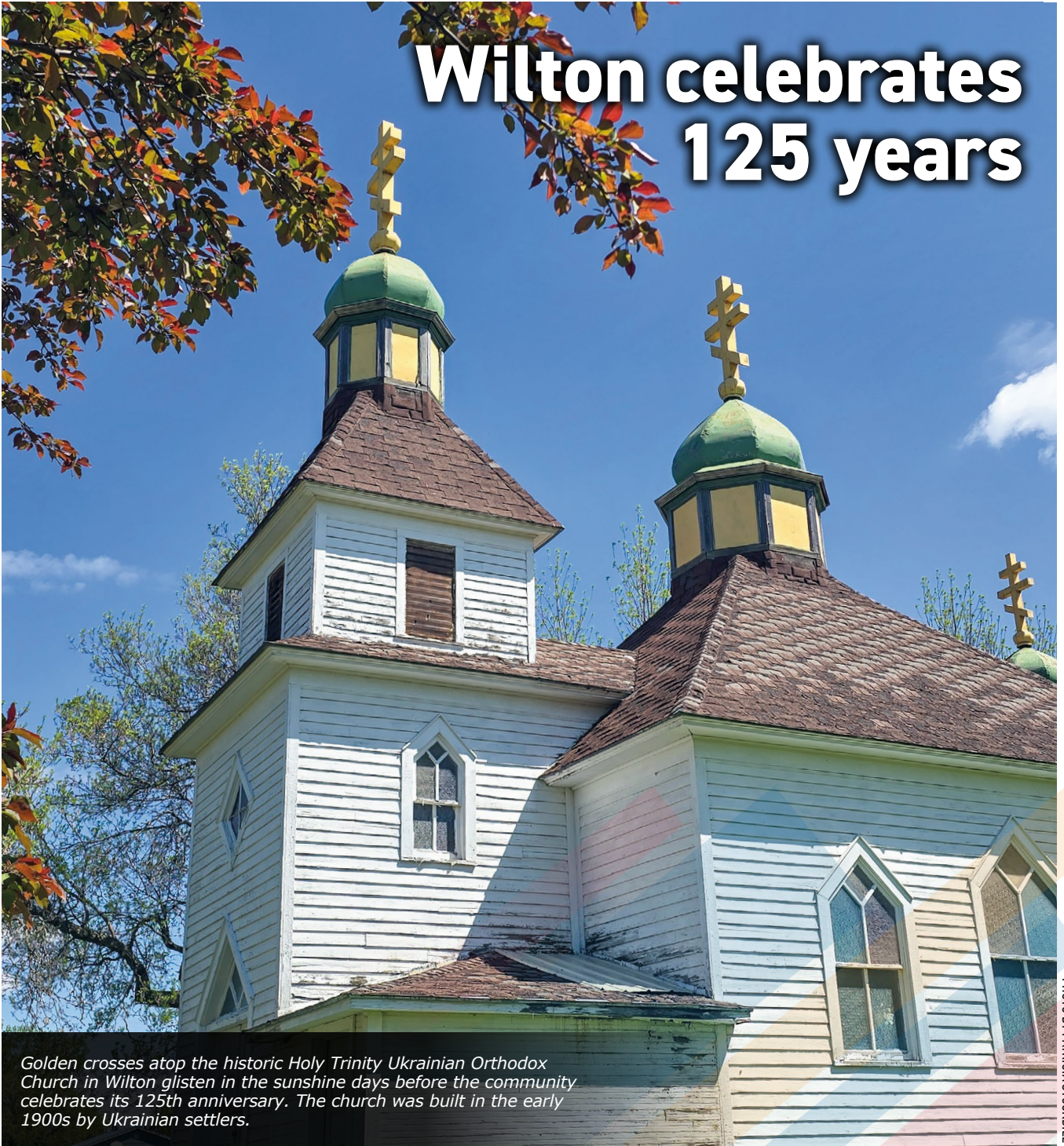


IN THIS ISSUE:

- Manager's moment
- Aim for grain bin safety
- Expanding North Country Trail

Wilton celebrates 125 years



Golden crosses atop the historic Holy Trinity Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Wilton glisten in the sunshine days before the community celebrates its 125th anniversary. The church was built in the early 1900s by Ukrainian settlers.

PHOTO BY PATRICIA STOCKDILL



PHOTOS BY PATRICIA STOCKDILL

The Wilton city pond offers a serene setting for people to walk in the outdoors or simply sit and relax. It's located on the east side of Highway 83 in Wilton.

125 YEARS: Wilton celebrates history, moves toward future

BY PATRICIA STOCKDILL

The community of Wilton marks its quasiquintennial in 2024.

Admittedly, it's much easier to say residents and folks from throughout the area are gearing up for the 125th anniversary of Wilton's founding, planning a busy weekend of fun, family and friendship July 12-14.

While it's an opportunity for classmates from bygone days to share distant memories, it's also an opportunity for families of all ages to come together for fun and activities.

"This whole thing will bring young and old together," LeeAnn Kellar says.

Kellar wears a multitude of hats lately: She's Wilton's mayor, and she works for the Wilton Ambulance District.

The lifelong Wilton resident is also coordinating the community's litany of anniversary activities, with the help of dozens of other volunteers.

Look for a July 12 trail ride as horseback riders deliver Gov. Doug Burgum's quasiquintennial declaration. They will serve as the celebration's parade grand marshals the following day.

The riders carry more than an official state of North

Dakota document, Kellar describes. One of the event volunteers tracked down an original mailbag used by the Wilton Post Office from the early 1900s, when Wilton's mailman, Chris Cleveland, used a team of horses to power his enclosed wooden-wheeled wagon as he delivered its contents to rural residents.

"How cool is that?" Kellar says, as she describes the efforts involved in locating and identifying the mailbag and its carrier.

The town's First Presbyterian Church will be transformed into a theatrical setting, as local actors delve into the history and humor of Wilton, looking back at some of the famous – and perhaps infamous people – of the community.

Influential people like Linda Slaughter came from the Wilton area. Slaughter was instrumental in founding what would become the State Historical Society. She was a leading women's rights advocate and Bismarck's first superintendent of schools.

Then there was "Little Casino," a woman who settled a few miles south of Wilton, buying a coal mine after her



Part of Bismarck artist **Melissa Gordon's** art supplies include a tall ladder to reach her mural created for Wilton's 125th anniversary.

“business” was closed in Bismarck. Folklore tells tales about her generosity and how she laid down \$1,200 on a table before the Capital Commission, helping ensure Bismarck as the capital of Dakota Territory and securing its move from Yankton, S.D.

She, along with longtime educators and others instrumental in Wilton – and McLean and Burleigh counties – will be woven into the unique play presented at 7 p.m. July 12.

For many communities in North Dakota and across the country, the coming of a railroad meant the blossoming of a town. Wilton is no exception.

However, rather than the railroad coming first, a wealthy businessman, former U.S. senator and surveyor-general of Minnesota, General W.D. Washburn bought

land with the intent to establish a land company, resell parcels to individuals and explore the possibility of large coal deposits in the area.

While a majority of the townsite of Wilton is in McLean County, it also included four blocks in Burleigh County. The nearby town of Washburn is named after the general's brother. Washburn named his new town, established May 10, 1899, after one in his home state of Maine.

Wilton's 1999 centennial book goes on to describe how Gen. Washburn determined Wilton needed a railroad to provide access to markets for the new settlers he hoped to attract, as well as ship the coal he hoped to mine. So, he established his own railroad line, originally called the Bismarck, Washburn and Ft. Buford Railroad Co. It would later become the Bismarck, Washburn and Great Falls

continued on next page

continued from previous page

Railroad until he sold it to the Soo Line Railroad in 1904.

Wilton's beginnings serve as a 125-year-old example of "build it and they will come."

Construction of a grain elevator and general store also began in 1899. The *Wilton News* newspaper was launched that same year. Even though the general store operator, P.K. Eastman, and his wife were the only two official residents by Christmas Day 1899, the town of Wilton was beginning to grow – aided in large part by the coming development of several coal mines in the area and opportunity-seeking homesteaders. A restaurant even joined the business community in February 1900.

Several early settlers included Ukrainian families, and Wilton was for many years home to two historical Ukrainian churches: Holy Trinity Ukrainian Orthodox Church and Sts. Peter and Paul Ukrainian Catholic Church.

A May 25, 1900, *Bismarck Tribune* article wrote about fine quality lignite coal discovered near Wilton – the first train station stop on what would be Gen. Washburn's rail line. A large vein was at a depth of 50 feet.

The railroad arrived in town nine months after Wilton was founded.

While many old, unused railroad depots across the country tend to be torn down, Wilton's depot – and a portion of original track – was moved from its original setting and restored. It's home to a collection of handmade replicas of historic buildings recreated to scale of the actual structures, memorabilia from throughout the area and a replication of the station master's living quarters.

"There's a pole in there that they used to catch the mail as (the train) drove by," Kellar adds.

Perhaps as stunning as anything is an entire room dedicated to a local model train organization's display, with buildings, automobiles, railcars and rail lines in a lifelike setting.

Fast-forward 125 years, and construction in Wilton is still taking place. In May and June, contractors were busy completing street improvement projects in time for the community's celebration.

The senior citizen center is in the midst of a remodeling project, Kellar adds.

But perhaps the largest project that will take Wilton and the surrounding area even further into the future is a school expansion project that began this spring. The project includes eight additional classrooms, a cafeteria expansion and storage space.

The 125th anniversary celebration melds history



This isn't an aerial view of a long-ago railroad yard in North Dakota. Instead, it's just a small portion of an amazing model train display in one entire room of the restored Wilton depot. Complete with rail lines going throughout many areas of the state, it includes buildings, automobiles, trains and so much more. Contact Wilton City Hall at 701-734-6707 to view the depot's collection of antiques as well as the model train display.

with a vision toward the future, but it also provides entertainment, such as rubber duck races.

"The fire department will add copious amounts of water, and whoever's duck crosses the finish line first wins \$6,000," Kellar describes. "One of the hardest things (about organizing the race) was finding 1,000 ducks all the same. So, they're all little yellow rubber duckies," she laughs.

A time capsule buried during the 1999 centennial will also be opened.

"We're going to find out what's in there. Nobody really remembers," Kellar says. Union Bank celebrates its centennial year in Wilton and is hosting a community meal. There's face painting, a dunk tank, kiddie parade, vendor fair, Wilton pop-up museum, entertainment and a dance featuring area breweries and wine, pedal tractor pull and much, much more.

Simply go to the website, <https://MyEvent.com/Wilton125>, for details. ■

Manager's moment

BY MARK DOYLE, GENERAL MANAGER



Mark Doyle

I would appreciate a moment of your time...

Mid-summer is here!

McLean Electric Cooperative (MEC) has been busy as usual! Lake development and White Shield continue to be the core of our projects. The economy has slowed housing builds a bit, but that only postpones the projects.

White Shield continues to grow with a new veterans center, restaurant, housing, day care, a Boys & Girls Club and the Son of Star Casino, which is expected to open in early 2025. As I said before, it is a model to follow with the major investment in their communities!

With all this growth, MEC has been able to keep up with demand due to carrying more inventory than normal. This does come at a cost. Higher prices and additional inventory have required us to make some rate changes. The board approved a base charge increase last year and again this year. The increase will provide some much-needed cash flow.

We borrow capital to fund our projects. The projects are financed over more than 30 years, so the membership

only carries the debt service of the loan rather than the full cost of the projects. The issue is we cannot borrow for the project until it is complete, so we need to carry the inventory with general funds. We know everything is increasing in cost, and we will always do our best to keep your service affordable.

So, as you plan your year, please bring any service changes to us as soon as possible, so we can accommodate your needs. Some material availability is still a year or more out, while others are more readily available. We certainly do not want to squelch your growth or ours.

Again, we appreciate the cooperation and patience the members provide in getting these projects done. As for cooperation, easements are always an issue, and we ask the landowners for continued support in putting our infrastructure in place to enhance our reliability. As for patience, we have several contractors working alongside the MEC crews to complete this infrastructure, and we thank you for understanding we cannot get everything done in a day, even though we try.

Make sure to check our website and social media for updates on what is happening at your cooperative.

As always, feel free to reach out to me with any questions or comments. My door is always open. ■

Bins require clearance from power lines

As rewarding as it may be, farming is an extremely difficult job. It ranks among the top 10 most dangerous professions in the United States. At McLean Electric Cooperative (MEC), safety is top priority for everyone.

Our farmers work hard to get the job done, and sometimes it's easy to forget all the necessary steps to take when practicing safe operations. Grain bins play an integral role in the efficiency and profitability of farm and ranch operations, and safety regulations should always be considered when working around these structures.

Whether you're purchasing new grain bins or remodeling areas that contain existing ones, proximity to overhead power lines must be a considered factor.

- **Safe clearance.** The National Electrical Safety Code requires an 18.5-foot minimum vertical clearance from the highest point of the filling port of the grain bin to nearby high-voltage wires and a 55-foot minimum distance from the power line to the grain bin wall. See the chart for further guidelines. Changes to

landscaping and drainage work can affect clearance heights of power lines, so remember to check these measurements regularly.

- **Filling grain bins.** High-voltage power lines are not insulated, so it's important to remember to maintain an adequate high-wire clearance when using a portable auger, conveyor or elevator to fill your grain bin.
- **Moving equipment near grain bins.** When moving equipment, such as a hopper or a scaffold, be aware of nearby power lines. Remember to maintain a 10-foot clearance to ensure safety.

Accidents can happen in a split second, which is why MEC reminds you to always use caution when working near power lines. If you are considering a plan for a new grain bin or reconstruction of an existing bin's site, please contact MEC. Let us assist you in maintaining a safe environment for you and your family. ■

Aim for safety with grain storage

Flowing grain can trap someone standing on it in just four to five seconds and that person will be completely covered in grain in about 22 seconds, according to the Grain Handling Safety Coalition.

Using appropriate safety practices when working around grain is vital. Make sure everyone working around stored grain understands the hazards and proper safety procedures.

The most dangerous scenarios around stored grain involve flowing grain, bridged grain and vertical grain walls.

- **Flowing grain** accounts for the majority of grain engulfment incidents and has become more dangerous as newer equipment unloads grain at faster rates. When grain is unloaded from below, such as in grain bins, grain piles, trucks and even grain wagons, anyone standing on the grain can be pulled down toward the outlet and are often stuck faster than they can react.
- **Bridged grain** occurs when a crust or clumps of spoiled grain forms on top of the grain and grain is removed, leaving a void space below the crust. The crust can collapse under a person's weight, potentially burying them in the shifting grain. Stay outside the bin and use a pole or other object to break the bridge loose.
- **Vertical grain** walls form when spoiled grain clumps stick to the wall and become dangerous when grain is dislodged and falls like an avalanche.

Follow these safety practices:

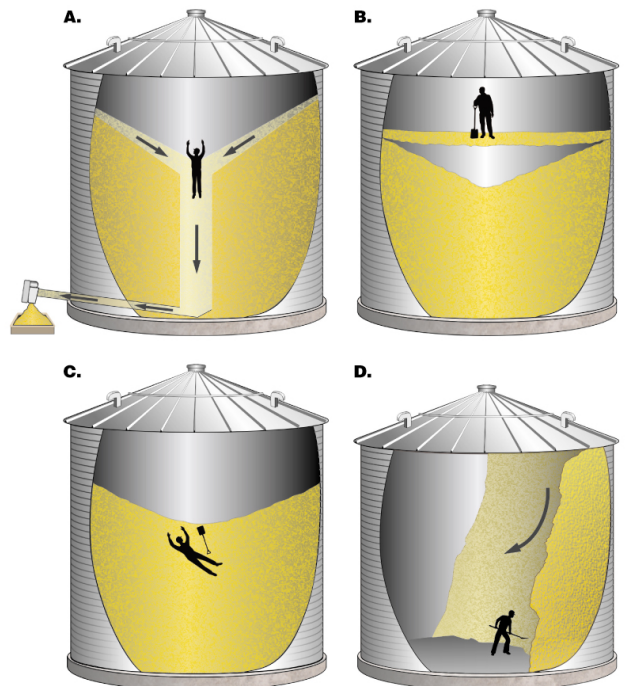
- Aim for zero entry into the bin. Never enter a bin while unloading grain or to break up a grain bridge. Flowing grain will pull you into the grain mass, burying you within seconds.
- Post warning signs on bins and at all entry points to make everyone aware of the hazards.
- Restrict access to bins and piles so unauthorized people and youth can't enter.
- Work from outside the bin and above the highest point of grain.

If entry is essential, use proper safe entry procedures including:

- Lock out and tag out all grain unloading equipment.
 - ▷ Stop the grain-conveying equipment and use the "lock-out/tag-out" procedures to secure it before entering the bin. Use a key-type padlock to lock the conveyor switch in the "off" position to assure the equipment does not start automatically or someone does not start it accidentally.
- Have an observer nearby.
- Use a life harness. ■

GRAIN BIN DANGERS

- Never enter a storage bin while unloading grain, because flowing grain can pull you in and bury you within seconds.
- Grain kernels may stick together, forming a crust or bridge that isn't strong enough to support a person's weight after the grain below it is removed.
- Don't try to break a grain bridge or blockage loose from inside the bin.
- Try to break up a vertical wall of grain from the top of the bin, not the bottom, because the grain can collapse and bury you.



Source: MidWest Plan Service, Iowa State University



PHOTO BY MATT DAVIS

Mark Zimmerman of Bismarck, a North Country Trail Central Flyway chapter member, explains the trail project to a group of supporters at the official ribbon-cutting ceremony for the trail segment around Lake Brekken and Lake Holmes near Turtle Lake in late May.

ONTO PHASE II: Expanding the North Country Trail in Turtle Lake area

BY PATRICIA STOCKDILL

Turtle Lake area residents celebrated a vision come true in late May.

They weren't alone. Joined by volunteers and others, they gathered for an official ribbon-cutting ceremony commemorating Phase I completion of a segment of the North Country Trail.

The 10-mile trail encircles both Lake Brekken and Lake Holmes just north of the Turtle Lake community.

It's officially part of the North Country Trail, an eight-state, 4,800-mile hiking and bicycling trail with segments along the nearby McClusky Canal, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Audubon National Wildlife, the Garrison Dam National Fish Hatchery and its western terminus at Lake Sakakawea State Park near Pick City.

A wide array of people and organizations set out to make the path possible: Turtle Lake Chamber of Progress businesses and residents, North Country Trail Central Flyway chapter members, Bismarck's Boy Scout Troop 123 and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation joined to bring the project to fruition.

The trail was mowed in the early spring, with signs placed to guide hikers along the route, described volunteer Steve Vetter, Turtle Lake.

Bicyclists and hikers were already enjoying the trail in early May, he added, as a mix of area residents and hikers are intrigued with the North Country Trail and hiking as a great North Dakota outdoor activity.

Volunteers will periodically mow the trail to keep it maintained.

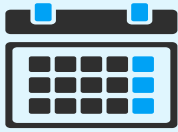
A good way to start hiking or biking the trail is simply go to the west end of the Lake Brekken campground just north of Turtle Lake

While the mowed portion is now a reality, work on Phase II is well underway, Vetter added.

"We're excited about it," he continued. One reason for the excitement is the Phase II trail will feature a 1.5-mile, 6-foot-wide gravel surface, making it accessible for wheelchairs.

Phase II also extends the length of the North Country Trail by bringing hikers from the McClusky Canal, Lake Brekken and Lake Holmes to Turtle Lake when completed.

Fundraising efforts are underway, and if the Turtle Lake Trails Project Committee's vision comes true, they might put a bow on Phase II sooner rather than later. ■



McLean County community calendar: Events and activities to see and do

McLean County area food pantry July distribution dates, times and locations:

- **Community Cupboard of Underwood food distribution:** 4-6 p.m. July 18, 208 Lincoln Ave. Like us on Facebook, Community Cupboard of Underwood, for food pantry distributions, thrift store and other information.
- **Community Food Pantry serving Ryder, Makoti, Roseglen, Plaza, White Shield, Parshall and those in need:** 10 a.m.-1 p.m. July 27, 181 Ellsworth, Makoti.
- **Community Thrift Store serving Ryder, Makoti, Roseglen, Plaza, White Shield, Parshall and the region, 181 Ellsworth, Makoti.** Store hours: 3-6 p.m. Tuesday, 4-7 p.m. Thursday and 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday, except holidays.
- **Free Community Clothing Share & Exchange Store:** Noon-6 p.m. every Thursday, 221 Main St., Turtle Lake.
- **Garrison Area Resource Center & Food Pantry:** Noon-2 p.m. and 5-7 p.m. July 25.
- **McLean Family Resource Center:** McLean County residents can contact the center, 701-462-8643, for an appointment to pick up baskets along with more information or assistance through the center, 205 Seventh St., Washburn.
- **McLean Family Resource Center Clothing Outlet:** 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday, and 10 a.m.-1 p.m. first Saturday of every month, 205 Seventh St., Washburn.
- **Our Savior Lord's Food Pantry, Max:** Noon-3 p.m. and 5-7 p.m. July 15, City Hall, 215 Main St., Max.
- **The Lord's Pantry:** 2-4 p.m. July 11 and 10 a.m.-noon July 27, Trinity Lutheran Church, 515 Kundert St., Turtle Lake.
- **Wilton Food Pantry:** Mini distributions every Friday, 11:30 a.m. until gone. Full food distribution, 4-6 p.m. July 18, Senior Citizens Center, 42 Dakota Ave., Wilton

Area food pantries often experience high needs for the following items: baked beans, pork and beans, canned fruit, tuna, chicken, vegetables, cereal, oatmeal, granola and breakfast bars, juice, macaroni and cheese, hamburger and tuna helper, pancake mix, syrup, pasta, spaghetti, Alfredo and pasta sauce, peanut butter, jelly, rice side dishes, soups, chili, and household items, such as body wash and soap, dish soap, laundry detergent, shampoo and conditioner, toilet paper, toothpaste and toothbrushes. Contact local food pantries for drop-off locations, information or a list of additional needs in your community.

July and August:

- **Garrison Dam National Fish Hatchery** open for free tours through Labor Day, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday and 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturday, Sunday and holidays.
- **July 12-14:** Wilton's 125th anniversary celebration.
- **July 12-14:** Turtle Days, Turtle Lake.
- **July 19-20:** N.D. Governor's Cup Walleye Derby. Launch at Fort Stevenson State Park, Garrison, with weigh-in at Garrison City Park, Main St.
- **July 20:** N.D. Junior Governor's Cup fishing derby, Fort Stevenson State Park, Garrison.
- **July 31-Aug. 2:** National Walleye Tour Fishing Tournament, Fort Stevenson State Park, Garrison. Rules and registration July 31; fishing Aug. 1-2.
- **Aug. 1-2:** Max annual rodeo.

Nonprofit organizations and communities throughout McLean County can contact Patricia Stockdill at stockdill.patricia@gmail.com or 701-337-5462 to submit community events. ■

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Larry Gessele, president
701-447-2461
District 7, Mercer

Darcy Klain, vice president
701-448-2408
District 4, Ruso

Rod Stockdill, secretary-treasurer
701-337-5462
District 3, Garrison

Clarence Behles, asst. secretary-treasurer
701-337-5362
District 2, Garrison

Troy Presser, director
701-447-2855
District 5, Turtle Lake

Karen Hanson, director
701-448-2636
District 6, Washburn

James Odermann, director
701-743-4415
District 1, Parshall

STAFF:

Mark Doyle, General Manager/CEO
Keith Thelen, Operations Manager
Lucas Schaaf, Engineering Manager
Wendy Kinn, Finance Manager

Office: 701-463-6700
Toll-Free: 800-263-4922
Fax: 701-337-5303

Email: mclean1@mcleanelectric.com
Website address:
www.mcleanelectric.com

