



# northersentry

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**MINOT AFB RECOGNIZES FIVE CHIEF MASTER SERGEANTS**

**CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT TIAWANNA DUNN**

**CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT SELECT JAMES JOHNSON**

**CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT MARY GRACE MARTIN**

**CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT JONATHAN PANCHAL**

**CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT SELECT JANSEN VELANTE**

Five outstanding senior NCOs from Minot Air Force Base, N.D. have been selected as the 2026 Chief Master Sergeants, marking the pinnacle of enlisted leadership in the U.S. Air Force. Their promotion reflects decades of dedication, operational excellence, and commitment to mentoring the next generation of Airmen. Check out this week's exclusive interviews with the 2026 Chief Master Sergeants from Minot AFB on pages A3-A7.

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**A VIEW FROM  
 OUR SIDE**

ROD WILSON



I don't want to continue to have my recent back surgery be the pinnacle of my life and perhaps this will be the last time it is a part of this column. I returned to Twin Cities Spine Center last week for a checkup to see how things were going. I kind of felt like I was doing OK, with slow but steady improvement, and fortunately so did my surgeon, Dr. Manual Pinto.

First, I was no longer taking prescription pain killers having switched to over the counter medications. Second, I am able to walk without a walker or even a cane. Not going to say I am sturdy on my feet, but where I am today is quite an improvement from where I was after surgery. And finally, I have returned to pretty much my normal routine writing and selling ads for the Northern Sentry. Again, quite a large step from 30 minutes at my desk at home, to a full day in the Northern Sentry office in the Main Medical building.

**SOME THOUGHTS**

Part of my normal monthly routine is attendance at the Military Affairs Committee gathering, normally held on the first Thursday of every month. This month we gathered at the Jimmy Doolittle Center on base. I only missed one MAC meeting in my eight week recovery, but it was great to once again be in attendance. One of the first people to welcome me back was Col. Jesse Lamarand, the Commander of the 5th Bomb Wing. Part of my goal in having surgery was to re-establish the shape of my spine. Stenosis is what they were attempting to



**UPSIDE DOWN  
 UNDER**

MARVIN BAKER

When we take a look at our history books, we see a lot of different things have happened since territorial days here and in South Dakota.

One of the biggest events to take place was the announcement and building of railroads across Dakota Territory.

Straight line rail across the northern tier and across the southern tier made it possible for settlers to come to the area, homestead and make a living.

Had it not been for the railroad, and government subsidies to help build said steel rail, our state's residents would have all settled near bodies of water.

# Thoughts...And Prayers

correct. My discs in between my vertebrae had flattened and we were headed toward a lifetime of leaning forward. It was either have the surgery to replace the discs with "cages" and then put rods in my back to straighten me up, or deal with spine issues for the rest of my life. Easy choice, but not so easy of a surgery.

After the MAC meeting Col Lamarand made it a point to get more details about my recovery, and we both had to chuckle when he said "Wow, you definitely are straightening up. You're taller than me now!" His comment made me feel pretty good. When I mentioned Col Lamarand's statement to my wife, I had to once again smile when she stoically reminded me that "I thought that was what this surgery was all about. You know, straightening you up." OK, enough said on that front. But, back to the MAC meeting. Col. Lamarand, and Col Schlabach for that matter, have always been so approachable when it comes to how Minot Air Force Base relates to the Minot community. From what I understand, it's not always that way. But according to Col Lamarand "this is not normal (in a good way). For a community and a base to have such a great relationship is out of the ordinary, and I hope it never changes."

My thoughts to Col Lamarand and Col Schlabach; neither do I. On the very day of my surgery Col Lamarand sent a text to my boss asking about my wellbeing, and how surgery had gone. The next day Ted asked how I was doing because Col Schlabach had asked. I may look at this through a different set of glasses than most, but Col's Lamarand and Schlabach certainly have a lot more pressing issues on their plates, but I cannot say enough how appreciative I was of their concern. So, thank you Col Lamarand and Col Schlabach, and of course all of the other folks who sent texts or emails to my boss, Ted Bolton asking how I was doing.

**AND NOW PRAYERS**

Even though a major portion of what I do revolves around the Minot Air Force Base, and the large part they play in deterrence



Col Lamarand addresses a recent Honorary Commander's Ceremony. The Honorary Commander's program ties the base and Minot together through community and base leaders.

of our adversaries, I really don't get a whole lot more information than what the average person following the local and national news channels does. What I know, because it has been repeated several times, is that there are at least eight B-52's from Minot & Barksdale Air Force Base deployed in support of Operation Epic Fury.

We certainly hope and pray that the crews of those B-52's from Minot, Barksdale, and all of the other military personnel deployed to the Middle East, are kept out of harms' way. Unfortunately, very few battles like Operation Epic Fury are fought without casualties. To all of the families who have lost loved ones so far

we send out heart felt condolences.

The other day I was privy to a conversation between four people at a local coffee shop. Eventually their conversation turned to the fact that there were several B-52's in Iran. "There isn't a darn thing we can do about it" said one gentleman. One of the other gentlemen answered, "Yes there is...we can pray for their safety."

My position at the Northern Sentry is to tell the stories of the people who are part of the Minot Air Force Base, and I am not afraid to say that every day those who serve our country and help maintain our freedom are in my thoughts and prayers. I hope they are also in yours, too.



B-52 From Minot AFB arriving at Fairford, England.

# Let's all take a history lesson

Taking another step back, before the railroads existed, steamboats were the mode of travel and three ports that were popular in territorial days remain today; Fargo, Grand Forks and Edwinton, which later became known as Bismarck.

On more of a local level, I've discovered that numerous small communities and settlements existed in what is now Emmons County, long before the railroad reached Bismarck. That, of course, was on a small scale, but these tiny hamlets like Glencoe, Livona and Winona, were often established to trade with like minded individuals on the west side of the Missouri River, i.e., Glencoe to Cannonball, Livona to Fort Rice and Winona to Fort Yates.

Well, the railroad changed all that. Finally, people could settle wherever they wanted to include areas far removed from any lake or river. And in Emmons County, that gave rise to communities such as Strasburn, Linton, Hazelton, Hague and Braddock.

There's no doubt the railroads, most notably Northern Pacific and the Great Northern, had a major

impact on this state, as did the immigrants who rode the steel rail to come to a new home they had never imagined.

From 1880 to 1910, floods of immigrants came to North Dakota to settle, many not knowing what to expect. Some had family members already in the United States, many did not. And for those folks, life was often difficult.

We have German, Norwegian, Swedish, Icelandic, Ukrainian, British, Dutch, Danish, French, Russian, Croatian, Polish, Greek, Swiss, Italian, Hungary and many others from eastern Europe and parts of Asia.

Yes, North Dakota is a melting pot, just as the United States as a whole.

What is your heritage? Mine is German, Swiss, Danish and Ukrainian.

All those people came here for a better life and opportunity from what they had in "the old country." Most were farmers. Others were merchants, lawyers, teachers, doctors engineers. They all contributed something to the growth of the early days of our state.

If you look at statistics, that immigration influx continued beyond 1910. The numbers of people dramatically shifted, starting in 1932. And, as a double whammy, many who settled the northern Great Plains, packed up and went west to California, Oregon and Washington, as was so well described in John Steinbeck's novel The Grapes of Wrath.

Since the latest oil boom, the trend was once again reversed and although population has stabilized, the population of North Dakota has surpassed 800,000 for the first time. Fargo has become a vibrant city and Bismarck is pushing toward 100,000 in its own right.

Dickinson, Williston, Minot, Grand Forks and Watford City have all grown, while many smaller communities have also seen subtle growth.

We're doing well, but we could do better. No doubt, oil has had its impact, but rather than putting all our eggs in one basket, we should create numerous other incentives, especially to bring young families here, just like the immigrants from Europe.



# Chief Martin's Journey: Leading with Care

NATALY ZARRELLA, NORTHERN SENTRY



**CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT SELECT MARY GRACE MARTIN**

Chief Master Sergeant Mary Grace Martin, newly selected for the rank of chief master sergeant with the 5th Force Support Squadron at Minot Air Force Base, credits her family, the people she serves, and a commitment to caring for others as the driving forces behind more than two decades of service in the U.S. Air Force.

Chief Martin's journey into the Air Force began unexpectedly in 2002 during her senior year of high school. While she had been accepted to college and was preparing for a traditional path like many of her classmates, a conversation with a friend sparked a different idea.

"A friend mentioned he was going to join, and I thought it sounded exciting, I was originally going to join the Marines", she said then she visited a recruiting office and an Air Force recruiter encouraged her to consider a different branch. As the oldest of four siblings, Chief Martin said the idea of doing something different from those around her appealed to her, and the Air Force ultimately became the path she chose.

"I didn't really have anyone to follow," she said. "The plan was go to college, become a nurse and follow that path, but I knew that wasn't what I wanted." Ultimately, she joined the Air Force seeking independence, educational opportunities and the chance to explore a different future. During her career, Chief Martin continued her education, earning both a bachelor's and a master's degree.

Although she enlisted with curiosity and a desire for change, she said the reasons she stayed in the Air Force evolved over time. "The reason I joined is definitely not the reason I stayed," she said. "I stayed because of the people." Over the years, Chief Martin said the relationships she built within the Air Force community played a major role in shaping both her career and personal growth.

"The 42-year-old version of me is not the same as my 18-year-old self," she said. "The Air Force has seen me grow, and I've grown with the people around me." Like many young Airmen, she initially planned to serve only one enlistment. "I was definitely thinking four and done," she said. When looking at locations to go for her first base she selected bases close to home in Chicago and was ultimately stationed in Kansas, about a 12-hour drive away.

Not long after arriving at her first duty station, her life changed again when she became a mother at age 20. "With my first daughter, everything changed," Chief Martin said. "I wasn't just responsible for myself anymore." She said the Air Force provided stability and support at a critical time in her life, offering a steady career and resources that helped her care for her growing family. "That security meant a lot," she said. "It helped me provide the best life I could for my daughter."

Family has remained a central part of Chief Martin's journey throughout her career. She and her husband, Senior Master Sergeant Ricardo Martin, who serves with the 5th Operations Support Squadron, have been together for more than 16 years.

As a dual-military couple raising four children JaiMarie, Janeah, Amelia and Adrian the Martins learned early on how to balance military responsibilities with family life. Rather than strictly separating work and home, Chief Martin said they chose to integrate the two so their children could better understand their parents' roles. "We wanted our family to see what we do and understand why it matters. It helped our kids understand when we couldn't always be home right away and it also helped our work family see that we also have real responsibilities at home".

Martin learned she had been selected for Chief Master Sergeant during an Airman breakfast focused on communication and culture. As part of the event, participants played a game of "telephone," where a message is

passed from person to person to demonstrate how communication can change along the way. When the final message was revealed, Airmen humorously repeated the phrase, "Senior Martin makes mean cheese." The original message, however, was meant to say, "Senior Martin made Chief."

"It was a really fun and memorable way to hear the news," Chief Martin said. "And it meant a lot that it happened surrounded by Airmen."

Now stepping into her role as the senior enlisted leader for the 5th Force Support Squadron, Chief Martin said her focus will remain on supporting Airmen and improving the environment for those she serves alongside. "I truly believe I'm here for the people," she said. "Whether it's helping with policy, guidance or just making the workplace better, that's what matters most."

Chief Martin also credited her husband for supporting her throughout her career. "Ric has been there every step of the way," she said. "He's always pushing me to reach my goals." Having already decided prior to her selection to the rank of CMSgt to continue serving until reaching 30 years in the Air Force, Chief Martin said she looks forward to continuing to mentor Airmen and contribute to the force.

For those just beginning their careers, she offered a simple piece of advice. "Care," Chief Martin said. "Care about yourself, care about your job, care about the people around you and care about the mission. When you care about something," she said, "everything else starts to fall into place."



Chief Mary Grace Martin during basic training, 2002, laying the foundation for a distinguished military career.



Chief Mary Grace Martin and her husband, SMSgt Ricardo Martin, building a foundation for each other while leading with care and commitment.



The Martin's with three of their four children, exemplifying dedication to both mission and family.



Once a young Airman, now a Chief, Chief Martin leads with care and dedication, committed to her people, the mission, and the legacy she leaves behind



Chief Martin pictured as a NCO fostering strong foreign relations by demonstrating dedication and care for the mission alongside international military partners.

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# Chief Dunn: Taking the Scenic Route

NATALY ZARRELLA, NORTHERN SENTRY



**CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT SELECT TIAWANNA DUNN**

After more than two decades in the U.S. Air Force, Senior Master Sgt. Tiawanna Dunn assigned to the 23rd Bomber Generation Squadron has built a career defined by perseverance, mentorship and a commitment to taking care of Airmen. SMSgt Dunn, who enlisted in February 2004, originally joined the Air Force with a simple goal, to see the world.

Raised in San Bernardino, California, but born in the village of Angie, Louisiana, SMSgt Dunn spent most of her childhood in Southern California before returning to Louisiana during her senior year of high school after several family losses. The move, she said, created a sense of uncertainty during a pivotal time in her life.

"I wanted to travel," SMSgt Dunn said during a recent interview. "Since I wanted to travel my options were either to be a flight attendant or join the military." Ultimately, timing and the desire for stability led her toward the Air Force. She enlisted out of Louisiana shortly after graduating high school.

Unlike many recruits who envision only a short enlistment, SMSgt Dunn said she joined with the intention of making the military a career. "I know everyone always says they didn't plan to stay," she said. "But I did. I wanted to do 20 years."

Still, the early years of her career were not without challenges.

During her first assignment, SMSgt Dunn endured struggles as a young Airman due to poor supervision from leaders who didn't take her development or that of her peers seriously.

That turning point came when she attended Airman Leadership School three years into her first tour. "I loved it," she said. "I loved the big Air Force picture, the mission, the impact of what we were doing." The experience helped her realize she possessed leadership qualities she had not previously recognized. "That's when it clicked," she said. "I realized I could do this long-term and do something bigger than myself."

Over the years, SMSgt Dunn's career has taken her across the globe. She and her family have completed nine permanent changes of station moves, spending approximately 15 years overseas. She first arrived at Minot Air Force Base in 2012 and returned in the summer of 2024 for her second assignment there.

Serving at Minot, part of Air Force Global Strike Command, carries a unique weight, SMSgt Dunn said. "The mission here is really big, and the expectations for NCOs are really big," she explained. "Being in a leadership position and overseeing Airmen executing that mission is huge."

Throughout her career, SMSgt Dunn said her motivations for staying in the Air Force have evolved. While travel initially drew her in, mentorship and advocacy for younger Airmen have become the driving forces behind her continued service.

"I didn't know as much about the military as people who grew up in it," she said. "I felt disadvantaged when I first joined. I needed a lot of guidance." That experience shaped her leadership philosophy. "I care a lot about the Airmen coming up behind me," she said. "Helping them navigate

their careers is what's kept me in."

Balancing military service with family life has also been a defining aspect of SMSgt Dunn's career. Married to another service member Senior Master Sergeant Rodney Dunn serving with the 5th Civil Engineer Squadron, the couple has spent years coordinating assignments, deployments and training schedules to support each other's careers. Despite the challenges, she credits open communication and firm boundaries for maintaining that balance. "There are certain things that are deal breakers for me," she said. "Missing big moments for my kids has to be for something truly critical."

SMSgt Dunn recently reached a new milestone in her career, earning the rank of Chief Master Sergeant. The news, she said, came unexpectedly. Her husband was the one who called her at work to tell her about the promotion, making the moment both joyful and bittersweet, as he had also been eligible for selection. "We had always joked that I would beat him to Chief," she said with a laugh. "So it was funny, but also a little surreal."

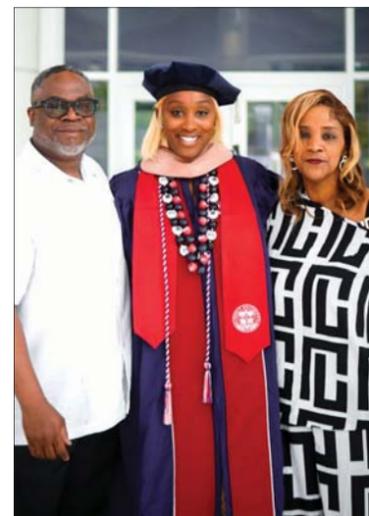
SMSgt Dunn, who is serving as a First Sergeant, often called "the shirt" said achieving the rank was never a specific career goal. "I never set out to be a Chief," she said. "It just feels weird because it wasn't something I deliberately chased." As she prepares to transition back into her Communications career field and taking off the diamond, she said her focus as a Chief will remain the same as it has throughout her career: advocating for people.

"I want to keep taking care of Airmen and doing the right thing," she said. "Too many times people are in the right position with the right rank and they don't do the right thing. I want to make sure I continue to be the person who does, even when it's hard."

Looking back on her journey from a struggling young Airman to now being selected for the rank of Chief Master Sergeant, Tiawanna Dunn encourages others to take a broader view of their careers. "I know promotions and positions are important," she said. "But people don't take enough time to enjoy the journey." Her advice to younger service members is simple, "take the scenic route when you can," she said. "If you enjoy the journey, you'll enjoy your career a lot more."



Pictured as a young Airman in Basic Military Training, Chief Dunn's journey to Chief reflects decades of dedication to people, mission, and continuous growth.



Chief Dunn stands with her parents during her 2025 graduation ceremony from Liberty University, celebrating her achievement of a Doctor of Business Administration with a Strategic Leadership focus.



A decade apart, photos of the Dunn family from their first time stationed at Minot AFB (2012-2015) and after their return in 2024.



Chief Select Tiawanna Dunn, 23rd BGS First Sergeant and her husband, SMSgt Rodney Dunn, 5 CES SEL.



Chief Dunn's husband and children tack on her MSgt stripe during a promotion ceremony in Okinawa, Japan.



Chief Dunn works alongside her team and Maj. Jeremiah Gray, Commander of the 23rd BGS, building bombs.

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# The Lessons That Built Chief Velante

ERIN BEENE, NORTHERN SENTRY

Chief Jansen Velante, Operations Flight Chief at the 5th Communications Squadron, is proof that one mistake or hardship does not have to define a career. Enlisting at age 27, later than many service members, he said becoming a chief was never his primary goal.

"I always did my best, abided by the Air Force Core Values, took care of people so they could take care of the mission, and tried to pay it forward," Velante said. Through numerous deployments and professional challenges, he ultimately rose to the highest enlisted rank in the United States Air Force.

Velante shared a time in his career when he believed everything might come to a sudden halt. While serving as a Military Training Leader (MTL) in AETC, he said he handled certain situations poorly and came under investigation by his command.

"Being under investigation was very traumatic for me, especially after the career

I had up to that point," he explained. "I had a handful of deployments, BTZ [Below the Zone], a plethora of awards and recognition, involvement in many organizations, and had helped produce a lot of subordinate success. I even had a line number for TSgt at the time. When I received paperwork from the squadron commander, my world felt crushed."

Unsure how to recover from the setback, Velante said his immediate leadership, MSgt Gulyas and Superintendent SMSgt Kwon, believed in him and gave him opportunities to rebuild his career. Years later, he was able to reconnect with the squadron commander who had issued the disciplinary paperwork and reflect on how the experience shaped him.

"I was already a First Sergeant when we spoke," he said. "I let her know I understood her hands were tied and that, for good order and discipline, her decision was the right one. As a Shirt, I would have advised her to do exactly

the same thing. In the long run, it taught me some important lessons."

Although Velante spent much of his military career single, he said his family has played a huge role in shaping who he has become in recent years. He spoke proudly of his wife, Jackie, and their daughters, Dacotah (11) and Jaxcen (2).

"It's ironic that I was a bachelor for the majority of my life and family was one of the furthest things from my mind," he said. "But Jackie is a saint—she's put up with four of my nine deployments. She completely shaped my career, even though I was already in my mid-30s when we started dating."

Velante credits his wife with pushing him to continue striving when he might otherwise have slowed down. "When I didn't want to study for WAPS [Weighted Airman Promotion System], she pushed me to study. When I wanted to take a break from leading and volunteering, she pushed me to keep going and to join or lead councils. When I said I wasn't going to get promoted, she said I would. Her unwavering support is directly tied to my career success."

Velante also shared a meaningful story about his daughter, Dacotah, and how she helped shape his perspective as a leader. When she experienced bullying at school, a boy told her that girls were not physically capable of doing "male jobs."

At the time, Velante was serving as a First Sergeant for Security Forces at Peterson Space Force Base. He began bringing his daughter to the base so she could meet Airmen and see the work being done.

"I made sure she spoke with our Defenders to show her that gender doesn't matter—it's the work someone puts in and the belief they have in themselves that allows them to succeed," he said.



**CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT SELECT JANSEN VELANTE**

"Our Defenders loved seeing her on post, and it also showed them that leaders understand how important family and support systems are."

Although becoming a chief was never his ultimate goal, Velante emphasized the significance of the promotion. "This milestone is very important because I want everyone I've led—and all the mentors who invested their time in me—to know their efforts helped me get here," he said.

Velante is quick to point out that his success was never achieved alone. He credits the combined support of his family, mentors, and fellow Airmen for helping him reach this point.

"I'm a product of everyone's efforts," he said. "My hope is to continue paying that forward."

When asked what advice he

would give his younger self, or Airmen just starting their journey, Velante offered simple but powerful guidance:

"Trust the process, trust the mentors who push you outside your comfort zone, and above all, take care of people so they can take care of the mission."



The Valante Family: SMSgt Jansen Velante, wife Jacquilyn, daughter Dacotah, taken the day Jaxcen was born, November 14, 2023, at Evans Army Community Hospital in Fort Carson, Colorado Springs, CO.



Al Udeid, Qatar, 2006. Deployed as the 71st Expeditionary Air Control Squadron.



SMSgt Velante, Shane Appleton, Jeremiah Siefert, Antonio Myles. This picture was at our Air Force Ball at DLIFLC, Monterey, CA in September 2013.



During an Iraq deployment taken after a Memorial Ruck for TSgt Solesbee, an EOD Technician who was also stationed at Hill AFB who made the ultimate sacrifice while they were deployed to Kandahar.



## SSgt Jeremy Massey



**5th Munitions Squadron**

**Hometown: Chocowinity, North Carolina**

SSgt Massey streamlined repair processes for 523 assets and overhauled guidelines for new maintenance practices, saving 16 man hours and eliminating 66% of erroneous replacement costs. He led 13 members through 412 maintenance tasks, enabling the employment of 201 precision guided munitions preserving Conventional Tactics Certifications for 45 operators, cementing his Squadron's Armament Technician of the Third Quarter Award! Additionally, he was hand-selected to deploy to the Pacific in support of a Multinational Department-level Integration exercise, resolving a launcher power-fault, keying the "longest standoff missile expenditure in Air Force history," solidifying his recognition as the Squadron's Non-Commission Officer of the Year Award.

GAME SALUTE: FRIDAY, MARCH 20

## Lt Taylor Sams



**742nd Missile Squadron**

**Hometown: Roy, Utah**

Lt Taylor Sams is a stellar officer who leverages her prior enlisted experience to bring out the best in herself, her peers, and her leadership.

As an Alternate Command Post-certified missileer, she assists the Mission Lead in operational direction of the 91st Missile Wing, overseeing 15 missile crews over 8.5K square-mi AOR. She is accountable to the President, Secretary of Defense, and USSTRATCOM Commander for execution of 150 ICBMs upon direction. She also serves as alternate Command Support Staff and the Unit Security Manger, verifying security clearances and ensuring security control for a \$3.3B weapon system. When she's not on alert, Lt Sams enjoys crocheting and running.

GAME SALUTE: SATURDAY, MARCH 21

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.



**CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT SELECT JIMMY JOHNSON**

# Chief Jimmy Johnson: Family Is Everything

ERIN BEENE, NORTHERN SENTRY

the military was not on his radar. But like many Americans, the events of September 11, 2001, changed everything.

“As information was released and the events of the attack became clearer, I felt a strong urge to do something for my country,” Johnson said. “I didn’t know what that would look like in 2001, but I knew it would be something.” After graduating college in 2005, he ultimately chose to enlist. Military life, he explained, came naturally to him. “Life in the military came easy to me. I would later joke with my father that his style of parenting was perfect preparation for the military,” he said. “I knew within the first year that the military was for me, and despite not using my degree, my parents have always been proud of my career.”

As a first-term Airman stationed at Minot, North Dakota quickly began to feel like home. Although he describes the base as “not for the faint of heart,” he credits it as one of the best things that ever happened to him. It was here that he met his wife, Lindsey, and together they have spent many years raising their family. “Family is everything,” Johnson said. “My wife and I have worked hard to provide

stability for our kids, which can be difficult in a military family.

He describes the Johnson family with both pride and humor:

Spouse, Lindsey: Owns and operates an equine business, Twilight Equine. Full-time mother, part-time father.

Daughter, Olivia (16): Straight as an arrow. Responsible, smart, and kind.

Son, Ethan (13): Reserved. Doesn’t say much. Kindhearted and a good brother.

Daughter, Avery (7): The wild card. Comedian of the group. Probably a future troublemaker.

Son, Elias (3): Hell on wheels. Insists on getting what he wants, when he wants it.

His devotion to family became especially evident when he reflected on the hardest parts of his military career. “Being separated from my family for long periods of time has definitely been the most difficult part of making the military a career,” he said. “I’ve missed births, deaths, holidays, special occasions, everything in between. My wife and kids are very understanding, and their strength and support have allowed me to continue serving.”

Though Johnson always planned to serve until retirement, he never pursued rank for the sake of promotion. Instead, he focused on longevity, doing his job well, and taking care of people. “I never really debated whether I was going to make a career out of the military,” he said. “Once I joined, I knew I was in it for the long haul. Joining is one of the best decisions I ever made.” He added, “I was not dead set on earning a Chief stripe. My goal has always been to be good at my job, have fun, and take care of those around me.”

That steady approach ultimately led him to promotion to Chief Master Sergeant in 2026. His advice to younger Airmen reflects the philosophy that has guided his career:

“Invest more. More importantly, spend more time with your family while you still can. In the Air Force, there’s always someone willing and ready to take your spot when you’re gone, the same can’t be said for your family.”

For Chief Johnson, the uniform has always mattered. But family has always mattered more.



The Johnson Family on day the Chief results were released. “Rank usually drives big changes for the family, but not this time. My oldest daughter was very proud of me, and everyone was happy no one was moving.” - Chief Johnson



During the family’s second assignment to Minot AFB in 2012, Jimmy’s son Ethan thought it was pretty cool to dress up like dad and was super excited to show him after work.



Spouse Lindsey owns and operates Twilight Equine. This picture was taken in 2023 at Minot Trail Riders, a non-profit saddle club Lindsey volunteers for.



As a Senior Airman, Jimmy Johnson went back to visit his parents for the first time since joining the military. He surprised them and brought a girlfriend with him too! Jimmy pictured with his now spouse, Lindsey Johnson in 2008.

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# Chief Panchal: A Family-Inspired Career

ERIN BEENE, NORTHERN SENTRY

The idea may have first come from his older brother, but from the moment Chief Jonathan Navnit Panchal enlisted in the Air Force in 2006 at the age of 20, he knew he wanted to make it a career. Although he experienced immediate personal growth right away, the only thing he was apprehensive about was the possibility of being away from his family for long periods of time. Still, he was ready for whatever Air Force life threw at him.

Panchal had a firsthand view of the opportunities the Air Force could bring. As a child, he got to witness his older brother, Senior Master Sergeant Raja Panchal (Ret.), serve and live all over the world. When speaking with Panchal, it was evident that his brother served as a guiding role model during his formative years.

“Watching his [Raja’s] career unfold as a kid and teenager was inspiring,” Panchal explained a specific story that made him realize he also wanted to try Air Force life. “During my high school years, Raja flew me out to

stay with him for about a month each summer. These trips really sealed the deal for me. Being able to see the growth he achieved, the opportunities he had, the friendships he made, and the places he got to go really helped me determine what I wanted from my life.”

Panchal had toyed with the idea of perhaps applying to the Air Force Academy, but ultimately decided to follow in his older brother’s footsteps and enlist instead. From that point on, he was all in. “From the very beginning, my goal was to make it a career of at least 20 years.”

It wasn’t just his brother who has played a meaningful role in his Air Force career. Panchal has been with his wife, Mai Pang Dao Panchal, for the entirety of his service, and their connection to one another was evident during the interview. While discussing what has made his job worthwhile, Panchal spoke about his wife.

“My wife Mai and I have been married throughout the entirety of my career. She’s been my rock

and has stood beside me through all the highs, lows, long work hours, TDYs, and deployments. I am forever indebted to her love and support. She and our boys are always at the forefront of any of the decisions I make.”

Ever the family man, Panchal also talked about the support he received from his parents.

“They’ve done so by exemplifying outstanding resilience and unconditional love. I could not have gotten to this point in my career without the examples they’ve set for me and the love they’ve given. Each of their stories, and the obstacles they’ve overcome, have inspired and motivated me through the many physical, mental, and spiritual challenges I’ve encountered while serving. Further, they’ve each been dependable sounding boards that I’ve been able to solicit advice from or simply vent to.”

Even with such a strong family support system, Panchal still faced some very difficult moments during his service that shaped him and his life immensely. Being far away and unable to return home when loved ones passed away was particularly challenging.

“This was especially difficult for me when I was unable to be there when my father and two of my childhood friends passed away. Initially, these experiences filled me with deep regret, but I

was able to work through it with time. The distance from loved ones, inherent to serving, taught me to be much more proactive in picking up the phone to call people.”

Through those experiences, he learned an important lesson. “Maintaining and strengthening relationships from afar takes effort, but it is worth every bit. My advice to anyone serving is to not let time or space diminish your relationships; pick up the phone and talk to your loved ones.”

Another defining moment in Panchal’s career came when his section chief invited him to lunch and presented him with a special set of staff sergeant stripes after he made the next rank.

“These stripes had been passed down for about 20 years to exceptional Materiel Management Airmen. He instilled a lot of belief in me as he discussed why he was passing those stripes down to me. It was really the first time that anyone outside of my own family expressed their belief in me. It truly motivated me more than he’ll ever know.”

As he steps into the role of Chief Master Sergeant, Panchal reflects on the one thing he wishes he had done differently earlier in his career.

“Early in my career, there were things I did or didn’t do, or procrastinated on, simply because I wasn’t confident or was scared



CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT JONATHAN PANCHAL

to fail. Trusting yourself and your decisions makes it easier to learn from your failures, hold yourself accountable, and celebrate your victories.”



SSgt Panchal on a supply mission via helicopter into the Kunar Province of Afghanistan circa 2011.



(counterclockwise) Mai (spouse), Rohan (son 8), Tahj (son 4), SMSgt Panchal enjoying a scenic stroll through Theodore Roosevelt National Park on July 3, 2025.



(Left to Right) A1C E. Cobo-Bernal, SSgt A. Randolph, TSgt Panchal, A1C J. Rivera, A1C T. Hibbs, MSgt A. Matthews attending a Naturalization Ceremony at James A. McClure Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse in Boise, Idaho circa April 2015.



A1C Panchal & A1C Patrick Guerrero rendering a salute to fallen WWII heroes at the Luxembourg American Memorial Cemetery circa May 2008.

## NOTES ON BEING SAFE

### SPRING THAW MEANS THIN ICE

The old saying, “You’re on thin ice” usually means one is probably speaking of a subject matter best left alone. The reason behind the saying is obvious -- those who attempt to walk on thin ice are quite likely to be swimming in short order. Every year, people head out onto frozen lakes in search of that last good fishing spot and end up at the bottom of the lake. There always seems to be that one guy who is oblivious to the rapidly approaching spring weather.

There is no guaranteed “safe” thickness of ice. However, there are general ice thickness guidelines that will give a good approximation.

Rivers and river outlets, which flow into lakes, are dangerous areas all throughout the winter months. Currents can erode ice, even when there are no indications of weakening on the surface. The only sure way to know how thick the ice is would be to drill test holes along the intended path.

North Dakota regulations require ice fishing houses and shelters to be removed from lakes no later than March 15. However, this does not guarantee safe ice until that last weekend. If it has been a warm winter, those dates may be well past a safe time to go out on the ice with vehicles or recreational equipment.

However, one cannot count on “the other guy” or a government agency for protection when they venture out on the ice. It is the individual’s responsibility to verify the ice conditions and be constantly aware of their surroundings.

In closing, here are a few tips if for those who venture out onto ice during the spring thaw:

- Use caution near bridges and trestles, as the structures conduct heat into the water, causing ice near these areas to be more dangerous.

This is also true for areas where the water has a strong current running through it.

- Be watchful when traveling on the ice at night or in fog. Reduced visibility increases your chances of driving into open water or onto weak ice. This is a frequent cause of ATV and snowmobile related crashes.

- Use the buddy system. A friend may be able to rescue or go for help if one gets into difficulty. Before leaving home, a person should tell someone where he is

going and what time he expects to return.

- Always wear a flotation suit or a lifejacket. Wearing a personal flotation device increases ones chance of survival if he should go through the ice.

- Take safety equipment. Ice picks, a rope and a cell phone can make a big difference.

- Avoid alcohol. Alcohol impairs ones judgment, coordination, and reaction time and speeds up hypothermia.



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Keeping up with vehicle maintenance sometimes can feel like a chore, especially when you can't exactly remember the last time you took your car into the auto shop. Periodic maintenance matters in the long run so you can avoid more costly repairs down the road.

An oil change is one of the more basic services your vehicle needs to perform at its best. Oil is specifically designed to lubricate your vehicle's engine. Fresh oil helps prevent your engine from using more energy and fuel than it needs and protects engine parts from wear and tear. We'll walk you through why oil changes matter for your vehicle and how long is too long to wait in between oil change services.

### WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU DON'T GET AN OIL CHANGE?

When life gets busy, it may be tempting to put things, like an oil change, on the back burner. Delaying important preventative maintenance could cost you overall. Without good engine oil, you are putting your car's engine in danger. Putting off an oil change for too long can:

- Worsen engine performance: Good engine oil keeps all the parts in an engine lubricated, but as it degrades it becomes more difficult for an engine to run at full capacity. As engine oil ages in service, acids accumulate in the oil. Additive performance and protection may also fade and the oil can thicken in viscosity.
- Cause costly engine damage: Neglecting an oil change long-term can have disastrous consequences. Old oil can eventually turn into sludge or deposits that can cause serious damage from a smoking engine to complete engine failure.

### HOW LONG CAN YOU GO WITHOUT AN OIL CHANGE?

Now that you know how important an oil change is for your vehicle, you may be wondering what's the best way to keep up with maintenance. A lot of this depends on your type of vehicle and how you drive. The best way to stay on top of maintenance intervals is to refer to your vehicle owner manual or the oil life monitor displayed on the driver information center of your dashboard or center console.

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**Prince Hall - 2nd Saturday at 9:00AM**

# Eighth Air Force command team visits Minot Air Force Base

2ND LT. MELISSA KAGELS, 5TH BOMB WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS



U.S. Air Force Maj. Gen. Ty Neuman, Eighth Air Force and Joint-Global Strike Operations Center commander (center), meets with 5th Bomb Wing helping agency leads at Minot Air Force Base, North Dakota, Feb. 23, 2026. Eighth Air Force leadership met with 5 BW helping agency leads during a round-table discussion on quality of life initiatives, highlighting the command's commitment to supporting the more than 24,000 active-duty, civilian, Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve Airmen who operate, maintain, support and defend its strategic capabilities.

MINOT AIR FORCE BASE, N.D.

U.S. Air Force Maj. Gen. Ty Neuman, Eighth Air Force and Joint-Global Strike Operations Center commander, and Chief Master Sgt. Brandon Wolfgang, Eighth Air Force command chief and J-GSOC senior enlisted leader, met with Airmen from Minot Air Force Base, February 23-24.

This was their first visit to Minot AFB since Neuman took command in November 2025. During the visit, they met with Airmen of the 5th Bomb Wing and local area civic leaders to discuss the importance of readiness, modernization and standards at Minot AFB -- the only base in the Department of War that hosts two legs of the Nuclear Triad.

Neuman and Wolfgang are responsible for the Air Force's bomber force and airborne nuclear command and control assets while overseeing all strategic deterrence operations within Air Force Global Strike Command.

One of their main priorities is modernization of the B-52H Stratofortress, a bomber platform flown by the aircrews of Minot AFB's 5 BW. The U.S. Air Force recently awarded Boeing a contract that will see these aircraft upgraded with new engines that will improve their performance and change their designation to B-52J.

During a meeting with 5 BW's aviation officers, Neuman underscored that their credibility as a fighting force is built upon maintaining a strong and ready nuclear force. He explained that key indicators like aircraft availability, aircrew proficiency, and the ability to generate combat power at scale are not just metrics -- they are the fundamental measure of that strength and the bomber force's ability to deter adversaries.

"The nuclear triad is the bedrock of our national defense," said Neuman. "Continued investment in the modernization of the B-52 ensures we have the cutting-edge needed to remain out in front of our adversaries."

While on base, the leadership team recognized superior performers, discussed quality of life initiatives for Airmen and families, and toured the Dakota Inn Dining Facility and flight line.

They began their visit by joining the Airmen of the 5 BW for their morning physical training session.

"Understanding, complying, and enforcing standards is essential," said Wolfgang. "The hard work the Warbird Airmen put in to improve their physical fitness really reflects their commitment to warrior readiness. What's a better way to start our visit than getting our blood pumping with these tough Airmen?"

Throughout the visit, Neuman and Wolfgang received a first-hand look at the key roles the Airmen of Minot AFB play in the larger mission of strategic deterrence and how modernization in equipment and infrastructure will ensure Minot AFB continues to meet the needs of an ever-evolving global, strategic environment.

"The sign on the base's gate reads, 'only the best come North,'" said the commander. "And after meeting with the Airmen of the 5 BW and witnessing their focus and grit, chief and I can see that it's true. Successful teams do hard things together, and the successes here demonstrate that Team Minot is a cut above."



U.S. Air Force Maj. Gen. Ty Neuman, Eighth Air Force and Joint-Global Strike Operations Center commander, coins U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Joseph Johnson, 5th Munitions Squadron conventional maintenance crew chief, at the Jimmy Doolittle Center on Minot Air Force Base, North Dakota, Feb. 24, 2026. Neuman presented coins to recognize high-performing Airmen who excelled while supporting the Team Minot mission.

U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTOS BY SENIOR AIRMAN KENDRA A. RANSUM

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U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Montana McCormick, 5th Force Support Squadron operations manager, briefs U.S. Air Force Maj. Gen. Ty Neuman, Eighth Air Force and Joint-Global Strike Operations Center commander, and U.S. Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Brandon Wolfgang (right), Eighth Air Force command chief and J-GSOC senior enlisted leader, about the Dakota Inn Dining Facility on Minot Air Force Base, North Dakota, Feb. 23, 2026. During Neuman's visit, he visited various 5th Bomb Wing units, including 5th FSS, the 5th Security Forces Squadron, 5th Civil Engineer Squadron and the 5th Operations Group.



U.S. Air Force Maj. Dylan Bechen, 5th Civil Engineer Squadron director of operations, provides a modernization and infrastructure brief to U.S. Air Force Maj. Gen. Ty Neuman, Eighth Air Force and Joint-Global Strike Operations Center commander, and U.S. Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Brandon Wolfgang (right), Eighth Air Force command chief and J-GSOC senior enlisted leader, at Minot Air Force Base, North Dakota, Feb. 23, 2026. Neuman and Wolfgang visited Minot AFB to ensure the current facilities are sufficient for supporting Team Minot personnel.



U.S. Air Force Maj. Gen. Ty Neuman (center right), Eighth Air Force and Joint-Global Strike Operations Center commander, speaks to Minot civic leaders at the Jimmy Doolittle Center on Minot Air Force Base, North Dakota, Feb. 24, 2026. The Eighth Air Force, one of two active-duty numbered air forces in Air Force Global Strike Command, met with City of Minot civic leaders to strengthen community partnership while advancing strategic deterrence and global combat power in defense of U.S. interests.



U.S. Air Force Maj. Gen. Ty Neuman (center left), Eighth Air Force and Joint-Global Strike Operations Center commander, exercises with 5th Bomb Wing Airmen at Minot Air Force Base, North Dakota, Feb. 23, 2026. Neuman ensured Warfighters are prepared to meet the demanding requirements of combat by enforcing standards and leading by example.

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**SSGT MADISON KENNON**

SSgt Madison Kennon has been in the Air Force for 9 years and stationed at Minot AFB for almost 9 years. She is attending college to obtain her second bachelor's degree in human resources in hopes to possibly commission one day. SSgt Kennon enjoys spending time with her family, running, reading, and spending time outside when the weather is nice.

*Info from March 2025*

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Breakfast Fellowship 10:00am  
Contemporary Service 11:00am  
(Holy Communion 1st Sunday)  
Children's Church available

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Sunday 1000  
Daily Monday-Friday 1200

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1000 on 1st & 3rd Saturdays

**Hof** (Norse Pagan)  
1700 on 2nd & 4th Wednesdays

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**Sunday, March 22**  
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11:00am Contemporary Service

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852-0315**

**Sunday Schedule**  
Contemporary Worship ..... 9:00am  
Sunday School (All Ages) ..... 10:00am  
Traditional Worship ..... 11:00am

**Wednesday Evening Schedule**  
Community Dinner ..... 5:30-6:30pm  
Contemporary Worship ..... 6:30pm  
Youth Group & Small Groups.. 7:15pm  
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www.faithumcminot.com

**Pastor Rick Craig**  
701-838-1540

Sunday School (All Ages): 9:45 a.m.  
Sunday Coffee Fellowship: 10:30 a.m.  
Worship Services: Sunday 11 a.m.

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www.ibcminot.org  
701-839-3694

**SUNDAY** 9:00am Coffee & Fellowship  
9:15am Sunday School  
10:30am Worship

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6:30pm HS & Adult Start

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Saturday ..... 5:00 p.m.  
Sunday ..... 8:00 & 10:30 a.m.

Fr. David A. Richter, Pastor  
Parish website: www.stjohnminot.com

### First Lutheran Church - ELCA



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852-4853

Sunday Worship  
9:30 am

www.firstlutheran.tv  
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www.flcminot.com

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9:00 am / 10:30 am / Noon

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email: minotcrbc@gmail.com  
Gabe McCormick- Pastor

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Sunday Worship ..... 10:30 a.m.  
Children's Church & Nursery  
Wednesday Family Training Hour  
Meal..... 5:30p.m.  
Classes for All Ages ..... 6:30 p.m.  
Youth Center, Friday..... 7:00 - 11:00 p.m.  
ABC Child Care Center.....852-6352

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9:30 AM

**Sunday Bible Study & Sunday School**  
11:00 AM

**Wednesday Kid Connection**  
6:00-7:00 PM

Reverend Philip Beyersdorf  
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www.fbcminot.org

Classic Worship Service ..... 8:30 a.m.  
Sunday School (All Ages)..... 9:45 a.m.  
Contemporary Worship Service..... 9:50 a.m.  
Adult Sunday School ..... 11:00 a.m.  
Contemporary Worship Service..... 11:05 a.m.  
Children's Church ..... 11:05 am.  
Wed. AWANA (Sept. to May) ..... 6:30 p.m.  
Fridays, Celebrate Recovery ..... 7:00 p.m.

Rev. Kent Hinkel, Senior Pastor  
Elaine Carlson, Children's Ministry Director

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Saturday School ..... 2:00 p.m.  
Sunday Worship ..... 3:30 p.m.  
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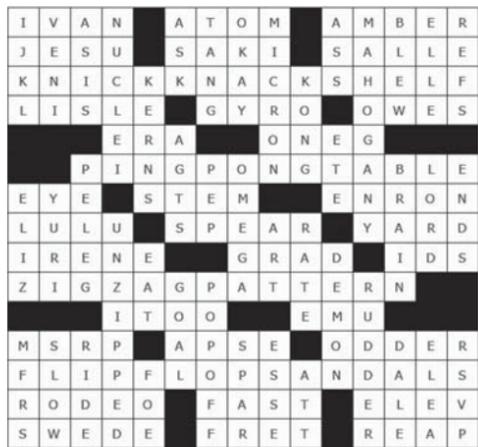
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CROSSWORD SOLUTION



SUDOKU

Solution to puzzle on page C7

	1			2		3	4
		4		5		6	
7			6			2	
		2			8		
3	5					1	9
			7			6	
		5			9		8
	8			4		5	
6	3		2				7

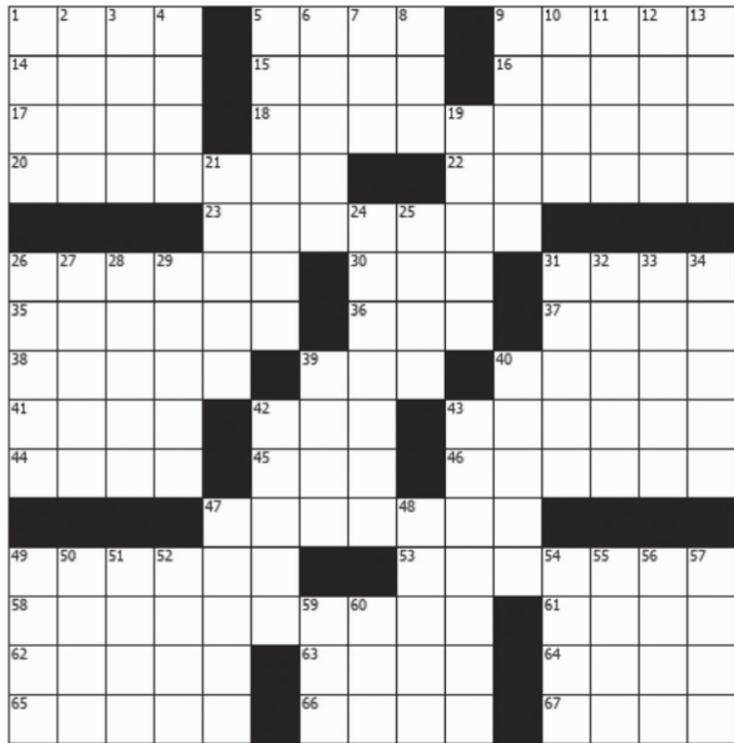
CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Across

- 1. Took a dip
- 5. Metal spike
- 9. Item of value
- 14. Stack
- 15. Military force
- 16. Fur wrap
- 17. \_\_\_-friendly
- 18. Flawless
- 20. Get
- 22. Defeats
- 23. Beef, e.g. (2 wds.)
- 26. Biblical mountain
- 30. Boat paddle
- 31. Top pilots
- 35. Give to charity
- 36. Nest egg letters
- 37. Make coffee
- 38. \_\_\_ Murphy of "Beverly Hills Cop"
- 39. Recipe measure (abbr.)
- 40. Stock unit
- 41. Rind
- 42. Fri. follower
- 43. Nova \_\_\_
- 44. Fling
- 45. Chopping tool
- 46. Vocation
- 47. Hillary Rodham \_\_\_
- 49. Writer \_\_\_ Christie
- 53. Silversmith, e.g.
- 58. Astonishing
- 61. Guy
- 62. Copenhagen natives
- 63. Sly look
- 64. Native minerals
- 65. Sugary
- 66. Not as much
- 67. For fear that

Down

- 1. Prod
- 2. Sage
- 3. Baldwin or Guinness
- 4. Insignificant
- 5. Innocence
- 6. Carrying a weapon
- 7. Brat
- 8. Caustic liquid
- 9. Formal necktie
- 10. Amtrak depots (abbr.)
- 11. Cries loudly
- 12. She, to Pierre
- 13. Ball holders
- 19. Barton or Bow
- 21. Wrathful
- 24. Dampen
- 25. Marshal Wyatt \_\_\_
- 26. Proficient
- 27. Cowboys' contest
- 28. Chile's mountains
- 29. Banisters
- 31. Despise
- 32. Creepy
- 33. Box
- 34. Take an oath
- 39. Cab
- 40. Meager
- 42. Mixed greens
- 43. Point winners
- 47. Trunk
- 48. Yarns
- 49. Assists
- 50. Nibble
- 51. Pimples
- 52. Family chart
- 54. False god
- 55. Free of doubt
- 56. Summer coolers
- 57. Bird's home
- 59. Not healthy
- 60. Hive resident



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# North Dakota Civic Leaders, Legislators Observe Launch of Unarmed Minuteman III Missile at Vandenberg Space Force Base

THE MINOT AREA CHAMBER EDC

Minot, N.D. – Members of Task Force 21, the Minot Area Chamber EDC's (MACEDC) initiative to support the long-term vitality of Minot Air Force Base, led a delegation of North Dakota lawmakers to California to witness a display of the readiness of the U.S. Air Force's nuclear deterrent: the successful test launch of an unarmed Minuteman III intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) equipped with two test reentry vehicles.

A joint team of Air Force Global Strike Command (AFGSC) Airmen launched the ICBM, which was pulled from the missile complex at Minot Air Force Base, at 11:01 p.m. Pacific Time on March 3 from Vandenberg Space Force Base, California. The launch was scheduled years ago and is not in response to world events.

This strategic military engagement with Minot Air Force Base and AFGSC included mission briefs and meetings with military leadership in addition to the test launch. The 18-member delegation led by MACEDC included 14 state lawmakers and four members of Task Force 21, whose purpose is to educate the local community, North Dakota officials, members of Congress, and the public on national security issues – particularly ones that affect Minot Air Force Base, the U.S. Air Force, and nuclear deterrence.

“North Dakota has long understood the responsibility that comes with supporting our nation’s nuclear deterrent. This successful launch underscores the strength, precision, and professionalism of the Airmen who carry out this mission every day,” said Brekka Kramer, President / CEO of the Minot Area Chamber EDC. “Bringing North Dakota leaders together to witness it firsthand ensures we are unified in our understanding of the work happening at Minot Air Force Base and the importance of supporting both the current Minuteman III mission and the transition to Sentinel.”

“As policymakers, it’s important that we fully understand the mission we’re supporting. This engagement provided valuable insight into the coordination, and dedication required to maintain a safe, secure, and effective deterrent,” said Sen. Majority Leader David Hogue. “North Dakota takes great pride in the critical role we play in our nation’s defense, and I remain committed to ensuring we support the Airmen and mission of Minot Air Force Base.”

The launch was the result of months of meticulous preparation



A delegation of civic leaders, including state lawmakers and members of Task Force 21, traveled to Vandenberg Space Force Base to observe the test launch.

involving multiple government partners. Airmen from the 91st Missile Wing at Minot Air Force Base provided direct maintenance support, while operators from across all three missile wings initiated the launch.

During the test, the ICBM’s two reentry vehicles traveled thousands of miles to a pre-determined target at the Kwajalein Atoll in the Marshall Islands. This long-range flight allows engineers and weapons experts to collect

invaluable data on the missile’s accuracy and reliability, verifying that every component of the ICBM weapon system performs as designed.

“It is critical to test all aspects of our ICBM force, including our ability to deliver multiple, independently targeted payloads with absolute precision,” said Gen. S.L. Davis, commander of Air Force Global Strike Command. “This test validates the intricate synchronization of the weapon system, from the initial launch sequence to the flawless deployment of each reentry vehicle.”

As the Minuteman III remains on alert, the Air Force is committed to its replacement, the LGM-35A Sentinel, which represents the modernization of the land-based leg of the U.S. nuclear triad.

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# Glory Trip 255 underscores reliability of the Minuteman III ICBM

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MINOT AIR FORCE BASE, N.D.

Airmen from Minot Air Force Base facilitated a successful test launch of an unarmed Minuteman III Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) on March 3 as part of Glory Trip 255 (GT 255) at Vandenberg Space Force Base, Calif., reaffirming the reliability of the United States' land-based nuclear deterrent.

Glory Trip missions are operational test launches in which missile crews from active-duty bases travel to Vandenberg SFB to simulate real-world conditions and validate the readiness, accuracy and reliability of the Minuteman III system.

GT 255 was scheduled several years in advance to support ongoing modernization efforts including the LGM-35A Sentinel ICBM.

"Test launches are the most visible and vital way we verify our capabilities and validate the performance of our systems," said U.S. Air Force Col. Dustin Harmon, the 377th Test and Evaluation Group (377 TEG) commander. "The men and women of our missile community represent some of the most highly trained professionals in our nation's defense. These tests confirm their unmatched ability to support this critical mission and provide crucial data that ensures our systems remain ready and reliable."

Minot AFB provided a previously fielded Minuteman III ICBM along with missile maintainers and operators from across their various squadrons who mobilized to operationally support this test.

The team of selected Airmen were also accompanied by five vectored civilians who enrolled in the 91 MW's inaugural Bully Trailblazer Course that provided the members a week-long deep dive into missile wing operations and capstoned with GT 255's successful launch, showcasing the full spectrum of the wing's mission set.

"I'm proud of our Rough Rider Airmen whose hard work and professionalism helped make Glory Trip 255 a success," said U.S. Air Force Col. James L. Schlabach, 91MW Commander. "Their efforts demonstrate the dedication it takes to sustain a safe, secure and effective nuclear deterrent. Our Rough Riders work diligently but it's not every day that they get the opportunity to participate in an operational test launch. A Glory Trip lets them see the fruits of their labor; this is the tangible result of their impact."

It takes months of preparation and coordination among multiple government partners and operational units across the missile enterprise to ensure successful launches. For GT 255, Airmen from the 91 MW provided direct maintenance support to ensure the missile was properly configured and prepared for launch. Meanwhile, missile combat crew operators from across all three missile wings executed the launch procedures.

The mission was overseen by the 377 TEG at Vandenberg SFB. Following the launch, the 377 TEG will analyze the data collected and distribute it to a wide range of stakeholders, including the United States Department of War,

the United States Department of Energy and United States Strategic Command.

"It is critical to test all aspects of our ICBM force, including our ability to deliver multiple, independently targeted payloads with absolute precision," said U.S. Air Force Gen. Stephen L. Davis, Commander of Air Force Global Strike Command. "This test validates the intricate synchronization of the weapon system, from the initial launch sequence to the flawless deployment of each reentry vehicle."

For GT 255's launch, the ICBM's two reentry vehicles traveled thousands of miles across the Pacific Ocean before reaching a predetermined target area near Kwajalein Atoll in the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

The long-range flight enabled the 377 TEG to collect invaluable data regarding the missile's accuracy, reliability and overall performance. By analyzing the trajectory, guidance and reentry behavior of the vehicles, each component of the Minuteman III weapon system continues to perform as designed. More than 300 similar tests have been achieved in past decades.

As the Air Force prepares to transition to the Sentinel ICBM, events like GT 255 remain essential to maintaining confidence in the current system while informing the next generation of strategic deterrence. Through rigorous testing and careful analysis, the missile enterprise continues to ensure the nation's land-based nuclear deterrent remains safe, secure and effective.



An unarmed Minuteman III Intercontinental Ballistic Missile launches during an operational test at 11:01 p.m. Pacific Time March 3, 2026, at Vandenberg Space Force Base, Calif. ICBM test launches help ensure the U.S. ICBM fleet is ready, reliable and effective. This launch, designated GT 255, was scheduled years ago, and was not in response to world events. It is a key component of a data-driven program that has been in place for decades, involving over 300 similar tests designed to validate the performance of the weapon system. The data collected from these routine tests is essential for ongoing and future force development.

U.S. SPACE FORCE PHOTO | STAFF SGT. JOSHUA LEROI



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### MONTHLY MEETING (Third Tuesday of Each Month)

**Tuesday, April 21**

**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/join](http://afa.org/join)



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# American Forces in Europe Key to War Against Iran: EUCOM Boss

CHRIS GORDON, AIR & SPACE FORCES MAGAZINE

U.S. personnel and bases in Europe are playing a major role in enabling the war against Iran, Operation Epic Fury, the head of American forces on the continent said March 12.

“Our forces, bases, and infrastructure take advantage of the continent’s strategic geography and allow the United States to rapidly move forces, sustain operations, and provide the president with diverse military options across multiple theaters,” Air Force Gen. Alexis G. Grynkeiwich, the head of U.S. European Command, told the Senate Armed Services Committee. “This mission continues today with support to Operation Epic Fury in Iran.”

One European base in particular, RAF Fairford in the United Kingdom, has been at the heart of bomber operations against Iran.

As of March 13, some 18 bombers are operating from the base in Gloucestershire, England—12 B-1B Lancers and six B-52 Stratofortresses, according to open source flight tracking data, air traffic control communications, and aircraft spotters. The British government has acknowledged that the U.S. is using the base to strike Iranian missile facilities, the main target of the U.S. bomber force.

Dozens of tankers operating from bases in Europe have also helped enable bombing missions from the continental United States.

“Having capability in Europe ultimately provides options for this administration or any administration in the event of a conflict,” said Grynkeiwich, who is also NATO’s top military commander. “One of the missions of U.S. European Command is to serve as a power projection platform. And so it is. Having capabilities in Europe, munitions in Europe allow us to help U.S. Africa Command to target terrorists in Africa or to help U.S. Central Command as they execute Operation Epic Fury. The distances are shorter, it’s less expensive, and it’s much easier to project power with our network of bases and allies.”

Installations haven’t been the only way the U.S. has leveraged Europe for the fight. The Pentagon has also drawn on much of the Air Force’s combat power assigned to Europe for Epic Fury.

Dozens of F-35 Lightning II and F-15E Strike Eagle based at RAF

Lakenheath, U.K., which carry “LN” tail codes, have participated in the air campaign, according to official images released by the U.S. military and U.S. officials. So have the “Wild Weasel” F-16 Fighting Falcons from Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany, whose role is to attack adversary air defenses, distinguished by their “SP” tails.

Those European-based fighters are permanently assigned to U.S. Air Forces in Europe, the air component to EUCOM. In contrast, Air Forces Central, the Air Force component in the Middle East, has no fighters that are permanently based in the region.

U.S. fighters heading to the Middle East have also used bases in Europe as stopovers before continuing eastward in the U.S. buildup to the war.

Iran’s actions have drawn Europe itself into the conflict too. British forces were attacked with apparent Iranian-designed drones in Cyprus when Iran retaliated after America and Israel began the war on Feb. 28. Iranian ballistic missiles were fired at Incirlik Air Base in Turkey, which is also part of European Command and has been a longtime base for U.S. forces. Turkey is also one of the 32 members of NATO. Grynkeiwich said Iran fired those missiles, which were shot down by air defenses.

“Our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, and Guardians have been operating at a high tempo in the Eastern Med and elsewhere defending Alliance territory and defending our forces and projecting power into U.S. Central Command,” Grynkeiwich said.

Conflict in Europe is also linked to tensions in the region, too. Iran has retaliated against countries across the Middle East and bases that host U.S. forces with the same type of one-way attack drones that it has supplied to Russia. Russia has reportedly provided targeting data to Iran, which Grynkeiwich declined to confirm. Six Soldiers were killed in an Iranian drone attack against U.S. forces in Kuwait, one Soldier was killed in an attack at Prince Sultan Air Base, Saudi Arabia, and six Airmen were killed March 12 when a KC-135 Stratotanker crashed in western Iraq.

“Our competitors around the globe will work with each other when they share interests,” Grynkeiwich said. “And we’ve certainly seen that with the North Koreans and the Iranians and the Russians.”



**3&4 MAR** **EXPLORE THE SKY: DRONE SHOW**  
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For more information and tickets:  
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**11 MAR** **ST. PATRICK'S DAY SUCCULENTS AND SIPS**  
6:00PM-8:00PM  
Minot Parks Horticulture Department,  
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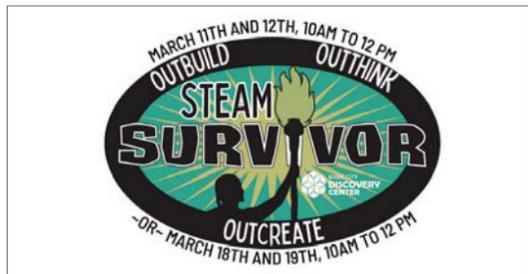
We had such a blast at our last Succulents & Sips event that we're doing it again for St. Patrick's Day! Cost: \$25. This event is 21+. This session will be a little different. We'll be planting one festive favorite, a lucky shamrock plant! If you joined us last time, don't worry, we'll be planting something new! Bring your favorite drink (BYOB), enjoy some tasty snacks, and get ready for a night full of fun, laughs, and greenery. Spots are limited, so grab yours and let's celebrate with some green vibes and good times!



For more information:  
Facebook / Minot Parks/ events

**11-12 MAR** **STEAM SURVIVOR CAMP**  
10:00AM-12:00PM  
Magic City Discovery Center,  
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**10 APR** **THE BIG ONE - MINOT SPRING SHOW**  
10:00AM-12:00PM  
ND State Fair Center  
2005 Burdick Expressway East

The 35th Annual Minot Spring Show includes over 250 booths showcasing products handmade from across the US. Over 175 exhibitors will fill their booths with arts, crafts, and baked goods that all have a touch of being handmade. Admission: \$5.00. Friday, April 10th, 2026 - 10am - 8pm Saturday, April 11th, 2026 - 9am - 5pm



For more information:  
<https://thebigone.biz/minot-spring-show/>

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Grand Prize Winner- Staci Haynes and her family accepted the prize of Family Pass to Bottineau Winter Park from Northern Sentry Owner, Ted Bolton.



Jesi Smith accepting prize from Northern Sentry Owner, Ted Bolton. The photo of her son in out on the snowy mountains has secured the place on the next Winter Guide cover!

## WINTERY PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS REVEALED

The Northern Sentry Wintery Photo Contest sponsored by Rainbow Photo Labs & Bottineau Winter Park.



Macy Humiston took the prize for "Staff Favorite" with her photo with her two kiddos on a snow tube. She also had a photo of a homemade igloo that made it to the front page of the Northern Sentry!

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YOUTH IN ACTION

# Making Music in Creative Ways at North Plains Elementary School

DR. AMANDA CAPOTE, PHD

This school year, the music room at North Plains has been full of creativity, energy, and some very unexpected instruments. Students have been exploring rhythm, beat, and musical expression through hands-on activities that turn everyday objects into exciting musical tools.

One of the most popular rhythm activities involved something students already love—fidget spinners. By spinning them on different surfaces and using them to keep a steady beat, students practiced timing and rhythm while discovering how movement and sound can work together in music.

Students also dove into the exciting world of bucket drumming. Using buckets as drums, classes learned how to keep a steady beat, follow rhythm patterns, and perform together as an ensemble. The classroom quickly transformed into a percussion stage filled with coordinated rhythms and enthusiastic performers.

Second graders added a delicious twist to learning rhythm with a Rhythm Restaurant. Students created their own menus filled with “food rhythms,” using foods like pizza, taco, and spaghetti to represent different rhythmic patterns. Classmates then “ordered” items from the menu and performed the rhythms, turning music class into a fun and interactive music cafe.

Students also explored melody by playing xylophones, recorders, bells and boomwhackers, colorful tubes that create musical notes when struck. These instruments helped students learn about pitch, patterns, and how different notes work together to make music.

Creativity did not stop there! Students had the chance to build their own instruments, experimenting with materials to discover how sound is created. They also learned traditional and folk-inspired rhythm techniques like playing spoons and cup rhythms, which challenged their coordination and timing.

To keep the fun going, students are currently participating in Music Madness, a lively board-style game where Disney Heroes battle Disney Villains for the ultimate championship!

Throughout the year, the focus in music class has been simple: learning by doing. Whether students are drumming on buckets, spinning rhythms, or performing with colorful instruments, they are building important musical skills while having fun and working together. With more music-making still ahead this year, North Plains’ music room will continue to be a place where creativity, rhythm, and learning come together in exciting ways!



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## A LOOK BACK THIS WEEK IN USAF HISTORY

### OPERATION TOMAHAWK

The Last Airborne Operation of the Korean War  
MARCH 23, 1951



Paratroopers of the 187th Airborne Regimental Combat Team (RCT), the 2d and 4th Ranger Companies, and the Indian Army Parachute Field Ambulance unit jump into combat at Munsan-Ni, Korea, 23 March 1951.

Seventy-four years ago, on 23 March 1951, The Eighth Army conducted a bold parachute assault to attempt to block enemy forces trying to escape north along highway 1 out of Seoul. Part of a larger Operation COURAGEOUS, the airborne element of Operation TOMAHAWK would drop the 187th Regimental Combat Team (RCT) into a blocking position near the Imjin River.

Meanwhile, an armored Task Force Growdon would conduct a passage of lines and attack north along highway 1 to destroy enemy forces in zone and link up with the 187th. The Task Force was formed around the 6th Medium Tank Battalion of the 24th Infantry Division, with the 58th Armored field Artillery Battalion from the 3d ID added for firepower and two British Churchill bridge-laying tanks included for mobility. The plan was to trap the escaping enemy between the two forces and south of the Imjin River, and destroy them. At 0700 on 23 March, TF Growdon exited friendly lines and attacked north on Hwy 1 (see map). Two hours later, at 0900, the Rakkasans and Rangers dropped into the DZ south of Munsan-Ni and established a blocking position. TF Growdon fought north, clearing several hastily emplaced minefields along the route. Soon afterward, the war became one of fixed, fortified positions backed by massed artillery fires. Lines solidified, and maneuver focused generally on the seizure of key terrain to gain observation and field of fire advantages. Operation TOMAHAWK became the last large-scale Airborne operation of the war.

Information courtesy of: [www.usarpac.army.mil](http://www.usarpac.army.mil)

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# Two Minot Public Schools' School Board Openings

Are you a citizen of the United States, eighteen years or older, a resident of North Dakota, and a resident who has resided in the precinct/district at least thirty days immediately preceding the election (election date: June 9th, 2026)? If so, there are two (2) four-year term seats up for election on the School Board of Minot Public School District #1. The term will expire on June 30th, 2030.

This is an exciting opportunity to take part in helping shape district policies and plans! You can attend school visits and participate in meetings. You can deliberate, add your opinion, and be a part of a group of individuals striving to ensure all local students succeed, which includes our military-connected students residing in this district.

Here are three questions and answers you may have: 1. Can I have a full-time job while on the School Board? A: Yes. 2. Do I need to be employed to be on the School Board? A: No. 3. Do I get paid

to be on the Minot Public School Board? A: Yes. Depending on your situation, this could be the perfect opportunity to positively contribute to Minot Public School District #1.

To apply, you must submit the following forms: Statement of Intent, North Dakota Secretary of State's Statement of Interests (SFN 10172), and Campaign Disclosure Statement (SFN 53970) to the Minot Public Schools' Business Manager, Ms. Laura Dokken, by Monday, April 6th, 2026 at 4:00pm. Although this is a school holiday for Minot Public Schools, the District Office will be open to accept all forms. You can also mail in the forms, but they must be received by April 6th at 4:00pm. Ms. Dokken's office is located at 215 2nd St. SE in Minot, ND 58701. If you have any questions, she can be reached at 701-857-4428 or laura.dokken@minot.k12.nd.us. If you need the forms, feel free to contact Ms. Dokken or myself at mafb.school.liaison@us.af.mil.

Then, from April 11th to April 16th, 2026 at Minot City Hall,

the Minot Area Chamber EDC (MACEDC) will hold candidate forums. There is more information to come on this, as the specific date for the Minot Public School Board candidate forum has not yet been determined or announced. Also, participation in the forums is not required to run for office. MACEDC staff will contact school board candidates in early April to invite their participation once the official list of candidates is finalized.

For more information on the School Board of Minot Public School District #1, please visit: <https://www.minot.k12.nd.us/en-US/school-board-42a69347/mps-school-board-100751c0>.

*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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# MSO presents "Ode to Joy"

A Landmark 100th Season Celebration featuring Minot State University alum

The Minot Symphony Orchestra continues its 100th season celebration with Ode to Joy on Saturday, March 21 at 7 pm. The evening promises an unforgettable musical experience, culminating in Beethoven's monumental Symphony No. 9 featuring over 200 area choir members. A pre-concert talk begins at 6pm offering audience members insight into the evening's repertoire.

The concert will feature a powerful collaboration with area choirs, including the Minot Chamber Chorale, and choirs from Minot State University, Minot High School, and Minot North High School, bringing together voices from across the community for this extraordinary performance.

The program opens with the MSU Honors Competition winner, Brook Jenks, performing the Gordon Jacobs Trombone Concerto, showcasing the exceptional talent emerging from Minot State University.

"Preparing for the competition and this performance pushed me to grow on my instrument faster than I might have otherwise. When I began music school, I played almost exclusively bass trombone, so transitioning to tenor trombone was a significant challenge. Winning the competition has helped give me confidence that I can successfully 'hold my own' on the tenor trombone," stated Jenks.

A special highlight of the evening will be the world premiere of the new Minot anthem: Open Prairies, Open Arms, Open Hearts, composed by Emerson Eads. The lyrics are based on the poem "Why Not?" by "The Fab Five": Kaylee Capp ('20), Megan Klebe ('23), Hannah Pederson ('23), Arnikka Schreier ('22), and Rachel Voth

('23). The poem was chosen as the anthem through a public contest held last year. Featured soloists for the premiere include Megan Klebe ('23), Gabrielle Razafinjatovo ('17), Royce Brown, and Chad Armstrong ('98). (Years in parentheses indicate graduation year from MSU.)

The concert concludes with Ludwig van Beethoven's Symphony No. 9, featuring returning soloist Bethany Jelinek, soprano, and MSU alum Gabrielle Razafinjatovo ('17), mezzo-soprano; Nathan Bowles ('19), tenor; and Chad Armstrong ('98), baritone. Beethoven's triumphant "Ode to Joy" stands as one of the most powerful and enduring works in the orchestral repertoire, a fitting capstone to this milestone season.

Musicology, the study of music, will begin 1 hour before the concert starts. Concertgoers are encouraged to attend this 30-minute engaging overview of the works being performed, the story behind the music, the composer, and historical context. The talk is free with your concert ticket.

Tickets are available at [www.minotsymphony.com](http://www.minotsymphony.com) or through the box office at 701-858-4228. Advanced tickets are encouraged.

The Minot Symphony Orchestra is a unique blend of student, community, and professional musicians from the Minot area. The symphony is directed by Maestro Efraín Amaya, Associate Professor of Performing Arts at Minot State University.

This project is supported in part by a grant from the North Dakota Council on the Arts, which receives funding from the state legislature and the National Endowment for the Arts.

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## THERE'S ALWAYS TOMORROW

Kim Fundingsland



When does Spring arrive? Seems like the answer is always tomorrow, but then I've grown accustomed to disappointment over my many years in North Dakota.

I enjoy the changing of the seasons, others do too, but my patience is quite limited when it comes to Spring. It's a struggle for me when Spring refuses to arrive when I want it to arrive. Yes, it's a yearly occurrence. Darn it.

This year, according to the calendar, March 20 is the first day of Spring. Bluebirds, blossoms, and sunshine? I wish it worked that way, but I have learned that Spring is more often the season that always starts tomorrow. Seems that way anyway. March 20 is the first day of astronomical Spring, the beginning of the Vernal Equinox when the sun is directly overhead. However, in North Dakota, the sun is as likely to be blotted out by snowfall as it is to shine brightly. No getting around it, that's the way it is in the far north.

The National Weather Service adds a bit of confusion to the season too. Their "meteorological" spring began March 1. To the NWS Spring is March, April, and May – easier for

record keeping.

Summer begins June 20, the longest day of sunshine of the year in the Northern Hemisphere. That's us. But the NWS says meteorological summer starts June 1, again for record keeping purposes.

A few weeks ago, we experienced spring, summer, and winter on consecutive days. Mid-30's one day, low 50's the next, and then a dump of snow. How North Dakota was that? It's why I've learned that Spring always starts tomorrow. At least with that way of thinking, I don't get overly disappointed when I put away the lawn mower and start the snowblower.

Spring arrives, maybe, when the leaves begin to return to the trees and grass starts to turn from brown to green. Geese have been migrating for weeks. Ducks and shorebirds won't be far behind. I hope.

We've just come through one of the warmest, most agreeable, pleasant winters in our history. Now, as always, I want an early Spring. Always optimistic, I'll know it when I see it.

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### AFGSC SURGEON GENERAL VISITS MINOT AFB

U.S. Air Force Col. Gregory Coleman (right), Air Force Global Strike Command surgeon general, observes medical training during a base visit at Minot Air Force Base, North Dakota, Feb. 25, 2026. As surgeon general, Coleman directs the strategy, policy, training, manpower, and resources for medical treatment facilities across Air Force Global Strike Command.



U.S. Air Force Col. Gregory Coleman (right), Air Force Global Strike Command surgeon general, observes medical training during a base visit at Minot Air Force Base, North Dakota, Feb. 25, 2026. As surgeon general, Coleman directs the strategy, policy, training, manpower, and resources for medical treatment facilities across Air Force Global Strike Command.



U.S. Air Force Col. Gregory Coleman, Air Force Global Strike Command surgeon general, speaks to Airmen assigned to the 5th Medical Group (5MDG) during a base visit at Minot Air Force Base, North Dakota, Feb. 25, 2026. During the visit, Coleman recognized several Airmen from the 5MDG for superior performance.

U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTOS | SENIOR AIRMAN KYLE WILSON



U.S. Air Force Col. Gregory Coleman (center right), Air Force Global Strike Command surgeon general, speaks to base leadership during a visit at Minot Air Force Base, North Dakota, Feb. 25, 2026. Coleman visited the base to gain a deeper understanding of the operational capabilities of Minot AFB's 5th Medical Group.

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**MINOT AFB**

**EMBRY-RIDDLE AERONAUTICAL UNIVERSITY** - Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University is the world's pre-eminent university for aviation and aerospace education. However, our dynamic, hands-on programs will prepare you for careers well beyond the limits of the sky. Our Worldwide Campus has been working with U.S. military service members since 1970, helping them to earn a degree while on active duty or as veterans. And we do it at more than 90 military installations around the globe. The Embry-Riddle Minot Campus - located at Minot Air Force Base - offers associate, bachelor's, and master's degrees, as well as undergraduate and graduate certifications, that will help you whether you are an active-duty military service member, a veteran, or a civilian working at or around Minot Air Force Base, Embry-Riddle Worldwide is here to help you earn your college degree. A degree from Embry-Riddle Worldwide will help service members to become commissioned officers, will make veterans more desirable job candidates as they enter the civilian workforce, and will assist civilians with job advancement or career changes. Our modes of instruction are: Online, Eaglevision Home and Eaglevision Classroom. For more information, please visit us in Room 223 located in the Base Education Center Building (2nd floor), email: minot@erau.edu or call office phone: 701-727-9007.

**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

**PARK UNIVERSITY MINOT** - Your degree, Your way. Park University is enrolling now. Earn your CCAF credits, AU-ABC, and your Bachelor's degree with PARK. Let's maximize your military experience! Find how many credits you can get from your military experience by going to military.park.edu. and confirmed your credits Or Ask Alexa! Enable the Park University skill on your Alexa device and say "Alexa, ask Park, How many credit hours can I get from my military experience?" She'll even tell you your graduation date! Minot AFB @ the Education Center RM 222 | 844-884-8612 | mino@park.edu PARK. YOU

**HELP WANTED**

**IMMEDIATE FULL AND PART TIME OPENINGS** for daytime and evening custodial positions cleaning buildings at the Minot Air Force Base. Pay is \$14.49/hour plus health & welfare benefit. Hours Days 8a or 9a-finish typically Monday through Friday, may include weekend work. Nights 5p-finish. Apply in person at: 605 27th St SE, Minot ND 58701 or contact: Alicia Mello by email or phone at amello@kalixnd.org 701-852-1014.

**MATURE, RELIABLE, AND A TRUSTWORTHY INDIVIDUAL.** Part-Time Retail sales 25-35 hrs/week occasional Sat. closed Sun. Apply in person at Aeroport Hobby Shoppe, 2112 N. Broadway.

**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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 Or contact: Alicia Mello  
 By email or phone at  
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**TITUS & PHILEMON** Everyday adventures of Titus and Philemon and their owner Joe.

Hey, boys, I bought a cookie bouquet from the downtown bakery!

Look at that! It's a bouquet of cookie flowers!

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.

**TIMMOTHY TIMM**

**SUDOKU SOLUTION**

**PUZZLE ON PAGE B5**

5	1	6	8	7	2	9	3	4
8	2	4	9	5	3	1	6	7
7	9	3	6	1	4	2	8	5
1	6	2	5	9	8	7	4	3
3	5	7	4	2	6	8	1	9
9	4	8	7	3	1	6	5	2
4	7	5	1	6	9	3	2	8
2	8	1	3	4	7	5	9	6
6	3	9	2	8	5	4	7	1

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# The Minot Park District Opens Registration for Summer Youth Recreation Programs

MINOT PARKS

Registration is now open for the Minot Park District's summer youth recreation programs, offering a variety of opportunities for kids to stay active, learn new skills, and enjoy a fun and engaging summer. Programs available this season include Youth T-Ball, Baseball, Softball, Fastpitch, Tennis, Fitness Gym, and Art Classes, giving youth a chance to explore sports, creativity, and physical activity throughout the summer months. The Youth Fastpitch season will begin the week of June 1, with all other youth recreation programs beginning the week of June 8.

"Parks and recreation play an important role in improving the quality of life in our community," said Ashley Gathman, Director of Marketing and Development for the Minot Park District. "Programs like these give youth the opportunity to stay active, build friendships, and enjoy meaningful experiences that

help strengthen our community."

The Minot Park District will also offer Spring Track and Summer Olympics again this summer, with Spring Track beginning in May and Summer Olympics beginning in June. These programs are free and do not require pre-registration.

The Minot Park District also remains committed to making recreation accessible to local families by offering no-questions-asked youth scholarships to help ensure every child has the opportunity to participate in programs. Scholarships are available at the Minot Park District office, located at 420 3rd Ave SW.

For more information or to register, visit [www.minotparks.com](http://www.minotparks.com) or download the free Minot Parks app.

For media inquiries, please call the Minot Park District office at (701)857-4136 or email [ashley@minotparks.com](mailto:ashley@minotparks.com)



**HELLO BABY**

<p><b>BABY GIRL BORN</b> MARCH 2, 2026 TO: ERIN PELTIER DUNSEITH, ND</p>	<p><b>BABY GIRL BORN</b> MARCH 5, 2026 TO: LINDSAY AND JACOB AHMANN MINOT, ND</p>
<p><b>BABY BOY BORN</b> MARCH 4, 2026 TO: ABBY MOSSER AND SEAN MORRIS MINOT, ND</p>	<p><b>BABY BOY BORN</b> MARCH 6, 2026 TO: MAYERLING TREMINIO DE OSEGUEDA AND JADER OSEGUEDA PAYAN TOWNER, ND</p>

*If you wish to put a photo of your baby in the Northern SENTRY, please send it to [nsads@srt.com](mailto:nsads@srt.com). Please include your name and the birth date of your baby.*



**Bottineau Winter Park**  
**OPEN**  
Friday 12 noon to 9pm  
Saturday 10am to 5pm  
Sunday 10am to 5pm

**We have lots of snow!**

1 Winter Park Road, Bottineau, ND  
[skibwp.com](http://skibwp.com)



**WOODLAND RESORT**  
**OUTDOOR**  
**REPORT**



by Patricia Stockdill

**FISHING:**

Lake Sakakawea elevation, March 16: 1,827.3 feet above mean sea level (MSL); 16,100 cubic feet per second (CFS) Garrison Dam average daily releases.

Devils Lake elevation: 1,449.04 feet above mean sea level (MSL). Stump Lake elevation: 1,448.96 MSL.

- N.D. Game & Fish Dept. game wardens: Use caution when venturing on lakes with changing weather conditions. Lake Metigoshe producing an occasional bluegill. No reports from Lake Darling, Lake Sakakawea, Lake Audubon, or Devils Lake.
- Devils Lake, Woodland Resort, Devils Lake: Work shallow in 6 to 12 feet for walleye with better success in the morning. Try west end of 6-Mile Bay.
- Lake Darling, Karma C-Store, Ruthville: Look for a little activity on Lake Audubon. No reports from Lake Darling.
- Lake Metigoshe, Four Seasons, Bottineau: Continued bluegill activity. Not many walleye anglers but success is more inconsistent with ongoing inconsistent weather patterns. Best activity remains in the evening, though.

- Lake Sakakawea/Lake Audubon, Cenex Bait & Tackle, Garrison: Not much activity on the east end of Lake Sakakawea but look for pike movement in the back bays. Use caution around slumping shorelines. No Lake Audubon reports.
- Lake Sakakawea/Lake Audubon, Hwy. 83 Lawn & Leisure, Garrison: Fair pike bite on the east end of Lake Sakakawea around Centennial, Steinke, and Douglas bays although shorelines are getting mushy. No recent reports from Lake Audubon.

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](http://www.woodlandresort.com)), Facebook at ([facebook.com/woodlandresortDL](https://facebook.com/woodlandresortDL)), telephone (701) 662-5996, extension 1, or email ([woodlandresort@gondtc.com](mailto:woodlandresort@gondtc.com)). They're located at 1012 Woodland Drive, Devils Lake, N.D. 58301.



- Ice is never completely safe and honeycombing ice is extremely dangerous. Beware of slumping shorelines on reservoirs, as well.
- March 21: Lonetree Rocky Mtn. Elk Foundation banquet, Harvey Eagles Club, 5 p.m.
- March 21: Watford City Ducks Unlimited banquet, Youth & Ag Expo Center, Watford City, 5 p.m.
- March 21: Bird Dog First Aid Course, \$100 class fee with free canine first aid kit sponsored by Sakakawea Pheasants Forever chapter, Totten Trail (north end of Lake Audubon along U.S. Hwy. 83). Registration and more information available on the website, ([events.pheasantsforever.org](http://events.pheasantsforever.org)), selecting North Dakota for listings.
- March 25: Moose, elk, & bighorn sheep applications (residents only) due. Go to the N.D. Game & Fish Dept. website, ([gf.nd.gov](http://gf.nd.gov)), for details and applications.
- March 27: "Wish"kers & FurBall Souris Valley Animal Shelter fundraising gala, RSVP at ([secure.qgiv.com/events/svasgala](http://secure.qgiv.com/events/svasgala)), Sleep Inn Suites & Convention Center, Minot, 5:30 p.m.
- March 27 - 29: Minot Curling Club Shirtsleeve Bonspiel.
- March 27 - 29: Gun Show sponsored by the Minot Rifle & Pistol Club, free admission, N.D. State Fair All Seasons Arena, Minot.
- April 1: New 2026 fishing, hunting, and trapping licenses required.

- Lake Sakakawea, New Town: Not much activity with inconsistent weather. Use caution along slumping shorelines and water on top of the ice in areas.
- Lake Sakakawea/Missouri River, Scott's Bait & Tackle, Pick City: Missouri River tailrace remains generally quiet.
- Lake Sakakawea/northwest N.D. lakes, Scenic Sports, Williston: Try White Earth Bay area on the upper end of Lake Sakakawea around the east flat or beginning of the bay in 12 to 18 feet for walleye. Some pike coming on frozen smelt or herring around Hofflund Islands. Continued crappie activity from Trenton lake. Use caution with changing ice conditions as spring approaches.
- North-central/central N.D. lakes, Towner Hdwe. Hank, Towner: No new reports.

**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.



**WOODLAND RESORT**  
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# What's Going On Minot AFB

## FRIDAY 20

- Junior Enlisted Foundations Course 300, 0730-1600, Professional Development Center
- Quarterly Food Service Advisory Board, 1300-1400, Dakota Inn Dining Facility
- Airmen's Night Out, 1600, Outdoor Recreation
- Friday Flicks, 1630-2200, Rockers Bar & Grill
- Progressive Bingo – Winter Series, 1730, Rockers Bar & Grill
- Library Mini-Golf, 1800-1900, Base Library
- Winter Karaoke Nights, 2000, Rockers Bar & Grill

## TUESDAY 24

- AFFT, 0530, McAdoo Fitness Center
- Yellow Belt Process Improvement Foundation Training, 0800-1500, Atomic Spark Innovation Lab
- FTEC, 0730-1600, Professional Development Center
- TAP VA Services 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
- Strength & Mobility, 1100, McAdoo Fitness Center

## FRIDAY 27

- FTEC, 0730-1600, Professional Development Center
- TAP DoL Employment Track Workshop, 0800-1600, M&FRC
- All-Star Membership Day, 1600-1730, Youth Center
- Community Game Night, 1600, Northern Paradise AMC inside Bomber Bistro
- Friday Flicks, 1630-2200, Rockers Bar & Grill

## SATURDAY 21

- Chess Club, 1200-1400, Minot AFB Library
- BookTok Trivia, 1700, Rockers Bar & Grill

## WEDNESDAY 25

- AFFT, 0530, McAdoo Fitness Center
- Base Right Start, 0730-1230, Jimmy Doolittle Center, hosted by M&FRC
- FTEC, 0730-1600, Professional Development Center
- TAP Employment Fundamentals of Career Transition, 0800-1600, M&FRC
- Storytime, 1030, Base Library
- AFFT, 1100, McAdoo Fitness Center

## SATURDAY 28

- Bismarck Foodie Tour, Information, Tickets & Travel inside Outdoor Recreation

## SUNDAY 22

- Sunday Escapes Book Club, 1330, Base Library

## THURSDAY 26

- AFFT, 0530, McAdoo Fitness Center
- FTEC, 0730-1600, Professional Development Center
- TAP DoL Employment Track Workshop, 0800-1600, M&FRC
- Exotic Eats: Australia - Special Lunch, 1030-1330, Dakota Inn Dining Facility
- AFFT, 1100, McAdoo Fitness Center
- Iron Endurance Circuit Training, 1100, McAdoo Fitness Center
- Tuition Assistance (TA) Brief, 1330, Education Center
- Exotic Eats: Australia - Special Dinner, 1630-1830, Dakota Inn Dining Facility

## SPECIALS

Rockers Bar & Grill Featured Item  
**Fish and Chips Basket**

Bomber Bistro Featured Item  
**Reuben Sandwich**

The B-Fifty Brew Featured Item  
**Parfait**

Scan for full event details



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20 FEB • 20 MAR 2026  
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**BOOKTOK TRIVIA**  
ROCKERS BAR & GRILL  
21 MAR 2026 • 1700

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TEAMS OF 4 MEMBERS MAX

MUST BE 18+ TO PLAY 727-ROCK

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**BISMARCK FOODIE TOUR**  
28 March 2026 • \$50  
Open to E1 - E4 Airmen

**NOW \$15**

Experience a gourmet foodie tour of local restaurants, cultural attractions, and historic sites in Bismarck, North Dakota!

Meet at Outdoor Recreation by 10:30AM. Transportation by Outdoor Recreation bus is required.

Registration: 2 - 23 March 2026  
Spots are limited!  
Sign up in person at ITT inside ODR or call 723-3648

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