

Snow

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“The last couple of snow storms have obviously been a little more difficult on the account of the ice situation (and) that the ground isn’t frozen yet,” Gustad said. “It makes our process a little more difficult as far as clearing snow on our gravel roads. On our paved roads, we’ve been having to use more salt this year on the account it seems the snow turns immediately to ice.”

Gustad said the county has all of its salt, sand and other materials purchased for the year, leaving fuel as the only worry — and he said his department is still well within budget.

“The biggest (budget item) as far as snow removal would be our fuel budget,” he said. “On our highway

fuel budget, I had a budget of nearly \$412,000 and as of Nov. 30, I’ve used \$108,000 of that, so I have a surplus of \$303,000.”

Kuhl said the City of Yankton does things a bit differently than most larger municipalities when it comes to its clearing timeframe.

“Our goal is, in 12-14 hours, to cover the entire town and have everything — curb-to-curb and the streets — completed,” he said. “That’s quite different. Many cities have a two- or three-day plow time, and that strings it out significantly.”

Gustad said as the winter goes along, county residents should continue to exercise caution and patience in winter conditions.

“People just need to drive as the weather conditions permit,” he said. “We’re out there trying to do what we can do. We have around 260 miles of paved roads and

we have seven snow plow trucks that cover the majority of that and two out by the lake.”

Kuhl also offered some advice for the city’s residents in dealing with winter storms.

“One thing that really speeds up the process and makes it much more efficient is, when people know it’s going to snow and we’re going to be plowing, for them to remove their cars from the street,” he said. “You can’t believe how much it slows the process when we have to go around parked cars. It makes for a messier street system to leave that snow behind, so we’d really appreciate it if people can find alternate places to park their cars when they know it’s going to snow.”

Follow @RobNielsenPandD on Twitter.

Medicaid

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Last week Gov. Dennis Daugaard announced in his budget speech to the Legislature that he would seek approval from state lawmakers only if he has the green light from the federal government and the support of tribal governments regarding the Indian Health Service piece of the plan.

South Dakota currently pays nearly half of the expenses submitted by health care providers for services provided to American Indian patients outside of the IHS system.

The federal government pays the full amount for IHS-delivered services but shifts some of the cost to the state government for non-IHS care of American Indian patients.

If the federal government would pay the full share in

all instances, the money saved by state government would be used to pay the state’s share of the Medicaid expansion under Daugaard’s plan.

The Medicaid expansion would cover an estimated 45,000 to 55,000 adults who live just above the poverty level.

Daugaard, a Republican, previously opposed the expansion because of the federal government, South Dakota would be required to pay 10 percent of the cost starting in 2020.

Many Republicans in the Legislature and other public offices in South Dakota are steadfastly opposed to Medicaid expansion for a variety of reasons including that it is a component of the Affordable Care Act championed by President Barack Obama, who is a Democrat, and it was passed when Democrats controlled both chambers of Congress.

Sen. Deb Soholt, R-Sioux Falls, said she attended the meeting the governor held with legislators in Sioux Falls on Monday. She serves on the coalition, has been president for the South Dakota Board of Nursing and works as director for women’s health at Avera McKennan Hospital, a supporter of expansion.

Soholt said legislators at the meeting Monday raised questions and philosophical objections remained for many.

Daugaard named the coalition members, whose number now exceeds 40 participants depending upon the meeting, less than three months ago. The first meeting was Oct. 7.

“I think we’ve got a lot of good work done in short order,” Malsam-Rysdton told the group Wednesday at the end of the teleconference meeting.

MMC

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a stressful week and are ready to travel home for the holidays.”

Having animals on campus briefly takes the edge off the responsibilities the students have on their shoulders.

“They get a quick mental break from their busy week and get a little love from our animals,” Hacecky said. “In return, we let them know

we’re here so they can have other opportunities to come over and do some socializing.”

Heartland regularly does similar events in places like nursing homes and elementary schools, though the latter is more for pet education purposes.

“When we go to elementary schools, we have a conversation about the proper ways to approach a strange animal, what and what not to do with a strange animal on the loose and so on,” Hacecky explained. “It helps keep the kids safe as they

grow up and learn how to interact with other people’s pets.”

Pet therapy isn’t just for the young and old, according to Hacecky.

“We’re happy to offer the program,” she said. “If there are any businesses in the community who could use our assistance, they can reach out to us and we’d be happy to help them.”

Follow @ReillyBiel on Twitter.

NECC

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“The most popular classes right now are anything to do with technology,” Flamig said. “That is what is being needed. People want to know how to use their computers, iPads and phones.”

Instead of bringing instructors to Hartington, Flamig has found some local community members who are interested in teaching courses. The more instructors he can find close to home, the bigger variety Flamig can offer the students.

In addition to technology, classes like line dancing and

gardening in the spring could open more doors to any number of skills people are willing to learn.

“Anything is available,” Flamig said. “If someone is out there and says, ‘Hey, I’m pretty good at this,’ I’ll try to get a class lined up, get them to be a college employee and we go from there. It’s really wide open.”

There have also been improvements on dual credit courses offered for area high schoolers. Students can earn credit for NECC while taking a course in high school. Most schools in the county offer a dual credit program for popular introductory classes like psychology. With his previous and current experience in Hartington Public Schools,

Flamig has added a personal finance and construction class for dual credit as well.

Flamig’s goal is to continue expanding programs by speaking with communities that are interested and helping to start their own programs for adult learners.

“Sometimes you wonder if you are doing anything,” Flamig said. “But I look at when I started here compared to what is going on now, I really can’t complain. I hope next year at this time, I can come back and say, ‘Hey, I had 20 classes offered.’ That was the purpose — make it feasible and I think it’s here to stay.”

Follow @alwooc01 on Twitter.

Man Drops Suit, Strikes Deal To Open Members-Only Strip Club

HASTINGS, Neb. (AP) — A Lincoln businessman has dropped his \$100 million lawsuit against the central Nebraska city of Hastings, saying he and city officials reached an agreement that will let him operate a members-only strip club that, in exchange, will not be allowed to sell alcohol.

Shane Harrington said the Midwest Girls Club will officially open Thursday as a private club in Hastings and will operate every weekend for the foreseeable future. He said under the deal reached Tuesday, only dues-paying members will be allowed into the club. They can bring their own alcohol, but it won’t be sold there, *the Hastings Tribune* reported.

Harrington previously filed lawsuits against officials in Hall and Seward counties after he failed to gain approval for adult businesses in those counties. Earlier this month, he began operating a members-only strip club

out of a Hastings bar called The Shed after it closed for the night, surprising city officials because he hadn’t sought permission.

Under the agreement with the city, the bar will close and the private strip club will take over the space. It will be open Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights, but it could also host special events on other days, the newspaper reported.

Harrington said he’s glad to be able to drop the lawsuit and to provide adult entertainment to those in the community who want it.

“It’s unfortunate that we had to file a lawsuit,” he said. “I feel like we’re all on a really good page, and it’s a good feeling that they allowed us to come in and show them what we can do and that we can follow the law and entertain customers and make everyone happy.”



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