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From left, Farm Rescue volunteers Louis Rothmann, Bill Krumwiede and Charlie Bartsch inspect a wheat field on John Renner's farm on Friday afternoon. The group decided to hold off on the harvest until the moisture level in the wheat kernels dropped. Krumwiede, of Voltaire, is a veteran with Farm Rescue and has been volunteering since the organization's founding in 2006. (TOM STROMME/Tribune)



Two more measures OK'd for Nov. ballot

By NICK SMITH
Bismarck Tribune

North Dakota voters will decide in November whether to approve a state conservation fund and whether they want the start of the school year to begin after Labor Day.

The measures are among eight to be decided by voters in the fall — the most on a North Dakota ballot since the June 1996 primary ballot with nine, Secretary of State Al Jaeger said.

Jaeger's office announced Friday that petition signatures for the conservation measure and the school start measure were sufficient to get them on the Nov. 4 general election ballot. The conservation measure would create a Clean Water, Wildlife and Parks Trust, setting aside 5 percent of the state's oil extraction tax revenue annually for conservation. A total of 39,755 signatures were accepted for the constitutional initiated measure, out of 41,195 submitted. The school start date measure, which would change state law, required 13,452 legitimate signatures to appear on the ballot. Of 15,781 signatures submitted, a total of 14,907 were accepted.

Two other initiated measures already have been approved for the fall ballot.

A pharmacy ownership measure approved in August would eliminate a state law requiring that the majority ownership of pharmacies in North Dakota be held by a registered pharmacist. The first initiated measure, approved in July, would change state law to give

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Retired farmers still planting

Pitch in as part of Farm Rescue

By JESSICA HOLDMAN
Bismarck Tribune

Farm Rescue will have planted or harvested more than 300 farms for farmers in need this year. Charlie Bartsch, Louie Rothmann and Bill Krumwiede have been to about 100 of those.

The trio is part of a group of five retired farmers who have volunteered for the charity since near its inception.

"These guys keep calling me," Krumwiede said, pointing to Bartsch and Rothmann as the culprits of his eight-year run as a volunteer.

Krumwiede, a native of Voltaire, found about the charity in 2006 from a newspaper ad asking for volunteers. When he called, he was told they had enough volunteers that

year, but he offered to help anyway, "fill a frill or whatever it takes."

Now Krumwiede runs the combine.

"You can't get him out of there," Rothmann joked.

"That's the best job on the farm," Krumwiede said.



Renner

On Friday, the three men waited in Washburn for a wheat field to dry so they could finish combining the 265 acres for John Renner.

"I prefer planting. It seems like with harvest we run into too much of this," Bartsch said referring to the wet field.

Renner had a cyst removed from

"This life has been good to me so it's a way to give back."

Charlie Bartsch

his back and can't work. He managed to get the crop in by himself, but said he really was hurting.

"Three months ago I couldn't have stood here like this," he said.

Renner said he's thankful for the help from the three men who have spent several years traveling the region helping out fellow farmers unable to work.

"It's really a good program," Bartsch said.

"And it gives us an excuse to play in the dirt," Rothmann said. "I buried a tractor in a graveyard."

"You buried one in a slough, too," Bartsch shot back. "For a while, we called him Cemetery Louie."

"We've had our share of

mishaps," Rothmann said.

"We make a little fun out of it," Krumwiede added.

Rothmann got into Farm Rescue in 2008 after a farmer working south of his hometown of Washburn was severely burned in a combine fire the year before.

Bartsch, a former farmer and rancher from Minot, learned about Farm Rescue from another volunteer at an agriculture industry show in 2008. The volunteer gave him a number to call and the next day Bartsch was joining the ranks.

"This life has been good to me so it's a way to give back," he said.

Bartsch said not long ago he was in J.C. Penney when a little girl whose family farm in Crosby he had volunteered on came up and hugged him. He said he plans to keep helping as long as his health holds up.

(Reach Jessica Holdman at 701-250-8261 or jessica.holdman@bismarcktribune.com.)

Cease-fire begins in Ukraine; U.S. skeptical

By NATALIYA VASILYEVA and PETER LEONARD
Associated Press

MINSK, Belarus — Ukraine, Russia and the Kremlin-backed separatists signed a cease-fire deal Friday after five months of bloodshed, and Europe readied additional sanctions on Moscow. NATO leaders created a new force designed to prevent any aggression by Russia against alliance members.

Gunfire and shelling appeared to fall silent across eastern Ukraine shortly after the appointed hour, to the relief of war-weary residents. But the U.S. voiced skepticism that the rebels and Russia would stop violating Ukrainian sovereignty.

Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko said he

Continued on 9A

Family grieving after girl's hit-and-run death

Police believe pickup was a Ford model

By KATHLEEN J. BRYAN
Forum News Service

MINOT — Minot police say the black pickup on Sunday's hit-and-run that killed 23-month-old Zofia Kristal Pepple has been identified as a Ford model.

Capt. John Klug said Thursday that police have narrowed their search to three or four models, including the FX4, Lariat and Harley Davidson edition, from between 2004 and 2008.

A local Ford dealership, after looking at photographs of the pickup, assisted police in identifying features consistent with those models, he said. The tires also were not original to the truck.

Klug said police have "good tips and good leads," and they're still looking for anyone who may have information about the incident. In cases like this, he said, the



Submitted photo

Zofia Kristal Pepple, 23 months, was the victim of a fatal hit-and-run in Minot on Sunday.

person who fled the scene will eventually divulge details to someone.

"Eventually someone's going to talk. (The driver) will tell someone — a family member or a friend — who will support them. We're waiting for the right tip," he said.

Zofia's father, Jason Pepple of New Town, was preparing Thursday for her

viewing Friday, followed by a funeral today, both to be held in Fessenden, about 90 miles southeast of Minot.

He said he had a message for the driver of the pickup.

"I hope your conscience weighs on you to the point that you do the right thing and turn yourself in," he said.

Pepple, who was not with his wife Chantelle and

daughters Zofia and Mya, 5 months, at the time of the crash, said his wife had traveled to Fessenden to visit her parents Sunday. She stopped in Minot en route to New Town to see a friend.

After securing Mya in her seat for the return trip home, Jason Pepple said Chantelle turned to pick up Zofia, and the toddler ran away thinking they were playing a game

and was struck by a black pickup going east in the 200 block of 11th Avenue South-east shortly before 6:30 p.m.

Jason Pepple said the pickup didn't stop or slow down. A neighbor tried to perform CPR on Zofia, who was coughing up blood.

"She passed away in my wife's arms," he said quietly.

When he arrived at Trinity Hospital's emergency room about 8 p.m., he said the chaplain met him and took him to see Chantelle, who was in shock, "bawling her eyes out" and still had Zofia's blood on her legs.

"She was blaming herself," Jason Pepple said.

He said Sunday night was extremely hard on Chantelle, and he's trying to be strong for her and their family. His mother cared for Mya for several days and when she returned, Chantelle's grief eased.

"Mya is a saving grace for her and for myself as well," Jason said.

An ardent fan of Winnie the Pooh with "beautiful strawberry blonde hair,"

Continued on 9A

Canceled drills

Federal budget crunch idles Guard units' training drills across U.S. — 2A

\$3B project

Fertilizer plant to be built at Spiritwood — 1B



Sunday

Cuts hurt, but tribal chairman says austerity will secure the future

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