

Press & Dakotan

(USPS 946-520)

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75 CENTS

The Oldest Daily Newspaper Of The Dakotas • www.yankton.net

VOLUME 136, NUMBER 103

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OFF TO A FRESH START



Marty Indian School superintendent Mike Elsberry (right) greets a student during the circle of honor at Monday's program opening the new school year. Elsberry, who started his job June 1, remains upbeat about the future despite spending the summer dealing with flood damage that forced a week's delay to the start of school.

Two Months After Flood, Marty School Opens With Optimism

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF randy.dockendorf@yankton.net

MARTY — The students and staff at the Marty Indian School received an extra week of summer vacation this year, but they would gladly have given up the reason in order to start classes on time.

In June, the Marty area was flooded with an estimated 8 inches of rain in a matter of hours. Other parts of southern Charles Mix County received 4 to 7 inches of rain. The region received an estimated 13 inches of rain during an 80-hour period.

Charles Mix County suffered an estimated \$1 million damage, and the Yankton Sioux Tribe sustained similar damage. At one time, nearly 40 displaced families were living in hotel rooms, with relatives and in other accommodations.

School superintendent Mike Elsberry and Steve Cournoyer Jr., the campus facilities manager, spent the entire summer working with campus repairs, federal agency inspections and insurance claims.

"We spent the entire summer working on (school) flood repairs," Elsberry said. "We were scheduled to start school Aug. 16, but as the date approached we hadn't even begun to do the usual things we needed for the school year."

That led to the decision to postpone the start of school, giving staff time to finish preparations, Elsberry said. Fortunately, the flooding damage left the main classroom buildings relatively unscathed, he said.

"Most schools around here didn't start until this week anyway," he said. "We will take a look at our calendar down the line and re-evaluate what to do."

On Monday, the entire K-12 student body gathered behind the high school for a program welcoming the new school year. They formed three circles, with the elementary students on the inside, the middle school in the center and the high school on the outside.

The traditional program provided nalmalcy for the students, staff and their families during a

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No Evidence Tainted Eggs Go Beyond 2 Iowa Farms

Investigators Continue Search For Cause Of Salmonella Outbreak

BY MARY CLARE JALONICK Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Food and Drug Administration officials said Monday that there is no evidence a massive outbreak of salmonella in eggs has spread beyond two Iowa farms, though a team of investigators is still trying to figure out what caused it.

FDA officials said they do not expect the number of eggs recalled — 550 million — to grow.

Dr. Jeff Farrar, FDA's associate commissioner for food protection, said 20 FDA investigators are at the two farms, Wright County Egg and Hillandale Farms, and could be there until next week. He said preliminary findings of the investigation should be available later this week.

Farrar said the chicks that came to the farms from a Minnesota hatchery appear to have been free of illness, so contamination most likely happened at the Iowa locations. The FDA is looking at eight different sites on the farms where laying hens were reared as well as other locations, he said.

The House Energy and Commerce Committee said it is investigating the outbreak and sent letters to both farms asking for detailed information about company operations, communi-

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Q&A: Are The Eggs At My Grocery Store Safe? PAGE 7

the Agriculture Department and the FDA, sent the two government agencies a letter asking what they knew.

The number of illnesses, which can be life-threatening, especially to those with weakened immune systems, is expected to increase. The federal Centers for Disease Control has said there could be as many as 1,300 salmonella illnesses linked to the eggs. The CDC said that for every case reported, there could be 30 or more unreported cases.

Dr. Christopher Braden, a CDC epidemiologist involved in the investigation, said there have been 40 more cases reported since last week, but it isn't immediately clear if all are linked to tainted eggs. Braden said so far the agency has not identified additional clusters of illness that would indicate the outbreak has spread beyond the two Iowa farms.

As her agency investigates the cause, FDA chief Margaret

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City Approves Salary Increases For Employees

BY NATHAN JOHNSON nathan.johnson@yankton.net

The Yankton City Commission opted Monday to continue implementing a pay increase plan for eligible employees but decided against giving itself a raise.

The two issues were bundled together under one agenda item, and Commissioner Charlie Gross proposed at the outset that they be separated.

"The first issue is the step increase which, historically about this time of year, the commission approves," he said. "Even though we budgeted for that step increase last year, we wait to see how revenues are coming in for the first six months of the year and then take an action."

The city Step Pay Plan aims to bring employees up to the mid-point of their respective salary range among individuals in similar positions as established by a salary study done every three years. The city compiles the salary data from other first-class cities in South Dakota, local private firms and nearby counties.

A proposal to raise the commissioner salary by 1.75 percent is a different issue and should not be tied to the step plan dis-

ussion, Gross continued. The commission got a .16 percent adjustment in 2003 in order to raise its salary by \$4.36 annually and make it an even number. Otherwise, the commission has not received a real raise since a 3 percent increase in January 1998. The increase of 1.75 percent was proposed by City Manager Doug Russell because that is what the salary increase will be for employees receiving the step adjustment.

The commission voted unanimously to delete the commission raise from the memorandum and save that discussion for another time.

Returning to the proposed step increase, it was revealed that it would affect 66 of the city's 134 eligible employees and would amount to an annual expenditure of approximately \$26,000.

It is given above and beyond the annual cost-of-living adjustment that is sometimes awarded to all city employees.

"That's 66 people who have not reached mid-point yet," Finance Officer Al Viereck said. "They've not reached 10 years of service. They get a step per year for up to 10 years."

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BOTTOMING OUT



KELLY HERTZ/P&D

The James River continues to recede in the Yankton area, with forecasters expecting the river to fall below flood stage at the Scotland reporting station this week. These tire ruts at the access area along Highway 81 north of Yankton indicate at least one boater couldn't wait to get his craft in the water. Despite some light rain Monday night, conditions are expected to remain dry for the next five days. For weather details, see page 2.

School District Seeks Solutions To Fund Shortage

BY SHAUNA MARLETTE shauna.marlette@yankton.net

Talk to business owners in the area and ask how they would handle a \$1.5 million shortage in funding their operating expenses for a year, and you would likely get a rather incredulous look.

Yet, the Yankton School District (YSD) is facing that exact shortage in the general fund Budget for the 2010-2011 school year.

"We prefer to say we have a revenue problem, not an expenditure problem," said YSD business manager Jason Bietz.

"This year, 83 percent of the general fund is directed specifically toward salaries and fringe benefits. The remaining is used for purchase services — such things as utilities, insurance and contracted services — supplies and materials. It is roughly 7 percent purchase services, 4 percent supplies and materials and just more than 1 percent for other such as dues and fees and stuff like that."

The general fund, which is the operating budget for the district, is just one of five funds. The others — capital outlay, special education, food service and bond redemption — are funded separately under different tax levies set by the state. The key to understanding the issue according to district superintendent Dr. Joseph Gertsema, is that the moneys collected can not be

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