



Light Snow Possible

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The Thirty-Eight

More Details Emerge On Vermillion Incident



Horseback riders participate in Wednesday's trail ride, commemorating the 150th anniversary of the hanging of 38 Santee Sioux at Mankato, Minn. The five-mile ride along the highway segment led to Santee, Neb., and a special meal and program.

Horseback Riders Pay Tribute To Santee Sioux Killed 150 Years Ago

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF

For about two dozen horseback riders, Wednesday's sub-zero temperatures wrapped them in a blanket of bitter chill. The riders remained focused on their five-mile ascent up the highway segment between Nebraska Highway 12 and Santee, Neb. They were joined by a line of vehicles crawling alongside them on the narrow road.

Despite the freezing weather, the riders knew their journey was a small sacrifice to make for a higher purpose. They were paying tribute to the 38 Santee Sioux hanged Dec. 26, 1862 — 150 years ago to the day — in the largest mass execution in United States history. The hangings ended the war between the U.S. and the Dakota people.

"It was uncomfortable and cold out today," Santee Sioux tribal chairman Roger Trudell said during Wednesday's dinner and program at the community center. "But compared to what our ancestors went through 150 years ago, it's really insignificant."

Nearly all of the Santee Sioux are direct descendants of the 38 executed in Mankato, Minn., Trudell said. In addition, many of the tribe's ancestors were transported from Minnesota to Crow Creek in central South Dakota, then walked to the modern-day reservation in northern Knox County, Neb.

Misty Thomas, director of the Santee Sioux's social services department, works with the tribal horse program and helped organize Wednesday's trail ride.

The tribe has commemorated the Dec. 26 hangings in the past, but the addition of the ride offers a special tribute to the 38, Thomas said. The horse in full regalia is recognized as a special honor, tribal members said Wednesday.

"We have had a program and meal at the community center (on the execution date) for about 10 years, but we wanted to do something special for the 150th anniversary," she said. "It started out that we wanted to dress a horse in traditional regalia, but then it just grew from there."

As the trail ride entered the Santee village, the participants pulled into a cemetery for ceremonial prayer and music, including the Mato Pejuta drum and song group.

The group proceeded to the community center for the meal, program and educational exhibits about the mass hanging.

Trudell considers the Dec. 26 observance as a tribal holiday, combining Memorial Day and Veterans Day tributes.

"We are here today to memorialize our '38," he said, adding their trials lasted as little as one minute.

"They had trials, but there wasn't any real defense or anything else like that," he said.

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Horses during Wednesday's march display special regalia, signifying special honor and tribute.

Fireworks Vendor Taking Cautious Approach To New Year Holiday Sales

BY NATHAN JOHNSON

With persistent dry conditions, a local fireworks vendor is hoping snow will arrive today (Thursday) to alleviate the fire danger.

If snow doesn't materialize, Josh Blom of Dam Fireworks said he might not open in advance of the New Year holiday. Wind conditions will also be a consideration.

"We're trying to check the weather as we get closer to see what things are going to be like before we fully determine if we will

open," he stated. "By law, we can open no matter what, and if we were located anywhere else in Yankton County, I wouldn't be worried. But the lake area is still pretty dry. It didn't get the snow that Gayville and other areas have received."

The National Weather Service was predicting a 100 percent chance of snow for Yankton as of Wednesday evening. Approximately five inches of snow is expected through Thursday night.

Dam Fireworks is located west of Yankton along Highway 52 near Gavins Point Dam and is the only local business with a

permit to sell fireworks during the holiday period.

It is the second year of a state law that allows for the sale and discharge of fireworks from Dec. 28 through Jan. 1.

Blom said he wants to be a responsible business owner.

"I don't want a house to catch on fire because somebody wasn't paying attention," he stated.

"Last year, (sales) went really well," he

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HOLIDAY SMASH-UP



Emergency responders were called to a two-vehicle accident at East Highway 50 and Ferdig Avenue in Yankton Wednesday afternoon. One driver was taken to the hospital with minor injuries.

KELLY HERTZ/P&D

Cliff Looms: Kicking The Can, Washington-Style

BY DAVID ESPO

AP Special Correspondent

WASHINGTON — When it comes to the nation's budget challenges, congressional leaders are fond of saying dismissively they don't want to kick the can down the road.

But now, a deadline hard ahead, even derided half-measures are uncertain as President Barack Obama and lawmakers struggle to avert across-the-board tax increases and spending cuts that comprise an economy-threatening fiscal cliff.

Congressional officials said Wednesday they knew of no sig-

nificant strides toward a compromise over a long Christmas week-end, and no negotiations have been set.

The Senate is due in session Thursday, although the immediate agenda includes legislation setting the rules for government surveillance of suspected spies and terrorists abroad, including Americans, as well as a measure providing \$60 billion for victims of Super Storm Sandy.

Obama decided to cut short his Hawaii vacation for an overnight flight expected to get him back to the White House in the pre-dawn

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TOMORROW: Veteran Comedian To Perform In Yankton

