

Dakota Style is back in the potato chip business

Dakota Style is already thinking about adding another potato chip plant. Just six weeks into production ramp of their brand new shiny chip production equipment and facility and with a month's production of pre-orders still unfilled, Riley Dandurand says they are planning for more growth.

Back in 1985, Betty and Bob Campbell, who were local potato farmers, started cooking chips in a kettle in the barn. With lots of work and tenacity, Dakota Style Industrial Strength Kettle Cooked potato chips became a regional brand under their watch.

Current Vice President and General Manager, Riley Dandurand, says "Dad (Kevin Dandurand) bought Dakota Style 25 years ago in 1997. The chips were made in that barn on the farm from startup in 1985 until 2016" when fire took it out. Along the way they added the sunflower products, in the shell "seeds" and out of shell "kernels". This product line was outsourced, private labeled for them with Dakota Style packaging. Then in 2011 a Walmart deal took the business national.

Riley explained that prior to the recession of 2008, private label products in general were perceived

negatively for their low and inconsistent quality of products, unattractive labeling, and bottom shelf exposure all reinforcing the perception. After 2008, that all began changing and private labeling (PL) started growing into it's own with those old issues all being addressed at once. By 2012, when Dakota Style entered that market, it was ripe to explode.

In 2012, a private label deal with Dakota Style products in Kum 'n Go packaging led the company into new markets. From there sales "blossomed into supermarkets." Dakota Style was on a roll. That same year they brought the sunflower product packaging in-house to the new facility in the Clark industrial park east of town.

The way Riley puts it, 2016 was a "bad, dark-cloud year." Fire took out the potato chip plant in February, and other events, including a long, drawn out battle with the insurance company over the fire, combined to "set the company back years."

"The (local) community was fantastic, and the Industrial Park facility was key," said Dandurand. By the time the insurance was settled, the company was in rough shape, but Dakota Style kept alive, pack-



Six years after a fire eliminated chips from their lineup and threatened the survival of the company, Riley Dandurand is proud to show the results of the long haul back for Dakota Style. Here he holds three of their distinctive and much-loved "Industrial Strength" flavors. When asked if we can buy them in local stores yet he verified, "Yes, local stores are now stocked." Potato chips are back at Dakota Style.

ing and selling sunflower products under their own brand and under private labels, out of the new industrial park building. In 2018,

they took the sunflower production completely in-house, roasting, sea-

soning and packaging all under one roof, the current main office building in the industrial park. That marked the beginning of the climb back to pre-2016 condition.

Nearly three years after the fire that eliminated their potato chip business, and running only on the sunflower products, Dakota Style added a new product leg to the their business in late 2018 with the Pretzel Kravings line late in 2018. Their four specific and special seasoning "flavor brands", jalapeno, honey mustard, dill, and barbecue that were originally used on the potato chips, and then on the sunflower seeds and kernels, were also applied to the pretzels. Pretzel Kravings helped the company and the brand immensely.

In May and June of 2020, more than four years after the life-changing fire set their business on a different course, they began asking "What's it going to take to get back into potato chips?" Covid-19 was hitting full stride, panic and shut-downs were affecting business everywhere, although less so in South Dakota and in Clark than in many parts of the country. It wasn't sti-

Dakota Style
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Easter services planned at area churches

The thief cometh not, but for to steal and to kill and to destroy: I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly. I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for his sheep. John 10: 10 & 11. King James Bible.

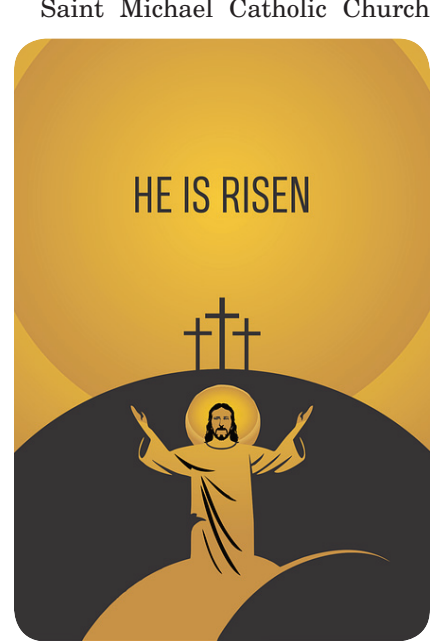
That is exactly what Jesus did. He gave his life for our sins and that is what Easter is all about. His death, but then his resurrection three days later - all for his children - us.

Holy Week is upon us starting next week and ends with the culmination of Easter Sunday, April 17. The following is a list of Easter services in our area:

Maundy Thursday

Churches having a Maundy Thursday service in the area on Thursday, April 14, include in Clark: The Clark United Methodist Church will host a community Maundy Thursday service with members of the ministerial associ-

ation and host Pastor Mark Tracy leading the service at 6:30 p.m. Saint Michael Catholic Church



will celebrate with a Holy Thursday of the Lord's supper mass with members of the Saint Henry Catho-

lic Church at 7:00 p.m. in Henry at Saint Henry Catholic Church.

At Willow Lake Evangelical Lutheran Church, members from Peace Lutheran in Clark and Bethlehem Lutheran in Raymond will join together at Peace Lutheran for a 7:00 p.m. Maundy Thursday service.

Members of the Prairie Star Lutheran parish will gather at 7:00 p.m. at the Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Vienna.

At Crocker Lutheran in Crocker, a 6:30 p.m. worship service with Holy Communion will be held.

At Lake Gospel Church in Willow Lake, a joint service for Lake Gospel Church and Spirit Lake Church will be held at 7:00 p.m. There will be a presentation of the Living Last Supper featuring church members. Communion will be served.

Good Friday

The Willow Lake Evangelical Lutheran Church in Willow Lake will host a Good Friday Tenebrae (ser-

vice of shadows) service at 6:30 p.m. for members of Peace Lutheran in Clark and the Willow Lake Evangelical Lutheran Church.

The Spirit Lake Church and Lake Gospel Church will be worshipping together at Spirit Lake Church with Pastor Jerod Jordan at 7:00 p.m.

Easter Services

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WEATHER

Robert Cole - Official
Weather Observer

	HI	LO	PR
March 29	46	23	0
March 30	43	30	0.12
March 31	32	22	0.17
April 1	32	20	0
April 2	37	24	0.23
April 3	49	30	0
April 4	45	27	0.05
2022 precipitation to date			1.18
2021 precipitation to date			2.35

City council auctions several property sites

The April 4 meeting of the Clark City council was the night selected to auction city owned land property.

The city had three parcels up for sale, going through the agenda process and then finalizing decisions after a brief, 15-minute

executive session.

The first parcel, the land east of Dollar General was sold for \$22,000 to Joe Herr, Jerome Nesheim and Jason Stern. It was appraised at \$27,000.

City Council Auction
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Clark County Commissioner District 5 to have election

If one is to file for county office as an Independent candidate, it must be done by April 26, 2022. To file for the June primary, the filing date was March 29.

To this point, Wallace Knock has filed for District I and Francis Hass for District III. For District 5, vot-

ers will have an election in November as Richard E. Reints and Sara Gjerde have both filed.

For Clark County Register of Deeds, Andrea Helkenn filed her petition for sheriff, as has Christine Tarbox for Clark County Auditor.

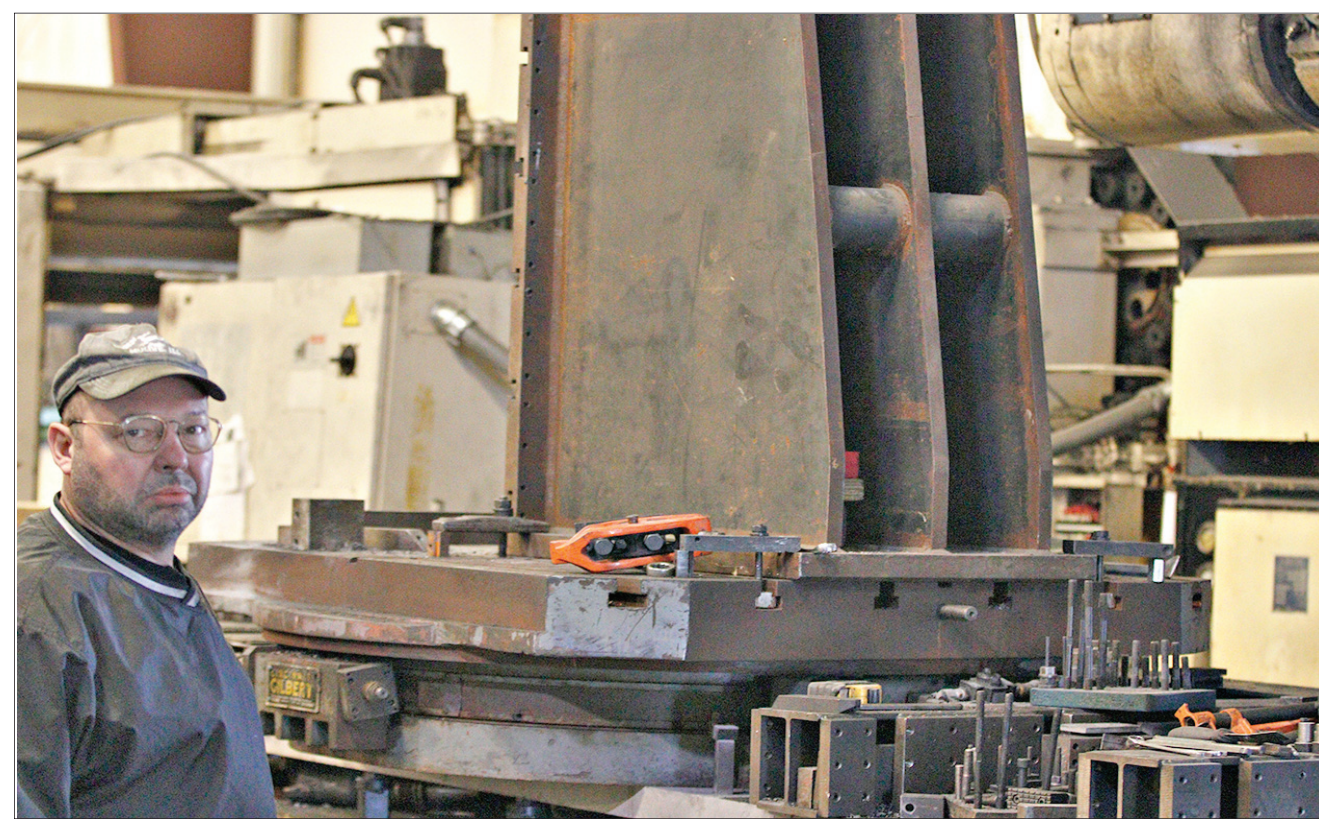
P4 is a machine shop not equalled in these 'parts'

In the southwest corner of the Clark Industrial Park is P4, a business with the second shortest name possible. Behind that small name are big machines and big jobs. Owner, Paul Streff, says his long-time right-hand man, Chad Helkin, currently Paul's only employee, runs the place when he's gone.

Inside, that ordinary looking steel building is jammed nearly full of big machines that carve huge steel, iron and other metal chunks into parts for other machines including top secret projects for the United States government.

Paul owner of P4 says the name came from his first initial and his four kids. He's a family man and a community supporter who thinks Clark is a great place for a business even when his customers are scattered far and wide, with a minority of his work coming from locals. That makes him an exporter from a local perspective, and a contributor to the money flowing into the local economy, into local wages, taxes, stores, restaurants, suppliers, etc. Paul indicated that he believes we need more people here.

The raw materials for P4 are



P4 owner, Paul Streff is standing beside a big steel weldment part that will receive the next step of it's preparation by machining the precision cuts that another manufacturer needs to finish the build. Both the equipment to do the work and the parts he works on are big machines.

mostly large cast iron rough parts and big steel "weldments", that

need machine work to prep for the next step of becoming part of a

machine. Most machine shops in the region make smaller parts and

lots of them. P4 focuses on the big one others can't handle, but not so many pieces.

P4 falls in the industrial classification "Job Shop", meaning their work is largely making parts for other machine shops and factories, as opposed to making finished products to sell to end users or retailers.

Paul knows who his customers are and what they need, which is a key to his success. They are scattered from coast to coast and Canada to Kansas.

Replacement parts for custom built machines is one of Paul's specialties. When a factory has a special machine built to do a certain thing they normally also get a blueprint with descriptions of the parts involved so the factory is not put in a bind if a part fails. They can send the blueprint to any capable shop and have a replacement part made. Paul can work off those blueprints, or even off the broken part, to help quickly get the factory back up and running.

Specialty work from other shops, and some "overflow" work when another shop can't get all their work done on time on their own are a cou-

ple situations where P4 can "pinch hit" for peers and customers.

"Short runs" (small quantities of a part) are a nemesis of most shops. It's difficult for a shop to be cost effective and profitable at the same time running "shorts", so it can be hard for a customer to find someone willing to take that kind of job. P4, with Paul's knowledge and skills can handle short runs all the way down to "one offs" or single part production.

Automation improves efficiency, and Paul strives to leverage computers to take care of the precision factor and perform the repetitious tasks so workers can be more productive and happy with their jobs. Good automation reduces errors and increases production, resulting in superior products for his customers. To that end, his machines are already, or are being refitted with, computer numeric controls (CNC). This puts his machines at a level of accuracy, consistency and efficiency that is impossible with manual controls.

Paul also teaches high school ju-

P4
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