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# Storm Troubles Continue For S.D.

Thousands Still Without Power

BY KRISTI EATON  
Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS — South Dakota residents hunkered down for a third day as ice and snow snarled traffic, bowed trees and basically shut down the state Thursday.

Government offices in eastern South Dakota were closed again, and many schools had previously announced Thursday cancellations.

More than 250 electrical poles in the region had been downed by the ice and snowstorm, according to the South Dakota Rural Electric Association. By Thursday evening, Xcel Energy crews had restored power to nearly 56,000 people in eastern and southeastern South Dakota and southwestern Minnesota, but another 24,000 remained in the dark, the utility said.

Officials said they expected "significant progress" Thursday and that most customers would have electricity restored by late Friday. Another 2,200 homes and businesses served by rural electric cooperatives remained without power Thursday morning.

"I strongly believe there is some light at the end of this tunnel. However, we've got to make it through this thing," Sioux Falls Mayor Mike Huether said Thursday afternoon.

Sioux Falls received about half a foot of snow overnight after seeing two days of freezing rain that coated power lines and tree branches with ice. City officials declared a snow alert and said snowplows would be out in force.

The bad weather was forecast to extend into southeastern North Dakota, with up to 10 inches of snow expected by Thursday night. State transportation officials issued a travel alert, urging motorists to use caution because of blowing snow and reduced visibility.

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## Yankton Sees Significant Moisture From Storm

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF  
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Yankton unofficially set a record Thursday, recording four inches of snow on April 11 — doubling a nearly century-old mark of 2 inches set on that date in 1920.

Thursday's snowfall gave Yankton six inches of the white stuff for the last three days. The spring storm began with a half-inch Tuesday, followed by 1.5 inches Wednesday and then the 4 inches Thursday.

The latest precipitation won't lift the region out of its exceptional drought. However, the mixture of rain and snow has provided the most significant moisture in months.

How significant? Yankton saw as much moisture in

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## 'It's Alright'



KELLY HERTZ/P&D

Members of Mount Marty College's Smooth Benediction a cappella group perform "It's Alright" by Huey Lewis and the News during MMC's spring vocal concert Thursday night at Marian Auditorium. The school's Chamber Choir and Mixed Choir also performed, offering selections ranging from Ave Maria to Simon and Garfunkel's "Homeward Bound." To see or purchase images from this event, visit [spotted.yankton.net](http://spotted.yankton.net).

## MOVING ON



RANDY DOCKENDORF/P&D

Steve Mietz, superintendent of the Missouri National Recreational River for the past three years, is leaving his post to become the new superintendent at Great Basin National Park in Baker, Nev. His replacement has not yet been named.

# MNRR Superintendent Leaving Yankton For Nev.

BY ANDREW ATWAL  
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The superintendent of the Missouri National Recreational River for the past three years is taking a new position in Nevada.

Steve Mietz is set to become the superintendent at Great Basin National Park in Baker, Nev., beginning on April 22.

"The park features more than 77,000 acres of land and has a large mountain peak of around 13,000 feet," he said. "Great Basin also has a limestone cave, which is a popular tourist attraction; bristlecone pines, which are more than 4,000 years old; and a variety of other natural resources that make the park unique."

Mietz said one of the biggest differences between the two parks is that the National Park Service (NPS) owns the land of Great Basin.

"Here at the Missouri River, we work in partnership with a lot of groups, including state agencies and the Corps of Engineers, so the NPS doesn't necessarily take the lead in all activities," he said. "At Great Basin, we take the lead in most activities. We still will work in partnership with groups, but not as much as we do here."

Mietz added that at the MNRR, there is some ambiguity with who's in charge of what along the river.

"In most instances, we usually decide to work to-

**"I'm really looking forward to getting back in that area and being near mountains. However, I'll miss a lot of good friends here and some of the partnerships we've made."**

**STEVE MIETZ**

gether," he said. "With the new job, it's more clear who will be in charge if there are problems or things that need to be resolved."

Mietz came to this area from the southwest, and he said he is eager to return there.

"I'm really looking forward to getting back in that area and being near mountains," he said. "However, I'll miss a lot of good friends here and some of the partnerships we've made."

Mietz's replacement has not been named yet. "With the sequester, we've been under a hiring freeze. However, we were able to get an exemption because of how critical this position is," he said. "We will have an interim person until a permanent replacement is named."

**MIETZ** | PAGE 11A

## Coming Up

# Event To Cap Off Cheer Season

BY DEREK BARTOS  
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When Justin Olson came to Yankton three years ago, he could tell something was missing.

As the former head tumbling coach for the Dakota Spirit cheer group in Sioux Falls, he noticed his new community lacked a similar organization. While Yankton High School had a cheer program, there was no competitive club to help feed that program.

"Competitive cheer is a hot sport right now," Olson said. "I couldn't believe there wasn't a program down here. So I said, 'You know what? I'm going to start this. I can see there's a demand for it, and no one else in the area does it.' I kept my fingers crossed that it would catch fire, and it did."

Today, the River City Cheer program (which is associated with River City Gymnastics) consists of more than 50 participants and just concluded its second season of competitive cheer.

To celebrate its success and to offer the community a chance to see the team perform locally, River City Cheer is holding its Cheer Extravaganza Sunday at the Yankton High School gym. Doors will open at 5:30 p.m. with performances beginning at 6:30 p.m.

"It's our big end-of-the-year



COURTESY PHOTO

Members of Yankton's River City Cheer group celebrate their victory at the "Baby I'm A Star" competition held last month in Sioux Falls. The organization, now in its second year, will be holding its Cheer Extravaganza to celebrate its season and to increase its exposure to the community.

event to pull everyone together as a River City family," said Olson, who serves as the program's cheer director and head coach. "It's also a chance to pull together those family members who weren't able to travel with us and see their kids' routines. This gives everyone a chance to see what we're all about and to display the hard work we put in throughout the season."

River City Cheer is made up of

four teams of various age groups, ranging from 3-year-olds to 18-year-olds. It is open to all males and females in the region, with current members from Yankton, Vermillion, Gayville, Volin, Tyndall, Tabor and several Nebraska communities.

There are also no tryouts for the program, Olson said.

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## RIVER CITY



**'Dirty Rotten Scoundrels' Hits YHS Stage**  
**RIVER CITY**

## INSIDE TODAY



**USA Weekend**

## CORRECTION

In Thursday's *Press & Dakotan* story on Dr. Ed Shindler, his name was misspelled in both the headline and underneath the photo. We apologize for those errors.

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# Niobrara Voters OK School Bond Measure

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF  
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NIOBRARA, Neb. — It took two days to learn the results, but Niobrara voters have approved a nearly \$10 million school bond issue for the replacement and renovation of buildings.

The election was held Tuesday, but the spring storm postponed the counting of ballots until Thursday.

The bond measure required a simple majority and passed by a 189-52 margin. The measure allows a maximum \$9.995 million over a 25-year period. The bond will increase property taxes by one cent per \$100 of taxable valuation.

Niobrara superintendent Margaret Sandoz noted the bond measure received 78 percent of the votes cast in Tuesday's election.

Sandoz saluted the voters who turned out in the unfavorable weather and travel conditions to cast their ballot. Tuesday's election drew 241 of 488 registered voters for 49.39 percent turnout, according to the Knox County clerk's office.

"My first reaction was the number of people who got out and voted (in the spring storm)," Sandoz said. "I think the Niobrara school supporters and the Niobrara school board should be commended for their awesome efforts to get the word out and to get the information out to the community. I think (the voter turnout and election outcome) are a real strong showing of the hard work that they put into this bond election."

Tuesday's inclement weather became a major issue in securing and counting the Niobrara ballots after the polls closed, said Knox County Clerk Joann Fischer, who also acts as election commissioner.

Tuesday's election was conducted as planned, with the polls remaining open until the scheduled time of 8 p.m., Fischer said. She consulted with the Nebraska secretary of state's office on how to proceed with the ballots.

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