

# Enderlin INDEPENDENT

VOLUME 133, NUMBER 52

ENDERLIN, RANSOM COUNTY, NORTH DAKOTA 58027

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, 2026.

\$1.00

## Enderlin Speech Team Places 2nd at North Sargent



Back row (l-r): Harrison Fraase, Jackson Fraase, Dexter Warg, Chloe Warg, Front row (l-r): Scout Friederichs, Nevaeh Garces, Julia Bergstedt, Max Lemna

March 14 was another successful speech day for the Enderlin team finishing 2nd place overall and many individuals and duos placing, as well as earning their spot at the State Speech tournament.

**Individual Placements:**  
 Nevaeh Garces 3rd Drama & 5th EPR  
 Chloe Warg 2nd Inform & 2nd Humorous Duo  
 Jackson Fraase 1st Impromptu (state qualifying) & 8th Serious Prose  
 Julia Bergstedt 1st Storytelling (state qualifying) & 3rd Serious Duo  
 Scout Friederichs 3rd Humorous & 3rd Serious Duo  
 Dexter Warg 1st Radio (state qualifying) & 2nd Humorous Duo  
 Harrison Fraase 7th Impromptu & 7th Storytelling  
 Desarae Wheeler 3rd Poetry & 6th Impromptu

## City News: BQE Hired To Conduct Sulfate Removal Testing Process.

Frank Egan

The Enderlin City Council met for its' monthly meeting on Monday, March 2nd, 2026. In attendance were guests Taran Langland and Frank Egan from the Enderlin Independent. Council and staff members present were Mayor Deon Maasjo, City Auditor Cyndee Chesley, Asst. City Auditor Emily Wolf, Council members Tim Michaelson, Terri Egan, Roger Maras, Shelly Hanson, Kevin Bunn, City Attorney Fallon Kelly, and Street Superintendent Rick Gillund.

City Engineer Tracy Eslinger (via phone) presented his report. In reference to Water Improvement Project 2026-1, the NDSU testing has not proven productive, so Moore Engineering is moving on to utilize BQE engineering services, a Canadian company known for industrial water filtering solutions, for consulting purposes. Eslinger presented a bill for \$125,000 for the initial cost of testing for the sulfate removal process. This amount is part of the cost in WIP 2026-1. After several questions from council members, the council approved the invoice. Continued planning for this project is contingent on ADM receiving their water permit from the state department of environmental services.

Mr. Gillund presented his report at this time. The major item was that there would need to be a new well put in place by Center Street with increased pumping capacity. The estimated cost for the new well will be \$125,000. The street department is continuing with street sweeping and cleaning with ongoing snow.

The mayor recognized Mr. Taran Langland, who wants to purchase a new lot on Morrow Way. The council and the city engineer looked at the city

map as to where the utilities lines come onto the prospective property. After discussion and review of the city map, the council approved Mr. Langland's request.

In community affairs, the city completed speaking to people on the list provided by the Lions and the Sheriff's department who suffered tree loss during the tornado. The response list will be given to Enderlin Lions for continued development of the idea for their reforestation service project.

Mrs. Chesley briefed that the curb appeals program has started. Small projects must be done by mid-June. Large projects have one year to complete project. The mayor and Mrs. Chesley reported that the State Tax Commission asked for return of three years' worth of sales tax revenue. The city had to rebate over \$300,000 of that money back to the state so that the local agricultural business which applied for their sales tax outlay can get their money back. There was a second reading on the flood zone ordinance. The ordinance had to have language changed so to allow residents to obtain federal flood insurance. In gaming and raffle permits, the alumni association applied for use at the Friendly Tavern for gaming. A raffle permit by the Enderlin/Sheldon wildlife club for an April 4th raffle board was approved. Payment for a premium of \$1565 to the State Fire and Tornado policy was approved. Two new computer systems were ordered for the staff to use the Black Mountain accounting system. State auditors will be onsite March 17th to review city accounts. An antenna will be mounted on the water tower in April for the water meter reading system.

The meeting recessed at 8:44 PM.

### Enderlin Lions Club Raffle Weekly Winners

Amanda Patterson Williamsburg VA  
 Connie Stordalen Bismarck ND  
 Rachel Farnham Barnesville MN  
 Randi Lindemann Enderlin  
 Travis Heger Lisbon ND

## Statewide Research Effort Examines Health of Newspaper Business, Community Journalism

Cally Peterson

North Dakota Living "It's such an interesting and unusual and walled-off world for independent newspaper owners. They're the only people in their community who do what they do, and very few people understand the sacrifices that are made and the slings and arrows that have to be dodged in order to do that for very low pay," says Cecile Wehrman, executive director of the North Dakota Newspaper Association (NDNA).

Local News logoAs the previous owner and publisher of the weekly The Journal, Crosby (which transferred ownership March 1), Wehrman is part of that small "fraternity of people" in the newspaper business.

"I believe in newspapers absolutely to the core of my being. I call it the gospel of newspapers. And I love, love telling the tale," she says.

It's a tale complicated by the rise of social and digital media and the information overload that oftentimes crowds out local news, postal service woes, shifting public perceptions that news should be free, and an industry changing hands to a new generation.

But with the challenges come opportunity, and North Dakota is charting a course forward for local news.

The Future of Local News

Initiative concluded in January with a comprehensive assessment of local news conditions in the state, including surveys of newspaper executives, journalists, college journalists, news consumers and residents of North Dakota's "news desert" counties which lack a resident newspaper. The research was conducted by Coda Ventures and funded through a Bush Foundation grant administered by the Rural Development Finance Corporation and North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives (NDAREC) in partnership and NDNA.

Additionally, a study of newspapers serving Native American communities is still in the works.

"North Dakota's local newspapers have long served as trusted, community-rooted institutions," says Chris Gessele, NDAREC cooperative development specialist. "This initiative not only highlights the challenges they face, but also offers a roadmap for actionable solutions that can help sustain local journalism for decades to come."

"The buzz is about the fact that we have this data, and what press association in this day and age could have afforded to spend money on research? Zero," Wehrman says. "We're incredibly fortunate to have access to this

database and all this research, and it's already yielding great information that we can share with legislators and grant sources."

### COMMUNITY AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

According to the research, nearly 90% of North Dakotans say having a local newspaper is important or very important, and local newspapers are considered the most trusted source for information about important community issues. And in areas without a resident newspaper, including Dunn, Sioux and Slope counties, residents experience notable civic impacts. This data serves as a warning sign to other communities about the negative impacts of losing a community's newspaper.

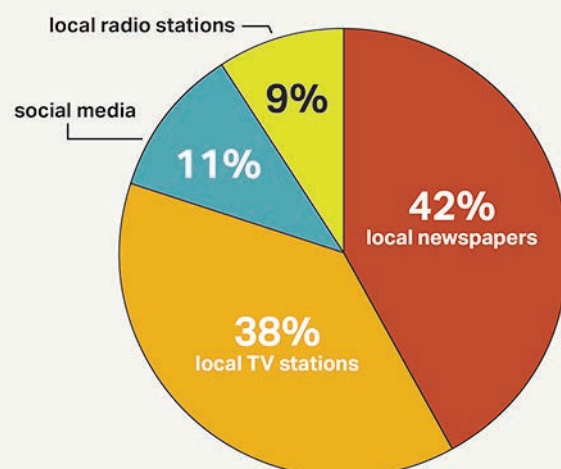
"We attend the city council, county commission and

school board meetings. We sit through long discussions about budgets, policies and decisions that directly impact taxpayers. Without journalists in the room, there is no one recording those conversations and no one regularly holding elected officials accountable for the choices they make," says Jill Friesz, owner of GS Publishing which publishes seven weekly newspapers serving southwestern North Dakota.

Wehrman says. "If you lose a newspaper, you've lost the place where people know they can go for government information, public notices, city minutes, school board minutes, and you lose your history, because nobody is recording for posterity the good things that happen in your town."

NEWS Continued Page 8...

### Where do North Dakotans turn to for the MOST TRUSTED information about important community issues?



Enderlin VFW  
 Post 9050

Open Mon. - Sat. 2 p.m.  
 Happy Hour 4-7 p.m.  
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