutes the mother goose flew back up onto the nest. That is a slice of life I think about every time I drive past an NWR.

The presence of wildlife has changed at our refuges over the past several years. Sometimes more, sometimes less. But the value of having land set aside for wildlife is always there, even more so as more and more habitat essential for the survival of many species, large and small, seen and unseen, is changed forever.



Our refuges, once thought of as existing only for migratory waterfowl, are now recognized as "refuges" for diminishing varieties of shorebirds and songbirds, butterflies, native plants, and more. They serve as places of learning for students pursuing careers in biology, agriculture, land management, and more. Now it's the winter season and seasonal species have moved out of North Dakota. The landscape gets that bleak and foreboding look, but it is the time of year when our NWR's often offer the only sanctuary available to wintering wildlife.

This year our winter started with an early and deep dump of snow but, with the effect of El Nino, warmer temperatures led to the melting of the initial snowpack. While daytime temperatures have been quite mild for several weeks, there's no escaping winter's presence. Even in an El Nino winter we'll get our share of the fourth season.

Our refuges provide protective habitat necessary for wildlife survival during our challenging winter months, woodlands and grasslands providing shelter from icy winds. Then, in the spring, the land comes to life again. Migrating birds return. Deer give birth to fawns and birds of all kinds nest successfully. All illustrate the importance of our National Wildlife Refuge system.



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FAMILY CHILD CARE

The 2025 Family Child Care Provider of the year is Ms. Tena Holmgren. The 2025 Provider of the Year ceremony was held back in August 2025. Ms. Tena was presented with a certificate and coin by FCC chairman Bruce Bartholomew. The Provider of the Year runner ups, Ms. Amanda Brittain and Ms. Starr Frei, were also presented with coins during the ceremony.



Tena Holmgren

When we got orders to Minot, I made the decision that it would be a nice quiet growing period for my family. When my husband deployed almost immediately, I found myself solo-parenting 3 children, five and under. What I needed most was community, I didn't know anyone yet though.

That's when I discovered FCC, a network of trained providers that offered not only professional care but genuine community. Through deployment care I met some amazing providers that became my village in those early days and gave me 16 hours a month to breathe and reset.

A couple of years later, after seeing FCC providers constantly step up for families, I came across a pamphlet about becoming a provider. Knowing how hard it is to find reliable child care, I realized it was a chance to

support others, earn income, and still be present for my own young children.

FCC definitely comes with ups and downs, much like any profession. With the support of my husband and my own kids we have found a balance while continuing the quiet growing period for our family, alongside the many children who come into our home. Our days are full of stories, art, projects, adventures, and lots of play.

Whether it's providing full-time care, deployment care, appointment care, or extended duty care, my goal is always the same: that my home is a fun, happy place to play for all children and that families get the support they need to thrive. I am honored to be a part of this Family Childcare program at Minot Air Force Base.

For more information about FCC, please check out the following website: <https://5thforcesupport.com/family-child-care/>

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14
JAN

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Blue Rider
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16
JAN

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VISIT WEBSITE FOR DATES & TIMES

Mouse River Players,

115 1st Street SE, Minot

17
JAN

ETERNAL WEEKEND LEGACY GAUNTLET

1:00PM

Chaos Games,

123 Main Street S, Minot

This is YOUR chance to get a PAID flight & hotel to Eternal Weekend 2026. THIS IS GUARANTEED to the winner of the Legacy Gauntlet CHAMPIONSHIP! We are going to host FOUR total Legacy events throughout 2026. Based on those FOUR events, we will schedule a TOP 8 playoff to determine the winner of the PAID flight & hotel to Eternal Weekend. Legacy Gauntlet Qualifier 1 - January 17th, 2026
Legacy Gauntlet Qualifier 2 - March 21st, 2026
Legacy Gauntlet Qualifier 3 - May 23rd, 2026
Legacy Gauntlet Qualifier 4 - July 18th, 2026
Legacy Gauntlet CHAMPIONSHIP (invite only).
Each event will be a \$50 entry fee with \$40 going to prize structure for that event and \$10 helping aid the prizeing for the TOP 8 grand prize.

19
JAN

SUPERHERO BOOTCAMP

10:00AM-2:00PM

Magic City Discovery Center,

1545 1st Street NW, Minot

Calling all heroes-in-training! Join us for a dynamic day of mask-making, power practice, and mission-based fun. In Superhero Bootcamp, kids will create their own superhero persona, design gear and gadgets, and complete challenges that test their strength, speed, and smarts.
Unleash your inner hero—it's time to save the day!
Ages: 5 - 12
Location: Community Rooms at the Magic City Discovery Center
Cost: \$25 for non-members, \$22.50 for members, \$20 for military members
Educator: Tessa

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THE NORTH DAKOTA NATIONAL GUARD have openings available in a variety of career fields across the state and in Minot. Continue your military career on a part-time basis. For more information call 420-5903 or 420-5904 in Minot.

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By email or phone at

amello@kalixnd.org

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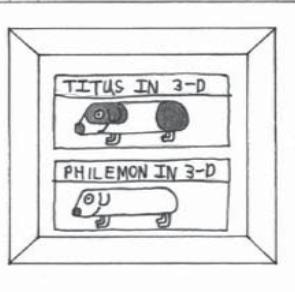
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TIMMOTHY TIMM

TITUS & PHILEMON

Everyday adventures of Titus and Philemon and their owner Joe.



Timothy Timm of Minot currently attends Minot State University, is a Minot High School graduate, artist, cartoonist, author and illustrator. Timm has also created other works of art that are on display in his art studio downtown located at 201 Main St. S. in Minot.

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MINOT STATE UNIVERSITY

Minot State University is excited to again offer face-to-face classes at the Minot Air Force Base. There is no application fee for active-duty military personnel. Military personnel can complete their Community College of the Air Force (CCAF) degree and earn a bachelor's degree from Minot State. For more information, contact Brigitte Mikula at 701-727-9044 or by email at Brigitte.mikula@minotstateu.edu

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Air Force Signs \$2 Billion Deal to Re-Engine Two B-52s for Testing

GREG HADLEY, AIR & SPACE FORCES MAGAZINE

The Air Force inked a \$2 billion deal with Boeing to install new engines on two B-52 bombers and begin testing of the new eight-engine configuration.

Boeing is the prime integrator for USAF's B-52 Commercial Engine Replacement Program in which new Rolls-Royce F130 engines will be installed in place of the legacy TF33 engines that date back to the 1960s.

"The task order progresses the B-52 CERP program by completing system integration activities after Critical Design Review and modifying and testing two B-52 aircraft with new engines and associated subsystems," the announcement states.

The Pentagon did not specify when the first jets will be ready for testing, saying only that the task order "is expected to be complete by May 31, 2033"—around the time the Air Force anticipates achieving initial operational capability with the new engines.

The F130 engine passed critical design review in December 2024, but the replacement program includes much more, including the engine struts, the electrical power generation system, and engine cockpit displays. A critical design review for the entire program is projected for April, according to the Government Accountability Office in its annual weapons report released last summer.

Along with the new engines, the Air Force is also replacing the radar on the B-52. Once both upgrades are installed, they will combine to form the "B-52J" variant, intended to continue flying into the 2050s, when the airframes will approach 100 years old.

The B-52 Radar Modernization Program has also signaled recent progress, with the new AN/APQ-188 radar making its first flight on a B-52 on Dec. 8. The bomber flew from San Antonio, Texas, to Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., to begin testing ahead of a production decision this year. The new radar replaces today's AN/APQ-166 radars, which were developed in the 1980s.

The F130-equipped B-52s will also be tested at Edwards, the home of the Air Force's main test wing.



U.S. Air Force Airmen repair a B-52H Stratofortress engine during a Bomber Task Force deployment at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, April 25, 2021.

U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO | SENIOR AIRMAN JOVANTE JOHNSON

A production decision on the engine replacement program is projected in late 2028, according to reports from the GAO and the Director of Operational Test and Evaluation.

Both the engine and the radar upgrades have overcome challenges. The engine program was first delayed by needed changes to nacelle design and auxiliary engine systems, followed by engine inlet issues discovered during testing. The radar program, meanwhile,

had to overcome a "non-critical" Nunn-McCurdy breach, meaning its baseline schedule or cost had grown by up to 15 percent, due to "environmental qualification, parts procurement, and software," per the GAO.

Work progresses, however, to keep the B-52 flying for decades to come as the "standoff" component of USAF's planned bomber force, consisting of stealthy B-21 "inside" bombers and stand-off B-52s.



Rolls-Royce F130 engines on test at NASA Stennis Space Center.

IMAGE COURTESY ROLLS-ROYCE.

Enjoy Frozen Fun with Minot Parks!

MINOT PARKS

Minot Parks invites friends, families, and winter enthusiasts of all ages to bundle up and join the fun at Frozen Fun Day, taking place Saturday, January 24, 2026 from 11:00am – 2:00pm at Polaris Park. This free community event celebrates winter with outdoor activities, warm treats, and plenty of opportunities to get moving and making memories.

Frozen Fun Day will feature skating on both rinks, frozen bubbles, snow painting, a scavenger hunt, and s'mores around the firepits. Attendees can also enjoy hearty foods, hot cocoa, and more throughout the event. Ski and skate rentals will be available for free during the event, making it the perfect opportunity for participants to try something new in a fun, low-pressure environment. Rentals are limited.

"Last year's Frozen Fun Day brought out hundreds of community members, and the response was incredibly positive," said Elly DesLauriers, Minot Parks Executive Director. "Events like this help showcase everything Minot Parks has to offer and what we hope to

continue expanding on. We want to create welcoming spaces and experiences that encourage people of all ages to get outside, stay active, and connect with their community."

Frozen Fun Day is free to attend and open to the public. All rentals used during the event are included at no cost, making it an accessible

and family-friendly way to enjoy the winter season.

Polaris Park is located at 712 26th Ave NW, Minot, ND.

For more information on Frozen Fun Day or any of our other events, visit www.minotparks.com or download our free Minot Parks app.



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Maj. Bechen of the 5th Medical Group was recognized at the MAJCOM level, receiving Air Force Global Strike Command's Clinical Excellence in Nursing award for outstanding patient care and professional expertise.

AFMS - MINOT - 5TH MEDICAL GROUP PHOTO



by Patricia Stockdull

FISHING:

Lake Sakakawea elevation, Jan. 5: 1,829.05 feet above mean sea level (MSL); 16,000 cubic feet per second (CFS) Garrison Dam average daily releases. Devils Lake elevation: 1,448.92 feet above mean sea level (MSL). Stump Lake elevation: 1,448.87 MSL.

- N.D. Game & Fish Dept. game wardens: No new reports from area lakes.
- Devils Lake, Woodland Resort, Devils Lake: Anglers marking fish on Devils Lake but walleye bite isn't on yet. Better success might be on northern feeder lakes such as Lake Irvine, but the bite still is only fair.
- Lake Darling, Karma C-Store, Ruthville: Lake Audubon producing occasional eater-sized walleye.

• Lake Metigoshe, Four Seasons, Bottineau: Improving bluegill success using wax worms. Try evening hours for walleye but sort through for the keepers.

- Lake Sakakawea/Lake Audubon, Cenex Bait & Tackle, Garrison: Lake Audubon producing occasional walleye but no consistency. Try 12 to 35 feet depending on light conditions and time of day. East end of Lake Sakakawea has extremely variable ice. Use extreme caution when walking onto back bays, including Centennial or Douglas bays, with main lake open water.
- Lake Sakakawea/Lake Audubon, Hwy. 83 Lawn & Leisure, Garrison: Lake Audubon fair for walleye but beware of pressure ridges and do not cross them. East end of Lake Sakakawea has occasional walleye from Centennial Bay but watch ice conditions and pressure ridges, as well.
- Lake Sakakawea, New Town: Van Hook Arm slow for walleye

Thanks to Woodland Resort, our Outdoors Report sponsor, for helping keep readers up-to-date on happenings throughout the region. For complete details about fishing Devils Lake and its array of recreational opportunities visit their website, (www.woodlandresort.com), Facebook at (facebook.com/woodlandresortDL), telephone (701) 662-5996, extension 1, or email (woodlandresort@gondtc.com). They're located at 1012 Woodland Drive, Devils Lake, N.D. 58301.



- Ice is never completely safe. Avoid areas with vegetation, moving water, pressure ridges, and springs. Check conditions as you go along on the ice and don't move around at night.
- Jan. 10: Fire & Ice Pickleball Tournament, Cameron Indoor Tennis Center, Minot. Register at the pickleball association website, (www.minotareapickleball.org).
- Jan. 10: Frozen Bison Fat Tire Bike Race, Bison Plant Trail, Minot.
- Jan. 11: Bowling for Birds sponsored by Souris Valley Pheasants Forever, North Hill Bowl, 11 a.m.

TOURNAMENTS:

- Jan. 10: Lake Darling; Lake Sakakawea, Lewis & Clark State Park; Devils Lake, Woodland Resort.
- Jan. 17 & 18: Lake Sakakawea, Four Bears.

with the river portion around New Town producing occasional activity.

- Lake Sakakawea/Missouri River, Scott's Bait & Tackle, Pick City: Missouri River tailrace continues producing some walleye from the wing walls using jigs and minnows or crankbaits from shore. Lake Audubon fair for walleye.
- Lake Sakakawea/northwest N.D. lakes, Scenic Sports, Williston: Decent walleye success on the upper end of Lake Sakakawea. Try from Lund's Landing to Hofflund, including Tobacco Garden on the south side in 16 feet. Some pike mixed in using tip-ups with frozen smelt. Trenton Lake continues producing crappie and pike. Try ice-fishing the Yellowstone River for ling and walleye. Kota-Ray Dam fair for bluegill. Northgate Dam producing some nice crappie.
- North-central/central N.D. lakes, Towner Hdwe. Hank, Towner: Some activity on the Souris River north of Upham but mixed success.

DOWNSHILL SKI REPORTS:

- Big Sky Resort, Big Sky, Mont., (800) 548-4486: Base varies from 28- to 43-inches with 251 runs open.
- Bottineau Winter Park, Bottineau, (701) 263-4556: 12- to 24-inch base with 6 runs, tubing runs, 1 chair, 1T-bar, and 2 carpets open.
- Frostfire Ski Area, Walhalla, (701) 549-3600: 7 runs open.
- Huff Hills Ski Area, Mandan, (701) 663-6421: 2- to 14-inch machine groomed base with 4 runs and 1 lift open.
- Terry Peak, Lead, S.D., (605) 584-2165: 14- to 24-inch base with 8 runs, 3 lifts, and 1 carpet open.

NUMBERS TO KNOW:

- N.D. Game and Fish Dept., main Bismarck office: (701) 328-6300, website: (<http://gf.nd.gov>).
- Report All Poachers: (701) 328-9921.

What's Going On Minot AFB

FRIDAY 09

- Intramural Basketball LOI and Rosters Due, McAdoo Fitness Center
- FTEC, 0730-1600, Professional Development Center
- Club Member Appreciation Luau, 1600-2100, Jimmy Doolittle Center
- Friday Flicks, 1630-2200, Rockers Bar & Grill

WEDNESDAY 14

- AFFT, 0530, McAdoo Fitness Center
- NCO Foundation Course 500, 0730-1600, Professional Development Center
- TAP DOL Overview, 0800-1600, M&FRC
- Pre-Deployment/Remote Readiness Training, 1000-1100, M&FRC
- Storytime, 1030, Base Library
- AFFT, 1100, McAdoo Fitness Center
- Financial Literacy Class, 1530-1630, Youth Center

SATURDAY 10

- Youth Bowl League, 0900, Rough Rider Bowling Center
- Winter STEAM Challenges, 1000, Minot AFB Library Facebook Page
- Dinosaur Discoveries, 1300, Minot AFB Library
- Youth Bowl League, 1400, Rough Rider Bowling Center

SUNDAY 11

MONDAY 12

- AFFT, 0530, McAdoo Fitness Center
- NCO Foundation Course 500, 0730-1600, Professional Development Center
- Yellow Belt – Process Improvement Fundamental Class, 0800-1500, Atomic Spark Innovation Lab
- TAP Overview, 0800-1600, M&FRC
- Reintegration Briefing, 1000-1100, M&FRC
- AFFT, 1100, McAdoo Fitness Center
- Craft Club, 1800, Base Library

TUESDAY 13

- AFFT, 0530, McAdoo Fitness Center
- NCO Foundation Course 500, 0730-1600, Professional Development Center
- Yellow Belt – Process Improvement Fundamental Class, 0800-1500, Atomic Spark Innovation Lab
- TAP VA Service and Benefits Briefing, 0800-1600, M&FRC
- Tuition Assistance (TA) Brief, 1000, Education Center
- Game Day, 1000-1930, Base Library
- AFFT, 1100, McAdoo Fitness Center

THURSDAY 15

- Submissions Close: BGCA National Arts Contest, Youth Center
- AFFT, 0530, McAdoo Fitness Center
- NCO Foundation Course 500, 0730-1600, Professional Development Center
- TAP Employment Track Workshop, 0800-1600, M&FRC
- Reintegration Briefing, 1000-1100, M&FRC, Zoom Meeting
- Exotic Eats: Asia Special Lunch, 1030-1330, Dakota Inn Dining Facility
- AFFT, 1100, McAdoo Fitness Center
- Tuition Assistance (TA) Brief, 1330, Education Center
- Exotic Eats: Asia Special Dinner, 1630-1800, Dakota Inn Dining Facility

Scan for full event details



NEON LIGHTS SKATE NIGHT

16 January 2026 • 6:00PM - 8:00PM
Youth Center • Ages 5 - 18

Members: Free • Non-Members: \$5

Keystone Club will be selling snacks!
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Youth under the age of 9 must have a parent present at all times.

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Helmets required for all skaters.

Scan the QR Code to register or visit the CYPBMS website at <https://parent.cypcyp.com/>

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For details, call the Youth Center at 723-2838

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DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
YOUTH PROGRAMS

5THFORCESUPPORT.COM

SATURDAY 17

- Bottineau Winter Park Trip, 0730-1830, Outdoor Recreation
- Winter STEAM Challenges, 1000, Minot AFB Library Facebook Page
- Elevate Your Relationship, 1200-1600, Sirocco Neighborhood Home Center
- Reality TV Trivia, 1700, Rockers Bar & Grill

SPECIALS

Rockers Bar & Grill Featured Item
Philly Cheesesteak

Bomber Bistro Featured Item
Banh Mi Sandwich

The B-Fifty Brew Featured Item
Chorizo Burrito

BOTTINEAU WINTER PARK

OUTDOOR RECREATION

17 JAN 2026 • 0730-1830

JOIN ODR FOR AN EPIC SKI TRIP WHERE EVERYTHING'S COVERED! FULL SKI OR SNOWBOARD GEAR RENTAL, A LIFT TICKET FOR THE DAY, & ROUND-TRIP TRANSPORTATION TO WINTER PARK. ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS SHOW UP AND HAVE FUN!

ONLY \$60



SPOTS ARE LIMITED SO LOCK IN YOURS BY 14 JAN INSIDE ODR OR OVER THE PHONE AT 723-3648

5THFORCESUPPORT.COM

AIR FORCE
OUTDOOR RECREATION

Winter Rentals

Outdoor Recreation

Snowboard & Ski Package

\$20 per day (Mon-Fri)
\$40 per weekend (Fri-Mon)
Includes board or skis with poles, boots, helmet, & goggles

Figure Skates

\$10 per day (Mon-Fri)
\$35 per weekend (Fri-Mon)

Poles rented as needed

5THFORCESUPPORT.COM



723-3648

AIR FORCE
OUTDOOR RECREATION

REALITY TV TRIVIA
ROCKERS BAR & GRILL

17 JAN 2026 • 1700

PUT YOUR BEST REALITY TV KNOWLEDGE TO THE TEST & COMPETE TO WIN A \$100 FSS GIFT CARD PER TEAM!
TEAMS OF 4 MEMBERS MAX

MUST BE 18+ TO PLAY **727-ROCK**

5THFORCESUPPORT.COM

KARAOKE NIGHTS
ROCKERS BAR & GRILL

WINTER 2026
16 JAN • 20 FEB
20 MAR

SING YOUR FAVORITES WITH US FOLLOWING PROGRESSIVE BINGO

727-ROCK

5THFORCESUPPORT.COM

Winter Rentals
Outdoor Recreation

Snowboard & Ski Package
\$20 per day (Mon-Fri)
\$40 per weekend (Fri-Mon)
Includes board or skis with poles, boots, helmet, & goggles

Figure Skates
\$10 per day (Mon-Fri)
\$35 per weekend (Fri-Mon)

Snowshoes & Poles
\$20 per day (Mon-Fri)
\$35 per weekend (Fri-Mon)
Poles rented as needed

5THFORCESUPPORT.COM

QUALITY HEALTHCARE FOR ALL

Non-emergency walk-ins welcome Monday-Friday 1-4 p.m.

- Ob/Gyn Care
- Newborn Care
- Well Child Visits
- Pediatrics
- Free Pregnancy Tests
- Geriatric Care
- Preventive Healthcare
- Full Service Pharmacy

1201 11th Avenue SW | Minot, ND | Phone 701.858.6700 | 800.841.7321 | Hours: M-F 8 AM-5 PM | cfminot.UND.edu

Center for Family Medicine

UND SCHOOL OF MEDICINE & HEALTH SCIENCES
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH DAKOTA



MAIN MEDICAL BUILDING
315 SOUTH MAIN STREET, MINOT
www.mainmedicalbuilding.com



IPM PROPERTY MANAGEMENT
701.852.1157
Rental Spaces Available