

# Oakes Times



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## COLUMN 1

**PUBLIC LIBRARY HOURS:**  
Monday, Tuesday and Thursday:  
1:30-5:30; Wednesday: 1:30-7:30; Friday: 1:30-3:30.

**POP TABS FOR RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE** can be dropped off at the Oakes Times.

**FULLERTON TOPS, 7:15 a.m.** Wednesdays, Fullerton Elevator Meeting Room.

**ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, 8:00 p.m.** Mon., Wed. and Sat., 201 S. 5th St., Oakes.

**AL ANON, 8:00 p.m.** Mon. at 201 S. 5th St., Oakes.

**CELEBRATE RECOVERY** at Oakes Church of the Nazarene Mondays at 6:30 p.m.

**OAKES COMMUNITY CENTER** is open for walking 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Monday-Friday.

**OAKES BONE BUILDERS** classes meet every Mon., Wed. and Fri. at the Oakes Senior Center at 10:00 a.m. Call Jen at 742-3509.

**BINGO AT THE SENIOR CENTER** every Monday at 1:00 p.m. Everyone welcome!

**CITY HALL HOURS:** Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Phone: 701-742-2137. On their website: oakesnd.com/CityAlerts, you will find current Public Works Dept. notifications.

**PHOTOS WANTED!** CHI Oakes Hospital is looking for high resolution photos to redecorate the main lobby of the hospital. Photos can be emailed to: alison.peterson@commspirit.org. Questions, call Alison at 742-3848.

**FIRST TUESDAY AT TWO COFFEE SOCIAL** meets March 5 at Sisters Kitchen.

## Federal funds available for ice storm recovery

Senators John Hoeven and Kevin Cramer and Congressman Kelly Armstrong issued the following statement after the Biden administration approved Governor Doug Burgum's request for a major disaster declaration covering the severe winter ice storm that occurred across North Dakota from December 25 to December 27. The declaration unlocks federal resources to support recovery and disaster mitigation in the affected areas, including Barnes, Cass, Dickey, Grant, LaMoure, Logan, McIntosh, Ransom, Richland, Sargent, Steele, Stutsman and Traill counties. Earlier this month, the delegation made the case for the declaration, outlining the widespread damage resulting from the storm.

"This is welcome news for the ongoing recovery and mitigation efforts across North Dakota," said the delegation. "This ice storm downed thousands of powerlines, left tens of thousands of residents without power and caused significant hardship for communities across the state. The resources made available by this declaration will provide an important support to the 13 counties."

## Oakes School Board votes to call special election, part 6

On Friday, January 12th, at the regular monthly board meeting of the Oakes Public School Board, members of the board voted unanimously to call a special election to approve the issuance of general obligation bonds for school building construction purposes. On March 14th, district voters will decide on a \$14.84 million plan to address critical facility challenges at our 100-year-old school building. If approved, this plan will provide our school with:

- New HVAC systems
- Accessible bathrooms
- Updated kitchen infrastructure
- Repaired underground plumbing

Visit OurSchoolOurFuture.org to learn more about the plan to maintain key infrastructure throughout our school building.

As a district, we have been and will continue to be committed to ensuring transparency about decision making and information pertaining to the proposed project. During the next two months, we will be sharing a series of facility questions and answers (FAQs) focused and guided by stakeholder input. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Anna Sell, Oakes Public School Superintendent, at anna.sell@k12.nd.us or 742-3234.

1. **Is this the right plan?**

Providing adequate facilities that support teaching and learning is critical for students and staff. Our school building is in need of critical and significant improvements. The proposed plan focuses only on urgent needs that put safety, accessibility, and health first. The four areas of the plan, a new HVAC system and windows, accessible bathrooms, repairing and upgrading plumbing and sewer pipes, and replacing outdated kitchen infrastructure, will improve our learning environment, meet current air quality standards, and comply with recommended industry guidelines. These improvements will also enhance the functionality of the building and extend its lifespan, ultimately saving the district money over time. While any investment may raise concerns among taxpayers regarding costs, the proposed plan is right for the district. It prioritizes our building's most urgent needs, replacing and repairing essential infrastructure for our school to continue operating while providing high value for taxpayer investments to address these critical improvements.

2. **How does the proposed plan support students?**

Our students are our number one priority. We are proud that our students perform at a high level, scoring higher than the state average for reading and math. Our district and our dedicated staff are committed to fostering student success and their overall well-being. When equipment breaks or fails to operate at its fullest potential or spaces are inaccessible, it disrupts education. For example, if our aging HVAC system breaks, we cannot provide school or activities for our high school students in cold weather months. In addition, the outdated and broken HVAC system and windows fail to meet current air quality standards. Studies have shown that poor air quality affects student performance. HVAC improvements, similar to what our district is proposing, will increase ventilation to improve concentration and productivity and improve air quality to reduce illnesses and increase attendance. Our students deserve a safe, healthy, and accessible building that supports their educational needs. In addition to the benefits this will provide to our students, this investment will also reduce energy costs and maintenance costs for the district.

## Norway Spur Elevator landmark sees its final days



Norway Spur Farmers Co-op dates back to the 1890's. It first started operating when the Soo Railroad expanded to cross the river. In the 1890's, the grain elevator was known as the Norway Spur Grain Company and later became known as the Farmers Co-op when a group of farmers bought the elevator. The grain elevator, which is located 2-1/2 miles west of Oakes, was purchased from the farmers in the 1930's by John Medd. In 1969 the company was purchased, once again, by farmers and became known as Norway Spur Farmers Co-op.

In 1972, Bill Dahlen came to manage the elevator, which had a storage capacity of 160,000 bushels. They built on to the structure and remodeled it over the years.

Other additions during Dahlen's management included new legs, cleaners and spouting equipment. Besides Dahlen, others at the grain elevator were Jim Guyott, Pat Gemar and Steve Konkler. There were approximately 225 shareholders in the elevator at this time.

In March of 1999, the patrons of the Norway Spur and Verona Farmers elevators voted by a wide margin to accept the merger agreement proposed by the Board of Directors of the respective elevators. The new company retained the name of Norway Spur Farmers Co-op Grain Company with the main offices remaining in Oakes. The merger was the result of several months of talks and negotiations between the two boards. For the first year the Board of Directors was comprised of the board members,

making a 12 member board. At the annual meeting in the year 2000, a seven member board was elected. Steve Groth assumed the manager position after the retirement of Bill Dahlen.

In 2002, James Valley Grain was formed by Norway Spur and South Dakota Wheat Growers with an eye towards profitability. It was based on the assets of both companies, with the goal being a 50-50 split.

Over the years, the Norway Spur facility was no longer used as a grain elevator. It was used as a seed cleaning facility for awhile, and eventually was sold to Galen Brandt, who is tearing it down.

Time marches on and so we see the end of an Oakes landmark.

### STATE PLACE WINNERS

160 JOSH MEEHL EARNS 2ND  
121 MATHIAS DAHLSTROM EARNS 7TH  
133 ZANE AWENDER EARNS 7TH  
139 CASE AWENDER EARNS 7TH  
152 ZAHE HEIER EARNS 7TH  
172 TATE THORPE EARNS 7TH

## TORNADO WRESTLING

## OPS Staff Spotlight... #WEAREOAKES

Submitted by Anna Sell, Superintendent

Name: Kylie Weber  
How long have you been at OPS? 5 years.

What does your job entail?

Growing the minds of young learners while encouraging their independence.

What is the best part of your job at OPS?

The learners. What piece of advice would you give our students?

Always try your best. You cannot fail unless you try, even then you grow.

What is something others don't know about you?

While student teaching for my cultural diversity class, I got caught in a snowstorm and was snowed in with the teacher for 3 days on a friend of the teachers farm.

Who has been the biggest influence in your life?

My past teachers and my mom. They show the joy every day and fostered my love for learning.

If you could pick any superpower, what would it be and why?

The power to clean my house with a snap.

What does it mean to you to be a Tornado?

To have grit, keep a growth mindset, and to never stop learning.



## Oakes Public School Hall of Fame nominees sought

Oakes Public School invites submission of nomination petitions to be considered for induction to our Hall of Fame. Many worthy individuals have provided outstanding service or brought honor to Oakes Public Schools. Hall of Fame inductees must have made significant contributions to Oakes Public Schools and must have been separated from OPS for at least three years before induction. Nominees may be former students, staff, administrators, school board members, volunteers, or the public. Nominees are not required to be graduates of Oakes Public Schools.

The Oakes Public School Hall of Fame was created in 2004 to recognize and honor the accomplishments of individuals in academics, athletics, fine arts, and other achievements, as well as outstanding contributions and dedication to Oakes Public Schools. With the addition

of Mrs. Susan German in 2023, twenty-six people have been inducted to the OPS Hall of Fame. Information about all inductees may be found on the OPS website at <https://www.oakes.k12.nd.us/inductees>. Plaques honoring the inductees are displayed in the activities lobby at the school.

Nominating petitions must be submitted to the school district office by May 1 to be considered for induction in 2024. The school board will name inductees by June 30. Nomination forms are available on the Oakes Public Schools website (<https://www.oakes.k12.nd.us/nomination>). Paper forms are available from Cari Haugen or Maureen Wentworth in the district's Central Office. If you have previously nominated someone that has not been selected, please consider updating the nomination with any new or additional information.

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