

Viborg-Hurley Elects School Board

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF
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The state's newest school district took its next step Tuesday night, with Viborg-Hurley patrons electing members for the five-member board.

In the end, familiar and experienced faces will take office. The Viborg-Hurley board will consist of current Viborg board members Gene Larsen, Denise Miller and Peggy Mach, and current Hurley board members Steve Rabern and Jim Gerdes.

The new district, approved by voters last fall, formally comes into existence July 1. However, the new board will get a jump on its duties, according to Hurley business manager Brian Andersen.

The Viborg-Hurley board will hold its first meeting at 6 p.m. Tuesday in the Hurley superintendent's office. The Viborg-Hurley board meeting is expected to begin preliminary work for decisions down the line, Andersen said.

The Hurley board will conduct its school board meeting at 7 p.m. Tuesday at the school, he added.

The Viborg-Hurley school board races weren't the only election activity Tuesday in Turner County.

By a nearly 2-to-1 margin, Viborg voters rejected the transfer of Swan Lake property from the city to an association.

The vote was 144 opposed to the transfer and 75 in favor, according to Viborg city finance officer Lori Ronke. The special election drew 41 percent voter turnout, she said.

The following is a breakdown of Tuesday's two elections.

- In the Viborg-Hurley school board race, voters decided three races while the other two races featured unopposed candidates.

The Viborg-Hurley district is divided into two areas of representation, north and south of 290th Street, with two board members from each area. The fifth seat goes to an at-large board member from anywhere in the district.

The following are the outcomes from Tuesday's election:

- Steve Rabern defeated Gordon Roth 177-62 for the North Area's 2-year term;
- Jim Gerdes defeated Bruce Ebbesen 142-99 for the North Area's 3-year term;
- Denise Miller ran unopposed for the South Area's 2-year term;
- Peggy Mach ran unopposed for the South Area's 3-year term;
- Gene Larsen defeated Chad Mason 318-189 for the At-Large 1-year term.

In the at-large race, each candidate won his home area. Broken down by precinct, Larsen used a 233-37 advantage in the South Area to offset Mason's 152-85 advantage in the North Area.

Rabern, Ebbesen and Gerdes currently serve on the Hurley school board. Miller, Mach and Larsen currently serve on the Viborg school board.

According to the candidate petitions, Mason resides in Hurley, while Roth's address is listed as rural Hurley.

The unopposed candidacies of Miller and Mach, along with the race between incumbents Ebbesen and Gerdes, guaranteed three current board members would sit on the new Viborg-Hurley board.

Some current board members did not seek

a seat on the new Viborg-Hurley board. Those sitting out the election included Viborg president Jim Larsen and vice president Wayne Larsen and Hurley president Jon Benson and vice president Denise Schoolmeester.

- In the Viborg referendum election, voters overturned the City Council resolution transferring title and control of Swan Lake property from the City of Viborg to the Swan Lake Improvement Association.

The resolution had been put on the ballot by 78 petition signatures, more than the required 29.

Tuesday's election outcome has blocked the property transfer from going into effect, finance officer Ronke said.

She was unsure if the council would reconsider the transfer at some point in the future. The law may require the council to wait a specified period of time before even revisiting the issue, she said.

The Swan Lake property, located about four miles northwest of Viborg, was given to the city in the 1930s with the stipulation that it remain a park.

Over the last 40 years, the Swan Lake Improvement Association has conducted all of the upgrades at the site, obtaining a grant for dredging the lake, Ronke said.

The association has also conducted fundraising for the park and performed upkeep such as mowing, Ronke said. The city covered lighting costs, she said.

By transferring title and control, the city had sought to give the Swan Lake Improvement Association more authority when dealing with Game, Fish and Parks or property-related issues, Ronke said.

Bonus

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erage on achievement tests, but their scores are not improving even though the state has more teachers and fewer students than it did 40 years ago.

"We cannot simply pour more money into the same old system," Daugaard said, noting the state added nearly 900 teachers while enrollment dropped by 50,000 students over the past four decades. "We must focus on improving results, and spend creatively and strategically to achieve results. The key to high achievement is great teaching and we will invest the dollars it will take to make a difference."

Beginning in the fall of 2014, school districts will be asked to identify their top 20 percent of teachers under a new evaluation system that will rank them based on students' test scores and other factors, Daugaard said. Top teachers will receive annual bonuses of \$5,000 each, costing the state about \$10 million a year, he said.

The state also would give each math and science teacher in middle and high school a yearly bonus of \$3,500 beginning in fall 2013 to deal with shortages in those fields. Those bonuses would cost the state \$5 million a year.

The final piece of the plan would end tenure in July for any teacher who does not already have it. Currently, any South Dakota teacher who has worked more than three consecutive years in a district has tenure and can be fired only for poor performance, gross immorality or other misconduct.

Teachers who already have tenure would not lose it, but Daugaard said new teachers don't need the protection because they will be evaluated fairly under the new system.

Hunhoff said schools are already hard pressed to deal with funding shortfalls, and Daugaard's apparent embrace of some conservative moves that have been tried in other states won't help.

"It's a war on schools at the very worst possible time when schools already feel under assault," he said.

Daugaard also asked lawmakers to support his plans for easing a shortage in a variety of professional and technical occupations in South Dakota, which has an unemployment rate of 4.3 percent, about half the national rate.

Those plans include expanded college programs to train more doctors, physicians' assistants, and other health care workers. Programs at technical schools also would be expanded to train more welders and machinists.

Discussion

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cited about that," Moser said. "It is going to come down to what your outlook is on it. It is not going to take away from anyone. If I were working in a school, I would be very excited to have the opportunity to get that bonus. If I wasn't chosen for the bonus, I would be excited for my colleague who was chosen. I don't see where there would be any criticism from that."

Democratic Rep. Bernie Hunhoff, the House minority leader, said the discussion is long overdue.

"We certainly welcome the recognition that education is the best form of economic development," he said. "If you read between the lines, that was the message of the speech. That is a new train of thought from this administration and it is one that is welcomed by Democrats and by people across South Dakota."

Moser expects to hear complaints from some school personnel about the elimination of tenure for teachers who have not already achieved it.

"I think you will find a mixed bag from the teachers," he said. "I think you will find some school

districts who are really in favor of it. I know there are some school superintendents who are planning to testify in favor of it, both from large and from smaller schools. You will have some schools that are against it. This isn't meant to solve a funding issue. This is there to reward the teachers who their own administrators have determined are doing the best work, and I think that is OK."

"In the end, we are looking at what is the best for our children," Sen. Hunhoff said. "This way, it is focused on the child. It is not looking at a national norm; it is looking directly at the child and seeing how they have improved (to determine which teachers will be rewarded.)"

However, Rep. Hunhoff said the governor's speech could be interpreted as a "war on



J. Hunhoff



Moser



B. Hunhoff

schools." He also questioned the use of unqualified data in the governor's speech.

In Tuesday's address, Daugaard questioned why education in 2012 costs so much more per pupil than when he was in high school, noting that in 1971 there were 8,452 teachers in the state compared to 9,321 today. At the same time there are 50,000 less students, and the costs went up from \$3,920 per student in 1969 to \$9,173 in 2008 with inflation figured.

Rep. Hunhoff responded: "Horses are cheaper than cars, but we don't want a horse-and-buggy education. Obviously everything has changed since the governor was in high school in 1971 — from nutrition programs, preschool initiatives, library services, technology; and we are doing such a better job of dealing with students with disabilities."

"I believe school officials, concerned parents and certainly teachers and staff are going to feel like they are under assault when they see the details of (the proposed initiative)," he said.

One aspect of the speech that Bernie found very encouraging — calling it a validation of what Democrats have been calling for, for a long time — is the South Dakota Workforce Initiative (S.D. WINS).

"We have been saying for a

long time that education is the best form of economic development," he said. "We should invest in people, not in chasing smoke stacks. It is a bit of change of course for state government and a welcome one as far as I am concerned."

Daugaard proposed four main components in with the program:

- Preparing South Dakota's children to fill the needs of the state's workforce including training as science and math teachers, for rural medical needs and for filling technical positions.
- Training more welders and machinists through a new program at Mitchell Technical Institute to begin in the fall 2012.
- Adding four positions in the University of South Dakota Sanford School of Medicine, as well as doubling the class sizes of the Physician Assistant and Nurse Practitioner programs.
- Working with Manpower, Inc., to recruit skilled workers from other states to move to South Dakota.

Applied Engineering of Yankton was one company that Daugaard said was excited to use the program to fill openings in the state.

"I think the South Dakota WINS initiative is going to be great for Yankton," Moser said. "We are in a position in that we will be one of the communities that will absolutely benefit the

most from this program. I just think it is exciting for Yankton, and frankly, I wish I was a 16-17 year old right now coming of age with these initiatives available. I think there are going to be a lot of great opportunities for kids out there."

The lawmakers said there is a huge need for such training right here in Yankton.

"I was at a meeting in Yankton just before I left for session where Josh Svatos was telling me Yankton is going to be 100-150 welders short by spring," Rep. Hunhoff said. "Job training and investing in people works."

"This will help to address that worker shortage," said Sen. Hunhoff. "The priority has always been to employ our own South Dakotans, but looking at the unemployment rates in the state and not being able to fill those positions, I think there are some great opportunities here for partnerships and addressing it from more than one angle."

Rep. Hunhoff said he found it ironic that the administration was willing to spend millions to bring in out-of-state workers, but it balks at fully funding the education of South Dakota's youth.

"He wants to share costs with Manpower and go shopping for engineers," Rep. Hunhoff said. "It is a new concept that is going to raise eyebrows when we consider that we haven't been able

to invest properly in educating students right here in South Dakota, yet we can find millions of dollars to recruit educated youth from other states. It is certainly an odd predicament. We didn't do a good job educating our own youth, so now we are going to spend millions recruiting youth from other states."

Looking forward to the session, Rep. Hunhoff said he hopes the Legislature can begin to rebuild following the 2011 session.

"We dug a real hole last year that we need to figure out how to rebuild from," he said. "Democrats are looking for bipartisan support to determine exactly what it costs to educate a K-12 student. It is very important that we figure that out. We constantly argue about where we need to be. So, we are going to introduce legislation to come up with a target figure. I think it will also initiate a good conversation on what it takes to educate a child in 2012, what it costs and where that money should come from."

Moser has a much more positive outlook.

"In general, I am excited to see us looking at tough policy issues and having a real frank conversation about them," he said. "Is all of this going to become policy? I don't know. But, I think it is a healthy thing to talk about them. I am excited."

OBITUARIES

Violet Diede

MENNO — Violet Diede, age 91, of Menno, SD died early Sunday morning, January 8, 2012 at the Menno-Olivet Care Center, Menno, SD.



Diede

Memorial services will be 11:00 a.m. Thursday, January 12, 2012, at Grace Lutheran Church, Menno, with Rev. Leon Schulz officiating. Private family committal services will be at the Menno Cemetery.

Visitations will be from 7-8 p.m. Wednesday, January 11, 2012, at the Aisenbrey-Opsahl-Kostel Memorial Chapel, Menno.

Violet Diede was born to Emmanuel and Emma (nee Zeeb) Herrboldt on December 26, 1920. She was baptized into the Christian Faith in Menno, SD. She attended a rural school in the area and graduated from Menno High School in 1939. She married Gerhard Diede on May 22, 1941. They farmed in the area and later purchased and operated the Diede Hardware Store in Menno, SD.

She is survived by her daughter, Delilah (William) Brieher of Sioux Falls, SD; 2 grandchildren, William M. Brieher (Vivian) of Urbana, IL and Ann (Dustin) Myers of Sioux Falls, SD; 3 great-grandchildren, Jacob, Joseph and Victoria; 2 sisters, Alitha Quast and LuElla Heer, both of Menno, SD.

She was preceded in death by her husband, sister, Viola Handel and 3 brothers, Ruben, Filmore and Edmund Herrboldt.

Yankton Press & Dakotan
January 11, 2012

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Leona Sedlezky

FREEMAN — Leona P. Sedlezky, age 97, of Freeman, SD passed away on Sunday, January 8, 2012 at the Freeman Community Hospital, Freeman, SD.



Sedlezky

Funeral services will be 1:30 p.m. Thursday, January 12, 2012, at Immanuel Lutheran Church, with Rev. David Ellis officiating. Burial will be in the Menno Cemetery.

Visitations will be from 5-8 p.m. Wednesday, January 11, 2011 at the Immanuel Lutheran Church, Menno, SD. Visitations will resume one hour prior to service at the church. The Aisenbrey-Opsahl-Kostel Memorial Chapel, Menno, is in charge of services.

Pallbearers are Darren Sedlezky, Kevin Sedlezky, Chris Savey, Steven Stern, Neil Fossum and Mike Stern.

Leona was born January 21, 1914 in Tripp, South Dakota to Richard and Lydia (Bietz) Friedrich. She was baptized at the Hoffnugstal Church and confirmed at Kulm Church in rural

Tripp, SD. On January 19, 1938, Leona was united in marriage to Edwin Sedlezky in Kaylor, SD with Rev. Briest officiating. They farmed in the Freeman area and lived there until her husband of 63 years, passed away. Leona then moved to an apartment in Freeman, SD where she lived for 10 years. In September of 2011 she moved to the Salem Mennonite Home where she quickly learned to enjoy new activities and friends.

Leona was a member of Immanuel Lutheran Church in Menno, SD her entire married life and treasured the many years she taught the younger children in Sunday School and her church family. She enjoyed gardening, painting and crafts, and sharing them with others. Her home was always full of flowers and a cookie. Leona loved to play cards, especially

with her precious grandchildren.

Those left to treasure her memory are 2 sons, Edwin Sedlezky Jr. of Custer, SD and Dale (Deb) Sedlezky of Freeman, SD; 2 daughters, Karen (Loren) Fossum of Sioux Falls, SD and Donna (Larry) Stern of Freeman, SD; 16 grandchildren and 20 great-grandchildren, plus many relatives and friends.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Edwin, her parents, 1 brother, Oscar Friedrich, and daughter-in-law, Yvonne Sedlezky.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to Main Street Living TV Ministry, 1400 S. Duluth Avenue, Sioux Falls, SD 57105.

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Martha Jenner

MINDEN, Neb. — Martha Jenner, 91, of Minden, Neb., and formerly of Yankton, died Tuesday, Jan. 10, 2012, at Kearney County Health Services, Minden.

Arrangements are pending with Wintz & Ray Funeral Home and Cremation Service, Yankton.

Katherine Smith

WAUSA, Neb. — Katherine Smith, 99, of Wausa, Neb., died Monday, Jan. 9, 2012 at Golden Living Center, Wausa.

Funeral services are at 3 p.m. Thursday at United Methodist Church, Wausa. Pastor Samm Johnston will officiate with burial in Woodlawn Cemetery in Wausa.

Visitation will be one hour prior to the services at the church.

Brockhaus Funeral Home of Wausa is in charge of arrangements.

Kenneth Eckmann

BLOOMFIELD, Neb. — Kenneth Eckmann, 74, of Bloomfield, Neb., died Monday, Jan. 9, 2012, at his home.

Funeral services are at 10:30 a.m. Friday at Christ Memorial United Methodist Church, Bloomfield. The Rev. Tim Pratt will officiate, with burial in the Bloomfield City Cemetery.

Visitation is 4-8 p.m. Thursday at Brockhaus Funeral Home, Bloomfield.

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