

WOKSAPE

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Yankton Students Continue The Gift Giver Tradition



BY
**MADISON
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Yankton High School is currently participating in their 15th year of the Gift Givers Program.

This program was started in 1998 when Mrs. Kristi O’Connel Ekroth spoke with her class about the value of donating to charities. The class decided to start up their own charity program to help some local families during the holiday season.

By doing this, the class knew that 100% of their proceeds would actually go to charity and they were also able to help families in their own community.

Eight years ago, Ms. Tasa, the high school librarian, got involved in the Gift Givers Program and has since been playing an active role with Mrs. Ekroth in gathering gifts and organizing the students who choose to participate in the program.

On average, The Gift Givers help thirteen families around the community each year. These families are chosen from the Yankton Elementary Schools, Middle School, and High School. The only information the Gift Givers receive about each family member is the gender, age, and clothing size so that appropriate gifts can be given to each selected family.

Each child from the family receives a toy and an article of clothing which is wrapped up as a present. Seniors from the Yankton



PHOTO BY TYLER BRANDT

Ashtyn Haak and Abby Schulte are shown preparing to wrap a gift box as a part of the longstanding *Gift Givers* tradition at Yankton High School.

High School then deliver the gifts to the principal of the corresponding school so that the presents can be distributed to the selected families. This ensures that the identities of the families remain anonymous.

In the past, the Gift Givers have received generous donations from community members who have heard of the program.

The high school students also host a food-drive to collect non-perishable food items for the program.

These food items are then organized into gift baskets and given to the families to help ensure that they will have a nice holiday dinner.

So far this year, the students have collected enough food to create 5 food baskets. Twelve homerooms at the Yankton

High School have started to gather items to create a “family needs” basket that the will also be donated to the families. The families that have been selected will receive their gifts and baskets a week before the Christmas break so that they will be able to have a joyful holiday season.

Ms. Tasa states, “It’s amazing how every year it just works out.”

The Gift Givers never have external fundraisers; however, they always gather enough supplies to help out the families thanks to the generosity of students and faculty at Yankton High School. Whether the donations are from the students or from kind-hearted members of the community, the Gift Givers are consistently able put together a

special holiday gift for those less fortunate and hopefully make their holiday more joyful. Ms. Tasa says that the kids that choose to participate in the Gift Givers Program are the reason that she keeps coming back. She commented, “What warms my heart every year is that the kids in the Gift Givers bring in the coolest toys for the families.”

On average, each family will receive six boxes full of toys, clothes and food to help make the holiday season special. The Gift Givers put much time into organizing and preparing the boxes which are distributed to the families, but in the end, they know their efforts will bring joy to a family in our community this holiday season.

Y’s Words On The Affordable Care Act



BY
**ALEX
FIELDS**

The Affordable Care Act, also efficiently known as Obamacare, tends to create a large amount of controversy. Most people don’t want it and some don’t quite know what it is to begin with.

First let’s look at the Obama aspect of it all. Most people hear Obama and immediately shut it down. You can think what you want about him and his Presidency but to ignore the fact that we need a social healthcare system is ignorance in full effect.

How do people know that they hate something when they have not given a chance? I am glad that people are weighing their options as well as the pros and cons. I am also happy to see so many citizens are actually taking notice of what the government is doing.

That being said, maybe people would get behind it a little more if the website would actually work. It is 2013; I would hope that a government website that is needed for such a daunting task would be up to snuff, but sadly I, as well as many others, was disappointed.

It’s like a continual bad joke. The government does something that people like, but everything along the way goes wrong.

When FDR and other legislators made the Glass–Steagall Legislation, there was some back fire for their radical legislation. In 2008, legislators tried to make provisions to the act. You would have thought they were clubbing a baby seal from the outcry that they received.

What I am trying to say is the Affordable Care Act seems just ludicrous right now to some people, but maybe 70 years down the road their grandchildren will be fighting to keep it.

Yankton Bucks Basketball Team Ready To Begin Regular Season



BY
**JACOB
SELGESTAD**

The Bucks are beginning the basketball season with head coach Chris Haynes, his second year in the position.

The team has a few simple goals in mind which include getting better each day and reaching the state tournament. Those two goals go hand-in-hand, because if the teams gets better, the wins will start to come. Haynes believes this team can shine in the state tournament because as he said, “Once the State Tournament starts anything can happen.”

The Bucks will likely be playing with an underdog mentality this season because of Yankton’s absence from the limelight in South Dakota basketball. However, Haynes believes that if the team continues to improve at the rate they already have there won’t be a lot of teams that can stop them.

This improvement can’t be seen as a sure thing by any means. However Haynes described the team as, “a group of kids who care about the game of basketball and for each other.” Statements like that make it hard to deny that the aforementioned improvements needed to reach the team’s goal of state will not happen.

Worst case scenario for this year’s team would have to be if all the talent currently on the varsity roster is not able to play as a cohesive unit. Haynes believes his teams biggest weakness, although it applies to every team and not just his, is, “the process of learning their identity and coming together.”

The best case scenario is that the team continues to get better everyday. If this team can have the sense of urgency to improve on a daily basis this team will be dangerous. Other teams know that if this Bucks team is firing on all cylinders by the end of the year they will be a force to be reckoned with; if things go as Haynes plans, that’s exactly the scenario they’ll be looking at.

Yankton High School Band Visits Chicago To March in McDonald’s Parade



BY
**JOHANNA
LIPPERT**

What happens when there are 111 kids, 13 chaperones, two directors, and one tour guide on buses?

They go to Chicago, of course! The YHS band and color guard has recently returned from their biannual band trip. This year’s trip had a busy itinerary including famous Chicago sites such as The Museum of Science and Industry, Millennium Park (with the Cloud Gate or “bean” as many like to call it), seeing the outside of the Art Institute of Chicago, the Lincoln Park Zoo, Willis Tower, shopping along the Magnificent Mile, and watching a Broadway Production of “Elf the Musical” at the Cadillac Theater.

YHS band director, Todd Carr, was very pleased with the amount of sightseeing the band was able to fit into the trip. “I felt our tour guide, Darrell Omanson, packed the trip with as much stuff as possible. Students can attest that we stayed as exhausted as possible.”

Not only did the band and color guard see the sights of Chicago, but they also marched in the 80th annual McDonald’s Thanksgiving Parade. The students prepared for the parade by holding morning practices each day to adjust their marching skills to a parade format. The music and color guard routines were edited versions of what was seen in their marching show, “Kyoto.” When the



PHOTO COURTESY OF MR. TODD CARR

The Yankton High School Marching Band is shown performing in Chicago during the annual McDonald’s Thanksgiving Day Parade. The band represented Yankton for the first time at this event. Students were able to sightsee before returning home.

day of the parade came, students piled on the layers under their marching uniforms, as temperatures were about 30 degrees. Hand warmers were a popular item and they could be seen being passed around among friends.

The band also had a unique strategy for staying warm which they called “huddling like penguins.” The students formed a large circle facing inwards with the color guard in the middle (they didn’t have the benefit of jackets as part of their uniform), and stood as close as they could to block the wind. At last it was time to line up and the YHS

band and color guard was ready to march.

About 400,000 people were lined up to watch the parade live, and an additional three million people tuned in by TV.

Mr. Carr also provided a unique service for those back home who wanted more footage of the band and color guard. Mr. Carr used an iPad to capture footage of the band and it was streamed live from the website highschool-cube.com, which is the website used to stream other YHS events such as concerts.

This was the first time YHS has participated in

this parade. Both Mr. Carr and Ms. Martindale, YHS color guard director, agreed that even though the set up and length was different than other parades the band and color guard has participated in, it was equally as fun and had more exposure than other parades.

Even with the bone-chilling cold at the parade, students seemed to enjoy their chance to show their skills that they have worked so hard to achieve.

Many students have fond memories of the trip and enjoyed the chance they had to experience new sights with their friends.

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Noteworthy News Briefs

- There will be a Y-Club meeting on Wed., Dec. 11 at 10 a.m. in the YC Alumni Hall.
- The Parents for a Safe Prom organization is asking for candy bar donations to sell at the middle school’s New Year’s Even Dance which will be Dec. 27. Parents may drop off donations at the YHS office. Any donations are appreciated.
- Students who do not have younger brothers or sisters in middle or elementary school may bring Boxtops for Education to YHS and drops them off at the attendance office. They will be used for other schools.