

Recovering a Six on Christmas in Zap North Dakota

By [John Welch](#)

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[The aircraft was [59-0017](#), which crashed 19 Dec 1963 while assigned 5th FIS. Ed Glenn, one of John's 5th FIS Engine Shop buddies confirmed thi]

Unfortunately one our [Minot 5th FIS](#) birds went down outside of a Small North Dakota Town called Zap North Dakota. I was dispatched with a Crew to assist in recovery operations at the site. The time, as I can best remember, was around Christmas of 1963.

We stayed in the only hotel in the town. The first evening there the local Law Enforcement officer stopped by the Hotel as we were eating and invited us Airmen to be judges of the towns commercial and residential Christmas Decorations.

That night we rode in the patrol cars and judged their decorations. They thought it was something to have judges from all over the country. And on Christmas day, while we were at the recovery site, residents shared some of their Christmas Dinner with us. I will always remember the hospitality of Zap North Dakota. I do not remember the tail number of the six we lost. It was a sad thing to lose a bird.

I heard that the farmer that owned the field where the impact occurred later sued the Air Force, Claiming that his cows ingested pieces of the fragmented F-106.

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