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JORDYNNE HART/P&D
Judy Lane holds up a blue puzzle piece sign her husband made to celebrate Autism Awareness Day, Thursday, April 2. Gramps will be hanging the sign up to participate in the Light It Up Blue campaign put on by Autism Speaks.

Store Shines A Light On Autism

BY JORDYNNE HART
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Gramps convenience store in Yankton will be celebrating World Autism Awareness Day Thursday by lighting the place up blue with a lit, welded puzzle piece.

The gas station will be joining landmarks such as the Empire State Building, the Sydney Opera House and Egypt's Great Pyramid that will be bathed in blue for the special campaign sponsored by Autism Speaks.

Gramps will also be selling homemade bars made by Judy Lane April 2, followed by every Wednesday throughout the month of April. All proceeds go toward autism.

The annual effort shines a light on autism as a growing global health crisis and raises awareness about the importance of education, early diagnosis and early intervention.

"The puzzle piece symbolizes autism being such a puzzling disease," Lane said. "Everybody is different in the spectrum because no two cases are the same. It is the perfect symbol for the disease."

Autism statistics from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) identify around 1 in 68 American children as on the autism spectrum — a ten-fold increase in prevalence in 40 years, according to the Autism Speaks website.

Studies also show that autism is four to five times more common among boys than girls. An estimated 1 out of 42 boys and 1 in 189 girls are diagnosed with autism in the United States.

"There are 3 million people in the United States who have been diagnosed with autism," Lane said. "It makes me wonder how many people haven't been diagnosed."

Judy Lane's husband, Larry, made the blue puzzle piece that will be hanging outside the gas station Thursday.

"Larry is a welder by trade," she said. "He did it to 'go blue' for autism. We just wanted to make people aware."

But behind the lit puzzle piece is a story.

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Extension Granted

PUC Gives Rosebud Sioux Time In TransCanada Pipeline Dispute

BY BOB MERCER
State Capitol Bureau

PIERRE — The state Public Utilities Commission granted two short extensions of deadlines to the Rosebud Sioux Tribe in the permit certification process for the Keystone XL pipeline project Tuesday.

The commission agreed with the Rosebud Sioux lawyer that TransCanada, the project sponsor, should have been more

responsive during the past two months to his information requests.

The tribal government consequently received an additional eight days to pre-file its witnesses' direct testimony. Those statements now are due April 10.

The deadline for filing rebuttal testimony from Rosebud Sioux expert witnesses also was pushed out four days to April 27.

However, none of the other interveners

received more time.

Among them are the Yankton, Cheyenne River and Standing Rock tribal governments, Dakota Rural Action and Bold Nebraska.

TransCanada received a state permit in June 2010 to build the Keystone XL pipeline through western and south-central South Dakota on a route that happens

PIPELINE | PAGE 11

On The Farm



RANDY DOCKENDORF/P&D
Mission Hill farmer Chris Nelsen explains farm machinery and crops during Monday's visit by Beadle School elementary students from Yankton. Nelson and his wife, Cindy, offered six tours for the Beadle students in grades K-5 to promote a greater understanding of agriculture.

Local Farm Exposes Kids To Agriculture

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF
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MISSION HILL — As he showed off farm machinery, Jeff Pravecek decided to test his young audience.

"How fast do you think this equipment goes?" he asked the Beadle School first graders.

"Three hundred miles an hour!" shouted an enthusiastic youngster.

"Not quite that fast," he replied, flashing a smile.

Pravecek was among volunteers Monday at the tour of Chris and Cindy Nelsen's farm near Mission Hill. The Nelsens opened their farm to the Yankton elemen-

tary school for three days of visits, wrapping up today (Wednesday).

Monday's visits drew 60 kindergartners and 63 first graders, with similar numbers expected for the rest of the tours.

Chris Nelsen's roots run deep in the rural Yankton County soil, a story he proudly shared during a break.

"My family homesteaded in this area 150 years ago, and this particular farm has been in my family for about 115 years," he said.

Unfortunately, many of today's youngsters — like the Beadle Elementary students — have little, if any, connection to the farm, Cindy Nelsen said.

"We're excited to have all these kids

coming out to see what we do," she said. "Our kids go to Beadle, and most of the time, they're the only ones that live on a farm."

As a result, a huge disconnect has occurred between today's generation and how they relate, if at all, to farms and the source of the food supply.

"We show them food doesn't come from the store," Cindy said.

Chris hopes the farm tours will provide a valuable first-hand experience. "This allows kids to visit a farm and to see the machinery, to touch the soil and to see the animals," he said.

FARM | PAGE 9

Diamonds & 'Jeopardy'

Game show host Scott Kooistra gets the air squeezed out of him by winning "contestant" Josh Svatos, president of the Yankton Chamber of Commerce's board of directors, while playing "Jeopardy!" during Chamber's annual banquet, held Tuesday night at Minerva's/Best Western Kelly Inn. The game show was part of a program, titled "Denim & Diamonds" that included a country style dinner, a review of 2014's accomplishments and a presentation of various awards. (Kelly Hertz/P&D)



Proposed Fuel-Tax Increase Divides Nebraska Lawmakers

BY GRANT SCHULTE
Associated Press

LINCOLN, Neb. — Nebraska lawmakers remained split Tuesday over a proposed fuel-tax increase as they debated the best way to pay for roads and bridges.

The measure would phase in a 6-cent increase over four years, raise the total gas tax to 31.6 cents per gallon and generate an estimated \$19 million a year for the aging infrastructure.

Sen. Jim Smith of Papillion said he proposed the bill as a "user fee" be-

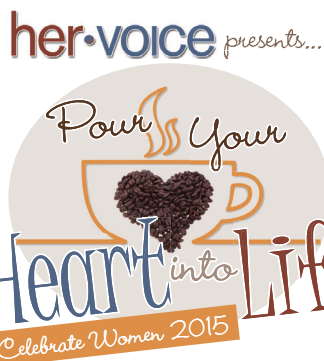
cause it only applies to motorists when they fill their tanks.

Smith, a conservative business owner who regularly advocates for tax cuts, said the fuel tax is pro-commerce and gives the state a pay-as-you-go option to pay for infrastructure. Smith said he preferred raising the fuel tax to using general-fund dollars, which would make it harder to lower taxes.

"I convinced my constituents that I had conservative principles, that I was a pro-business person," said Smith,

FUEL | PAGE 11

Plan Now
To Attend
Celebrate
Women
2015



with Event Speaker Julie Clark

NEW Location!
Saturday, May 9th
NFAA Easton Archery Complex

Advance Tickets Only \$20
Tickets available at Hy-Vee & The P&D
Doors Open at 11:00 am
Lunch Served 12:30pm-1:45pm
Speaker 2pm • Booths Open at 11am
Yankton's Primo Women's Event!