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An Honored Soldier

Avon Guardsman Chosen To Receive National Award

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF
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AVON — U.S. Army Warrant Officer Kenneth Podzimek lost one of his men, but it wasn't from enemy fire.

"It was an incident that we had at the unit, shortly after I became a warrant officer," he told the *Press & Dakotan*. "The death was from a self-inflicted wound. It took everyone in the unit by surprise."

Podzimek helped his South Dakota Army National Guard (SDANG) unit deal with the loss. The incident called upon him to use both his leadership and personal skills.

In another instance, he provided logistical planning and support for simultaneous June 2014 natural disasters in different parts of South Dakota.

And now, he is helping prepare his unit for an upcoming deployment to Kuwait.

The Avon soldier's effective, diverse leadership skills have earned him national recognition. The

U.S. Army announced Podzimek will receive the General Douglas MacArthur leadership award during a May 29 ceremony at the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia. Gen. Raymond Odierno, the U.S. Army Chief of Staff, is scheduled to present the awards.

Podzimek serves as a construction engineer technician in the 155th Engineer Company in Wagner. He has served his entire 14-year National



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Warrant Officer Kenneth Podzimek

On The Hunt



RANDY DOCKENDORF/P&D
Chris Nohr follows his 1-year-old daughter Faith as she heads for an Easter egg during Saturday's hunt on the Avera Yankton Care Center grounds. Nohr, a Yankton native, now lives in Huron. Saturday's event represented a bit of history as it marked the last Easter egg hunt at the current site before the care center moves to its new location later this year.

Pope Praises Iran Deal In Easter Message

VATICAN CITY (AP) — In an Easter peace wish, Pope Francis on Sunday praised the framework nuclear agreement with Iran as an opportunity to make the world safer, while expressing deep worry about bloodshed in Libya, Yemen, Syria, Iraq, Nigeria and elsewhere in Africa.

Cautious hope ran through Francis' "Urbi et Orbi" Easter message, a kind of papal commentary on the state of the world's affairs, which he delivered from the central balcony of St. Peter's Square.

He had just celebrated Mass in rain-whipped St. Peter's Square for tens of thousands of people, who huddled under umbrellas or braved the downpour in thin, plastic rain-slickers.

Easter day is "so beautiful, and so ugly because of the rain," Francis said after Mass about Christianity's most important feast day. He expressed thanks for the flowers which bedecked the square and which were donated by the Netherlands, but the bright hues of the azaleas and other blossoms seemed muted by the gray skies.

GF&P To Hold Open House

From P&D Staff Reports

The South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks will host an open house Thursday (April 9) at the NFAA Easton Yankton Complex, located at 800 Archery Lane in Yankton.

The open house runs from 5:30-7:30 p.m. The event is free and open to the public.

The first hour will focus on Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) concerns at

Yankton and other areas. Mike Smith, AIS statewide coordinator from Pierre, along with local GF&P staff, will be on hand to present information and to answer questions at this open house.

The open house will allow area residents to ask questions and express concerns on AIS or any other topic. The open house will provide opportunities for area residents to speak one-on-one with GF&P officials.

South Dakota

Lawmakers Have Summer Homework Assignments

BY JAMES NORD
Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS — State lawmakers and interested groups will spend the summer investigating several problems in South Dakota that could be solved with legislation during the 2016 session in Pierre.

Legislators will meet in late April to determine topics to study over the summer, and several groups already have been formed or extended.

Such studies frequently germinate into concrete legislation. The road and bridge funding hike that lawmakers passed in March that raises more than \$80 million in its first year came out of a summer study group on highway needs. Lawmakers also passed a study-spawned bill this session mandating that certain insurance plans cover a costly but effective treatment for children with autism and would lay the groundwork for further coverage in the future.

Here are some of the upcoming efforts:

JOLENE'S LAW

The Jolene's Law Task Force during the 2015 session put forward mandatory reporter legislation meant to make sure an account of

abuse doesn't become jumbled as it passes through multiple people on its way to authorities.

The work group also asked for reauthorization from the Legislature to continue studying the topic of child sexual abuse, but the bill suffered a surprise defeat in a legislative committee. Gov. Dennis Daugaard stepped in and folded the task force into the executive branch so it could keep working.

The task force is named after Jolene Loetscher, of Sioux Falls, who was a victim of sexual abuse as a teenager and has talked publicly about her story.

Loetscher has said the task force wants to continue working on a broader public awareness campaign in part about the signs of abuse and to improve how K-12 students, volunteers, teachers and parents are educated about abuse, among other initiatives.

EDUCATION

Republican state officials want to study the South Dakota education system and re-evaluate how it's funded, rather than changing policy based on anecdote and public opinion. Daugaard and GOP

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Springfield Vet Memorial Far Ahead Of Schedule

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF
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SPRINGFIELD — Progress on the Springfield Veterans Memorial isn't going according to plan.

Actually, it's moving far beyond expectations.

"We're probably a year ahead of schedule," said chairwoman Connie Allen. "We're to the point where we're going to hold our groundbreaking ceremony on Memorial Day and the dedication in October."

The memorial will be located in Terrace Park overlooking the Missouri River. The gray granite spire will stand 22 feet

tall, sporting a lit top which will be visible miles away. The black granite panels will stand 5-8 feet tall and break into a zig-zag design at the top. The sloping tablets will symbolize the undulating hills and scenery surrounding the site as well as the broken lives caused by war and conflict.

The Springfield Veterans Memorial committee formed in 2010 and kicked off its efforts Memorial Day 2011.

"Springfield always does its five (Memorial Day) ceremonies in the morning. Then, they have a program at the Community Center," Allen said. "For the



SHAUNA MARLETTE/P&D
Terrace Park, shown in a February photo, will host the new Springfield Veterans Memorial. The monument is set for a Memorial Day groundbreaking and an October dedication ceremony. The memorial, overlooking the Missouri River, will incorporate the park's cannon.

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Plan Now To Attend Celebrate Women 2015

her·voice presents...

Pour Your Heart into Life 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!