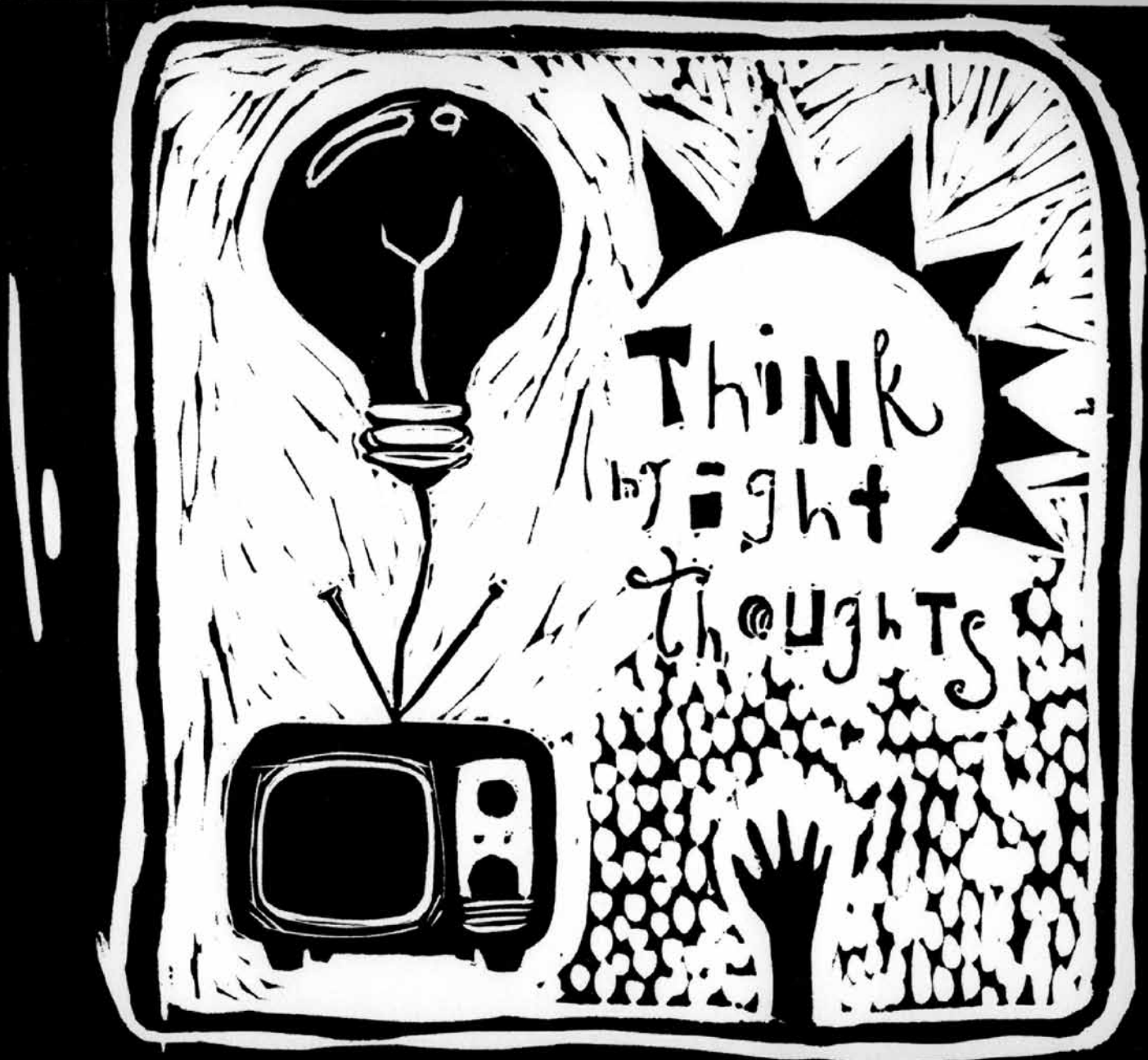


NDSU NORTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY FALL 2009 magazine





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editor's note

In the spirit of never being too old to learn something new, I have begun to ride a really fast bicycle. This may not sound like much, but please bear with me, it's a big deal. For starters, this bicycle is a scary-looking contraption. The wheels are very thin and the seat, (correctly called a saddle, for which you have your, ahem, girth, measured) is teeny tiny. Road bikes, as they are known, also require special shoes fitted with clips that snick into the pedals. Or snick in if you are coordinated enough to make them do so. I have gotten better.

My bike is silver, which is pretty much all I know. But the first time I met up with some new cycling friends, they were rather excited about it having a carbon fork. I told you it was a brave new world.

The past two years I have fallen off my previous bike early in the spring. My husband and I used to think we were really doing something when we rode our old bikes with fat tires, wide seats and high rise handle bars seven miles for a cup of coffee. When you're such a klutz that you fall over when you come to a red light and end up with scabs on your knees like you haven't had since you were an eight-year-old, you think twice before getting on a much more dangerous road bike. But you have adopted a new spirit of open mindedness, so you try it out.

My first reaction to that first ride is still my position on this: I should not be in possession of anything that allows me to go that fast. My second thought, to which I am ever more committed: I gotta get faster.

The idea of improving took a hit on my first attempt at a big group ride. This was supposed to be the relaxed group, and if so, I would not like to see the aggressive crowd. It was a tough night because of a 20 mph wind we rode against for the first 12 miles or so. I knew the wind would pose a challenge, but I'd heard a lot about the wind-sheltering benefits of riding in a group. There's a fascinating sort of bicycle ballet known as a pace line, involving people who ride at the front for a while to fight the wind, and then break off to the sides and the next in line pull for a while, and so on. Of course, that only works if you can stay with the main pack. My husband and his very nice friends stayed back with me, and I alternated emotions between awe at their kindness and just desperately hoping they would go ahead so I could lie down on the side of the road and weep. The good news is that, eventually, you get to turn and have the wind at your back, so no matter how humbled you may have been on the way out, you feel like a superstar on the way home.

Life has many demands and difficulties, times to be serious. May you have many chances to try new things, meet new people, and grin like a fool.

Thank you for reading.

Laura.McDaniel@nds.edu

www.ndsu.edu/magazine

on the cover



Katie Johanson created this piece as a participant in North Dakota State University's Governor's Schools in the Visual Arts program, and it is part of a traveling exhibition 9:1. Ten gifted high school students from around the state participated in the six-week program. The students chose the title for the show, 9:1, as a way of referencing their individuality as well as their cohesion as a group, but also to signify that often at least one student disagreed with the other nine when arriving at decisions.

Johanson is a junior at Century High School in Bismarck.

THINK BRIGHT THOUGHTS (2009)
Relief Print, 8 x 10 inches

The inspiration for this piece came from a shirt that said "think bright thoughts." The other elements came together as my ideas grew. This is a symbol for the necessity to think on our own, and to think positively. Now that the world is changing and conforming to different things, it is really important to stress individuality and independence.

contributors



Jerry Hart

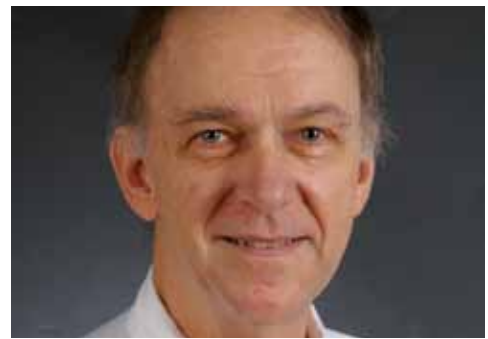
Brian Doyle is the editor of Portland Magazine at the University of Portland in Oregon, and the author most recently of *Thirsty for the Joy: Australian & American Voices* (One Day Hill). He is a prolific writer and possesses a unique voice, as you will note in this passage expressing his interest in appearing in the NDSU magazine: “Ever since he was a puppy he has been fascinated by Dakotanness for reasons having largely to do with the riveting words bison, pipit, curlew, and longspur, not to mention cranes, which sound like vast grumpy basso trucks floating overhead, don’t

they? Isn’t that an incredible sound? Like a thunderstorm gargling, something like that?” A night in the infirmary p. 8-9.



Merrie Sue Holtan, communication studies instructor at Minnesota State University Moorhead, also teaches on-line media writing classes for North Dakota State University. She has a master’s degree in communication from NDSU and a master’s of fine arts

in creative writing from MSUM. She grew up ice-skating on Rush Creek in southeastern Minnesota and always wanted to twirl her baton on ice. Two of her baton students now perform with the NDSU Gold Star Marching Band. The Nancy Burgraff story (p. 26-27) “called to her,” and she is committed to telling stories that have “gone missing.” She and her husband, Phil, live on Big Pine Lake near Perham, Minn., and they have three grown children.



Robert Dodge studied history at North Dakota State University, graduating with honors in 1967, and was awarded one of two National Collegiate Athletic Association post-graduate scholarships for scholar-athletes given to tennis players that year. He became a middle school teacher in West Fargo, while his wife taught elementary in Fargo. After 10 years he headed overseas, and spent four years in London. They moved to Singapore in 1983. Singapore has been home ever since, except when he got a scholarship and sabbatical to get a second master’s degree at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard.

He left teaching after the 2006 school year. His reading preference is nonfiction after years of teaching history and says he hasn’t lost all hope that we can make the world a better place. An excerpt from his latest book, *Prairie Murders, the True Story of Three Murders and the Loss of Innocence in A Small North Dakota Town*, is on p. 40-47. He also wrote about a previous book, *The Strategist*, a biography of Thomas Schelling, the Nobel Prize winner in economics in 2005, in the spring 2007 issue of NDSU magazine.



A NIGHT IN THE INFIRMARY

ESSAY BY BRIAN DOYLE

Which I bet nearly every student at every university in America spent, at some shaky point of their years undergraduating, and every boy or girl who did so probably shivered with the same fear and fascination and amazement that I did, partly because you were actually in the belly of the building we all passed a thousand times but never actually thought about, like you never actually thought about the football stadium or the physical plant building unless you were assigned there somehow, or found yourself embroiled in the social ramble, or had to spend a night under observation because the nurse thought probably you had a concussion, although it was hard, she said, to find a concussion under all that hair, which made me laugh, a little, but that hurt, so she fell silent and took my temperature again.

Where are you from, son?

New York City.

So you have had plenty of concussions, eh?

I remember long narrow hallways with mullioned windows, and polite professional people who murmured gently, and I remember that it was cold, and that the sheets in the bed were beautifully starched, as if an army of grandmothers laboring in the basement were producing crackling redolent bedclothes so wonderfully clean and pressed that it seemed a shame to fold back the covers and infest them with my adolescent self, but I did so, because the nurse told me to, and she was terse and sturdy, and I was in her spotless bailiwick, not the shaggy chaos of my usual life in the residence halls. This was no dorm, despite the familiar turtle-green paint and the ancient iron beds; this was the island of the ill, where voices were soft and machinery hummed, where the few other students I saw were curled and pale in their beds, under the old hairy blankets the university must have bought by the thousands from the government, perhaps just after the Peloponnesian War.

Can you hear me, son?

Yes, ma'am.

We've decided not to replace your brain with an apple, all right?

Yes, ma'am.

My concussion, under all that hair, had been incurred when I landed head-first on the basketball floor of the vast student rec center, after soaring in admirable fashion to try to block a shot above the rim but tripping on a guy and somersaulting and ending up imprinting my face in the rubber, a weird image that may still be there like the haunted visage on the Shroud of Turin, although that gaunt Jewish guy looked cooler than me, I looked like a dissolute John Lennon then.

You're a sophomore, son?

Yes, ma'am.

So you have roommates.

Yes.

But they are sophomores also.

Yes.

So none of you can be trusted with hourly overnight observation.

No, ma'am.

So I spent the night in the infirmary. I seemed to be partly blind, and had a roaring headache, and was Officially Damaged, there was a Chart, there was a Consulting Physician, there would be sheaves of reports, my parents would be notified, and already they had received pink slips indicating Academic Difficulty, which caused my father's face to tighten, and my mother's smile to fade, and I had finally arrived at an age when I first noticed threads of sadness in their faces, and began to have a dim appreciation of how hard they had worked for their rude and selfish children, how much they had sacrificed, how much I had hurt them with sneer and snide, how much they loved me and could not say, for all their articulate wit and professional eloquence as journalist and teacher; and here I was, yet again, a cause of pain for them.

I'll wake you every hour to check your eyes.

Yes, ma'am.

Are you scared?

Yes, ma'am.

I'll send someone.

She sent another nurse. I don't remember her name. I don't remember the color of her uniform, her eyes or her stature or her age or anything else except her voice and her hands, which were cool and warm at the same time. I remember that she spoke quietly, and that whatever it was that she said calmed me, and helped me sleep, and I remember that she was there again and again that night, perhaps all night long.

In the morning I was released from the infirmary with instructions to lay low and have a roommate wake me every hour the next night, which my roommate did with his usual high glee, he was the most cheerful boy in the history of the galaxy and had been a wrestling champion famous for laughing during matches, which infuriated his opponents, which may have led to their defeat, which would not be the first time joy outwitted rage.

I called my parents that day and admitted I loved them and apologized for having been such a selfish ass. My mother was delighted. My father, a wise man, wondered why I was really calling. I did not see those nurses again, but I didn't forget them, and something about their quiet humor and intent grace was a seed in me as far as savoring the grace of people who serve other people, especially lanky children secretly desperate to find out who they are and what they will do with their wild and lovely lives, which is the definition of Undergraduate. My mother, now 88 years old, dearly loves to tell people how her middle son, at the ripe old age of nineteen, awoke from many years of pure and unadulterated selfishness and telephoned to say he was sorry. I remember it was October, says my mom, with dark pleasure. I believe it was October nineteenth, in fact. Let me check with your father. I would sigh at the high glee with which my mom likes to tell this story, but I know very well that may be the moment I stopped thinking only of myself and was the moment college mattered the most to me. I've been going to college ever since.





GROWING

NORTH DAKOTA

A quiet revolution is about to take place on the western edge of the NDSU campus. The vaulted ceilings and wide corridors of the stylish brick front for the new greenhouse complex taking shape there hint at the botanical possibilities waiting to be unlocked beneath its canopies. The new greenhouses, with the first phase slated to open in January, will extend the length of three football fields when finished. The complex will be one of the most sophisticated buildings on campus, with computers controlling the climates within individual greenhouses so plant breeders, pathologists and other scientists can control their experiments.



Think of the new greenhouse complex as both incubator and fortress. Greenhouses, of course, help accelerate the changes that plant breeders introduce to develop new crop varieties with beneficial traits. But the glass panes – actually clear acrylic plastic in the new houses – also act as a huge shield, since they play a vital role in developing resistance to disease and insect pests that, if unchecked, can wipe out crops and cost millions of dollars in losses, an economic disaster felt far beyond an unlucky farmer’s decimated field.

It’s worth remembering that most of the greenhouses on campus were built after an epidemic of stem rust devastated the wheat and barley fields of North Dakota in the 1950s. At the peak of the epidemic, in 1953 and 1954, a time when wheat was a much larger part of the state’s cropping mix than it is today, 42 percent of the spring wheat harvest was lost to the

fungal disease. Today, just two wheat varieties developed with help from NDSU greenhouses account for roughly half of all the spring wheat grown in the state, an example of how the genetic manipulations ultimately translate into dollars. “It’s easily generating several hundreds of millions of dollars of new revenue to the state,” says Ken Grafton, director of the North Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station and dean of NDSU’s College of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Natural Resources. “It has a huge economic impact to the state.” Wheat, still king when it comes to North Dakota’s cash crops, contributes \$6.4 billion to the state’s economy, an amount equal to a quarter of the state’s economic base.

In an uncanny replay of history, just as the new greenhouses are nearing the start of service, a deadly new race of stem rust is drifting out of Africa into Asia and across the Red Sea



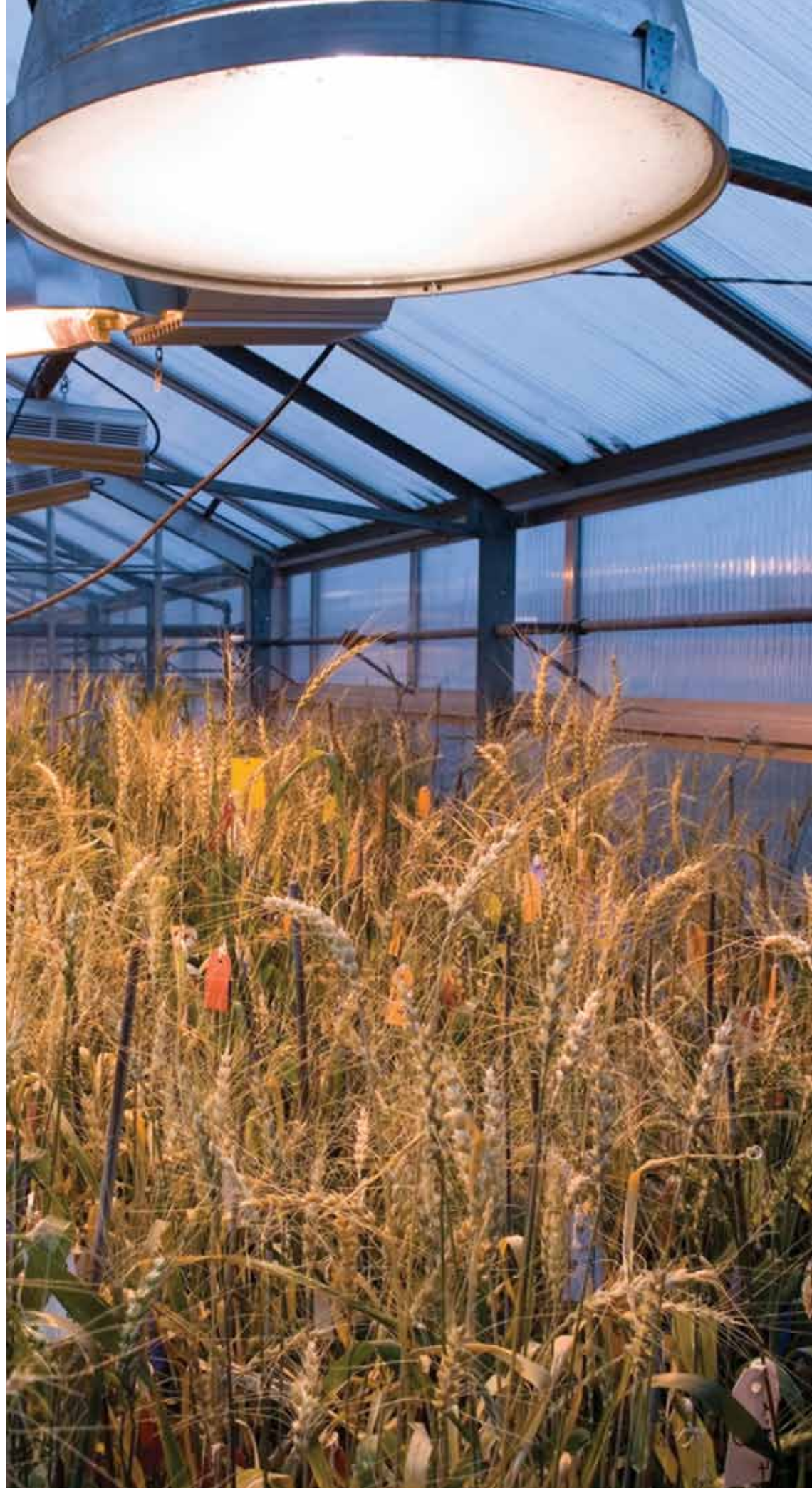
to the Middle East. Agronomists fear it's only a matter of time before the winds carry the spores of the killer fungus to North America. Ug99 – so named because it was discovered in Uganda in 1999 – poses a lethal threat to wheat and barley in North Dakota, since varieties on the Great Plains haven't developed a resistance to the new fungus – handing plant breeders and pathologists a pressing item on their priority lists as they prepare research projects for the new greenhouses.



The electronic sign behind the front counter at Sun Prairie Grains in Minot, N.D., displays the daily prices of a dozen commodities commonly grown by farmers in the area. It also provides a good window into the explosive growth of crop diversity that has quietly transformed North Dakota agriculture. Not too

many years ago, farmers around Minot, and throughout much of the state, grew perhaps five or six crops. And for a long, long time, just three cash crops – wheat, durum and barley – formed the base of North Dakota's crop agriculture.

Brad Haugeberg, Sun Prairie's general manager, is as amazed as anyone about the dizzying diversity of crops grown on the farms in his area, north-central North Dakota. "If you had an elevator with a hundred bins you'd be three short," he jokes. In fact, the elevators he manages don't have room for all of the crop varieties grown in the area. Some farmers use specialty storage for peas, lentils and chickpeas as well as Navy beans, buckwheat and mustard. "North-central North Dakota is probably as diverse as it gets," Haugeberg says. "That's ground zero for crop diversity."



“DIVERSITY IS A GOOD THING, NOT ONLY FOR THE FARMERS THEMSELVES, BUT FOR THE ECONOMY OF NORTH DAKOTA. IT **PROTECTS** US OVER TIME AGAINST THE CALAMITIES THAT OCCUR.”

Thanks to the advances in plant genetics, the surge in crop diversity is happening all over North Dakota, literally changing the cropping landscape of the state. Take soybeans, a specialty crop in North Dakota until a little more than a decade ago, which now rank behind wheat as the leading export crop, worth nearly half a billion dollars a year in direct economic impact. Cass County and neighboring Richland County, in fact, are among the leading soybean producers in the nation. Corn has enjoyed a similar boost in popularity with farmers, enabling corn ethanol manufacturing to gain a much larger presence in the state. “It’s huge,” Bill Wilson, NDSU distinguished university professor of agricultural economics, says of the financial ripples flowing from the increase in North Dakota’s crop mix.

Diversity matters. For farmers, growing a variety of crop types buffers them against weather conditions that hurt one type of crop but favor another. Similarly when the price of wheat ebbs, the price of flax might just be soaring, providing a financial cushion for fluctuating commodity prices. Multiply that financial hedge across the state, and the numbers add up. “Diversity is a good thing, not only for the farmers themselves, but for the economy of North Dakota,” Wilson says. “It protects us over time against the calamities that occur.”

It does more than that, as Wilson goes on to explain. When the price of one crop goes up, that exerts upward pressure on other crops, which must provide returns to remain competitive – a commodities version of the rising tide that lifts all boats, at least in theory. That competition is called the battle for acres. “That’s a good thing,” Wilson explains, adding that a vigorous “battle” among crops for farmers’ fields helps to nudge up prices. Played out over time, the story is told in the numbers that comprise North Dakota’s economic portrait. Back in 1958, when North Dakota’s crop agriculture was much more dependent on the old standbys – wheat, durum and barley – crop agriculture contributed \$440 million to the state’s economic base. In 50 years, as measured in constant, inflation-adjusted dollars, crop agriculture had grown more than tenfold, to \$4.9 billion.

Growth like that doesn’t happen without farmers taking risks. The ultimate test of a new crop variety, after all, takes place in the farmer’s field. “We have some very progressive farmers in the state,” Grafton says. “We have some individuals who are not afraid to experiment.” One of them is Jim Broten, a large grower near Dazey, N.D., and past president of the U.S. Grains Council, which develops crop export markets. He’s seen a lot of changes in 45 years of farming. Advances in crop genetics have meant he saves money by using less fuel and fertilizer, and boosts revenues through higher yields. His corn yields, for instance,

have doubled during the past 20 years. That makes Broten, who also is a mechanical engineer, a firm believer in the value of research. “It makes farming more profitable,” he says. “It increases the bottom line. People don’t realize that.”

To protect that bottom line, Broten Farms is a showcase of diversification. He grows wheat, barley, sunflowers, canola, soybeans, corn, edible beans, potatoes, hay, sorghum and peas. He also raises livestock. As a kid, Broten heard about the devastating stem rust plague of the 1950s. He’s acutely aware of how that disaster was the impetus for the old greenhouses still in use at NDSU. “We just need these facilities,” he says, referring to the new greenhouse complex. The most impressive advances in plant genetics, in his view, have been in corn and soybeans. Both crops are relative newcomers to North Dakota. Ten years ago, Broten didn’t grow soybeans; 25 years ago, he didn’t grow corn, except for silage. He thinks that small grains, so important to so many North Dakota farmers, now must catch up in trait development to the precocious row crops. State-of-the-art greenhouses will help to make that happen. “We need these facilities to go after this kind of research,” Broten says.

The economic benefits that farmers realize from advances in crop genetics are vitally important, he adds. That’s because the cost of fuel, fertilizer and pesticides spiral upward, squeezing farmers, whose livelihoods depend on a low-margin business, and who must compete with growers around the globe. Farmers find themselves in a perpetual race, always looking to adopt new seed varieties, better equipment and more efficient methods to stay ahead of rising costs, not to mention threats posed by disease, such as new forms of stem rust. “We couldn’t be in business,” Broten says, “if we had the yields we had 10 years ago.”



Beneath North Dakota's impressive proliferation of crops, like an intricate root system, are research programs that have grown significantly since the 1950s. NDSU now has 13 crop-breeding programs, compared to a handful five decades ago, and each program has grown larger and more sophisticated, requiring more greenhouse space. Even with the addition of temporary greenhouses on campus, researchers lack room enough for all the experiments they'd like to conduct. But not for long. "We're going to be doing things we would never have thought of doing in the past," says Richard Horsley, a barley breeder who was involved in planning the new greenhouses. "This is a huge enhancement for the Experiment Station."

Dean Grafton credits Gov. John Hoeven and the North Dakota Legislature with recognizing the importance of the greenhouse by investing in the facility, with an estimated price tag of \$31 million. The first phase, opening in January 2010, cost \$11.575 million to build, and the second phase is expected to cost a bit less, \$11.45 million. Lawmakers will be asked in 2011 to support the third phase. "It's a wise investment by the state," Grafton says, noting that agriculture comprises an important part of the state's economic backbone. "It's something that's going to pay back to the state in the not-too-distant future. The payback will be tremendous."

Private support for the greenhouse complex also has been significant, says Peter Nygaard, assistant director of development for the NDSU Development Foundation. The North Dakota Soybean Council and American Crystal Sugar Company are two major donors, both grower constituencies that see the value in investing in research to adapt to new breeding opportunities and prepare for future threats farmers will face in the field. Monte Peterson, who farms near Valley City, serves as chairman of the research committee of the North Dakota Soybean Council, whose board members voted unanimously to make a sizeable contribution to the greenhouse project. "It should lead to some cutting-edge research," he says, taking a call from the cab of his sprayer, which he's using to apply pesticide to control spider mites on his soybean fields. "The facilities will give the opportunity to do some research that maybe hasn't been done before. Certainly it lends itself to producing better research with better results. I think most of us are optimistic about the research that will come. We're looking forward to the research that will come."

David Berg, president of American Crystal Sugar, says the greenhouse will enable NDSU researchers to build upon a solid foundation of achievements. "My impression is for years and years at NDSU we've had many of the best people in the world," Berg says. "This project really kind of brings the infrastructure up to that level. We need the best research possible." An example of the ingenuity that comes from the labs at NDSU is a system that allows sugar beet growers to "micro-apply" herbicides, saving farmers money and helping the environment. "That was developed and completely invented at NDSU," Berg says. Developing disease resistance is a continuing need, he notes, and the greenhouse augments the research base right in the heart of sugar beet country, the Red River Valley. "This one really lines up with the needs and the wants of the sugar beet industry."



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The project's second and third phases will double the size of the current "head house," the brickwork front of the greenhouse complex, including offices, preparation rooms and other facilities that serve the greenhouses themselves, which will extend to the west, toward test plots. The greenhouses will occupy about 60,000 square feet, more than a quarter of the footprint of the Fargodome, doubling the available greenhouse capacity on campus. Even with all that added room, greenhouse space remains at a premium. The complex will be managed with a scrutinizing eye for "managed utilization," meaning researchers will have to win approval for space, Grafton says. "This is very, very high quality space," he says. "We want to make sure we get the most bang for our buck." Safeguards are built in. Alarms will warn when the power fails, for example, triggering backup generators to keep temperatures from spiking or plunging and killing plants – ruining time-consuming experiments. "That's going to be a big help to us," Horsley says.

Sophisticated controls will regulate climate and other variables – 21st century technology instead of 1950s technology that will allow researchers to better investigate critical issues, such as carbon sequestration and invasive species. Importantly, some of the new space will provide bio-safety containment protection, allowing researchers to work with dangerous pathogens, including the likes of Ug99, which could cause catastrophic damage if released to the environment. "I think it'll be the most complicated building on campus when it's completed," Horsley says.

Of course, greenhouses aren't the only tools that have grown in sophistication. Phil McClean, a plant molecular geneticist at NDSU, says the new greenhouse will be an important upgrade in the chain of collaborative research that extends from the laboratory to the test field at the Center of Excellence for AgBiotechnology. Today plant breeders can do their work much more efficiently by using DNA markers to zero in on the genes that provide beneficial traits, eliminating much of the "trial and error" plant crosses that traditional breeding required. That means researchers have to test far fewer breeding lines than they once did. The use of molecular markers is just one

of the techniques that have been behind the advances in plant genetics at NDSU during the past 15 years, and especially the past five years, McClean says. “The greenhouse is just another example,” he adds. “We’re second to no one in the U.S. in terms of infrastructure. There’s no one who matches the number of breeding programs and crops at NDSU. That is a fact.”



The continuing spread of Ug99 – Kenya in 2001, Ethiopia in 2003, Sudan and Yemen in 2006, Iran in 2007 – has been called a ticking time bomb for the world’s wheat crop. Unchecked, experts say, the fungus could destroy 80 percent of the global wheat crop. After several years of intensive research, scientists have identified half a dozen genes that could help protect crops. Using traditional breeding methods, resistant crop varieties are eight to 12 years away. The emerging threat of Ug99, and its potential to sow famine, highlights the need for aggressive research, many agree. The containment of the 1950s stem rust epidemic, however, shows the challenge can be met, scientists say. “North Dakota might not have wheat today if there were not a major effort in annihilating that,” McClean says, referring to a collaboration between researchers at NDSU and U.S. Department of Agriculture labs in Fargo and St. Paul. “That basically saved North Dakota.”

On a less sobering note, Wilson says, the promise of further advances in crop genetics is among a host of factors pointing to continued upward pressure on commodities prices for the next six to eight years. That’s good news for North Dakota’s farmers – and the state’s economy. Farmland prices in North Dakota have risen during the past decade, reflecting the robust strength of the state’s cropping system and sometimes bucking a national trend. Meanwhile, Wilson says, global population growth and climate change are among the forces that will increase the need for genetically enhanced crops. Grafton agrees. “It’s going to require us to be as productive as possible in order to continue to feed the world,” he says. So NDSU’s new greenhouse complex has a daunting to-do list awaiting its completion. But that’s nothing new.



A large, dark gray, stylized number '5' is positioned on the left side of the page, extending vertically from the top to the bottom. The number is composed of thick, rounded lines. The word 'EXCERPTS' is written in a light gray, all-caps, serif font across the middle of the page, with the '5' partially overlapping it. Below 'EXCERPTS' is the phrase '{on education}' in a smaller, white, lowercase serif font, enclosed in curly braces.

EXCERPTS
{on education}

1.

Betsy Birmingham
{Associate Professor, *English*}



Educated people used to be able to know everything there was to know. Now we have so much more information out there that people need to know. People know smaller chunks of things, though they might have more depth in those areas, so knowledge is becoming more collaborative. We need more people who know their own little things to work together to share that information. So, for me, an important piece of being well-educated is being able to know where to find information, who to tap for that information and how to work with others to synthesize that information.

I don't think any of us can know enough anymore, and I think we need to honor the things that other people know in order to help ourselves be educated and knowledgeable. I don't always see that. Sometimes I see even us as teachers saying, "Oh, these kids don't know anything today." That always surprises me. They know different things than I know, but they know a lot about those things. In a pluralistic, multicultural society we're going to have different takes on things. Being educated means different things in different little subgroups, so we've got to hang out together and learn what other people know.

There has been an amazing mushrooming of content too. I think there's more stuff out there to know about more things, things that we hadn't even thought about in the past.

We used to have this notion of what it meant to be an educated man, right, because they typically were men. That meant probably some basic science, rhetoric and a classical education, being able to speak well, all of those things. Now we expect people to have sort of general medical and scientific

information. Things that would have been very specialized even a hundred years ago, we expect people to know those things.

I think there's much more to know as the world expands. A stick writing in the dirt, chalk writing on slate – small, small numbers of people had access to those technologies even though they were simple technologies. Now our world is becoming more and more literate – certainly at the functional level, but even beyond the functional level. We have more and more highly literate people in the world than we ever did before. Which isn't to say that everyone has good access yet. So, while those technologies might be the same, I would say our information retrieval technologies are much more sophisticated. So I don't need to know all the best that's been said and written. To paraphrase Matthew Arnold, I need to know how to access all the best that's been said and written and I need to make sure my students understand how to access that and then how to use it and pull it together.

2

DAVID BERRYHILL {Director of Special Programs, *College of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Natural Resources*}

An educated person would have heightened abilities to analyze, synthesize, understand and communicate plus a desire to continue to learn. I think the things I just described also would describe a person who was considered well educated centuries ago. Certainly the environment in which we exist is different. NDSU, compared to when I arrived here in 1971, is considerably different. A lot of that is good, but not everything. These are skills that are developed and hopefully will continue to develop throughout one's life. My education did not stop in 1971. In fact, I had an opportunity to reinvent myself, if you will, in 2002, taking on a new disciplinary area within my professional background. Virtually all of that was self-taught to the point that, in 2007, I co-wrote a book on the subject. That's what you can do in five years.

It was something that I'd never had any course work in. I had an awareness. But really, for my first years at NDSU, I was much more focused on bacterial genetics, molecular biology, those kinds of things. That's what I was teaching. Now, I am teaching about infectious diseases. These are the infectious diseases that are of concern with regard to bioterrorism because these are zoonotic diseases – they go from animals to humans and occasionally in the reverse direction. For instance, anthrax, which has been around forever, was the first agent of mass destruction released upon the United States. Rabies and the current "swine flu," more correctly known as "pandemic H1N1 influenza," also are zoonotic diseases.

The technology has changed dramatically. My workday had to do with yellow legal pads, overhead transparencies and overhead projectors that I printed on by hand with Sharpie markers, as opposed to projectors in the room, computers, the Internet and all of these new tools. Students sitting there instead of with paper notebooks, sitting there with their laptops. It's different, not necessarily better, but it's different.





3.

WILL BLEIER {Professor and Department Head, *Biological Sciences*}

One way to look at education is what knowledge a person has or what tools he or she has that can be used to survive. I've often thought that if one took a Neanderthal at birth today and raised him or her in our environment, would he/she turn out to be a competent biologist, or a rocket scientist or whatever? I think probably so. It would be an interesting experiment that we can't do.

I think an educated person needs to be someone who is well versed, whatever that means, well read, well versed in a variety of areas. I think today maybe too many of us, and I include myself, focus in on a particular area. I don't consider myself educated in the same sense as a variety of people I've known during the years. The other part is that an educated person needs to have a historical perspective. The molecular biologists, the population geneticists, all these people are doing very, very sophisticated studies today. I would argue it is important to place the studies into the historical context of where population genetics was a hundred years ago, where cell biology was a hundred years ago. Then, the other thing I think an educated person needs is knowledge of the global community. How can one really be educated if one doesn't have a sense of the global community?

I think it's harder and harder. I don't know the exact numbers, but people say we are in a situation now where we double our knowledge every x number of years. Let's just assume it's every 10 years. No one, at least very, very few people, can keep up with that. I may be too old to think about an

educated person in the current situation. All of us think that we can go to Google and do a search and we're good at it. No, most of us are not. I tell students all the time, "If you want to find somebody who really knows how to find information, you go talk to a reference librarian, because they are experts in that."

An educated person not only has either in his or her brain a wealth of information, but each also knows what to do with it. Today, a lot of people can quickly access information, but where's the critical thinking, where's the integration of it, where's the problem solving?

One can't be educated one day and then 20 years later still claim to be educated. It's a life-long learning process to maintain this educated state. Whether libraries are shelves of books, or whether a library is a computer where one can read anything that can be accessed around the world, an educated person still has that curiosity and that drive to learn and to ponder things.



4.

KALPANA KATTI {University Distinguished Professor, *Civil Engineering*}

In my mind, somebody who has formal education only (higher education) does not constitute an educated person. I think an educated person, besides having that formal education, is somebody whose mind is open to ideas. Especially in engineering and science, the content of what we learn evolves. So 20 years from now, what we're teaching in classes now becomes less significant. A person who's educated is somebody who, besides their formal education, has that open mind to new ideas that can continue to grow. If somebody's mind is closed, it doesn't matter how many degrees they have because in a few years what they have learned will become redundant.

What I understand education is has definitely evolved in my lifetime. When you are younger, you think an educated person is someone with a Ph.D. or who went to law school or has some college degrees or things like that. I think it is really about your mind having the ability to grow. Education is where you can continue to grow and your mind doesn't stay closed on a certain theory, a certain philosophy, even a certain discipline. I think there have always been people in this world who have understood that. If you think of how the scholars were a hundred years ago, the scholars have the same mindset today.

What is scholarship and what is education also has stayed the same for centuries. What has changed is the actual content of education. If you have a degree in mechanical engineering, civil engineering, chemistry, etc., certainly the content of that has evolved, but really what education means has not evolved. That's why you have brilliant professors who got their degrees 30 years ago, and certainly what they learned in their college years is not even

close to what they're teaching today. They have the ability to do so because they really got something out of their education.

The person who is studying needs to have their mind engaged. The teacher's role depends on their maturity level. If their maturity level is very high, they don't even need a teacher. But often with younger people, their maturity level is low and they need somebody to engage them, and so there is a teacher who is concerned about their well-being, who is knowledgeable. That is a basic tool of education, i.e. the student-teacher relationship, and that's been the same for centuries. The physical tools have evolved such as paper pencil versus blackboard versus whiteboard versus projectors and laptops and pocket PCs and PDAs and now Facebook, and will continue to change. Those are just generational things, I think. The basic tool of education is the student-teacher relationship, a concept where the person who wants the education needs to have their mind engaged, and the person who is facilitating it is concerned enough about the student. This is an ancient concept that never will change and which goes back millennia and is documented in Eastern cultures.

5

R.S. KRISHNAN {Professor and Associate Vice President, *Academic Affairs*}

My sense of an educated person is somebody who is knowledgeable, has an understanding of the world, and has skills requisite to what he or she wants to accomplish in particular areas, perhaps, and who uses that knowledge either through formal education or through experience as a life-long process. I went through what you call a British system of education. That is, you go through a formal educational process, get a degree, and that qualifies you as an “education person.” But, I think that has changed, especially because of technology. I think knowledge comes to us through a variety of sources. How we formalize that knowledge through a curricular process or through a particular process or through a system of formal educational process allows us to expand the area of our understanding.

I try to remember Aristotle’s quote, “It is a mark of an educated mind to entertain a thought without accepting it.” That to me suggests that you have to be able to contain contradictory ideas simultaneously.

The delivery of the content has changed certainly. I think most students who come to college nowadays are visual learners. They have far more understanding of technology, I think. They take to it very well. That requires a delivery system, knowledge has to change as well. That’s what they expect. So the traditional methodology, while still very useful, I think, has to expand to include

what it is that students need to know in a way that they will more easily access that knowledge.

That’s how I look at it. I was lectured to most of the time. We would pay careful attention and try to understand what’s being taught. An examination would be a focal point of our trying to retain or indicate how much knowledge we had retained. It has its points. But, at the same time, we are a visual culture with social media. There are a lot more easily accessible ways of imparting news, information, knowledge, and students tend to gravitate toward that much more quickly than to the traditional ways. Take online education. You have the ability to learn the same or similar things without being in the classroom. Technology has allowed the space, the virtual space, to be the classroom. It allows you to multi-task, too. And that phrase was not in the lexicon 10 or 20 years ago. We always have new ways of learning new things.



Recording a Life

It all began in a college speech class. The assignment: a speech of tribute to someone you admire. First-year student, Kari Hagen, from Roseau, Minnesota, took the podium with confidence and left it with a classroom of 24 students and me, the teacher, in tears. This was the first I had heard of Nancy Burggraf, first woman nominated to the United States Hockey Hall of Fame.

She had never played hockey or coached a team, but in five decades Burggraf worked with more than 40,000 players in her specialized camps and clinics. Burggraf could look at a player and determine what would improve his play while also connecting on a personal and spiritual level. She died from Lou Gehrig's disease after helping the Roseau Rams win the 1999 Minnesota Hockey State Tournament.

"Why haven't we heard of her before?" asked one student. "She should be famous."

Hagen's speech and Burggraf got lost in my day-to-day duties until two weeks later when I sat in the dental chair for an annual cleaning. I scanned the many articles, photos and family memorabilia my hygienist Becky had posted high on the wall. There she was, staring down at me – Nancy Burggraf.

"Why do you have that photo?" I asked, pushing away the suction tube.

"That's my mom."

In the following days and weeks Becky, the four other Burggraf siblings, and Bernie, Burggraf's husband, shared Burggraf's life story with me. Hockey players Burggraf trained encouraged me to keep going; they said it was more than just an article. Friends of Burggraf and news reporters I interviewed said, "It's about time someone told her story."

As I worked with the research, akin to putting a blob of clay on the potter's wheel, I felt the story spinning in another direction. It formed a slide show. I visualized a 5-foot-3, 110-pound Burggraf training a team in preseason power skating using what they called "voodoo hockey" techniques, including acupressure and massage. When she let out one shrill whistle, they skated to attention. These were huge guys, and she commanded their respect, often outskating them while they hung over the boards exhausted.



Writing and journalism theory talks about ethics and truth telling. What's in? What's out? There is great power in editing. Wouldn't we like to edit our own lives and cut what we don't like? We took this power seriously as we listened to memories and perceptions of Burggraf.

I gathered mental images of Burggraf training the Roseau Rams in the 1970s with players rolling their eyes and making snide comments about being taught by an “old woman.” Again, the whistle. They snapped to attention.

I heard that whistle as well, and it told me to change creative directions. This story should be a film, a documentary. I'd never done a film before. How hard could it be? I asked two of my Concordia communication students if they'd like to join me in a “special” film project. They agreed and we received a research grant to fund the production. We wrote a three-year timeline to log hours of interviews in Roseau, Minneapolis, Fargo-Moorhead and Grand Forks, and learned how to use cameras, microphones, lighting and editing machines. Then came the storyboard.

We plastered a wall with color-coded note cards and quotes, moving them here and there to form a life script. We brought in two more students for creative film editing and musical composition. The students cut much of my writing, insisting we tell the story with images not words. Reluctantly, I gave in.

Writing and journalism theory talks about ethics and truth telling. What's in? What's out? There is great power in editing. Wouldn't we like to edit our own lives and cut what we don't like? We took this power seriously as we listened to memories and perceptions of Burggraf.

We found that people tended to remember events in different ways, filtering and processing information as they saw it. When Burggraf became ill with ALS, some remember her crying out in frustration and anger, while others remember her never being angry. So we included both those perceptions, struggled as best we could with these choices and came as close to the truth as we could. It was exhausting to be sensitive interviewers and careful listeners, especially when it involves a terminal illness. Newspaper articles, help from historical organizations, extended family members and Burggraf's journals rounded out our research.

After eight script and editing drafts, the film premiered in 2002 and received a screening at the Fargo Film Festival, winning the Ruth Landfield Award for portraying a woman of compassion, conviction and courage. But the challenge continued – the next step in the creative process – making the film into a print biography to meet requirements for a Master's of Fine Arts in Creative Writing at Minnesota State University Moorhead. The big decision, how to frame and organize the story? How to keep the reader engaged? The film had progressed in chronological order, but with help from writing professors, peer workshop writers and my editor in Minneapolis, it took on a new look.

After several false starts, I decided to frame Burggraf's life within the timeline of the 1999 State Hockey Tournament and move back and forth in time. She had worked with these boys since they were seven years old. This was her team. And after all, hockey is like a religion in Roseau, whose team plays one level up, with the big city teams. They are like Hoosiers on Ice. They had only lost one game that year, and they dedicated the tournament to Burggraf, now on her deathbed. And in the final game, they got a shut out for her, beating Hastings 4-0.

At her funeral, there were 97 baskets of flowers, and 60 hockey players were pallbearers.

A few times, when I wanted to start a bonfire with the project, an unusual inspiration happened. Like the Friday afternoon as I was researching Burggraf's funeral text from Job 19: “How I wish that someone would remember my words and record them in a book! Or with a chisel carve my words in stone so they would last forever.” Enough said. Keep going.

That's how Nancy Burggraf came to live with me. Holding her sweatpants up to me, I knew that they would fit. Her ice skates were my size, and I carried my research in her Burggraf Skating Skills bag. She loved her family, hometown, friends, faith, and her hockey players. And she loved to push her own body, which would turn against her all too soon. For Burggraf and her storytellers, it was a journey with joys and struggles, ups and downs, but nevertheless a journey into the light.

My speech student was right all along. Nancy Burggraf should be famous.

Merrie Sue Holtan



layers of history *Students work to restore earthen home*



Forty miles northwest of Dickinson, in western North Dakota, are the remains of an earthen house and four outbuildings – a livestock barn, a garage with an attached coal shed, a granary and a chicken coop. Clay mortar holds together the sandstone slab walls. Rough-hewn logs, brush, straw and eight inches of clay make up the roofs.

Unlike the drafty wood frame houses built for the purpose of staying just long enough to “prove up” the claim before selling it, earthen homes are a symbol of permanence on the Great Plains. Yet it doesn’t take long for an earthen building to decay. Cattle often do the work by rubbing up against the sides. Only a few earthen houses remain in secluded areas, and the art of building them has largely been lost.

The Hutmacher farm in western North Dakota is the best example in the Great Plains of earthen-roofed stone-slab vernacular architecture, a traditional method of construction that uses locally available resources as building materials. The Hutmachers used techniques imported with the Germans from Russia, an ethnic group that immigrated to North Dakota in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Frank Hutmacher was born in 1902 in Sulz, Russia. In 1911, he immigrated to the United States with his parents, Valentine and Frances, who built their farmstead in western North Dakota’s rolling landscape. The remains of that farm still lie in a field where cattle graze around a nearby spring.

Frank grew up and married Veronica Nuss in 1927. Between 1928 and 1930, he and his brothers built a new earthen home across the road. It was a modest two rooms to overlook their 300- to 400-acre spread. Over the years, they continued to add rooms on either end – a new kitchen in 1941, another bedroom in 1950 and a *vörhausl*, or entry vestibule, in 1962, where they washed laundry and housed the cream separator. Electricity was added between 1961 and 1964. They never added plumbing to the 1,000-square-foot house.

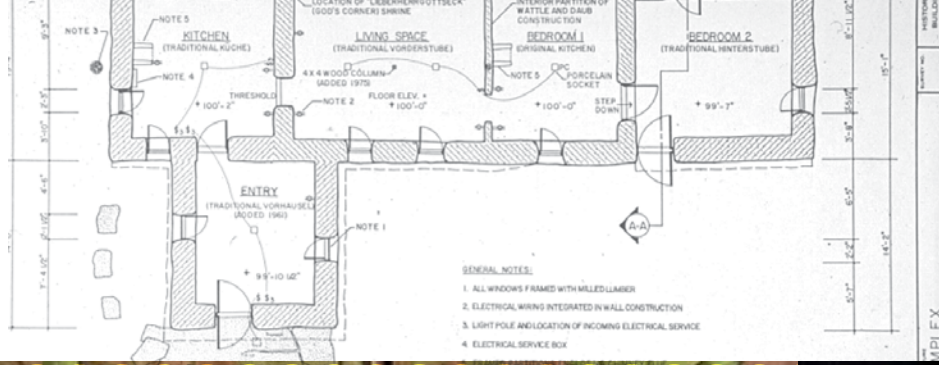
The National Register of Historic Places lists the Hutmacher farm as one of the few remaining examples of this architectural style. The listing calls the house “especially rare in the purity of architectural form, the utilization of only native building materials and the absence of intrusion by other building forms.”

The farm’s last resident, Frank and Veronica’s son, Alex, left in 1979. The house quickly fell into disrepair.

From Manning, N.D., the farm is a 12-mile drive down hilly, gravel roads lined with wild sunflowers, cattle ranges, flax fields, road construction equipment and the occasional oil well. On a sunny July morning, a caravan of vehicles carrying students, ranging from a North Dakota State University junior to a retired couple from Washington, kicks up dust over the last ridge to the Hutmacher farm. The students are there to restore a piece of the past and to re-create a lost art of prairie home construction.

The vehicles drive through the enclosure fence, where a sign warns of rattlesnakes, and soon almost a dozen people are pulling on work gloves. They are ready to re-roof the kitchen.





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photos by Dan Koeck





*Recipe for top layer of clay,
the resistance layer:*

- 4 inches thick
- 1 bucket lime water
- 1 bucket chopped wheat straw
- 2 buckets yellow clay
- 4 buckets masonry sand
- 2 buckets scoria



Restoration efforts took decades to get to this point. In 1980, Steve Burian of rural Manning purchased the farmstead and donated it to the Dunn County Historical Society. Lack of manpower and resources kept the society from doing much, and they gave it back. Steve Martens, NDSU associate professor of architecture, led a group to the site in 1995 to record what they could before the building completely degraded.

In 2007, Burian's son, Arnold, deeded the property over to Preservation North Dakota, a statewide non-profit organization for historical preservation. They landed a \$98,000 grant to fix the site from Save America's Treasures, a federal program. Now they needed workers.

Labor came from Tom Isern, NDSU distinguished professor of history, and Suzanne Kelley, doctoral candidate and president of Preservation North Dakota. The students are here for Isern's field school, "Prairie Earth, Prairie Homes." Isern previously took students to the site as an optional assignment in one of his history classes, but this is the first course entirely dedicated to restoration efforts. The course is open to students, teachers and anyone else with a desire to learn about earthen home dwellings and willing to get their hands dirty.

For most of the week, the class tours western North Dakota to visit a variety of earthen homes. On Tuesday, a gray and spitty day, they stop at the Hutmacher farm to deconstruct the roof over the kitchen and entryway. Strong winds and sudden downpours make the work miserable. One graduate student falls thigh-deep into the roof. They huddle together under a tarp they stretched over the garage.

By Friday, the sun is out and a slight breeze keeps the temperature from becoming unbearable. The air smells of sweet clover, dry mown grass, wild sage and clay. The odors help to evoke the farm's past.

Hutmacher wanted to keep his building costs down by using nearby resources. The stones came from the tops of the nearby hills. Hutmacher mined clay from a hill 100 yards to the west, where a coal vein also supplied the family fuel for heat and cooking. Cottonwood trees provided ridge beams to support the green ash rafters. Buckthorn, chokecherry, buffalo berry, willow, plum and red haw brush were laid over the rafters, followed by straw. Hutmacher then shoveled on layers of clay for waterproofing. Water for the clay came from the spring across the road.

The house is an index of the countryside. Every piece of the house draws from the land around it, and soon it's easy to imagine life on the farm.

The house is an index of the countryside. Every piece of the house draws from the land around it, and soon it's easy to imagine life on the farm. The children struggling up the ditch to the gravel road carrying water. Frank mixing clay to patch the roof. Veronica cooking her famous chicken noodle soup. The farm comes to life, and its story is of a family using what they had at hand to make their home at an estimated cost of \$100.

Eleanor (Hutmacher) Urlacher grew up in the house from 1932 to 1953. She visits the class on Friday to talk about life on the farm. She tells the students how her parents couldn't plant flowers next to the house since the dirt run-off from the roof would bury them, how they had to move the root cellar three times because of cave-ins, how they farmed with horses until 1950, how her father spent six weeks making the garage one summer and would mine coal for the year in one two-week stint, and how they only had one "very serious" ceiling leak she can remember.

The house served as a popular resting spot for neighbors on the way to St. Edward's Catholic Church or nearby Fayette, which is now a ghost town. They played whist and other card games at the living room table while catching up on news of neighbors. A notch in the plaster wall still marks the spot where the table stood.

The Hutmachers raised their four girls and one boy at the farm. Veronica died in 1969. Frank died in 1974. Both are buried in St. Edward's Cemetery, a windswept area just across the road and filled with Hutmachers and other local families. Bush-like weeds cover many of the older, weatherworn gravestones. From the cemetery, the house looks much as it did 30 years ago.

The temperature continues to rise as the day wears on. The air is at least 10 degrees cooler inside the house's 16-inch-thick walls, but the years have not been kind. Splintered wood covers the floors that aren't bare dirt. Cracked and peeling paint, once bright shades of pink, green and lavender, coats the walls in patches. Straw pokes out of the clay and manure-based plaster. Of the ceiling made from cardboard and fabric soaked in wheat paste, only the rusty jar lids that held it in place remain. The five-foot-high door-frames slant to the side, and all are easy to bump into when not looking. A fine powder of dust and clay covers everything.

Outside, other sandstone buildings in various states of decay surround the students as they work. The chicken coop still has some glass in the windows, while the root cellar is now little more than a depression in the ground behind the fence surrounding the property. Old farm machinery rusts along the fence line.

Isern, dressed in tan Carhartt overalls, black boots, a red t-shirt and a green NDSU Bison baseball cap, sits cross-legged on the roof. He's waiting for more flax straw to lay over the prickly brush. It looks precarious, but he seems comfortable.





“This is a type of labor-intensive building in that it’s every year. Every year. There’s a German Russian saying – It’s work that makes life sweet.”

Even with sample testing to determine what the plaster is made of and what recipe they used for the roof, re-creating the technique of building takes more than ingredients. They still can’t get the plaster to stick to the wall as well as it used to, and they must constantly adjust the clay mix for the roof to contend with weather conditions and ingredient quality. Right out of the mixer, the clay

looks like chocolate frosting and feels like firm mud – easy to roll into a little ball and a bit gritty. Clay dust is in the air. After dumping in ingredients for the second layer of clay roof, history student Robert Kurtz spits. “I taste it,” he says.

The students work independently. Isern gives out very few orders. Everyone knows what must get done. When they need more water to make mud, Kelley runs the trailer into Killdeer to fill it up at the local campground. When they need more clay, one of the students runs the Bobcat out to dig up more. When they need more brush, Isern takes his truck to the top of a nearby hill to cut out some bull berry.



They use a few modern conveniences – a mixer, a Bobcat and a chainsaw – but mostly they work the house in the same way Hutmacher did. They re-create old skills not used in modern construction. They rely on each other to carry ridge poles and keep the chopped flax straw coming.

The class is able to get two layers of clay on one half of the kitchen by Saturday evening. The other half and the entryway are covered in brush. It's not as much as they hoped to get done, but it will be easy for the next group to continue the work in the fall.

“We’re trying to do something a bit more enduring than the Hutmachers,” says Isern. “This is a type of labor-intensive building in that it’s every year. Every year. There’s a German Russian saying – It’s work that makes life sweet.”

Once the main building is done, the preservation group will decide what to do next. They could go on and restore the other buildings on site, or they could start working on restoring the interior of the house to its 1950s condition. It all depends on funding. Half the students pledge their return to work on the site. Several of them talk of bringing their families.

–J. Hagen

A NEW *hall*

About 2,500 students a day attend classes at North Dakota State University's downtown locations. Here is the newest addition, Richard H. Barry Hall, home to the College of Business, the Department of Agribusiness and Applied Economics, and other offices like the North Dakota Trade Office, a branch of the NDSU Bookstore, a coffee shop, and great study space in the atrium. The tower on the left previously housed Pioneer Mutual, and the atrium, which you see at the forefront, was added on. Behind the atrium is AgCountry Auditorium, also added as part of the project. City buses stop by every 12 minutes or so to take students to and from other parts of campus.





PRAIRIE



Fieshel Knigh
(closed)

BOOK EXCERPT by Robert Dodge

MURDER

North

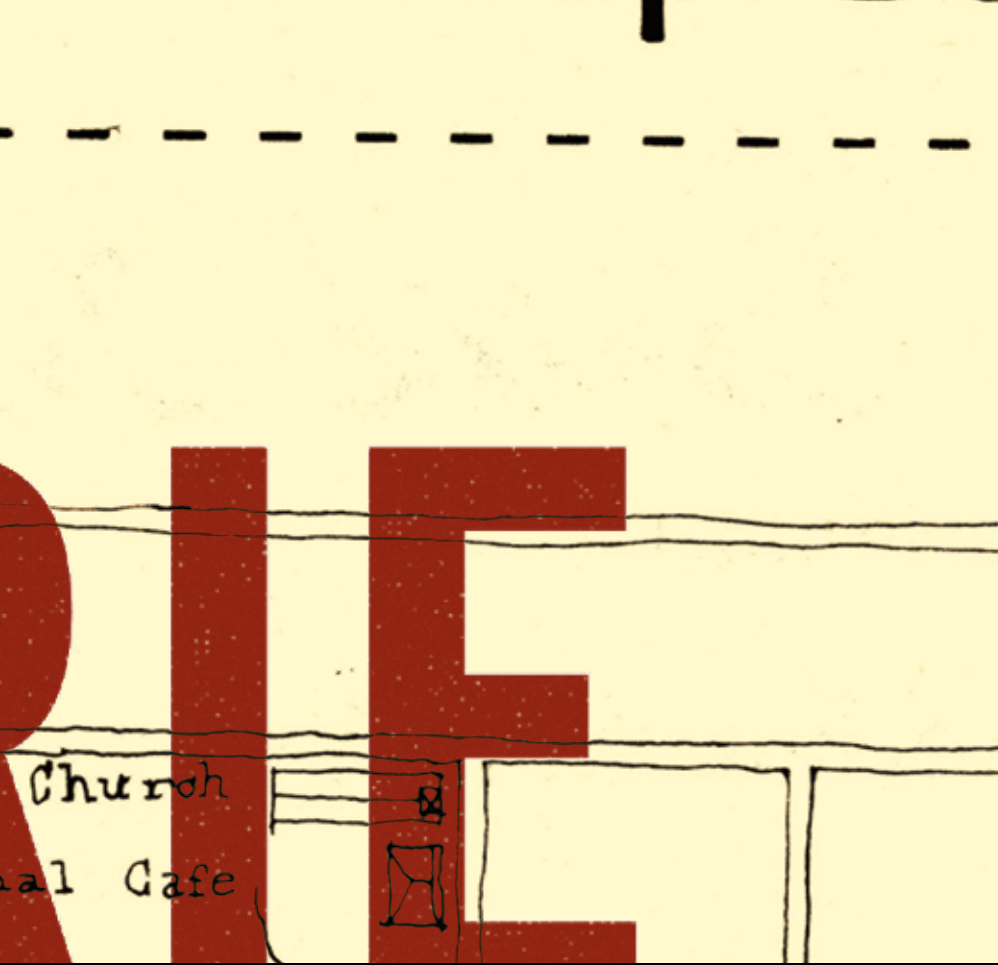
Pauls Bar

Knife
River

Luckies Bar

Dance Hall





ROBERT DODGE'S BOOK, *PRAIRIE MURDERS*, IS A STORY ABOUT NORTH DAKOTA AS MUCH AS ABOUT MURDERS. THIS EXCERPT IS THE INTRODUCTION, WHICH SETS THE STAGE FOR THE PERIOD WHEN THE EVENTS TOOK PLACE.



THE INTRODUCTION:

As the curtain came down on the 1960s, young people across the country were taking to the streets and protesting. Social activism sometimes got out of control over the great social and political issues of the times – civil rights and the continuing War in Vietnam.

When these activities were beyond the capabilities of local law enforcement to control or they turned into riots, the National Guard was frequently called out, such as at Kent State in 1970.

It is a telling commentary on North Dakota that, in its entire history, the National Guard has only been called on once to officially disperse a riot. That happened in the middle of the era of civil consciousness and public protest on May 10, 1969. What gives this incident such a North Dakota flavor is the special nature of the student riot the National Guard was called in to control.

In that 1969 spring, a year after the assassinations of Martin Luther King, Jr., and Bobby Kennedy and the Tet Offensive in Vietnam, and as America was preparing to send a man to the moon to take command of the space race, there had been race riots and antiwar demonstrations, forcing campuses across the nation to look at new curricula and shut down at times. National Guardsmen were frequently on campuses and patrolling streets in urban areas.

At North Dakota State University in Fargo, Kevin Carvell, the editor of the college newspaper *The Spectrum*, convinced some others on the staff to do something more mundane, rather than take on the great issues for the moment. It was time for a staff picnic, since spring break was coming, and they thought they'd make a bit more of the event. It could be a real joke of the North Dakota variety, which involved playing into people's stereotypes of the state and laughing at themselves while others did the same.

There is a fine line between a joke about being backward hicks where others see a joke and where locals believe that, since outsiders are laughing, they really are hicks and are ashamed. Those remain individual choices prairie people like North Dakotans deal with.

Carvell's choice for the location of college newspaper's staff spring picnic was the town of Zap, which he thought was a strange name. The staff went along with it and published their plans, and student body

PRAIRIE MURDERS

BOOK EXCERPT by Robert Dodge

ZAP to BISMA

a proposed *Spectrum* ended at the Seratoma smarck on the morning. The people in Zap at happened in be-

s a joke to many abounded. What if st in Zap? What if ple there? Wouldn't

vide. The Associated

Spectrum.

Came the week. Monday . . . Tuesday . . . Wednesday . . . Thursday. That's the day, Thursday. The Festival began. A group from Florida pulled into Zap and settled in. Signs in the two bars stated: "Florida was first." All was calm.

Friday morning — anticipation was high. The beer supplies were in.

The Flieshe Keuchle were being made. Everything was ready. But was it? No matter, the kids were on their way. They had been invited; they were going to be



president Chuck Stroup took out an ad supporting it. They really did intend to have a newspaper staff gathering, but the way the idea was presented was a bit more.

The paper proclaimed that while college students all over America would have the opportunity to head off to Florida and other sunny climes for spring break, what about a choice for those living in this isolated middle of the continent? Zap was the answer, and "Zip to Zap" was born with a front page story by Carvell in The Spectrum.

Zap, with a population of 271, had been known to state residents previously as part of a response to the puzzle, name three North Dakota towns that sound like Kellogg's Rice Krispies "snap, crackle and pop" commercial. They were "Zap, Gackle and Mott." The article promised great times for college students in Zap, concluding with, "a full program of orgies, brawls, freakouts, and arrests are being planned. Do you dare miss it?"

The story was picked up by Moorhead State University across the river from Fargo and the University of North Dakota, ninety miles north in Grand Forks. The idea moved beyond being a joke when the Associated Press got wind of it and turned it into national news.

It was a time when young people congregated, expecting excitement and fun. The ultimate example would come three months after Zap at a dairy farm in New York with less facilities than Zap, but with open space and a great schedule of music, when nearly half a million would head to the Woodstock Festival.

The Zip to Zap, offering nothing, came on May 9 as an estimated 3,000 college students poured into the town, some from as far off as Florida, New Jersey, and Louisiana and outnumbering the local population by ten to one. The two local bars were soon dry and had angered the students by doubling their prices, while cafés were not nearly prepared for such numbers. As the temperature dropped in the evening, a vacant building was torn up to use as firewood for a bonfire in the center of Main Street.

RCK



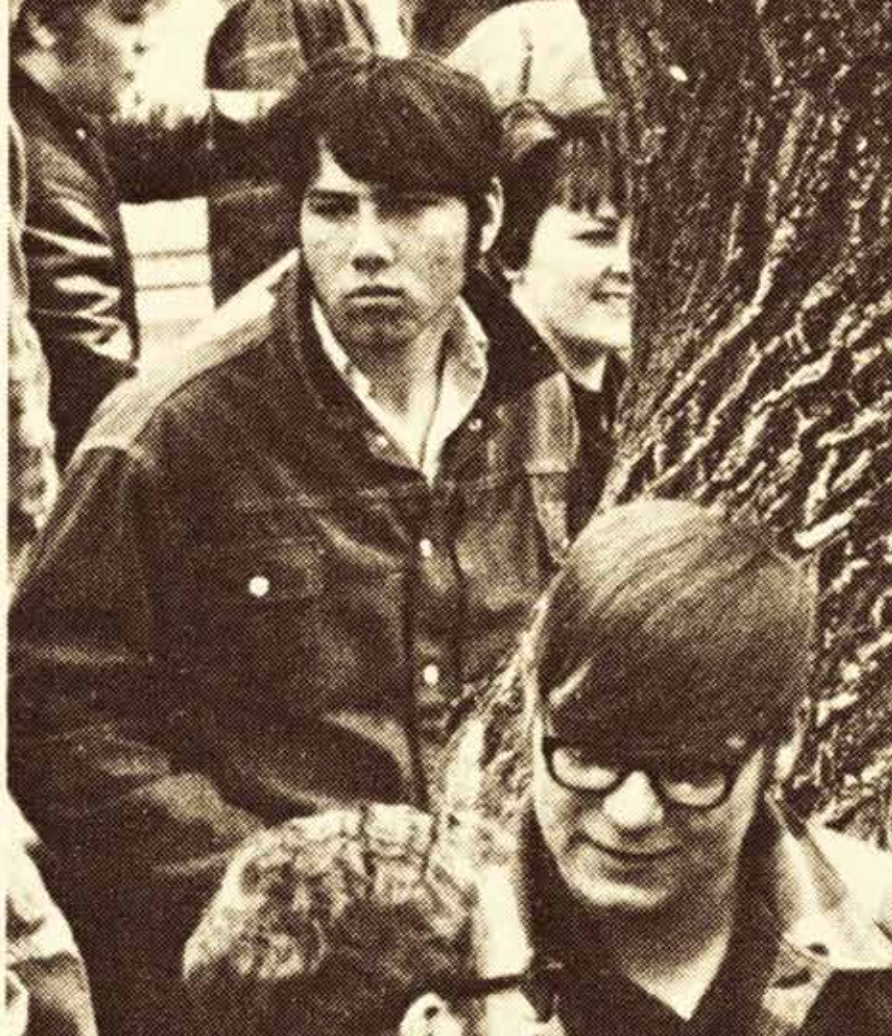
National Guard doing their thing in Zap.



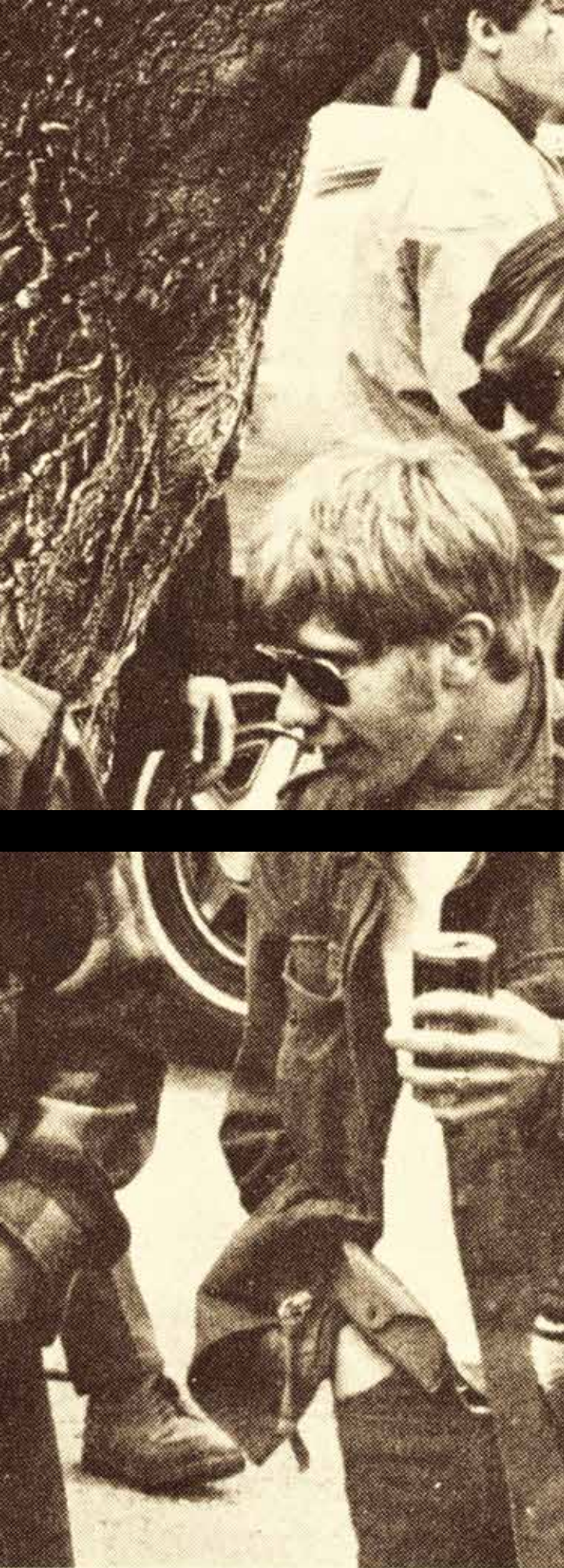


PRAIRIE MURDERS

BOOK EXCERPT *by Robert Dodge*



visitors were everywhere



re in Bismarck's River

A number of students left and headed for other towns when the local people asked them to go, but about 1,000 refused, and some local businesses' windows were shattered as things began to get out of control. Several hundred merrymakers carried on throughout the night, vomiting and urinating in public while some passed out, as others slept anywhere they could find, in cars, on blankets, on the street.

The Fargo Forum reported, "There were Vietnam veterans, fuzzy-cheeked teenagers, fraternity men, long-hairs, and a minority of girls. Virtually all of the students were drinking and a majority were drunk." It was seen by this time as a riot.

At dawn 500 National Guardsmen entered with fixed bayonets. Empty beer cans and broken glass crunched under the boots of the troops as they faced little resistance while they cleared out the town. Some revilers moved on to the nearby small towns of Beulah and Hazen, and at 8:30 a.m. about 1,000 students had congregated in Beulah's main street, chanting "Open the bar. Open the bar." Again the National Guard arrived and the show was soon over.

The joke gone awry was the lead story that night on Walter Cronkite's CBS News and was carried by most major newspapers, including the Soviet Union's Pravda. News magazines told the story and their coverage made a mockery of North Dakota's provincialism and isolation.

Zap submitted bills for damage caused by the young people to the student governments of North Dakota State University and the University of North Dakota and was paid. North Dakota's only riot; the only time the National Guard has been called up to control rioting.

Carvell recalls, "Some people thought it was a left-wing commie conspiracy, but Zip to Zap was zero political. The 'commies' who showed up included the Vets Club, the football team, the Theta Chi fraternity." His comment echoes The Fargo Forum's coverage from the day, even as the crowd made its attempts in the final moments to vent frustrations. They reported, "A staggering student from Pittsburgh, Pa., refused to move, yelling 'stick it to me, stick it to me.' ... Some students tried to shout anti-establishment and anti-military rhetoric at the Guardsmen, but they were too drunk to make any coherent, well-founded statements." What The Spectrum staff had done was more in the tradition of Norwegian jokes told by North Dakota's many Norwegian descendants, where they laughed at themselves and their heritage.

It was still Cold War time and a typical joke was the one about the Russian, the American, and the Norwegian talking about their space programs. The American said, "We are going to go to Mars." The

Russian said, "Oh, really. Well we're doing more than that. We are going to Jupiter." The Norwegian chimed in with, "We can top both of those. We are going to the sun." The American and the Russian looked at each other and chuckled, then said, "You can't do that because once you were within millions and millions of miles of it, the heat would be so great your spaceship and the people in it would disintegrate." The Norwegian replied, "We know that, so we are going at night." This kind of joke initiated humor about themselves and their heritage that assumed they were the dull-witted, uncultured country hicks others presumed they were and they joined in the laughter.

Like the Zap-in demonstrated and its coverage announced to the world, this could reinforce those stereotypes and make some people in North Dakota begin to accept the beliefs as well. A thesaurus written on America's East or West Coast that included "North Dakota" might well offer the following synonyms: "blizzard, remote, unsophisticated, farmer, hick." If the book had been produced in North Dakota, the entry would be more likely to say something like "honest, neighborly, courageous, hard working." They would both include descriptive elements that had foundations in truth, but those in the first set are interrelated, and North Dakotans have long been aware of outsiders' views of them and their home on the Canadian border and were hurt, or in some cases ashamed of their state.

Some fell into holding the same disdainful views as were held by more urbanized outsiders, feeling inferior or focusing on the hardships of the weather and the lack of cultural activity, such as when Eric Severeid, a native of the

small North Dakota town of Velva, who offered commentary for years on Walter Cronkite's CBS News, did when he described the state as "a meaningless rectangle."

Others wore the weather as a badge of courage that showed the strength of character and fortitude of the people who had settled the prairie and those who remained and survived what nature threw at them, helping each other through it. That difficult life had given them a common challenge and sense of community. They worked harder, worshipped more, counted on family and neighbors. Their payoff for living hard lives was longer lives. The highest number of triple-digitarians in the nation was in the state where hard work and clean air came with a pace of life that measured time in seasons.

The entry for a thesaurus that comes to mind first when one leaves Minnesota and crosses the Red River into North Dakota, is "flat." This most rural state in the nation is pancake flat in the east. It was once the bottom of the great glacial lake, Lake Agassiz, created as glaciers retreated at the end of the last ice age. The sediment deposited at the bottom of the lake created remarkably fertile soil where wheat, oats, and sunflowers grow in abundance. The flatness made for spectacularly large views of the skies to horizons in all directions and watching the weather was a major concern, as it varied dramatically and the agricultural economic base was dependent on it. "Strength from the Soil" became the appropriate words on the State Coat of Arms.



Images courtesy of NDSU Archives





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