

Your Weather



Friday - May 2
57 / 39



Saturday - May 3
75 / 41



Sunday - May 4
81 / 49

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

Terry Beauchamp
Dayton, NV

In this issue:



STATE: Armstrong signed
a bill to protect ND
students in K-12 **PG. 2**



SPORTS: Titans shine in
multiple track meets **PG. 12**



EDUCATION: Nine Drayton
students inducted to the
Honor Society **PG. 11**

'Following
Freeway'
Drayton's town
mascot comes
home, has a
job to do

By Christine Jensen

Everyone has a purpose and a journey in life, for one local celebrity, a German Shepherd dog named Freeway, who has had his share of difficulties, purpose found him when he was given a new lease on life. After a time of being lost and alone, he found his forever home and attended training to become certified as a Police Community Engagement Dog.

Freeway was abandoned and was noticed roaming the ditches near Drayton. With the help of some passionate community members including Jeremy Praska and Greg Andreen, he was finally caught on March 19, 2024. From there, his journey took on an entirely new meaning. He was brought to Animal Elskin Inn, a shelter located in Park River, ND. Freeway was adopted by Ian and Jamie Mattice shortly after his arrival and his kind and gentle nature made him the perfect fit, not only for his new family but also for the Drayton Community.

Fundraising efforts exploded as the community pulled together to raise funds for Freeway's training at Minnesota Canine Consultants (MCC) in New Prague, Minn., which was established by an Eagan police officer named Andrew Helgerson in 2015.

Helgerson later wrote, "I was contacted by the Chief of a small town police department in Drayton. Long story short: the community had, in effect, adopted this dog that was abandoned and found injured. Instead of giving up on him, Chief Mattice decided to bring the dog into his home and ultimately, as a part of the community. The goal is to bring Freeway wherever possible to bring people together within the town. While Freeway's injury resulted in an amputation, he overcame the obstacles and did an awesome job training. He is living his best life. We are honored to be a part of this amazing dog's journey."

Drayton educator recognized at the
state level

By Andrea Johnston

On April 24, State School Superintendent Kirsten Baesler congratulated 46 educators across the state. Drayton's own, Mr. Adam Riddle was among those chosen to be honored.

"It is our pleasure to honor these outstanding teachers, who have been recognized by their peers and the students and families they serve as being exemplars of their profession," Baesler said. "All North Dakotans should be grateful for the work our educators do to help develop our state's new generations of citizens."

Mr. Riddle is in his third year of teaching at DPS. He is also an Ag instructor through North Valley in Grafton and the FFA advisor. Mr. Riddle has been working on the development of a work-based learning station at the Drayton School.

Mr. Riddle is motivated by his student's successes. "The big thing that motivates me is seeing my students being successful! Watching them learn and figuring out what is their purpose in life is the biggest motivation I could ask for! I am very thankful for this opportunity I wouldn't be this successful if it wasn't for my family and amazing students," stated Mr. Riddle.



Mr. Riddle, leading a lesson in agriculture with the seventh graders at DPS community garden. Photo by Jamie Rarick



Freeway, back from training and on the job as Drayton's Police Community Engagement Dog. Photo by Christine Jensen.

In addition to Helgerson helping with his training, Freeway had the opportunity to train with Ross Blair, a former police officer who started at MCC in the summer of 2021. In a video clip of Freeway's training, Blair said although Freeway's injury resulted in an amputation of his back left leg, the community of Drayton, more or less, rallied around Freeway and adopted him as their mascot.

"He is going to be an awesome ambassador," Blair said. "Freeway's story is absolutely incredible and just fun to be a part of. What is really awesome is even though he has three legs, he is way better than most dogs with four."

According to Ian Mattice, Drayton's Chief of Police, Freeway arrived home on April 21. He attended training for nine weeks. Mattice said because of his injury which was an open wound,

when he first went to training, his paw ended up getting infected because the infection was on his pads and it wasn't closing up.

Mattice, along with his wife Jamie, brought Freeway to a specialist who recommended amputation. Ian said even though Freeway was only at training for one week before the infection, the trainer thought he could do the training anyway so in January of 2025, Freeway underwent surgery and after approximately three weeks of recuperation, he went back to training in February.

"He went back for another eight weeks," Ian said. "It feels so great to have him back, he was excited to come home."

The first day Freeway arrived home,

'FREEWAY' CON'T PAGE 9

'Our power, our planet'

Students rally to help community

By Christine Jensen

It takes an entire community to pull together and find common ground in the restoration of its components. When teamwork is involved, there is a great deal of positive energy implemented in the quest to make an impact while connecting to the environment as a whole.

As a skinny Robin picked at leaves on the curve near a large pine tree in front of Drayton Public School, students were donning their plastic gloves with garbage bags in hand to disperse throughout the Drayton community and pick up garbage in honor of Earth Day.

Students gathered in the gymnasium for instructions prior to heading out on foot. Earth Day efforts, which were scheduled for April 22, were postponed due to rain and rescheduled for Friday, April 25.

According to Wikipedia, Earth Day is an annual event on April 22 to demonstrate support for environmental protection. It was first held on April 22, 1970 and now involves a wide range of events coordinated globally through earthday.org, including one billion people in more than 193 countries. Earth Day's 2025 theme is, "Our Power, Our Planet," calling for everyone to unite around renewable energy.

Kallie Christenson, Drayton Public School's Nurse, coordinated the event. She said they created a map of the town and color coded it by age groups. She said this was their second



DPS students clean up the dike behind the monument that honors their ancestors. Photo by Christine Jensen

year taking part in Earth Day events.

"Last year we got the idea to take some action on Earth Day," Christenson said. "I modeled it after what we use to do at my old high school in St. Thomas. Kay Barker would lead the entire school there."

Christenson said it is important because it is a tangible experience the students can be a part of. She said it is an exceptional way for students to move outside the classroom walls and partake in the care of their community.

"With that comes responsibility and pride for their community,"

'EARTH DAY' CON'T PAGE 9



Ezra Adkins, Jonah Rarick, and Jasper Halvorson did their part to clean up the town. Photo by Christine Jensen

Titans send three to Shanley
Invitational Track Meet



Left to right: Elizabeth Fedje, Brady Reilly and Alyssa Hoyles at Fargo Shanley Invitational. Photo courtesy of Jodi Fedje

By Murph Thompson

Thanks to a special "featured race" 300 hurdle event at the new Shanley track and field the Titans were able to send three athletes to compete April 24. The 300 hurdle race was an invitation to the top 300 hurdles in ND, MN, and SD. Junior hurdler Elizabeth Fedje made the competition list and the Titans were allowed to send two other athletes. Alyssa Hoyles and Brady Reilly accompanied Elizabeth to the Fargo Class A meet. All three Titans had quality performances. Fedje placed third in the featured race, 300 Hurdles, with a :46.85.

The winning time was :44.22 by Peyson O'Neill from Bennett County School in Martin, SD (in the southwest corner of SD). Second place was :45.51 by Sophie Brakke of Red River.

Fedje won the high jump and set a new school record at 5'5". Elizabeth set the record at 5'4" earlier this season. Fedje continued to shine against the elite competition placing fourth in javelin 111'6", and third in the 200 with a personal best of :26.12.

Senior Brady Reilly had personal best efforts in the three events he did. Placing third in the 400 dash at :51.41 setting a school record. He had the old record at :51.81. He finished fifth in the 200 with a time of :22.81, and ran a personal best 100 meter at :11.54.

Junior Alyssa Hoyles placed fourth in the pole vault at 9'3", and also competed in the javelin, 200 and triple jump.

Great job in Fargo!

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