



YANKTON DAILY PRESS & DAKOTAN



Bucks Blank Riders 1-0
PAGE 11

f t r Volume 140
Number: 307

The Dakotas' Oldest Newspaper | **20 PAGES** | www.yankton.net

75¢



PHOTO: LINDA WUEBBEN
Auschwitz survivor Phillip L. Gans is greeted from a young member of the audience after Gans discussed the Holocaust at Crofton High School Friday.

Auschwitz Survivor Reveals The Past To Crofton Students

BY LINDA WUEBBEN
P&D Correspondent

CROFTON, Neb. — “The Nazis had no respect for humanity,” Phillip L. Gans said. “They would make life as miserable as they possibly could for us.”

Gans talked to students at Crofton Community Schools Friday about the time he spent in a Nazi concentration camp during World War II.

“I am 87 years old and you are a witness to what I witnessed,” Gans said. “Your children’s children will never be able to talk to an Auschwitz survivor like you are now.”

The average life span for prisoner living in the Auschwitz labor camp during World War II was four months. Gans was a prisoner in one for 18 months.

Gans lived in Auschwitz III Slave Labor Camp in Nazi Germany from August 1943 to January 1945 and then followed with confinement at Flossenbürg from January 1945 to April 1945. He was incarcerated at the age of 15.

Before Gans’ family was taken, they spent a little more than a year in hiding in homes of family friends in their hometown of Amsterdam. His father, mother, grandma, brother and sister operated a business out of their family home and were passed over many times when the Nazis came to clean out the Jews after Holland became occupied by Hitler’s army in 1940.

Eventually, Gans was taken to the country to work for a farmer and the family hidden in other homes but the Nazi machine finally caught up to them. Jews were not allowed in public and wore the Star of David on their clothing so they were easily identified. Their identification cards were printed with the capitol letter J in the upper right hand corner. Jewish children went to special schools.

After the family went into hiding, every member started crocheting women’s clothing to bring in some income. Jews were not allocated food ration cards so they needed to buy food ration cards on the black market so they could go to grocery stores and buy what they needed. They sometimes slept in homes but if the Germans came to town, they hid in sheds with Grandma sleeping on the bare floor and the others seated in chairs taking turns sleeping and keeping watch.

When Gans’ family was arrested, they were taken to jail and questioned about the food ration cards and where they got money. After several days, they were handcuffed and marched through town to the rail station where they were crowded in cattle cars to be shipped to Westerbork, Holland.

SURVIVOR | PAGE 19

Burn Ban Lifted

Yankton County Removes Ban, Caution Still Urged

BY ROB NIELSEN
Rob.nielsen@yankton.net

For the moment, Yankton County is no longer in a burn ban, but officials are still warning anyone looking to burn to be cautious.

Yankton County Emergency Management Director Paul Scherschligt told the *Press & Dakotan* Friday that overall

greening of the land helped in lifting the ban.

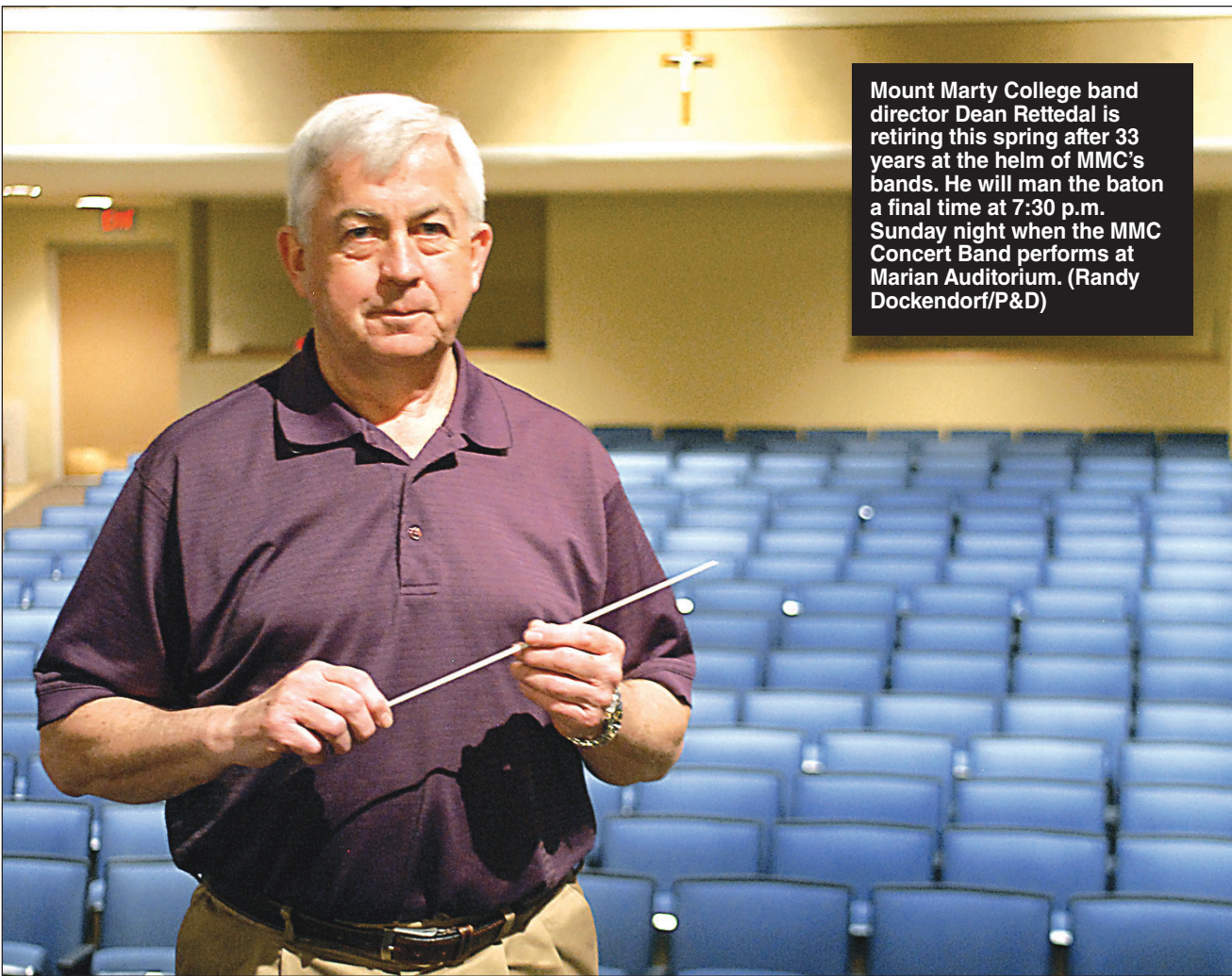
“The fire chiefs feel that the greening up of the ditches and stuff like that have helped a lot,” Scherschligt said. “It isn’t the moisture — we’re still dry — but the ditches greened up and some of the pastures are starting to green up, and they felt it would be all right to open it back up for a while.”

Despite the lifted burn ban, Scherschligt said there’s still a need to be careful.

“Any fields that have dead trash on them like corn fields will still burn real fast,” he said. “People will need to, when they do burn, still use caution — and most people, for that part, do. But if

BAN | PAGE 19

Swan Song



Mount Marty College band director Dean Rettedal is retiring this spring after 33 years at the helm of MMC’s bands. He will man the baton a final time at 7:30 p.m. Sunday night when the MMC Concert Band performs at Marian Auditorium. (Randy Dockendorf/P&D)

Rettedal Retiring As MMC Band Director

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF
randy.dockendorf@yankton.net

During a performance in Sioux Falls, director Dean Rettedal and his Mount Marty College band members ended up in prison — and they wanted it that way.

“We were on tour and setting up to play in the gym at O’Gorman High School, and a blizzard cancelled classes and our concert,” Rettedal said. “What was I going to do all day with 70 college students during a blizzard?”

Rettedal then came up with an idea — quickly schedule another concert in Sioux Falls.

“I called up the state penitentiary and talked with Warden (Herman) Solem,” he said. “I explained our situation and asked if we could play a concert at the prison. He thought it was a great idea, and we were there within two hours.”

The inmates were extremely appreciative of the impromptu concert, Rettedal said. “The prisoners were loving every second of it,” he said.

The concert was just one of many highlights during Rettedal’s 33 years as a MMC band director and faculty member. However, he and his trademark trumpet are retiring this spring.

“I can’t believe it’s been 33 years,” he said. “It’s amazing how time flies.”

But first, he is preparing for one final event as conductor.

The MMC Concert Band will present its spring performance at 7:30 p.m. Sunday in Marian Auditorium on the Mount Marty College campus. The concert is free, and the public is invited to attend. A retirement reception honoring Rettedal will be held immediately following the concert.

The spring concert will offer a mixture of the

MMC | PAGE 20

Special School Board Meeting Slated Monday

By P&D Staff Reports

The Yankton school board will hold a special meeting at noon on Monday, April 27.

The school board will discuss approving the Title I Reading Recovery position for Lydia Wentworth for the 2015-2016 school year. The school board approved a one-year contract to hire the position for the current school year.

The board will also discuss approving an art teaching position for the Yankton Middle School for the 2015-2016 school year.

The board will also consider leaving the current school calendar as approved on April 14, and not make up the one snow day that was taken last December.

The meeting will be held in the School Administration Building at 2410 West City Limits Road.

Arbor Day



KELLY HERTZ/P&D

The City of Yankton commemorated Arbor Day Friday by planting an Autumn Blaze Maple at the south end of Fante Memorial Park. Shown planting the tree are Yankton urban forestry specialist Lisa Kortan and city employees Justin Myers and Mike VanWinkle. This is the 31st year that Yankton has been designated a Tree City USA.

Speaker Addresses State Of Mental Care For Vets

BY ROB NIELSEN
rob.nielsen@yankton.net

Care builds hope when it comes to mental health.

This was one of the main messages brought forward by Dennis Mohatt, vice president for behavioral health with the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE), Friday during a conference focused on improving combat veterans’ care held at the Avera Sacred Heart Professional Pavilion.

Mohatt said there’s long been a tendency to dehumanize mental ailments.

“In the area of behavioral health, I would say we have a long tradition of responding in ways that steal hope,” Mohatt said. “When I trained in the



Mohatt

late ‘70s-early ‘80s, we didn’t talk about people with mental illness — we talked about the mentally ill. We didn’t talk about people who had depression — we talked about depressive people. We didn’t talk about persons with schizo-

phrenia — we talked about schizophrenics. They were their disorder first; they were people second. We didn’t talk about recovery, we told people — and I’ve got to tell you that early in my career sitting with parents and telling them — ‘I don’t know if your child will ever recover.’”

VETS | PAGE 19