

The Blonde on the Prairie meets “I Dream of Jeannie” - kinda

If there's one thing I've learned in life, it's this - I am a magnet to the peculiar. You may be one like me and understand that sentence. I'm not a magnet in a bad way—just in the cosmic comedy meets divine appointment kind of way. The kind of way where the universe says, “You know what she needs right now? Cherries with a dash of bizarre wrapped in a hug.”

Only a couple of months ago, I told you that I bought a new truck. In that short time since then, I've racked up over 8,000 miles. Which seems like a lot... unless you're me. If you are me, that's just two solid months of singing to the steering wheel, dodging pot-holes, and meeting half of America at every gas station, roadside diner, and grocery store from here to next Tuesday. I see many races, faces and personalities.

See, I was born with the “come tell me everything” gene. I don't know if the doctor slapped



Genie photo courtesy Metro Creator Images - not an actual photo of Jodi as “I Dream of Jeannie”.

me first or handed me a clipboard and said to my mama, “Ma'am, she'll be hosting group therapy at the nearest grocery store by kindergarten.”

From clinic waiting rooms to grocery store checkout lines or on just a shared bench in the mall - people tell me things. Deep things. Startling things. “Why are you telling me this, sir, we

are just standing by the pickles I don't know you” kind of things.

Which brings me to what just happened at a Cash Wise Foods in Fargo, ND. I only went in to buy one item on sale. (Ha. That was cute.) \$150 later, I'm standing by the bing cherries, (because I dream of bing cherries!)

I'm lost in a hunger-

fueled daze, when suddenly—out of nowhere—a rather handsome man comes flying toward me like he was launched out of a sitcom. I'm only telling you that he was handsome in my opinion so that you didn't think he was some kind of sadly diagnosed schizophrenic, unkept - type of fella.

He looks at me, just beaming, and says, “Oh my goodness! I never thought I'd get to meet I Dream of Jeannie in real life!” (Oh no, not again! I was just minding my own business and now this is happening!) Someone turn my magnet off!

Now listen. I'm standing there with my high, tight but messy ponytail and my favorite patch-work hippie jumpsuit on, feeling very casual and not even remotely magical - But, when life tosses you a compliment dipped in 60s TV nostalgia, you just go with it. So I did. I went with it. I crossed my arms and did the classic “I Dream of Jeannie” nod. (You know the one!)

I did it bold. Deliberate. Fully committed even!

He gasped an enthusiastic gasp! He literally clutched his chest, threw out his arms and declared, “This is the greatest day! I met I Dream of Jeannie!”

Now, this man did not look like someone who collects crystals or communes with squirrels. He looked like a completely average, sensible, khaki-wearing man. But he hugged me like he meant it—like he'd been waiting his whole life to find a wish-granting genie in the produce section of a grocery store.

He stood back and looked at me as if he was attempting to see if my clothing was the right size for me. He laughed. I laughed. He walked one way, I walked the other, both of us grinning like fools who just remembered that humans are weird - but not in a weird way - and so very wonderful and full of surprises!

Here's the thing though - yes, our parents told us

not to talk to strangers. But if I had listened, I'd have missed out on some of the best moments—and getting to know some of the grooviest people—of my life. Many of my favorite humans started as strangers. Some even that I met in grocery store aisles.

Not every stranger is a threat. Some are just a hug wrapped in khakis and 60s sitcom references.

So go ahead—talk to strangers. Just maybe not the ones who try to sell you essential oils and animal hides out of their trunk or overcoat. Use wisdom and discernment. But don't forget to use wonder, too.

I think this hug felt angelic to me! Non-sexual, non-threatening and rawly organic!

I liked that day a whole bunch!

And good grief those cherries on my trip were a delight!

Make a wish, nod and believe!

Grocery

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of the North Dakota Grocers Association, said he only started hearing about the issue on June 9 after seeing several notices through social media and afterward connected with a contact at UNFI.

“What I was told by an individual with UNFI is that they're basically trying to fill orders ‘the old way,’ which was typically by hand,” Dyste said. “He said they're having trouble receiving product and sending product out.”

One issue is that even if milk and other perishables are ready to ship out of a warehouse, orders can't be taken through the online system, meaning those products can't get where they need to go and may end up being discarded if they expire.

“If it's a perishable product it's going to be a dilemma,” Dyste said.

Bronson's Marketplace in Beulah was one store

with some impacts, but are still able to get orders through “the old way” and didn't expect much disruption, according to general manager Devan Hoffer.

“I would imagine the smaller stores, and I don't know how to say this politically, but the bigger stores are probably going to get attention sooner than the smaller stores,” Dyste said.

While some stores contacted by NDNC reported that they're working through the situation and trying to get orders filled in the way Dyste describes, others report the situation is causing significant issues.

Zach Holen, manager of the grocery in McClusky, said the situation with the distributor has been chaotic since the cyberattack was discovered.

Holen said a truck was supposed to deliver on June 9 but did not fulfill the order.

“We're told we might get a truck next week, or we might not, so we're trying to figure out some

alternatives to keep the store stocked,” Holen said.

The store is running short of just about everything, according to Holen.

“Our meat, our dairy, our produce, all the dry goods come on UNFI trucks,” Holen said.

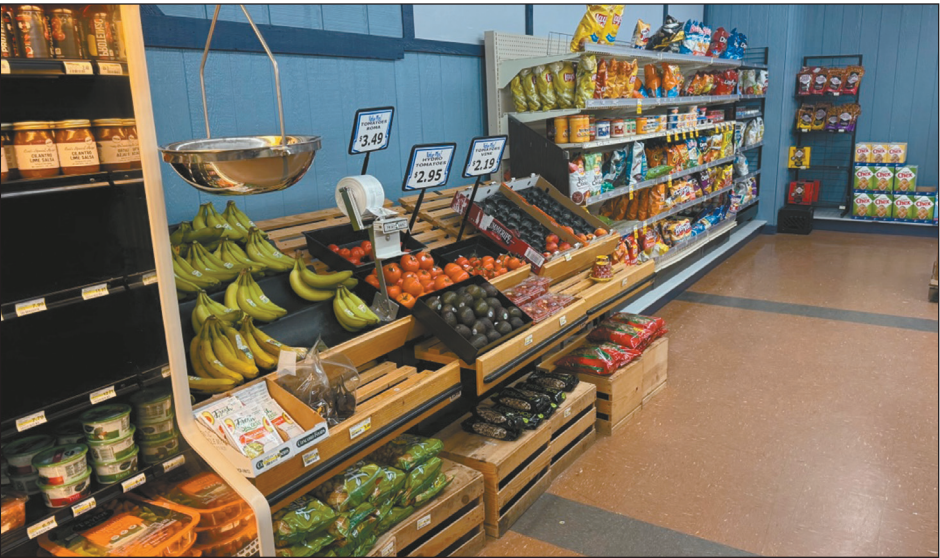
The other grocery nearest to McClusky is Turtle Lake Main Street Market, which shares the same delivery truck and supply chain.

Turtle Lake Main Street Market posted on Facebook about the delivery disruption, as did Baker's Market in Westhope saying milk would not be delivered this week.

Residents in surrounding communities may need to drive to major metro areas for fresh goods over the coming week or two if the situation is not resolved soon.

UNFI disclosed in a filing to the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission on June 9 that it shut down parts of its network after discovering unauthorized access to its systems on June 5. They're attempting to get their system back online with a possible restart date of June 15.

Calls to the closest



UNFI distribution center located in Fargo went unanswered on June 10.

A spokesperson for UNFI reached the same day said the SEC filing was the only information they could disclose at this time.

Dyste said some stores have two distributors and can backfill on orders if there are disruptions to one of the suppliers, but this isn't really an option for smaller, more geographically isolated stores or for other distributors to step in and quickly fill the gaps.

“It would be very difficult for anyone to drop what they're doing and say, okay we're going to take care of you too, without it being a prob-

lem for their regular customers,” Dyste said. “I don't see that happening.”

For smaller stores, having multiple distributors would not be cost effective, he said.

“The way these warehouses work, the more you buy from them, the better your deals are, so to speak. Volume speaks a lot. So, if you start spreading everything to different distributors, then you're losing some of that effectiveness,” Dyste said.

The long-term issue of potential future cyberattacks could impact food security further in rural areas as well as the viability of smaller, struggling grocery stores.

“You just wonder, does this show how exposed our whole economy is that they can do this to a national wholesaler,” Dyste said. “It's a worry and this is a pretty big deal.”

The North Dakota News Cooperative is a non-profit news organization providing reliable and independent reporting on issues and events that impact the lives of North Dakotans. The organization increases the public's access to quality journalism and advances news literacy across the state. For more information about NDNC or to make a charitable contribution, please visit newscoopnd.org.

Association

- Devils Lake VFW Post 756, DAV Chapter 5, American Legion Post 24
- Devils Lake Joint Water Resource Board
- Devils Lake Kiwanis Club
- The Friends of Randy R “Red” Myers
- Garrison Diversion (Recreation Grant)
- Blue Water Consulting
- Lake Region Sportsmen's Club
- Devils Lake Youth Activities

• And many individual donors

Kenner closed her remarks with a message of inclusion and hope: “You didn't just fund a platform. You built a bridge—to nature, to joy, and to the spirit of this community. This is our way of saying: ‘You're invited too.’ Let's cast a line into a future that includes everyone.”

The Merle Baisch Memorial Wheelchair Ramp is now open for public use, offering a safe,

dignified, and scenic fishing experience for residents and visitors of all abilities. How- to signage will be placed later this month, along with final details to the parking area. A bathroom remodel will start later this summer.

For more information about the project or to get involved with accessibility initiatives in the Devils Lake area, contact Devils Lake Tourism at (701) 662-4903 or visit www.devilslakend.com.

Wheelchair

From page 1

laboration between city officials, local businesses, civic organizations, and volunteers. Special thanks were extended to all of them. For the full list visit www.devilslakend.com

Significant financial contributions were made by a wide range of local supporters, including:

- Devils Lake Tourism
- Lake Region Angler

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NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING

North Prairie Ag Annual Meeting

June 26, 2025 | 5:00 p.m.

Barley Hall Osnaobrock, ND

In accordance with the By-Laws of North Prairie Ag, you are hereby notified that the 2025 Annual Meeting will be held at 5:00 p.m. on the 26th day of June at the Barley Hall in Osnaobrock, ND. The purpose of the meeting is to update the patrons on cooperative news, financial status, and to elect 2 board members. Absentee ballots can be obtained by communicating with any North Prairie Ag director. Ballots must be returned by June 25, 2025. We hope to see you at the meeting and appreciate your continued support. A meal will follow the meeting.