

News & Issues report

April (2019)

4/1 A 34-year old Grand Forks man who was shot by deputies in February appeared in court Monday on unrelated charges. Travis Holt is accused of threatening a woman the day before the incident with the G-F-S-O. :50 sec)

4/2 Red River Flooding: Urban and Small Stream Flood Advisory - Grand Forks County.....60 sec

4/3 Mn Emerald Ash Borer: Stearns County under quarantine due to tree-killing insect.....45 sec

4/4 Minnesota governor delivers State of State message urging lawmakers to put aside ideology.....:50 sec

4/4 NWS issues Flood Warning: GF/EWGF/Oslo message. In GF the crest could climb to 45 feet next week...F/S 28 feet.....70 sec

4/4 GFSO gathering info on potential flood areas: Deputies are going door-to-door getting information from property owners in case of emergency.....60 sec

4/5 MN legislature: Senate Majority Leader Paul Gazelka says gun control is dead for the session if House Democrats stick to their plan to wrap two of their priority bills for addressing gun violence into an umbrella public safety budget bill. 60 sec

4/5 ND Health Department chooses operators for medical marijuana dispensaries in Devils Lake, Dickinson, Jamestown and Minot. GF dispensary to open in May. ^0 sec

4/5 GF Edgewood Development: P & Z reviews initial plans for senior housing complex in south Grand Forks. :50 sec

4/7 Downtown Sorlie Bridge to close due to river flooding.....14-thousand vehicles per day.....50 sec

4/8 Grand Forks unveil downtown action plan....changes coming to town square.....60 sec

4/9 Grand forks (city) to purchase downtown Herald building for expansion....Herald agrees to five year lease.....:70 sec

4/9 ACME expansion: Acme Tools has unveiled plans to double the size of its distribution center in Grand Forks. The national retailer of tool brands has made a request for a five-year declining property tax exemption to help in the process. :60 sec

4/10 UND President Mark Kennedy is the lone finalist for top job of the U of Colorado system....60 sec

4/12 ND Supreme Court: Court rules UND and President Mark Kennedy substantially complied with their contractual obligations in firing Cuzzo.....60 sec

4/12 EGF considers UTC ordinance to allow vehicles on city streets....state highways would be prohibited.....60 sec

4/13 MN Cell Phones: Gov. Tim Walz is about to sign into law a bill that will require Minnesota motorists to use hands-free devices when they're driving while phoning.....50 sec

4/15 Colorado protest: An estimated 100 students attended a Monday rally protesting the selection of UND President Mark Kennedy as the lone finalist for the presidency of the Colorado University System.....70 sec

4/16 GF Road Construction: Price-tag for DeMers reconstruction misses mark....\$2million higher.....:60 sec

4/17 EGF looking to reopen Point Bridge....clay berms could protect the approach from river flooding.....:60 sec

4/19 Demographer expects GF school enrollment to grow 4.5% over the next five years.....enrollment declined 2018-19 school year.....70 sec

4/23 GF fire officials say cause of fire at a warehouse off Mill Road may not be known...too much damage....fire occurred 4/16 :45

4/23 Grand Sky UAS corridor: Grand Sky and the Harris Corporation have joined forces to create a U-A-S "super corridor" to support beyond line of sight flight operations.....60 sec

4/25 Gander: EGF mayor delivers State of City.....road funding....LGA...and south side bridge among priority items for the city.....60 sec

4/27 MN transportation funding: MN House approves budget that calls for a 20 cent gas tax increase over four years.....:60 sec

4/27 Crookston Hospital: Groundbreaking for new Riverside Hospital project.....51 million dollar effort.....50 sec

4/30 Power Outage: Bad cable zaps power to thousands in EGF....bad cable blamed.....45 sec

Daily coverage in April of river readings due to spring flooding on Red River...impact to city and rural areas...road closures in Red River Valley due to a top ten flood event.

Live weather updates with Staff Meteorologist Mark Ewens at 6:25 & 7:25 each morning (5 minutes).

News & Issues report

May (2019)

5/1 GF Smoke Compliance Checks: The G-F-P-D enlists the services of area youth - under supervision - to buy smokes while not attempting to conceal their actual age. Goal to deter underage buying. :60 sec.

5/1 GF water plant funding: North Dakota lawmakers set aside a chunk of money to help fund water projects around the state during the just concluded legislative session. GF looking for nine-million. :50 sec

5/2 UND President Kennedy: The U-N-D President is the lone finalist for the top job in the C-U system. He spent last week touring college campuses in Colorado and holding Q-and-A forums. 60 sec

5/2 UND Commencement: UND says former Senator Heidi Heitkamp, actor Josh Duhamel and aviation pioneer Clay Lacy will receive their honorary degrees at spring commencement ceremonies on May 11th at the Alerus Center. 45 sec

5/3 Altru Health Expansion: With site work already underway Altru Hospital officials held a meeting last night with nearby homeowners to go over what they can expect during the upcoming construction period. Pile driving for the 305 million dollar building will likely begin later this month. 70 sec

5/3 UAS Funding: Gov. Doug Burgum and the North Dakota Commerce Department have announced a \$33 million investment in the UAS industry. 50 sec

5/6 GF & EGF Cleanup: Spring clean-up is in full swing this week in Grand Forks and East Grand Forks. Residents can put extra junk out with their regular garbage and city crews will haul it away for free. 45 sec

5/6 UND Presidential Search: The search for a new president of the University of North Dakota actually begins this week. Chancellor Mark Hagerott says he'll travel to Grand Forks to talk to executive staff members about the timeline of the presidential search process. 60 sec

5/6 GF fatal crash: While GF police were attempting to locate the fleeing suspect, indications are that he accessed Interstate 29, and began traveling northbound. He apparently turned to the west, crossed the median, driving in the path of a southbound tractor-trailer. 70 sec

5/7 MN Child Heat: Authorities say a 4-year-old Minnesota boy died after his father left him in a hot SUV for hours while he worked. Health Warning. 45 sec

5/8 EGF goals: Mayor Steve Gander says one challenge became clear during the recent State of the City address –East Grand forks needs to adopt a street replacement policy. Gander says other goals include: working with the state to stabilize L-G-A payments...a south end bridge...Griggs Park development. 70 sec

5/11 GFAFB Mission: Air Force Secretary Heather Wilson stopped by the Grand Forks Air Force Base today to announce the re-designation of the local base as an Air Reconnaissance Wing, establishing the base as the lead in all Global Hawk operations. :60 sec

5/11 Red River Safety: The Grand Forks Sheriff's Department has lifted the river closure notice that was in place during flooding. Instead the G-F-S-O is advising caution as water levels remain elevated - and hazardous debris could be submerged in the channel. :45 sec

5/13 GF Bike Share: The Grand Forks council gets a first look at a proposed Bike Share program. A private company is pedaling the idea to the city. Riders would be able to use a phone-based app to rent a bike for short periods of time. 60 sec

5/14 GF Police Memorial: Law enforcement officials from throughout the northern Red River Valley and southern Manitoba gathered in Grand Forks on Tuesday for the ninth annual Northern Valley Police Memorial Service. 50 sec

5/15 GF School Study: The Grand Forks School Board is moving ahead with a 50-thousand dollar capacity study for the district. The report from R-S-P Associates will examine each school building on the basis of physical...operational...and program space. 70 sec

5/15 EGF Sewer lines: As part of a preventative maintenance program launched in 2011 the city cleans approximately one-fifth of its lines each year. This summer the southeast portion of town will be targeted. The cost is just under 126-thousand dollars. 60 sec

5/16 GF Teacher Talks: Contract talks between teachers and the Grand Forks School Board resume. The teachers had requested a three and five percent pay bump in each of the next two years. 50 sec

5/17 GF Construction: The reconstruction of downtown DeMers Avenue begins Monday in Grand Forks. The project will stretch from 6th Street to 3rd Street and the 5th Street and 4th Street intersections will be closed to crossing traffic during construction. Cost...\$8.1 million. 70 sec

5/17 ND Medical Pot: North Dakota's second medical marijuana dispensary is scheduled to open in Grand Forks next week. The dispensary - named Strive Life - is operated by We-Mend LLC. The location at 1809 13th Avenue North should be up and running on May 22nd. 70 sec

5/21 GF Missing Teen: The Grand Forks Police Department is asking the public for help in locating an absconding juvenile. The G-F-P-D says 16-year old Tahj Hampton left the custody of his guardian on April 26th. (teen found) 60 sec

5/21 UND Gas Leak: A natural gas leak at a construction site on the University of North Dakota campus has been contained -- and an "all clear" has been issued. At least 10 buildings were evacuated. 60 sec

5/21 GF Southern Estates: The Grand Forks council gave the green light last night to a commercial development plot on the city's south side. The project involves a row of townhomes plus retail and office development along Columbia Road from 40th Avenue South to 45th Avenue South. 50 sec

5/22 ND Road Safety: North Dakota DOT officials kicked off the summer construction season in GF with a message about safety. Last year there were three work zone fatalities. :45 sec

5/22 GF Northern Rose: Grand Forks may soon be home to a 150 ton Northern Rose. The Public Arts Commission is working with two anonymous donors and an artist to create the 18-by-18 foot piece of granite. 60 sec

5/22 GF Jail Counseling: Eligible North Dakota resident inmates at the Grand Forks County Correctional Center are now being offered in-house addiction counseling. It's a partnership program with Aggasiz Associates of Grand Forks.

5/24 UMC Aviation: The University of Minnesota Crookston's aviation program has suspended new admissions and officials say the program will likely be discontinued in the coming year. UMC vice chancellor John Hoffman said the program has had a "great partnership" with UND Aerospace. 70 sec

5/24 ND Gov Disaster Request: Governor Doug Burgum has requested a presidential disaster declaration as a result of widespread spring flooding. Preliminary damage assessments indicated that flood damage was expected to exceed nearly \$8.5 million. :50 sec

5/28 ND Natural Gas: Natural gas is being burned off and wasted at record levels in North Dakota because development of the pipelines and processing facilities needed to handle it has not kept pace. Natural gas production hit a record in March. But about 20 percent of it went up in flames through "flaring." :50 sec

5/28 ND Study Topics: Legislative Management committee voted to study 46 topics that could inspire bills for the next legislative session. 50 sec

5/29 Smoky Skies: Forest fires in western and southern Canada – as well as local smaller controlled burns – are generating smoke that could impact our area in the coming days. KNOX Staff Meteorologist Mark Ewens said it's similar to the haze that developed here last year in mid-July and lasted intermittently for several weeks. 60 sec

5/30 GF Veterans Park: Veterans Memorial Park is getting a financial shot in the arm from the city of Grand Forks. The council has agreed to chip in up to 150-thousand dollars in infrastructure needs as the park continues to develop.

Special "live" weather coverage (MAY)

5/16 Storms visit region special reports 2-3 minutes each

5/18 Special weather statements for May snow event....Travel Alert issued.....

5/28 Tornadoes confirmed in region.....special "live" weather coverage/warning 2-3 minute reports every 10-15 minutes 6-9 p-m)

News & Issues Report

June (2019)

6/1 GF Community High School: Community High School will continue to operate out of the North Dakota School for the Blind. The Grand Forks School Board agreed this week to renew the contract for space for another year. (60 sec)

6/2 American Crystal Sugar: American Crystal Sugar is asking East Grand Forks to endorse an eight-and-a-half million dollar project to install new pulp presses at the local plant. The tax exempt bonds would be issued under the Industrial Development Act. (45 sec)

6/3 ND Schools Armed Responders: With school shootings increasingly in the headlines, North Dakota and federal officials are developing the rules for a state program that would allow armed first responders to be posted in schools. The state's superintendent, Kirsten Baesler, expects the draft to be complete by June 13. (50 sec)

6/4 Pure Development Expansion: The Pure Development project in downtown Grand Forks is undergoing some changes. Developers are proposing to add a fifth floor to the structure at North Fifth Street and DeMers. The additional space would mean another 18 residential units and boost the total project cost to 13-point-six million dollars. (60 sec)

6/5 West Nile Virus: North Dakota health officials are out with a safety reminder....with the return of warmer weather comes the risk of West Nile virus. Last year over 200 cases of the mosquito borne illness were documented in North Dakota. (45 sec)

6/5 Altru Groundbreaking: Altru health officials held a ceremonial groundbreaking ceremony for the already under construction hospital project this evening. As part of the celebration officials unveiled the first rendering of what the \$305 million dollar building and campus will look like. (50 sec)

6/6 EGF UTV Ordinance: The East Grand Forks Council gave preliminary approval last night (Tuesday) to a proposed U-T-V ordinance. The measure would allow Utility Task Vehicles on most streets - as long as the operator obtains a permit from the city. The permit would come up for renewal every three years. (45 sec)

6/7 GF Downtown Parking: Expect to see some new signage in downtown Grand Forks designed to highlight available parking in the Central and Corporate ramps. The Planning and Zoning Commission approved the temporary vinyl signs to alleviate parking concerns due to the DeMers Avenue reconstruction project. The signs will advertise two hour public parking. (45 sec)

6/8 GF Balcony Collapse: At approximately 2:33 AM, five individuals were on a 4th floor balcony at 3880 Garden View Dr. when it collapsed. The five individuals who fell from the 4th floor balcony were all transported to the Altru ER. (45 sec)

6/9 WIC Guidelines: Income eligibility guidelines for the North Dakota Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) have increased based on changes in the federal poverty levels. The change increases the amount of income a family can make and still qualify for services. Effective May 1, 2019, a family of four can earn up to \$3,970 each month. (50 sec)

6/11 Northern Rose: Plans to place a 150 ton Northern Rose in Grand Forks continue. The city council gave the go ahead last night for additional planning on the giant rock art project. (45 sec)

6/12 GF Schools Historical: The Grand Forks School Board will allow the local Preservation Commission to take a look inside six schools but stopped short of allowing them proceed with placing the buildings on the National Register of Historic Places. (45 sec)

6/13 GF Road Construction: The 2019 road construction season is in full swing across North Dakota. State D-O-T officials will spend some 370-million dollars on road projects this year. In Grand Forks the downtown DeMers Avenue reconstruction is underway – plus the rebuilding of University Avenue through the U-N-D campus. (60 sec)

6/13 EGF Ice Arenas: East Grand Forks may enlist the services of a consultant to help decide the future of its aging ice arenas. Tops on the agenda is how to make ice without R-22. The city is considering a plan to stockpile the refrigerant which faces an E-P-A production deadline or phase-out. (60 sec)

6/14 GF School Referendum: Officials with the Grand Forks School District say, because of budget deficits, deferred maintenance and other projects, they will push for a referendum to generate more money. School Board President Bill Palmiscno says the public can expect to hear more about it in a few months. (50 sec)

6/18 REA and Alerus Alcohol: The “Ralph” and Alerus Center have the green light to provide alcohol at off-premise sponsored events – but only if they are held at the Empire Arts Center or Chester Fritz Auditorium. The city council added the building limits last night to a proposed expansion of current liquor license for the two venues. (45 sec)

6/18 ND Flu Season: North Dakota’s 2018-19 flu season was nothing to sneeze at. In fact the 7,896 confirmed cases to date by the state health department is second only to last year’s modern day high. The 2017-18 tally topped 85-hundred. (45 sec)

6/19 GFAFB Changes: The Grand Forks Air Force base has scheduled two key ceremonies June 28th. The first is a change of command ceremony, where 319th Air Base Wing Commander Col. Benjamin Spencer relinquishes command to Col. Cameron Pringle, the 319th Reconnaissance Wing commander. That will be followed by a ceremony re-designating the base as the 319th Reconnaissance Wing, establishing the base as the lead in all operations of the remotely-piloted Global Hawk. (60 sec)

6/20 ND Census: North Dakota is getting younger according to the latest data from the U-S Census Bureau. North Dakota’s median age dropped from 37 in 2010 to 35.2 in 2018. (35 sec)

6/21 Columbia mall Future: The owners of Columbia Mall met with city...chamber...and mall tenants as they look to bring more traffic and retail to the south side shopping complex. The mall has not been immune to recent changes in the retail sector – including the closing of Macy’s and Sears. Grand Forks Chamber President Barry Wilfahrt says the visit shows GK is "committed to the market."

6/25 Drone Waiver: The North Dakota Department of Transportation has received a four-year waiver to fly drones over people. The D-O-T will partner with the Northern Plains test site in Grand Forks on the venture. It’s the first time a state agency has received a federal waiver to conduct U-A-S operations in that manner. (50 sec)

6/26 New REA Scoreboard: The Ralph Engelstad Arena in Grand Forks just even more high tech. The home of UND Hockey unveiled its new video display system today - billed as the largest in college hockey. The new center hung scoreboard has four times more video space and weighs nearly 50-thousand pounds. (50 sec)

6/28 EGF Resource Officer: City and school officials in East Grand Forks are looking to renew an existing school resource officer agreement. The program has been in place since 2014 and places a city police officer in school buildings. In recent years a federal grant helped subsidize the salary of a newly hired officer. The new M-O-U simply calls for the program cost to be split 50-50 between the two sides. (60 sec)

Special "Live" weather coverage (June)

6/10 Severe Weather Friday including tornado SE Fertile (MN) 2-3 minute reports every ten minutes 6-8 PM for Severe T-Storm Warning....

6/29 Severe T-Storm Warning GF County and region....2-3 minute updates every ten minutes during A-M warnings and P-M time periods....