

Hi, hello and welcome to our subscriber of the week:

Shirley Jensen
Drayton, ND

Your weather



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SPORTS: Football season has begun with a 77-0 win **PG. 9**



EDUCATION: Meet two of Drayton's new teachers **PG. 9**



Homegrown handmade

Local woman plans to create honor stand

By Christine Jensen

For one area woman, carrying on the traditions of her ancestors not only helps honor their memories, but also brings purpose, peace, and a chance to teach her grandchildren what she grew up learning.

LeeAnn Johnson's favorite place to be is in her kitchen, cooking and canning delicacies of all types. She takes pride in her flourishing garden and the intricate work she does making sweet treats of all different shapes and flavors.

Recently, she read about a unique way to share her creations. An honor stand is a pop up cabinet displaying various goods. People can buy her homegrown and handmade creations and leave payment in a lock box at the site.

"It will be a little stand that includes shelves where I can place a variety

of things and people can come get them and leave a payment," Johnson said. "I will probably have it open three days a week, it will explain what is available and people can just leave payment. There will also be a fridge for baked goods and canned items."

Currently Johnson is making several items created from her flourishing garden in the backyard. Next to it is a thriving raspberry bush and a bee sanctuary which she said had more bees this year than she has ever witnessed.

"I just love bees so I have a little garden for them," Johnson said. "So far this year we have also collected 130 zucchinis and 110 cucumbers as well as tomatoes and peppers too many to count from the garden."

Some of her goods include pickled veggie jars which contain a variety of vegetables such as cauliflower, carrots, celery, and onions. She



Top left: Treats made by Johnson come in many fun and intricate designs. Submitted photo
Top right: LeeAnn Johnson, posing with only a very small portion of this year's garden bounty. Photo by Christine Jensen

also makes homemade salsa which has already been a hit for those who have purchased from her and plans to make roasted tomato soup from her large tomato crop. She also cans refrigerator pickles.

One unique item which she has been working on perfecting for the last year is a Focaccia bread which is a delicious flatbread that is made with various herbs on it. She also plans to make the bread with different varieties including some with olives and tomatoes.

Johnson said she was unable to have a garden for several years when she lived in an apartment but with their house in Drayton she has been able to have a large garden in the back yard.

"I saw a couple videos of people doing an honor stand and thought it would be a great idea," Johnson said. "I take orders and sell items anyway so this would be an easy way to do it and also to contribute to the community."

She hopes to share some of her massive vegetable harvest and will put a sign out that reads, "Take what you need, leave what you can." People can choose how much they put into the lock box and if they are unable to pay, they can just take items. She said she will have prices on certain items like her baked goods, breads, muffins, and cookies in her sweet and savory honor stand.

In addition to her garden goods, Johnson also creates intricate candies. She sells them in decorated boxes and trays. She has been making these goods for more than four decades and said she learned a great deal about cooking and baking from her mother and grandmothers.

She makes a variety of chocolates as well as candy bars. Each color of her chocolates has a different flavor. She makes chocolate chippers, Oreo cookie and Oreo truffle chocolates, pretzel chocolates, Twix style candies, caramel, fruit and nut, mixed nuts, as well as special

'HOMEGROWN' CON'T PAGE 7

Local teacher gets certification in record time

By Christine Jensen

Teaching is a profession many are called to execute. For one area teacher, earning her certification in record time took a great deal of perseverance and determination but with help and encouragement from others, she was able to successfully complete what she was determined to succeed at.

Allison Riddle graduated from Grafton High School before attending the University of Minnesota, Crookston, and earning her bachelor degree in Exercise Science and Wellness. Following graduation, she coached softball in Fargo and spent a few years working at a daycare. For two years she worked in Grafton as a fifth and sixth grade title teacher before transferring to Drayton to teach third grade at Drayton Public School for the 2025-26 school year.

"We moved to Drayton three years ago because my husband Adam has been teaching in Drayton for the past four years," Riddle said. "We bought a house here in March and have two dogs, Loki and Buttons."

She said although teaching in Drayton has been an adjustment due to the smaller class size, she has thoroughly enjoyed it and said the students she teaches are great.

"It has been so nice, the teachers and staff are willing to lend a

hand and help when I have been trying to learn the ropes of this position," she said.

Riddle also coaches seventh and eighth grade volleyball after school and drives school bus in the morning to transport students from Grafton who go to school in Drayton. Her day starts at around 6:00 am every day. She also helps her husband with concessions at home football games. She hopes to help with the After School Program (ASP) at Drayton Public School as well.

Riddle earned the American Board Certification for teaching in record time. The certification is a program designed to help teachers get their certification quickly, which is allowed in North Dakota she said. Anyone who has a bachelor's degree can earn the certification. Usually the course takes anywhere from nine months to a year but Riddle earned hers, after a great deal of hard work and dedication, in one and one half months.

"It was probably the most stressful two months of my life and I would be doing the course any time of



Drayton teacher Allison Riddle. Submitted photo

day," she said. "I was coaching softball this summer and working weekends at the Drayton Golf Course and on top of that I joined the cleaning group that was cleaning the school over the summer."

Riddle said for her, there was a couple of things at play. She said it was agreed between school board members and herself that she would get the certification done before the school year started.

"I wanted to be a one hundred percent certified teacher and to know I accomplished that meant a lot," Riddle said.

She said one of her favorite parts about teaching is watching her students grow through the year and seeing the small successes that come from their faithfulness and hard work.

"I love seeing a student from day one and how they continue to grow emotionally, physically, academically and behaviorally," Riddle said. "Seeing that growth through the whole year and knowing

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Johnson's lush gardens provide her with a variety of fresh ingredients for her cooking. Photo by Christine Jensen



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HAPPY
LABOR
DAY