



Sunny, Very Hot

9 a.m.: **75** | 3 p.m.: **91** | DETAILS: PAGE 2

FRIDAY ■ AUGUST 31, 2012

# YANKTON DAILY PRESS & DAKOTAN

VOLUME 138  
NUMBER 108

The Dakotas' Oldest Newspaper | **TWO SECTIONS** | www.yankton.net

75¢



## Drought Conditions Worsen

Most Of South Dakota And Nebraska Still In Drought

BY DEREK BARTOS

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Drought conditions continue to worsen for most of South Dakota, while conditions in Nebraska shifted slightly as part of the state received some much needed rain, according to the latest U.S. Drought Monitor map released Thursday.

In South Dakota, the total area of extreme drought (D3) expanded to 26.44 percent, an increase of almost 8.5 percent from last week and the highest total the state has seen since the summer of 2006. Overall, 83.3 percent of the state is experiencing moderate drought (D1) or worse, with 60.98 percent experiencing severe drought (D2) or worse.

In Nebraska, some areas in the southeastern part of the state recently received up to 4 inches of rain, allowing the total area of the state seeing D3 or worse to drop from 98.3 percent last week to 97.21 percent. However, the percentage of the state experiencing D4 conditions increased from 22.53 percent to 23.33 percent.

According to Dennis Today, South Dakota state climatologist, data being compiled as the region nears the end of the climatological summer is producing some of the driest and warmest measurements on record. Most stations in southeast South



Today

Dakota are poised to set all-time lows for precipitation, breaking some records that date back to the 1930s.

"Any time you are comparing records with the Dust Bowl, you have some serious issues," Today said in a news release. "While temperatures were generally just short of Dust Bowl records, precipitation records did beat many from the 1930s."

The following precipitation data (through Aug. 29) shows how stations currently rank compared to the driest summers on record:

Vermillion — 1.62, record: 3.68 (1931);  
Yankton — 1.76, record: 2.79 (1970);  
Centerville — 2.30, record: 3.56 (1931);  
Ft. Meade (Sturgis) — 2.69, record: 3.00 (2006)

DROUGHT | PAGE 10A



HARRY E. WALKER/MCT

Republican presidential nominee Mitt Romney speaks to the delegation at the 2012 Republican National Convention in the Tampa Bay Times Forum, Thursday, August 30, 2012 in Tampa, Florida.

## Romney Accepts Nomination

BY DAVID ESPO AND ROBERT FURLOW

Associated Press

TAMPA, Fla. — Mitt Romney launched his fall campaign for the White House in a rousing Republican National Convention finale Thursday night, proclaiming America needs "jobs, lots of jobs" and promising to create 12 million of them in perilous economic times.

"Now is the time to restore the promise of America," Romney said in prime-time speech to a nation struggling with 8.3 percent unemployment and the slowest economic recovery in decades.

Often viewed as a distant politician, Romney made a press-the-flesh entrance into the hall, walking slowly down one of the convention hall aisles and shaking hands with dozens of delegates. The hall erupted in cheers when he reached the stage and waved to his cheering, chanting supporters before beginning to speak.

"I accept your nomination for president," he said, to more cheers.

He muted his criticism President Barack Obama, his quarry in a close and uncertain race for the White House.

"I wish President Obama had succeeded because I want America to succeed," he said. "But his promises gave way to disappointment and division."

Clint Eastwood, legendary Hollywood tough guy, put it more plainly. "When somebody does not do the job, you've got to let 'em go," he said to the cheers of thousands in the packed convention hall.

He spoke moments before Romney walked on stage.

"This isn't something we have to accept," he said, appealing to millions of voters who say they are disappointed in the president yet



ROMNEY | PAGE 10A

## Holiday Travel Numbers Expected To Be Highest In Years

BY ANDREW ATWAL

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For many families, Labor Day weekend is the last opportunity of the year for a family vacation. The number of people coming into Yankton this weekend is expected to be at near record level.

AAA South Dakota projects 69,000 South Dakotans will travel 50 or more miles from home during the Labor Day holiday weekend, which is up 3 percent from last year.

Nationally, the total number of travelers this weekend is projected to be about 33 million, also about a 3 percent increase from last year.

There are expected to be about 28.2 million people making their weekend travel by car — another approximately 3 percent increase from weekend car travel last year. Air travel is also projected to increase by nearly 4 percent compared to last year.

"Despite the rather feeble national economy and recent rises in South Dakota's pump prices, consumer confidence appears to be driving this increase in holiday travel compared to Labor Day, 2011," Marilyn Buskohl, spokeswoman for AAA South Dakota, said in a statement. "Plus, the enticing prospect of one more road trip before winter is apparently proving too alluring to resist."

Locally, Yankton's Rockin' Ribfest was moved up to Labor Day weekend for weather reasons. The date change is expected to bring more people to Yankton for Labor Day weekend than ever before.

Ben Hanten, a Ribfest organizer, said there is the possibility for increased crowds with the date of Ribfest moving up from the middle of September to Labor Day weekend this year.

"I think this year's Ribfest will be the best yet," he said. "We're setting ourselves up for better weather with the date change."

He added the date change could help save people money for campers and vacationers in Yankton for the Labor Day weekend. Having Ribfest this weekend allows people to stay at home, as opposed to going elsewhere for something to do for the long holiday weekend.

TRAVEL | PAGE 2A

## DEWITT ACCEPTS NEW ROLE AT MMC



KELLY HERTZ/P&D

MMC officials recently announced the newly created position of Associate Dean of Academic Affairs for the Watertown and Sioux Falls locations. Dr. Krisma DeWitt started serving in the position on August 13, and will continue to teach chemistry at the Yankton campus.

## MMC Announces New Position To Grow Watertown And Sioux Falls Campuses

*EDITOR'S NOTE: This is part of the Press & Dakotan's monthly series spotlighting occupations, tasks and duties in our coverage area.*

BY ANDREW ATWAL

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Officials at Mount Marty recently announced Dr. Krisma DeWitt will be moving into the role of Associate Dean of Academic Affairs of the Watertown and Sioux Falls locations. However, despite the change, she will continue to live in Yankton and teach at the Yankton campus.

Dr. DeWitt had served as the division chair to the department of natural sciences, and was also an associate professor of chemistry at the MMC campus in Yankton. Her new responsibilities in Watertown and Sioux Falls will be in addition to her responsibilities in Yankton.



"I'm excited for this new position," DeWitt said. "There's a lot of opportunity to help the Watertown and Sioux Falls campuses grow and develop."

Her new responsibilities include assisting with the strategic planning at the two sites, academic programming, faculty development and assessment, and community development, both internally and externally at both campuses.

DeWitt's colleagues at MMC think she will do an outstanding job in the position.

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## INSIDE TODAY



Fall Fashions Come Into Focus

USA Weekend

Country Music Star Bogguss To Perform At WJ Ranch  
River City



## Firefighters Extinguish Two Knox County Blazes

BY NATHAN JOHNSON

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NIORARA, Neb. — Firefighters in Knox County contained two large grass fires Wednesday.

According to Niobrara firefighter Robert Olson, a call was received around 9:30 a.m. of a fire northwest of Verdel that was started by a hay baler.

"With it being hot and windy, there were some problems," he said. "But before long, we did have it pretty well contained."

Olson estimated that the fire consumed at least 40 acres.

Part of the field had been baled, so he said firefighters were on the scene for approximately five hours as the hay bales burned themselves out.

In addition to the Niobrara Fire Department, the Lynch and Verdigre fire departments were also involved.

Shortly after Niobrara firefighters returned from the Verdel blaze, a call was received about a fire southeast of Niobrara. That report was received at approximately

3:30 p.m., Olson said.

A farm equipment accident sparked the grass fire in this instance.

"A tractor was pulling a large silage wagon, and it lost power going up a fairly steep hill," Olson stated. "Once the tractor lost power, there were no brakes and it rolled backwards."

The tractor and wagon jack-knifed and the tractor started on fire. It eventually burned up, according to Olson.

It also ignited the adjoining pasture on fire.

"With the wind, it really spread fast," Olson said.

Firefighters from Bloomfield, Creighton, Crofton, Santee, Verdigre and Wausa joined the Niobrara Fire Department to battle the blaze in the hilly, rugged landscape. Olson said the real challenge was when the fire got into trees on the property.

At least 80 acres were burned, he stated.

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