

## Farm

From Page 1

for the future." Eventually owners will die and someone else will own it. Owners need to think about what happens to their business and if they want it to continue after they die.

A farmer starting out spends time getting established and maybe by age 30 they begin to experience growth. For the next 20 years, the farmer grows the business and sees success but by age 60, the business flattens out. He is not willing to take the risks he took at age 35 or 45. The calendar is his enemy, the days are running out and the business tends to coast.

The optimum time for a farmer to start working with a younger operator is in the strong growth cycle. A young operator can start with physical contributions, learning the ropes so to say. The owner still makes the decisions and can act as a mentor. The next phase includes decision making together so the young man can learn from the mentor's past mistakes and finally when the mentor is ready to

retire, the young operator can easily transition into management.

This is just the first step in a long-range plan for a successful business transition. Goeller described it as a three-legged stool. How to proceed with business succession needs to be planned and should include goals, economic stability and transfer of management.

The next leg is deciding on a retirement plan by determining who makes the decisions and who does the day-to-day labor.

The final leg includes an Estate Plan to make the transfer of assets a reality.

Goeller talked about a 68-year-old rancher from the Nebraska Panhandle who came to him several years ago. He wanted to know how to start the conversation for passing the ranch on to the next generation. Goeller started talking to him opening a line of communication with his 38-year-old son. The rancher stopped him and said he wanted to have the conversation with his 90-year-old father. The father still made all the management and checkbook decisions and told the son and grandson everyday what they should do.

The situation was sad to



PHOTO: LINDA WUEBBEN

**Fordyce resident Roger Kaiser, left, talks to Dave Goeller, a Farm Transition Specialist with the Department of Agricultural Economics at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, during a workshop on farm transitions and estate planning Wednesday in Hartington, Nebraska.**

say the least and got sadder when his parents both died and the ranch was divided eight ways between the son and his seven siblings. At the age of 68, the son was not able to get financing to buy-out his siblings so the ranch was sold to a large corporation. The son used his inheritance to cover huge medical bills for his wife and now lives in subsidized housing.

"I'm sure his parents

didn't want that to happen but this is just an example of what happens without long-range planning," Goeller said. If that father had started his son out slowly in the shallow end of the pool, giving him small decision-making responsibilities and allowing him maybe to graze a herd of his own, establishing equity, the ending would have been far better for everyone.

## Reward

From Page 1

viction of the suspect.

Clay County Sheriff Andy Howe said in an interview with the *Vermillion Plain Talk* Wednesday that he is confident there is information out there that will help lead to an arrest and conviction.

"We have nothing new to report, other than the fact that there is now a reward being offered for information

that leads to an arrest and conviction," he said. "We are trying to track down any information people might not have told us. We are hoping that the reward will stimulate someone to come forward with any information. They may have thought we already had the information, or for whatever reason, were not telling us what we know. But we are confident that there is more information out there."

Individuals with any information are asked to contact the Clay County Sheriff's Office at 605-677-7100.

## Alcohol

From Page 1

South Dakota State University is constructing a new football stadium with a special enclosed area. The University of South Dakota is building a new stadium for basketball and volleyball.

## Golf

From Page 1

years in the 2000s, including 35,055 rounds played in 2009. Nelson said the city is now working to find ways to promote the Fox Run course, bring in more customers and make it more efficient.

"We have a beautifully maintained course," she said. "We have a strong number of golf rounds on our course, but looking into the future, we want to make sure all of our programs that we run in the city and all of our departments are sustainable long term."

Before the Yankton City Commission's regular meeting on Nov. 23, commissioners held a public study session on the Fox Run Golf Course.

During the hour-long session, Larson presented a number of options for the course, including hiring more full-time staff, hiring management companies to take over clubhouse and golf operations, hiring consultant companies to show which areas the course could improve on, becoming an affiliate member in a chain of courses run by a golf management company or possibly leasing the entire course to a company which would provide all services, including maintenance.

Some of the management companies discussed include Dakota Golf Management of Sioux Falls and Great Life Golf & Fitness.

Dakota Golf Management runs all of the public courses in Sioux Falls and would be more likely to operate in a consultation role.

Larson said the city would still see some revenues should a management entity be sought out.

"There's different types of management agreements," he said. "We have, currently, three full-time employees out at the golf course. As you would start to work through those details, in some scenarios, those three employees stay city employees and continue to do golf course work and the management company comes in really focused on the clubhouse — the golf operations, the food and beverage, the pro shop and some of those types of things. It's kind of a hybrid where we have expenses to maintain the course just like

we would a park ... but then they're in there with their expertise helping to improve food and beverage sales, improve pro shop sales and bring their membership base ... Those people now will come and use your course because Great Life is involved with it. You get some sharing of revenue, but there's still some costs associated with having and being involved with a golf course operation."

The study session was unable to yield an immediate direction for the 2016 golf season and beyond, but Larson said it was a productive event.

"The commissioners thought it was a good presentation," he said. "They liked the information they were given and (said) it was going to take a little bit of time for them to look over stuff, think through stuff, make some decisions, get some feedback from other people, so I thought it went well."

He added that while city officials would love to plot a course of action soon, he sees the need to take some time before any decisions are made.

"Of course, we would like a decision sooner rather than later from a staffing and operations standpoint, but it's understandable when you're talking about maybe going out of house with operations, lease agreements and stuff like that. It's something that's going to take a little bit of time and real thought to put into it," he said.

The Fox Run issue is set to be a discussion topic at the next meeting of the City Commission on Dec. 14.

Nelson said the city will continue to make improvements to the course as a whole.

"Regardless of how we move forward, we're still going to make improvements to the golf course," she said. "One of those things is going to be concrete cart paths. That's been desired by our Golf Advisory Board and some of our members for a long time. ... What we want to have is the best facility we can for our members, our citizens and our visitors to the course, and we want to be able to look at the best way to manage the facility and run the facility."

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## Ethics

From Page 1

and professional experiences with students to help them make the connection between what they are learning in school and what they will need to succeed in work and life.

"We are grateful for the time executives take to share their personal experiences and challenge the students to think about the impact of ethical decision making," Junior Achievement of South Dakota President Kala Eitrem said in a press release. "JA realized the impact of these discussions can benefit the students both now and in the future."

Much of Wednesday's program was focused on social media and what the concept of "to post or not to post" means for themselves and the people around them.

For instance, one part of the activity involved students looking at situations involving posted photos and status. They were then to determine the consequences and how those unethical choices influenced others. For instance, if someone were to post a photo of themselves doing something inappropriate, it could mean losing scholarships, friends or even jobs.

"These people are hiring and firing," Specht said. "If you post something on Facebook that is not appropriate, you might not get the job. For some reason, it becomes a competition to see how many likes they can get."

Part of another teaching tool involved a balloon. A student was asked to blow up a balloon. What the student did not know is that the balloon was previously punctured, thus making it harder to inflate. Once the student realized what was wrong, his initial reaction was to attempt to fix the balloon. But as the lesson demonstrates, you can only fix the balloon so many times before the integrity of the balloon is compromised past the point of its original function. This is similar to a student who posts something damaging to his or her reputation.

"I think the biggest thing is to find something they relate to," Specht said. "Obviously if you can interject a little humor and get on their level, that always helps."

YHS had 11 leaders throughout the community come in Wednesday to teach lessons to students. They include: Rob Stephenson, president of First Dakota National Bank; Jack Weeks, vice president of First National Bank; George Lundgren, plant operations manager at Baldwin Filters; Laurie Moeller, vice president of Human Resources at First Dakota National Bank; David Carda, mayor of Yankton; Lynn Peterson, senior vice president at CorTrust Bank; Marcy Moser, vice president at First Dakota National Bank; Linda Asher, Yankton Federal Prison Camp; Don Marker, CEO and general manager of Sioux Valley Energy; and Specht.

"You're not by trade educators and we know that," Specht said to her volunteers. "Sometimes it's daunting and scary to be in front of all these kids. That is why JA provides the tools you need to feel confident about

"Remember, it's your stuff; don't necessarily ask your attorney who should you leave it to," said Goeller. "You should know when you go for legal advice." He said ask an attorney legal questions — not personal questions — not personal questions. If he had to guess, the parents went to the family attorney and asked how they should divide their estate and the attorney may have said usually it is divided equally between all the heirs so they agreed.

"Sometimes the most unfair thing you can do is to treat all your heirs equally," said Goeller. "There is a lot to be said for compensating a son or daughter for contributions to the operation which continue to make it successful."

The new Golden Rule is the person with the Gold gets to make the rules. Goeller said if a family member is contributing to the success of your business, pay them. Cash payments are hard anytime in farming so set up a sweetheart arrangement and help them develop equity. If they are valuable, compensate them.

"Non-farmers have trouble with this concept especially if they are an in-law in the family but remember, you have the gold; it's your

stuff," said Goeller. Many times a father or mother may need to make it financially feasible for the successor.

Successful farm transitions need some key concepts and the first is communication.

Listen to everyone's expectations and write them down. Also make sure what one person thinks was said is what the other individuals heard. Have regular meetings, keep talking and it is also important to share with non-farm individuals. It always better to be informed rather to be blind-sided with surprises.

"Men don't do well with communication," said Goeller. "It's important to sit down and have the conversation."

Even small things need to be discussed like what time does the workday start; who works on the weekends; do things need to be done in the evening; are there vacations; is family time spent skiing in Colorado or is family time baling the north 40 together.

"If you want your legacy to continue, your business continue to be successful, it's time to put the next manager in the shallow end of the pool, teach him to dog paddle, float and let him swim," said Goeller.

## NE Cemetery Statues Vandalized

PLATTE CENTER, Neb. (AP) — Officials say several statues at an eastern Nebraska cemetery have been vandalized.

The *Omaha World-Herald* reports black spray paint was used to mark statues of saints, angels and Christ at the St. Patrick-St. Joseph Cemetery near Platte Center, a community of about 338 people. Cemetery officials say a couple visiting the grave of their son discovered the damage Sunday.

According to officials, a black heart was painted on St. Joseph and a white supremacist symbol marks the chest of St. Patrick. They say black eyes were painted onto a statue of Christ, while upside down crosses were painted on the chests of angels.

The walls flanking the cemetery's gates were marked with phrases, including one in reference to Satan.

The eight-acre cemetery has about 800 graves, and is one of about two dozen rural cemeteries in the county.

Cemetery board member Bob Schmidt says cleaning up the damage will be problematic because warmer weather is needed to use the liquid that can remove the paint from the statues. Schmidt says no headstones appeared to have been damaged.

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