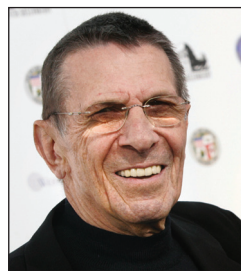




Afternoon Snow Showers
9 a.m. **10** 3 p.m. **19** | DETAILS: Page 2



Memoriam

A Look Back On Some
Of The Notables We
Lost In 2015
PAGES 7-8

MONDAY ■ December 28, 2015

YANKTON DAILY PRESS & DAKOTAN

Volume 140
Number 207

The Dakotas' Oldest Newspaper | **16 PAGES** | www.yankton.net

75¢



Just The Start

Officials Look To Downtown Yankton's Future

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the final story in the Press & Dakotan's series examining of downtown Yankton's past, present and future.

BY ROB NIELSEN
rob.nielsen@yankton.net

With a vibrant past and a hopeful present, officials and business owners alike are looking to see what the future may hold for downtown Yankton.

From the ongoing development of Meridian Plaza to the promise of a new facade grant and implementation of the Onward Yankton idea for an entrepreneurial capital in Yankton, officials say there is some real promise while offering a few of their own suggestions to capitalize on that promise.

FOUNDATION FOR THE FUTURE
As 2015 comes to a close, the future of Yankton's downtown will begin tak-

ing shape with the dawn of 2016. Businesses will be able to start applying for the city's facade improvement grant starting Jan. 1 while the next phase of the Meridian Bridge Plaza project will begin as soon as the weather improves. But long-term improvements, such as the Onward Yankton goal of turning Yankton into the entrepreneurship capital of the state, and others will take



The Meridian Bridge Plaza fountain, completed this past summer, is part of the City of Yankton's efforts to revitalize downtown Yankton. The plaza will continue to be updated in the near future as city officials look at the long-term promise of the city's downtown district.

KELLY HERTZ/P&D

DOWNTOWN | PAGE 14

Round One For The Area?



Yankton street crews were busy Saturday cleaning up the snow that fell late Christmas Day into the overnight hours. Yankton received 8 inches of snow from the storm — and more may be coming. At press time, Yankton County was under a winter storm watch for today (Monday) into Tuesday, while Clay and Cedar counties were under winter storm warnings. The National Weather Service said 6-10 inches of snow could be possible with the storm, the track of which was still uncertain late Sunday night. For more weather information, see page 2.

KELLY HERTZ/P&D

World War II

Two December Events Remembered

BY DAVID HOSMER
For the Press & Dakotan

December contains many World War II memories, including the attack at Pearl Harbor, the Wake Island surrender, and Typhoon Cobra. Two more stand out — the sinking of the SS *Leopoldville* and the siege of Bastogne.

The SS *Leopoldville* was a converted troop ship that had been used many times during 1944 to deliver troops from England to France. It was on a similar trip the day before Christmas in 1944. Landing troops and materials in deeper water ports was preferable, but the Germans had sabotaged most of them. The *Leopoldville* was heading to Cherbourg, France.

Aboard ship were the men of the 262nd Regiment in the 66th Division. They had been ordered to replace the 94th division at Brittany. One

member of the Regiment was Staff Sergeant G. Ordell Husby, whose parents were Oliver and Grace. He had attended Yankton High School,

and later Yankton College, and was married to Elma Barnes. Robert Moore of Yankton described Ordell as a "good kid."

At about 5 p.m. on Christmas Eve, the ship was about five miles out from Cherbourg when it was struck by a torpedo from a German U-boat. The Belgian Congo crew released the lifeboats



Husby



Axelsson

and jumped in. They ship slowly sank, taking nearly two hours. Men were reluctant to dive into the cold water and the Germans were firing at survivors in the water. There were 2,235 men aboard and 763 died, including Ordell.

This was a horrible sight. Eugene Weidenbach from Scotland, who recently celebrated his 95th birthday, was stationed in Cherbourg with the 533rd Ordnance Company. His company had the unfortunate job of collecting and burying the GIs.

Many of the men in the 262nd were wearing life jackets. The suction caused by the boat sank them. They later rose to the top of the water and drifted to shore. A bulldozer was used to dig a trench in the sand and the men were placed side by side. As Eugene noted, the scene was so horrendous that many men skipped the Christmas

DECEMBER | PAGE 14

Abolition Of Death Penalty The Top Neb. Story For 2015

BY NELSON LAMPE
Associated Press

OMAHA, Neb. — Newspaper and broadcast members of The Associated Press have voted the Legislature's abolition of the state's death penalty as the top Nebraska news story for 2015.

The measure passed on May 20 with the unusual backing from conservative lawmakers who oppose capital punishment for religious, financial and practical reasons. A week later the senators overrode a veto by Gov. Pete Ricketts, who condemned the action and said: "My words cannot express how appalled I am that we have lost a critical tool to protect law enforcement and Nebraska families."

The first-year governor and his family lent financial support later to Nebraskans for the Death Penalty, which gathered nearly 167,000 signatures from all 93 of the state's counties to place the item on next year's general election ballot.

Finishing second in the voting was President Barack Obama's decision in November to deny a federal permit for the Keystone XL oil pipeline, a project that would have cut through Nebraska on its way to Texas Gulf Coast refineries. Environmental activists spent years denouncing the pipeline, while supporters said it would create jobs and reduce U.S. reliance on Middle Eastern oil.

The pipeline developer, TransCanada, soon withdrew its application for Nebraska route approval but also said it remained committed to the project.

The year's No. 3 story as voted by AP members was a federal court decision to strike down Nebraska's ban on gay marriage and civil unions as unconstitutional. The state appealed, but the ban — one of the most restrictive in the nation — was ultimately overturned by the U.S. Supreme Court's finding in June that same-sex couples have a right to marry anywhere in the United States.

Finishing fourth in the voting was the May riot at the Tecumseh State Correctional Institution that left two inmates dead, four others injured and widespread damage throughout the prison. A state report released in June concluded that the riot started after too many prisoners were allowed to leave their cells at once to get medication while the prison was at minimum staffing levels.

The No. 5 story for 2015 was the shooting death of an Omaha police officer. Kerrie Orozco was one day away from going on maternity leave to care for the daughter she had delivered prematurely three months earlier when she was shot and killed in the line of duty in May.

The disappointing regular season of the Nebraska football team finished sixth in the voting. Nebraska went 5-7 in Mike Riley's first season as head coach, the Huskers' first losing season since Bill Callahan's 2007 team had the same record.

The No. 7 story was the ConAgra Foods shake-up. ConAgra announced

STORIES | PAGE 12

A Priest Dances For The Stars

Man Shines In National TV 'Performance'

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF
randy.dockendorf@yankton.net

NEWCASTLE, Neb. — Many times, the Rev. Andy Sohm feels so good about life that he needs to dance.

And now, he has found a national audience.

The Catholic priest was chosen as the "trivia dancer" last week for the New York-based show "Live! With Kelly and Michael."

The syndicated talk show features co-hosts Kelly Ripa and Michael Strahan. They chat during the opening segment and then ask a contestant a trivia question in order to win a trip. An audience member dances in the spotlight while the

hosts spin the wheel to determine the vacation destination for the contestant.

Sohm serves two parishes, St. Peter in Newcastle, Nebraska, and St. Joseph in Ponca, Nebraska. He resides at the Newcastle rectory and was introduced on the "Live!" show as "Andrew from Newcastle, Nebraska."

"I gave them my last name, but they didn't use it," Sohm said with a chuckle.

He also didn't wear a priest's collar or clothes, and he didn't tell the show's producers beforehand of his heavenly calling.

"I didn't tell them that that I'm a Catho-



COURTESY PHOTO

The Rev. Andy Sohm of Newcastle, Nebraska, share a smile with Kelly Ripa, co-host of "Live! With Kelly and Michael," while co-host Michael Strahan "photo bombs" in the background. Sohm, a Catholic priest for parishes in Newcastle and Ponca, Nebraska, was the trivia dancer selected from the audience of the New York-based television show.

PRIEST | PAGE 12



REGION 2 | OBITUARIES 3 | VIEWS 4 | LIFE 5 | SPORTS 9 | MIDWEST 11 | CLASSIFIEDS 13 | WORLD 15

TOMORROW: Kuhl Set To Retire From City Of Yankton

YANKTON RECYCLING FOR THIS WEEK
SOUTH
OF 15TH STREET