



Benson County Farmers Press Minnewaukan ND

Owner: Denise Westad

In July of 2014, Denise Westad purchased Consolidated Newspapers, Inc. dba Benson County Farmers Press in Minnewaukan, ND. Prior to purchasing the business, Denise worked under the long-time owner/publisher, Richard Peterson. Denise had sought assistance from the Devils Lake ND SBDC for financial projections to assist in obtaining financing to purchase the business.

The *Benson County Farmers Press* is a weekly newspaper serving Benson County residents and surrounding communities; it offers local happenings from the surrounding communities, columnists, editorials, features and local news. They have a loyal readership of current county residents, past residents and surrounding communities.

When Denise took over the business, it had 1 part-time and 4 full-time employees. After the first year under her ownership, the newspaper experienced growth and hired an additional full-time employee. This growth also created a need for updated equipment, and Denise again requested assistance from the Devils Lake ND SBDC.

Consolidated Newspapers, Inc. was able to secure financing for a new network server and printer, which improved the efficiency of day-to-day operations.

In 2016, Consolidated Newspapers Inc. expanded yet again with the purchase of another weekly newspaper *The Lakota American*, in Lakota, North Dakota. Denise utilized the Devils Lake ND SBDC for assistance with the purchase of this business as well.

Consolidated Newspapers, Inc. has brought the addition of color and a broader reporting scope to the weekly newspaper. They have been well received by readers and welcomed into the community. *The Lakota American* newspaper has 1 full-time and 2 part-time employees. The past year Denise (Publisher), along with Sara Plum (Editor) and their staff have settled into a routine of publishing 2 weekly newspapers. The staff at the Minnewaukan and Lakota offices are able to work together in the publication of both newspapers. This has led to better service to the individual communities and an increase in advertising and readership. They will continue to serve these communities as a business and be a local news source to maintain citizens' quality of life.