

Soccer

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bringing us in and making us part of the family.”

Bucks head coach Warren Brenner said it felt great playing in front of a home crowd for the first time as an official sport.

“We had a great crowd tonight,” Brenner said. “The heat played a little bit of a role in how we played but overall I think it was fun and exciting to have a home game that’s sanctioned against a team that we haven’t seen or played with for quite a long time.”

Gazelle senior Elizabeth Rust said she’s happy to be able to be able to represent the city and that she sees this as perhaps a gateway for more players.

“It’s super exciting,” she said. “Soccer’s a great sport and I’m really glad we can represent Yankton while we’re playing, so I hope it catches on.”

The Bucks’ John Dannenberg said one major advantage a sanctioned sport has over the old club system is there is no longer a need for player to pay to play.

“I definitely think it will (bring more players in) because it doesn’t cost money to play,” he said. “All you need is a pair of cleats and you’re out playing, where before, you had to pay a fee, take a car to games. Now it’s free transportation, free to come on to the fields and I definitely think it’ll increase the youth membership, which will in turn create a larger high school team in the future.”

He added there’s already a noticeable difference in the atmosphere between club and sanctioned soccer.

“It was parent’s day for one, which brought a larger crowd anyway,” he said. “We had a trainer here, which was great because we knew that if we got hurt, we’d be safe. We had a score keeper and it was a different atmosphere than it was before. It felt like it was a

city-backed game instead of just a little club team where only the parents came to support.”

Brenner said this also brings more structure to the program and helps instill more school spirit in the players.

“I think it brings a little more organization overall,” he said. “You get more school camaraderie. You get the feeling of acceptance. Things like homecoming are going to be more valued to them.”

Schuring said the next step will be to continue bringing more people into the game.

“I think a really big part of it is really working to build up our numbers,” he said. “Once our numbers are up, you’ll get some more competition, players will get better competing for spots and that’s just going to help make the team more competitive.”

Twenty years ago, soccer was almost seen as an afterthought in the U.S., which lacked a professional league at the time. Today, Major League Soccer has grown to a point where its average attendance outperformed two (NBA and NHL) of the “Big Four” professional sports in America.

Schuring said there’s great evidence of how far the sport has come in a short period of time.

“Even in the last (few) years, I think the country has embraced soccer overall and I think a lot of that has to do with the build-up for the men’s World Cup and now the women’s World Cup next year,” he said. “Overall the American Outlaws (the unofficial supporters group for the U.S. national soccer team) have definitely helped out soccer presence in this country. Just being recognized as a ‘real sport’ and a competitive sport for the U.S. on the national level has brought in respect and got more players out.”

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Benda

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development.

Benda’s job as secretary of tourism and state development went away in January 2011 after Gov. Dennis Daugaard took office.

Benda died Oct. 20, 2013, by what’s been ruled suicide.

During the seven months when Benda was a target of the state’s criminal investigation, the expectation became that restitution would be pursued as part of a criminal sentence, according to Tony Venhuizen, a spokesman for Daugaard.

Venhuizen said Friday that Benda’s death shifted the restitution question to a potential civil matter that Bachand is now analyzing.

Bachand is a former county, state and federal prosecutor who moved to private practice in 2005 at the Schmidt, Schroyer, Moreno, Lee and Bachand firm in Pierre.

GOED continued to retain Bachand after Benda’s death.

Bachand, in trying to determine how to go after the \$550,000 with Benda dead, reached agreement with state Attorney General Marty Jackley this summer to look at much of Jackley’s material about Benda.

State Circuit Judge John Brown issued an order June 27 allowing Bachand to inspect and take notes from much of the Benda investigation file but prohibited Bachand making copies.

The judge gave Bachand permission to report his findings and conclusions on an attorney-client basis to GOED Commissioner Pat Costello, Gov. Dennis Daugaard, senior staff and legal counsel for GOED and the governor.

The judge’s order covers an 11-point list of materials ranging from witness interviews to a wide variety of records for Benda, GOED, another semi-government agency and two businesses.

So far a restitution claim hasn’t been filed.

“He (Bachand) is now in the process of evaluating what he describes as a voluminous file. He hasn’t give us any initial thoughts as to what his opinion might be,” Venhuizen said.

The only individual specifically named in the judge’s order was Benda.

“The investigation covered matters upon which there was probable cause to believe a crime was committed,” Jackley said Thursday.

He said unofficial state policy developed “several governors and attorney generals ago” became that GOED would use private attorneys to handle its legal matters rather than the state Office of Attorney General.

A full-time Division of Criminal Investigation agent was dedicated to the Benda case in April 2013 and ultimately two prosecutors were brought onto it, according to Jackley.

He said the two prosecutors would have been in an ethical conflict if they attempted to handle civil pursuit of the restitution and that GOED preferred to continue using private counsel.

State records show that lawyers for the Schmidt firm often handle various legal matters for state government.

The firm has been paid \$47,478.15 since July 1 of the current state fiscal year. The firm received \$285,301.70 in fiscal 2014 that ended June 30 and \$460,085.39 in fiscal 2013, according to state records.

The allegations of what transpired involving Benda and the \$550,000 are complicated.

As governor, Rounds signed an agreement in December 2010 during his last full month in office to provide a Future Fund grant of \$1 million to the Northern Beef processing plant project at Aberdeen.

According to a lawyer for Northern Beef, there was a secret agreement that required Northern Beef to divert \$550,000 to SDRC Inc. This was later confirmed publicly by Jackley after his 2013 investigation.

SDRC was a private company that was formed in 2008 in Aberdeen and received a state contract from Benda in 2009, while Benda was secretary of tourism and state development for Rounds.

Joop Bollen, a former official for the international business program at Northern State University in Aberdeen, created SDRC. The state contract made SDRC the private administrator for state government’s EB-5 foreign investment program.

While at the university, Bollen worked with various officials in Rounds’ administration to establish EB-5 as a

state program, with Rounds’ approval, prior to Benda joining Rounds’ administration in 2006.

The SDRC contract reached in 2009 between Bollen and Benda was written by Aberdeen lawyer Jeff Sveen on behalf of SDRC and by Pierre lawyer Tim Engel for Benda’s office.

The contract allowed SDRC to take control of recruiting projects and make overseas visits to attract foreign investors who put up \$500,000 apiece.

Under the federal EB-5 regulations, the foreign investors then could qualify in many instances for visas allowing them and their immediate families to live anywhere in the United States.

Benda’s future changed in November 2010 after Lt. Gov. Dennis Daugaard was elected governor to succeed Rounds. Daugaard decided against keeping Benda in his new administration.

One month after the election, Rounds made the \$1 million grant to Northern Beef, an EB-5 project heavily promoted by Benda in his state job and with financing overseen by SDRC.

Northern Beef however allegedly was forced to give \$550,000 of the grant to SDRC.

The money allegedly was to cover two years of salary and other expenses for Benda to take a job at SDRC as EB-5 loan monitor for Northern Beef because he had lost his state job.

A federal grand jury in March 2013 reportedly issued a subpoena to Daugaard’s administration seeking information that included Benda’s travel records while Benda worked for Rounds.

Reportedly at issue was alleged double billing by Benda for trips to China on recruiting missions for EB-5 investors.

Daugaard’s legal counsel, Jim Seward, sent an official letter on the governor’s behalf to Jackley in April 2013.

Jackley said his investigation subsequently found records showing Benda charged state government twice for two trips to China and twice for one trip to Las Vegas.

In the course of the still-secret investigation, Jackley also received evidence that grant money was allegedly mishandled.

Jackley declined to be specific Thursday about why or when the state investigation shifted focus onto the grant program.

He said that, as matters

proceeded, “concerns surfaced that ultimately led to questions and obtaining further documentation.”

Daugaard was asked Friday how he felt a year ago when he was told that \$550,000 allegedly was misdirected.

In a written response, he said:

“Initially, the possibility of wrongdoing surprised me and I hoped it wasn’t true. In August, when I learned that there was reason to believe that it was true, I was very disappointed and saddened by the situation.”

Jackley verbally briefed the governor and other state officials in August 2013.

Soon other steps began. GOED’s Costello terminated the state contract with SDRC in September, it was later learned.

He also contracted with a private accounting firm in early October to look at GOED finances.

Jackley meanwhile took steps behind the scenes to prepare to prosecute Benda.

Jackley disclosed recently that he had scheduled a grand jury for late October and had prepared an undated warrant for Benda’s arrest.

There was neither a state grand jury convened nor an arrest made. When Benda missed some business appointments on Oct. 21, people became concerned.

His dead body was found on Oct. 22 in a shelterbelt at the farm of a brother-in-law near Lake Andes.

The cause of death was listed as a shotgun wound to the abdomen, with a stick used to fire the gun. The date of death was put at Oct. 20.

Jackley has refused to publicly release further details from the death investigation. That question is pending in state circuit court.

According to information presented by Jackley, the \$550,000 diversion from Northern Beef to SDRC was allegedly only one step in a series.

Benda next allegedly increased the amounts of two other grants from the Future Fund later in December 2010.

The grants went to the quasi-government South Dakota Development Corp., which exists to make business loans from public funds to private projects.

The grant amounts were increased by a total of \$550,000 and the grants were destined for Northern Beef.

SDRC’s records are among those in the Benda investigation file that Bachand is now using in the state’s attempt to get back the \$550,000.

Theatre

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Marvel action film that they had been sent back in time to sit and enjoy something from Hitchcock until the digital film began to project that day’s images on to the big screen.

“It bothers me and it’s a bummer I guess,” Regan Bye said of the closing. “It was a single theater and there are not many left of those. It gives you that small town feeling.”

Of course, Vermillion still has the Coyote Twin Theater to enjoy, and moving the functioning projector from the closing building to the open one will remedy the issues the Coyote Twin has battled as of late.

Craig Cummings, who grew up in Vermillion during the 50s and 60s, was back in town this past weekend on a three-day break and wound up being the last person to buy a ticket at the theater.

“I came up and the sign said, ‘last show’ so I had to buy a ticket,” Cummings said. “There were six people in the theater. It’s sad. I hope they turn it into a theater. It was a nice big theater and they had good sound.”

Johnson, who has worked for March since 1978 when he was a college student at Wayne State University, notes that films like the recent Star Trek reissue, the Shrek planet, and the Rise of the Planet of the Apes all played well at the theater.

But nothing matched the power of the force.

“I remember when they re-issued ‘Star Wars’ in 1998 before they made chapters one, two, three,” Johnson said. “We had lines going out this door and all the way down to where Café Brule is today. People were camping out to get tickets.”

He also had a soft spot for the kiddie matinees that would play free, full-length films for kids. Those days are now a fixture at the Coyote Twin.

“This was my favorite place to watch the movies,” Johnson said. “I’d work here and it is such close quarters I could stand and watch the movie and come back and check the front and watch traffic. This was my place to watch movies.”

Now as Johnson moves over to work full time across the street at the Coyote Twin, he will ponder the future of his favorite place to hang out, eat popcorn, and catch some of the best flicks around.

“It’s sad to see them driving smalltime theaters out,” “Now you get 20 theaters in one place and the numbers you need to support that is big.”

Maybe the old quote, “I’m going to make him an offer he can’t refuse,” will play out when March sells the building.

Maybe they can find a way to keep the theater as it is.

“It could still be a theater and the building is for sale,” Johnson said. “It would be hard to convert it into anything else. It is a possibility. So if someone made the investment in the digital equipment it could be a theater again.”

“I don’t know what’s going to happen.”

Garden

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When people donate the produce, the center officials inspect it to make sure nothing is rotten or spoiled.

“A ton of people take them,” she said. “People have been very generous. One time, a lady even canned with them. But if someone doesn’t take them they will go bad.”

Adamson said that she would rather people bring their excess produce to the Contact Center then discard

the items.

“We don’t monitor or watch what people take. If you want to take it, go for it. It is meant to be eaten,” Adamson said.

If you wish to donate produce, you can drop it off on the table outside the Contact Center’s doors.

For more information, call the Yankton Contact Center at 605-260-4400, Opt. 2.

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