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## **Coal Country Deliver by Monday**

Monday, Jan. 6, 2020 Vol. 51, No. 44

Published weekly by the Beulah Beacon & Hazen Star 324 2nd Ave. N.E., Beulah, N.D. 58523 • 873-4381 Box 508, Hazen, N.D. 58545 • 748-2255





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## May the fish rise to meet you

By Nick Simonson

There's an old Irish proverb that wishes good luck to the traveler by stating "may the road rise to meet you.' For anglers, especially those on the ice, it should be more like "may the fish rise to meet you.

Presentation is one of the key factors for consistently catching fish and the nature of angling through the ice doesn't leave a whole lot of horizontal options. For that reason, knowing why fish take to a vertical presentation, how to draw them up to a lure and what to do to seal the deal when they do rise to meet a jig or a spoon are vital for success.

Most active fish in the winter will rise to take a lure that is worked in the water column above them, whether it's just a few inches or up to several feet. Even neutral fish will come off the bottom or out of the depths to inspect a jig or a spoon worked up higher in the water column. The reason for this is simple armchair biology. The eyes of most fish species are mounted to provide an upward viewing angle.

They see everything to each side, out in front of them some distance and up toward the surface of the water. Therefore, they are more likely to see an item of prey that is above them than below them, where their viewing angle is limited.

When fish are marked on or come in close to the bottom, a presentation of 12 to 24 inches above them is



ideal in gauging their aggressiveness or at least in determining their interest. If an aggressive fish doesn't speed up to the bait, lower it slightly with a few jiggles and hops. Particularly with perch and bluegills, when watching a sonar screen, the highest-sitting fish in the column may not be the first fish to the bait. Oftentimes, a smaller specimen will race past that top fish to seize the opportunity. On a hot bite, that first fish might trigger a rush of strikes, drawing fish of all sizes (including the big one that didn't seem all that interested at first) up to the bait, and the fishing is good in that spot for some time thereafter. This scenario plays out across species, from bluegills, perch and

crappies on up to walleyes. Frequently, however,

anglers are forced to finesse those fish into biting. For this situation, an elevated presentation also helps draw their attention. Then it's up to the angler to convince them to bite. When fishing panfish, a sensitive graphite rod with a spring bobber helps manage a finesse presentation and often only a slight jiggle and pause above the fish will start them moving in for a closer look. Remember when fishing panfish, that they have relatively big eyes and small mouths and dine on the tiniest pieces of food. For this reason, be subtle with a presentation when a slowrising fish (neutral or just slightly active) moves in to inspect. The closer a panfish gets, the more subtle the jiggles and hops and the longer the pauses should

be. Sometimes, as a blip closes in on the Vexilar, all it takes is the tap of a finger against the rod handle, or just a slight squeeze on the grip to impart the necessary movement to trigger a bite. In these instances, watch the spring bobber and line carefully as the bite from a neutral fish will be very subtle, telegraphed as just the slightest twitch.

When fishing active predators, like walleye and pike, the opposite may very well be the case. The fish may approach cautiously but be triggered into biting by a wild jigging motion which pulls the bait up and away from them, inducing a reaction strike. Experiment with both methods, or find something in the middle that sets big fish off. There's one common instance where a

bait lower than the fish can trigger a bite. When over a school of fish that have cooled off and are not biting, and none will rise to meet an offering, try letting the lure freefall through the group and hit bottom before raising it above them again. This rapid descent and lifting of a lure may trigger the curiosity of some of those fish from the bottom of the school to ascend and take to a jig or a spoon. The disturbance caused by the lure may also free debris from the bottom, attracting fish and restarting a slowed bite.

After a few outings, one is better able to pattern the targeted species on a water and how they react to a raised lure. This season on the ice, start above any quarry and then work down to them or make them come to the offering with a series of jiggles, hops, taps and pauses. Adjusting a presentation based on how fish view their prey will help elevate success this season and the fish will rise to meet







#### **AILBOX**

Deanne Gierke, Beulah

Happy New Year to Mercer County. Thank the Beulah Beacon for the excellent articles being brought to us by Amy Nash. I know that she is going above and beyond to present us with the best news and community commentary she can. I want to address the letter to the editor from the paper dated December 31st, written by Mr. Neuberger. Because of short deadlines and personalities, his message was probably published without the proper scrutiny it deserved. Mr. Neuberger has stated facts mingled with false information to make the daily reader assume his truths. Shame on him for again trying to mislead the reader. Whether you are in favor of improvements to the school through school bonding referendum or not -- you should be allowed to make informed decisions.

First - the project has a hard ceiling for cost at 10 million dollars.

Second - the  $2.4\ million$ in building fund bonds to be covered by the current income flowing into the building fund were approved by the board in 2018. If Mr. Neuberger had

been in attendance at the November 4th meeting, he would have heard an explanation of that situation.

Third- I think that every adult fully understands that there are costs when financing a project. If anyone has taken the time to review the amortization schedule for a home purchase, they will fully see that the total cost of the home is much higher because of the interest. That doesn't mean that the approved project building costs are grossly over 10 million. The good news is that the interest rates that are available now are the lowest we have seen, saving us money if approved!

Fourth- there is no possible way to illustrate the entire cost of the project with interest costs until approved and bonds are issued. That is like knowing the interest you are going to get before you submit an offer for the house. It may change!

Fifth - the issue is to approved the 6.9 million in general obligation bonds. This amount is in alignment with the survey results that all members of the community could voice their opinions. The opin-

ion of those who responded, stated they would approve 6.9 to fix the 1963 building, make it more secure, don't do anything with the kitchen or agriculture department. This value is precisely what the members of the population stated they wanted!

The community asked for these things and that is what the school board is trying to deliver. The district also asked for saved money to be used-- they did that. The community asked for something to be done but with a much smaller budget-- they did that too! The school board has done everything that the school district has asked of them.

The truth of the question is simple - can you personally afford the tax impact to ensure that we are providing a more secure, safe, and healthy place for our students? Nothing has been hidden or sneaky when the school board has tried to find solutions to the issue at hand.

Thank you to Amy Nash for all her hard work. Thank you to the school board, administration, and staff for all they do to keep our community running!

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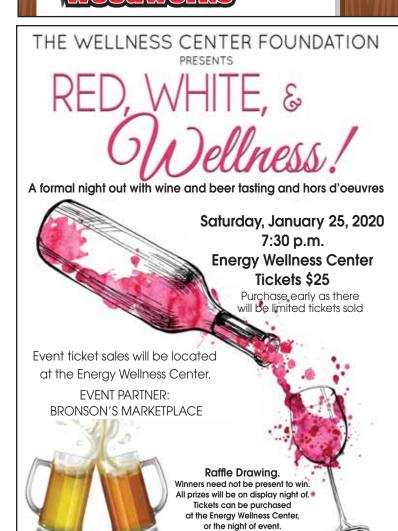
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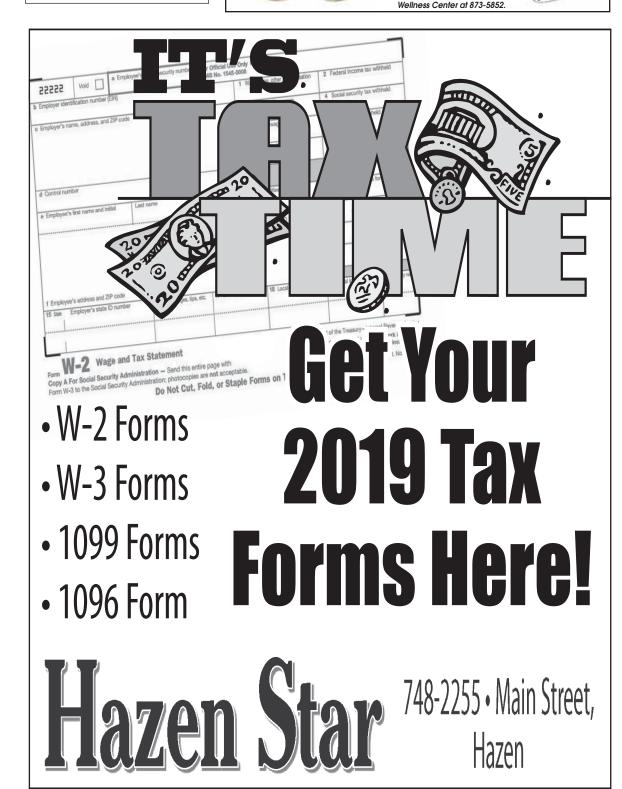
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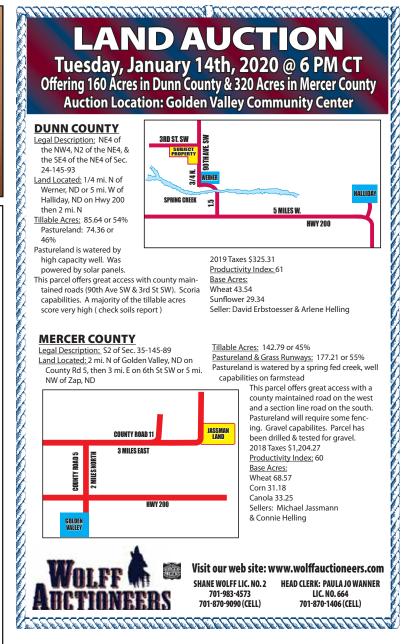
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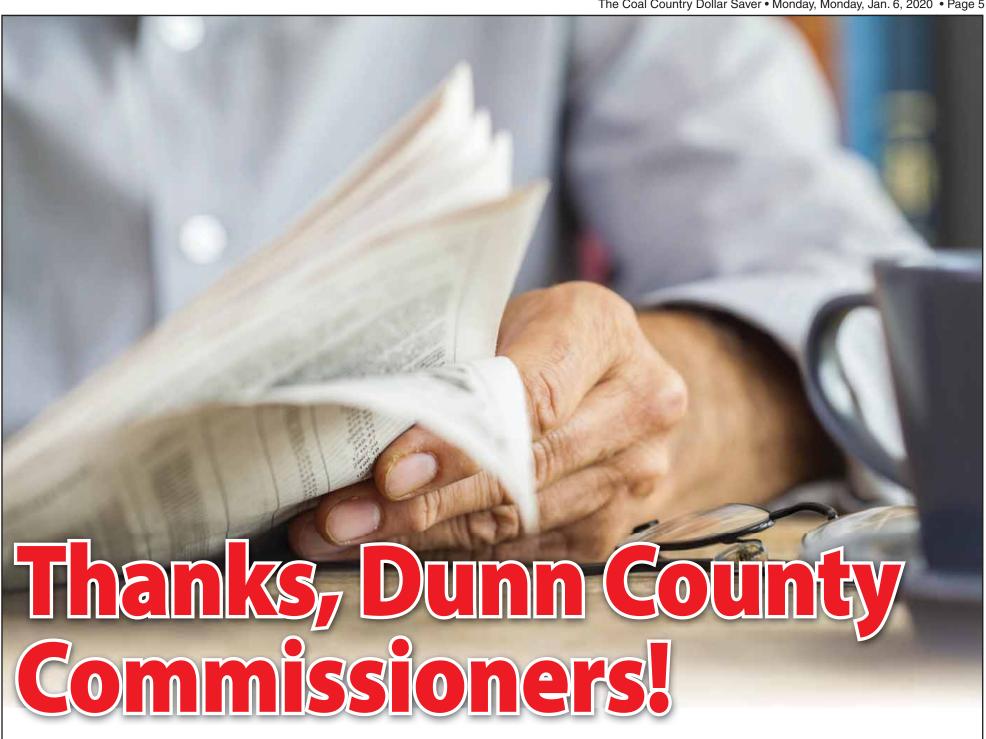
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#### January is Cervical Health Awareness Month

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Sakakawea Medical Center

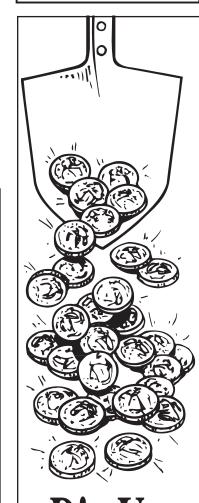
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