

Panelist: ND must brag and ‘push, push, push’

Economic conference to continue in Grand Forks through Thursday

BY DELANEY OTTO
Grand Forks Herald

GRAND FORKS — With more than 17,000 open jobs in North Dakota and just one third of a person available for each opening, attraction initiatives for potential workers and collaboration with business site selectors were among the conversations during the second day of the Economic Development Association of North Dakota’s spring conference.

North Dakota’s modesty is one thing that keeps it from being a target for potential residents and businesses, economic development leaders and

site selectors said at the conference.

“We have to be willing to be innovative and competitive,” said Brekka Kramer, president and CEO of the Minot Chamber EDC.

The EDND spring conference, held in Grand Forks for the first time in 10 years, brought together local and state leaders, businesses and other community organizations for discussions about economic development. The panels held during the second day of the conference took place in the Olive Ann Hotel’s Cloud 9 Suite, which was packed with people from across the state and beyond. Two

of those panels, held back to back, focused on talent attraction initiatives for workforce development and how to put North Dakota on the map for site selection.

The former panel consisted of speakers Kramer; Becca Cruger, workforce development director of the Grand Forks Region EDC; and Pat Bertagnolli, executive director of North Dakota Job Service. The panel was moderated by Sarah Michael, a talent attraction specialist from the North Dakota Department of Commerce. Panelists spoke of the North Dakota worker attraction initiative Find the Good

Life, which has been in action since June 2022. Other initiatives, such as Minot Wayfinder and Grand Forks is Cooler, also were topics that showed how local initiatives can bring in new residents.

Ways of further pushing these initiatives and gaining attention from those outside the state were discussed, such as utilizing video projects, getting youth involved and making North Dakota more visible. Bertagnolli, who has visited multiple North Dakota communities, said he looks for showmanship

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Delaney Otto / Grand Forks Herald

From left, Sarah Michael, talent attraction specialist from the North Dakota Department of Commerce; Brekka Kramer, president and CEO of the Minot Chamber EDC; Becca Cruger, workforce development director of the Grand Forks Region EDC; and Pat Bertagnolli, executive director of North Dakota Job Service, talk about talent attraction initiatives. They spoke at the Economic Development Association of North Dakota spring conference on Thursday, May 2, 2024, in Grand Forks.

More than 700 attend CVIC event

Mission, concerns and progress of the CVIC shared with attendees

BY SAV KELLY
Grand Forks Herald

Editor’s Note: If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic violence, visit CVIC’s website at <https://www.cviconline.org/> or call the 24-hour crisis line at (701) 746-8900.

GRAND FORKS

During the CVIC’s annual Judd Sondreal Memorial Rise & Shine for Peace Breakfast, CEO and President Coiya Tompkins Inman emphasized the power each individual has to address interpersonal violence in the Grand Forks community.

“When we have a team that believes in themselves and believes (in ending interpersonal violence) in two generations, I believe our dreams are limitless,” Tompkins Inman said. “Those dreams signify hope. They signify hope in one community that cares, one individual who sees you and one friend who says, ‘I’m there for you.’”

More than 700 people gathered Wednesday morning, May 1, in the



Korrie Wenzel / Grand Forks Herald

Coiya Tompkins Inman speaks during the CVIC’s annual Judd Sondreal Memorial Rise & Shine for Peace Breakfast, held Wednesday, May 1, 2024, at the Alerus Center in Grand Forks.

Alerus Center ballroom for CVIC’s signature fundraising event, which had a goal of securing \$450,000 in donations for the next five years of the organization’s operation. During the breakfast, the mission, concerns and progress of the CVIC — which stands for Community Violence Intervention Center — were shared with current and prospective donors.

Among those in attendance were two women who survived interpersonal violence and decided to share their experiences. Sherah Adkins, a CVIC client, said in a video that she chooses to share her story because she knows there are others with similar experiences. She hopes to inspire them to seek help. “Healing can be done,” Adkins said. “If we can

have our victims turning into survivors, the hope is that they’re not going to be another generation of trauma passed down.”

Amorelle Upton, the event’s keynote speaker, is now a UND student in the doctoral occupational therapy program and CVIC partner. But as a high-schooler, she was in a relationship with someone who controlled what she wore, who she talked

to and how she spent her time.

“Reflecting back five years ago, I truly wish that myself and those around me had been more educated on the topic of domestic violence,” Upton said. “Although the resources were available to me after I’d gotten out of the relationship, and I’m forever grateful for that, I often wonder if circumstances would’ve been different if I were more educated.”

With this in mind, Upton chose to speak at the event with hopes of helping others. She told the Herald that having an impact on just one person would make it worthwhile.

Also during the event, the 2024 Jim Vigness Peacemaker Award was presented to Chuck Hiles, owner of C&B Home Improvement in Grand Forks.

Hiles — one of 10 nominees selected by CVIC staff and board members — has provided maintenance and repairs at CVIC’s facilities, including the emergency shelter, for the last decade. During that time, he’s

CVIC on A2

Nothing relevant to Dockter case in new AG emails

BY APRIL BAUMGARTEN
The Forum

BISMARCK — Private emails from former North Dakota Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem have turned up no information about a lease



deal that led to a criminal case set for trial this week. The Attorney General’s Office said it continues to review thousands of government emails and text messages that belonged to Stenehjem.

The North Dakota Attorney General’s Office released nearly 100 emails from Stenehjem’s AOL account to media outlets on Wednesday, May 1, as part of an open records request made by The Forum. The release of the communications comes two days before Stenehjem’s campaign treasurer, state Rep. Jason Dockter, R-Bismarck, heads to trial on Friday in Burleigh County District Court for a misdemeanor charge of speculating or wagering on official action for

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Family wants Spirit Lake Social Services held responsible for child’s death

BY MATT HENSON
WDAY

SPIRIT LAKE RESERVATION — The grandparents of a young girl who died on the Spirit Lake Reservation are remembering the “star of the family.”

They say all they have are memories of 3-year-old Ariana McKay after she overdosed on Tylenol.

The girl’s father, 28-year-old Austin Lester, and his girlfriend, 35-year-old Krissy Hinsley, have been charged in federal court with involuntary manslaughter and child neglect.

“It was a big relief for us. It’s been a long, long two years,” said her

grandfather Owen McKay.

He said it’s been a lonely and miserable two years without his only granddaughter — missing her signature laugh.

“Star of the family, star of the show. She just woke up happy and happy-go-lucky,” he said.

Ariana died at a Twin Cities hospital two years ago after her grandparents say she drank an entire bottle of adult liquid Tylenol.

According to the federal indictment, Ariana’s father and his girlfriend left the girl unsupervised with access to medicine and did not get her proper medical care.

Ariana’s father is also accused of beating his

daughter with a wooden backscratcher.

“It was a shocker when I found out on the news that she was beaten by a wooden back scratcher,” said her grandfather.

The McKays said they were afraid this could happen.

“We warned them many times but they didn’t hear us, didn’t hear her cry for help,” said McKay.

In 2021, Ariana’s grandparents lost custody of their granddaughter. Social workers claimed they were abusive, an allegation they deny.

Ariana was placed into her father’s care. The McKays said they told Child Protective Services

he was abusing her.

Ariana is the second child in the care of Spirit Lake Social Services to die in the past four years. The foster parents of 5-year-old Raven Thompson are serving life sentences for her murder. Prosecutors said she died from prolonged dehydration and abuse.

“I’m hoping CPS gets what they deserve, too,” McKay said. “They should be held accountable because they are the ones that place these children and my granddaughter in an unsafe home.”

If convicted of the most serious charge of involuntary manslaughter, Lester and Hinsley face up to six years in



Submitted Photo

3-year-old Ariana McKay.

prison.

“I want Austin to feel what Ariana felt, the pain and what we are feeling, pain,” McKay said. “I want him to suffer how

Ariana suffered.”

Spirit Lake Social Services did not respond for this article.

TODAY IN HISTORY

TODAY’S HISTORY:
In 1536, King Henry VIII of England had Anne Boleyn, Queen of England, arrested and imprisoned on charges including high treason.
In 1918, General Motors Corp. purchased Chevrolet Motor Co.
In 1945, tens of

thousands of German troops in Berlin surrendered to the Soviet Union’s Red Army.
In 2007, the International Criminal Court issued the first two arrest warrants for individuals accused of war crimes in Darfur, Sudan. 7).

CALENDAR

Today, May 2

To place your event in the Grand Forks Herald calendar, email gfhcity@gfherald.com, with “Calendar item” in the subject line. Events should include name, time, location, short description and contact info. Please submit 10 days before the event. The Herald does not guarantee publication of all events.

Breakfast at the Grand Forks Senior Center is 8:30 to 9 a.m., 620 Fourth Ave. S. Also, **hot meal drive-thru** is 11:30 a.m. to noon, and **inside dining serving** is 11:45 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. **Monday through Friday.** For 60+. Obtain required paperwork and key tags in the Senior Center. Order frozen meals ahead of time at (701) 772-7245, pick up during the drive-thru or inside.

SCORE free and confidential business mentoring meetings, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. **every Thursday** via Zoom, phone, email or in person. To schedule an appointment, email score@gra.midco.net or visit www.score.org and request a mentor from

58201, Grand Forks.

LSS senior meals: Congregate, home delivered and curbside is 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., **Monday through Friday,** in the East Grand Forks Senior Center, 538 Rhinehart Dr. S.E., East Grand Forks. Info: (218) 399-3351.

Thursday Music Club of Greater Grand Forks meeting Gold Note Award luncheon, 1 p.m., Trinity Free Lutheran Church, 3426 Chestnut St., Grand Forks. All are welcome. Info: Candy, (701) 230-2399.

Muddy Waters Clay Center Spring Showcase, 3 to 8 p.m., 2014 13th Ave. N. Also 1 to 8 p.m., Friday, and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Saturday. Visit with artists, door prizes, treats.

Grand Cities Children’s Choir auditions, 4:30 to 6 p.m., New Heights Elementary, 1427 Sixth Ave. NW, East Grand Forks. Open to singers entering grades 3-9 in the fall. Visit <https://grandcitiescc.org/how-to-join/> on the online scheduler. Info: (701) 777-2818.



Korrie Wenzel / Grand Forks Herald

Jody Hodgson, chairman of CVIC’s board of directors, congratulates Chuck Hiles, the 2024 recipient of the Jim Vigness Peacemaker Award, during the Judd Sondreal Memorial Rise & Shine for Peace Breakfast, held Wednesday, May 1, 2024, at the Alerus Center in Grand Forks.

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gone above and beyond his duties, according to a CVIC press release.
“Chuck installed protective strips on high-traffic hallway corners at Mary’s Place to increase the longevity of our floors in an incredibly cost-effective way,” said Shannon Morley, CVIC director of shelter services. “Although he considered it a minor adjustment, we consider it a way to increase the longevity of our shelter’s flooring, thus allowing us to focus our funding and efforts on supporting our clients rather than pouring money into entirely preventable building

repairs later on.”
Hiles also thinks of ways to make lives better for clients and staff, assembling furniture and doing touch-ups to make everyone more comfortable in the space.
“Chuck is very mindful of providing privacy and confidentiality, and consistently has positive and respectful interactions with shelter clients, even bringing treats throughout the year for clients and staff to enjoy,” said Jody Hodgson, chairman of CVIC’s board of directors and the opening speaker at Wednesday’s event. “For shelter clients, arriving at a safe and welcoming space is often the first step in their healing journey.”

BRIEF

Pennock woman dies of injuries suffered in head-on collision
BECKER, Minn. — A woman from Pennock, Minnesota, died of injuries suffered in a head-on collision reported Thursday, April 25, in Sherburne County.
According to a Tuesday, April 30, update to the accident report from the Minnesota State Patrol, Ardis Irene Knight, 84, died after being transported to the Hennepin County Medical Center in Minneapolis. An obituary published online by Anderson-TeBeest Funeral Home said she died at the hospital Saturday.
According to the crash report, Knight was driving a 2006 Ford Five

Hundred eastbound on U.S. Highway 10 in Becker. A 2020 Mazda CX-5 was traveling westbound, and the two collided at the intersection with Bradley Boulevard.
The other driver was identified as Anne Elizabeth Lanier, 28. Lanier suffered non-life-threatening injuries along with two child passengers, Sloan Jolie Mannklante, 6, and 1-year-old Saeed Rahim Fattal, all from Monticello.
All parties involved were wearing their seat belts, and alcohol was not a factor in the collision.
Road conditions were reported as dry at the time of the collision at 12:46 p.m. Thursday.
Forum Communications

StormTRACKER

WDAYabc

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StormTRACKER Forecast

Showers moving through the region again today. Highs in the 40s today but warmer this weekend.

Almanac Through 6 pm Wednesday

Temperature	High	Low
Wednesday	61°	40°
Normal	60°	37°
Record	89° in 1934	17° in 1900

Precipitation

Wednesday

Month To Date

Departure From Avg Month To Date

Year To Date

Departure From Avg Year To Date

In Inches

.01"

.01"

-0.05"

3.79"

.58"

Sunrise: 5:59 a.m.

Moonrise: 3:28 a.m.

Sunset: 8:15 p.m.

Moonset: 1:37 p.m.

New
May 7

First
May 15

Full
May 23

Third
June 28

Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
52 / 40	60 / 36	56 / 35	68 / 50	68 / 50	64 / 48	65 / 44
Showers	Mostly Cloudy	Cloudy	Partly Cloudy	Scattered ...	Mostly Cloudy	Mostly Cloudy
Wind: SE 11 mph	Wind: W 20 mph	Wind: NW 13 mph	Wind: S 16 mph	Wind: S 23 mph	Wind: SW 24 mph	Wind: W 17 mph

*Average wind speed for each day

WEATHERTALK

AI will take over weather forecasting someday

BY JOHN WHEELER
WDAY

FARGO — Artificial intelligence will likely soon make its way into weather forecasting.
To clarify, a computer weather model isn’t the same as AI. A weather model is a complex set of equations with input from measured weather conditions. The output of a weather model is nothing more than the answer to this complex set of equations. Different weather models have different skills and tendencies based on how each model simplifies the processes.
A meteorologist decides what is likely based on weather patterns and weather models. AI is a brain-like computer application that can make decisions now made by humans. As AI gains experience through failure and success, it gets smarter. It’s a matter of time before AI will be faster and better at forecasting weather than human forecasters are today.

John Wheeler is Chief Meteorologist for WDAY Television.

Grand Forks Snowfall Report

As measured by the National Weather Service in Grand Forks

	Observed	Average	Last Year
As of 6 pm Tuesday	0	0	0
Month To Date	.1"	3.0"	18.2"
Since July 1	29.1"	48.6"	85.2"
Snow Depth	0		

North Dakota	Today	Tomorrow
Bismarck	Hi 48 Lo 36	Hi 53 Lo 33
Devils Lake	Hi 47 Lo 38	Hi 51 Lo 37
Fargo	Hi 55 Lo 43	Hi 58 Lo 38
Minot	Hi 52 Lo 36	Hi 48 Lo 31
Williston	Hi 56 Lo 34	Hi 50 Lo 33

Minnesota	Today	Tomorrow
Bemidji	Hi 52 Lo 39	Hi 60 Lo 40
Duluth	Hi 45 Lo 40	Hi 66 Lo 46
International Falls	Hi 55 Lo 40	Hi 60 Lo 40
Minneapolis	Hi 52 Lo 45	Hi 69 Lo 50
Rochester	Hi 56 Lo 45	Hi 68 Lo 48

Delaney Otto

From left: Matt Marshall, rates and economic development manager from Minnkota Power Cooperative; Ty Eschenbaum, partner for A1 Development Solutions in Brookings, South Dakota; Jerry Szatan, owner of Site Selection Consultants from Chicago, Illinois; Justin Erickson, vice president of site selection and economic development at The Brookershire Company in Bloomington, Minnesota; and Devin Hillsdon-Smith, director of Cushman and Wakefield in Atlanta, Georgia, talk about site selection.

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and hospitality, as well as an emotion amongst residents when he visits.
“How excited are you to talk about your community and the great things that are going on?” he said. “The emotion I feel in their communities is that this is home.”
The panel focusing on site selection featured speakers Justin Erickson, vice president of site selection and economic development at The Brookershire

Company in Bloomington, Minnasota; Ty Eschenbaum, partner for A1 Development Solutions in Brookings, South Dakota; Devin Hillsdon-Smith, director of Cushman and Wakefield in Atlanta; and Jerry Szatan, owner of Site Selection Consultants from Chicago. Matt Marshall, a rates and economic development manager from Minnkota Power Cooperative, served as moderator.
The panelists spoke about their experiences working with clients to

find sites for their projects, varying in focuses from luxury vehicles to manufacturing to agriculture to energy. Two of them, Eschenbaum and Erickson, have experience in North Dakota, while the other two didn’t. The former two listed some qualities of North Dakota that make it a positive place for site selection, such as excellent state level economic developers, the ability to reach leaders easily and its fiscal responsibility.
Erickson urged those in the room to be bold,

push for projects to come to the state, call site selectors and be more vocal about the opportunities in the state.
“I think it’s our Midwest nature in general, but I think North Dakota specifically has been a little bit shy to say, ‘Well, we don’t want to brag and we don’t want to push,’” he said. “Push, push, push because nobody else is going to pay attention if you guys aren’t pushing it.”