



# YANKTON DAILY PRESS & DAKOTAN

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## SPORTS



Local High School Basketball Season Tips Off  
SPORTS | 8A

## RIVER CITY

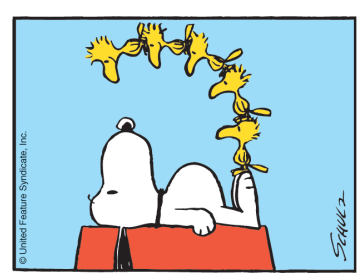


Yankton Native Has Part Of Independent Film  
RIVER CITY | 1B

## USA WEEKEND



## COUNTDOWN



Dec. 2  
23 shopping days to Christmas

# Avera Sacred Heart Set For Major Expansion

### Northern Lights Project To Focus Mainly On Hospitality

BY SHAUNA MARLETTE  
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An investment of more than \$25 million in two separate projects will soon completely change the appearance of the Avera Sacred Heart Hospital (ASHH) Campus.

During a press conference Thursday at the Avera Professional Office Pavilion, ASHH president Pam Rezac said the surgery department expansion — an \$8 million investment — is well under way at almost two-thirds complete, while a major new expansion on the north side of the facility will be started in the next year.

“Our Northern Lights project — so titled because it will be on the northern side of our building — will begin in July 2012,” she said.

“With input from patients, providers and families who will be utilizing the facility ... we will be investing more than \$25 million ... into Yankton’s health care and are committed to improving the health care services for Yankton. It does affirm our commitment to quality and technology to our people, physicians and staff and to our patients and their families.”

Key areas affected during the \$16.2 million Northern Lights project will include a new kitchen and cafeteria, a new pharmacy and new laboratory facilities.

“The Northern Lights project will be a new three-story addition. ... The major portion of this expansion will be to allow us to expand our hospitality services,” said Doug Ekeren, ASHH vice president of Planning and Development. “We really don’t have a cafeteria in the hospital and we don’t have a kitchen there. We have to move meals almost a half-mile round trip to get the meals from the kitchen to the rooms and back. So for the first time since the hospital was built in 1980, we will have a true cafeteria.”

Ekeren said the expanded cafeteria, to be located on the second floor of the new expansion, will help promote a more healing environment for the hospital.

“As you know, you can have long waits while in the hospital ... Sometimes people just need to get away and have a break,” he said. “Right now we don’t have the facilities to do that. It will put a new face on our fac-



Doug Ekeren, vice president of Planning and Development at Yankton's Avera Sacred Heart Hospital, announces the plans for the new Northern Lights project, shown in the background, during a press conference Thursday at the Avera Pavilion.

KELLY HERTZ/P&D

ility from the north side, and having that natural light will be part of the healing environment we think is important in the overall patient experience.”

Ekeren said many of the projects addressed in the new expansion have been on a needs list for a long time.

“We have put off these items in favor of other projects; they have been bumped by something else — a new emergency department, redoing obstetrics, redoing radiology, building the pavilion,” Ekeren said. “It is just time that we make the investment in our

own campus and services so we can keep Yankton as a regional health care destination.”

The first floor of the new addition will be designated for laboratory and radiology services.

“In terms of effectiveness of the new facility ... our clinical services will all be located on the first floor of the hospital,” Rezac said. “We had extensive discussions with patients

AVERA | PAGE 2A

# Midwest Economic Growth Slowing

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — Job growth has slowed significantly in nine Midwest and Plains states, and many companies in the region expect further job cuts in the coming six months, according to a monthly survey of business managers released Thursday.

About 18 percent of survey respondents reported job reductions for November, said Creighton University economist Ernie Goss, who oversees the Mid-America business conditions index survey.

Business managers also were asked in the November survey about their hiring expectations for the next six months.

“Only 30 percent expect to add workers, while the remaining 70 percent anticipate layoffs or level employment for the first half of 2012,” Goss said. “These expectations are somewhat more optimistic than December 2010, when 24 percent anticipated worker additions for the next six months.”

The overall regional Business Conditions index rose to 52.6 in November, jumping 2.7 percentage points from 49.9 in October.

Organizers say any survey score above 50 suggests economic growth in the next three to six months, while a score below 50 suggests economic decline.

States in the survey are Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma and South Dakota.

The prices-paid index, which tracks the cost of raw

GROWTH | PAGE 2A

# Yankton County Sheriff's Office Unveils New Website

BY DEREK BARTOS  
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In an effort to provide the public with more information and to increase ease of use, the Yankton County Sheriff's Office has launched a new website at [www.yanktonsheriffsoffice.com](http://www.yanktonsheriffsoffice.com).

According to Yankton County Sheriff Jim Vlahakis, the website, which went online last week, offers several new categories of information and has been updated for easier navigation.

“We had a website before that wasn’t

real user-friendly,” he said. “This one’s new and improved.”

Vlahakis said one feature the public should find particularly interesting is the county’s listing of more than 1,800 arrest warrants and bench warrants.

“They’ll be able to search those, and if they know the whereabouts of some of the people, hopefully they’ll let us know,” he said.



Vlahakis

Vlahakis added that the majority of the warrants on file are for minor offenses for failure to appear on traffic violations or failure to pay fines.

Anyone with information on these wanted individuals can contact the sheriff’s office by calling 605-668-3567 or by email at [sheriff@yankton.law.com](mailto:sheriff@yankton.law.com). Reports can remain anonymous.

Information is also available on the website concerning jail visitation regulations and employment fingerprinting.

A link is available to identify local sex offenders as well, Vlahakis said.

“That links to the attorney general’s office website for sex offenders where you’re able to go in and put in a zip code. It’ll identify all the sex offenders in your area and where they’re living,” he said.

The new website also allows applicants for concealed weapons permits to print out applications online. While the applicants still need to visit the sheriff’s office in person, the online process should help save some time, Vlahakis said.

WEBSITE | PAGE 2A

# Area Libraries Rank Nationally

## Hartington, Centerville Earn 5-Star Award For Third Straight Year

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF  
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Just because it’s a tough economy, the Hartington, Neb., and Centerville libraries aren’t shelving their activities.

In fact, more people than ever are checking out both libraries.

“With the recession, people are looking for free services and entertainment. Statistically, across the nation, public libraries are seeing a huge increase,” said Hartington Public Library director Tami Anderson.

Those sentiments were echoed at the Centerville Community Library, a joint city-school facility, by city librarian Lindsey Hansen and school librarian

Linda Holmberg.

“I have worked here for three years, and the library has always been a very busy place,” Hansen said.

For their outstanding service and strong public use, the Hartington and Centerville sites were selected by the American Library Journal among the nation’s best libraries in 2011.

Both Hartington and Centerville were selected as “5 Star” libraries — the highest possible ranking — for the third consecutive year. Only 262 libraries out of about 7,500 nationwide earned a designation of three, four or five stars.

Hartington is one of eight honored Nebraska libraries. Centerville is one of two

South Dakota libraries and the only one with a 5 Star rating.

The rating is based on visits, circulation, program attendance and public Internet computer use. Libraries are classified by their budgets rather than their community populations.

With a score of 2,930, Hartington was ranked first in the nation for libraries with expenditures of \$50,000-99,999.

With a score of 1,673, Centerville ranked 10th nationally for libraries with expenditures of \$10,000-49,999.

Besides its city funding, the Hartington library — along with the two other certified

AWARD | PAGE 5A

# ‘PICTURES OF DECEMBER’



KELLY HERTZ/P&D

Fifth-graders from Yankton's Beadle Elementary School dance in a circle as they sing “Oh, Hanukah” during the school’s winter concert Thursday night at the YHS/Summit Activities Center theatre. Beadle fourth- and fifth-graders presented the program, “Pictures of December,” which paid tribute to some of the staples of life in the final month of the year. The program touched on themes ranging from Christmas and snow to catching a cold. To see or purchase images from this event, visit [spotted.yankton.net](http://spotted.yankton.net).

PHOTOS WITH SANTA Saturday, December 3rd 1:00pm-4:00pm LilyCrest 211 W. 3rd, Downtown Yankton

