



Mostly Cloudy, Snow Showers Likely

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Yankton's Citizens Of The Year



Brooks and Vi Ranney have been selected as Yankton's 2012 Citizens of the Year. While speaking with the Press & Dakotan recently, the two joked about one area in which their personalities differ. Vi said she is a people person who loves being in a group. Brooks countered that he is a person person. "One at a time," he said. That chemistry has served the couple well during more than 30 years of marriage.

KELLY HERTZ/P&D

Yankton County commissioner Allen Sinclair discusses jail issues with Yankton County Sheriff Jim Vlahakis during the commission's year-ending session Monday afternoon in Yankton. (Kelly Hertz/P&D)



County Ends 2012 With \$2.3M Surplus

BY NATHAN JOHNSON
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The Yankton County Commission closed out its 2012 business with a surprise Monday.

During a special meeting to address year-end issues, Yankton County Auditor Paula Jones said there would be approximately \$2.3 million in reserves to carry over into 2013.

Typically, that figure is in the \$1.2 million to \$1.5 million range.

"I was really surprised at the dollar amount we have left in our reserves. I was expecting \$1.2 million," Commission Chairman Bruce Jensen said after the meeting. "All the departments watch their spending. They always have over the years. They are to be commended."

Plenty of needs face the county that those unspent dollars can address, he added. The new highway shop has to be paid off, and road and bridge

maintenance must be addressed. For example, a consultant's study of the James River bridge along Old Highway 50 showed long-term fixes for that structure could amount to millions of dollars in the years to come.

Additionally, a desired storage facility for the emergency management and the ambulance departments is expected to cost approximately \$49,000 and has not been budgeted for 2013.

"There are a lot of counties that wish they had the reserve that we have," Jensen said. "We're going to continue on building, being conservative and being proactive."

In other business Monday, the commission was informed by Sheriff Jim Vlahakis that the jail had about \$606,000 in revenues during 2012. A big reason for that is the income the jail gets for housing inmates for the

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Ranneys Honored For Years Of Service To Community

BY NATHAN JOHNSON
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Brooks and Vi Ranney feel like they've done it all — and they're glad they've been able to do it while calling Yankton home.

Brooks spent almost 50 years providing obstetrician/gynecology services to patients, and was the first fully-trained OB/GYN in the region when he arrived in 1948. Meanwhile, Vi spent years in the banking and non-profit sectors.

Later in their lives, the two collaborated on a shared passion — designing and escorting tour groups.

For their good works, the Ranneys have been named Yankton's 2012 Citizens of the Year by a committee composed of various local civic organizations. The Press & Dakotan is one of the sponsors of the Citizen of the Year award.

Often described as a humble man by those who know him, Brooks had a large role in improving the standard of care for women in South Dakota.

"When I came here, I was the only obstetrician/gynecologist in Yankton. Medical care for women was a little bit sloppy," he said. "I had just completed my training, so I was ready."

Brooks grew up in Metamora, Ill., a place where he notes President Abraham Lincoln practiced law. After serving as a medical officer in the 181st Engineers Heavy Ponton Battalion during World War II, Brooks finished his medical degree.

While receiving his medical training in Illinois, Brooks met Dr. Theodore H. Sattler, who told him he and Dr. Chester McVay would be starting the first multi-specialty clinic in the state of South Dakota.

"I knew the quality of both men, so instead of going to a big city, I came here (in 1948)," Brooks said.

From 1952-1976, he was the chair of the Department of OB/GYN at the University of South Dakota School of Medicine and director of the OB/GYN residency program there from 1955-1981.

In 1982, Brooks became the president of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists.

During his career, he also authored 75 medical articles. In 2000, he was inducted into the South Dakota Hall of Fame under the professional category.

Brooks' service extended beyond the medical field. In 1958, he was elected to the Yankton City Commission and became mayor in 1964.

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MICHAEL REYNOLDS/EPA VIA ABACA PRESS/MCT

President Barack Obama delivers remarks on the fiscal cliff at a White House event with middle-income Americans, at the Eisenhower Executive Office Building in Washington Monday.

Over The Edge And Back ...

Congress Sends Obama Bill To Avoid 'Fiscal Cliff'

BY DAVID ESPO AND ALAN FRAM
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Past its own New Year's deadline, a weary Congress sent President Barack Obama legislation to avoid a national "fiscal cliff" of middle class tax increases and spending cuts late Tuesday night in the culmination of a struggle that strained America's divided government to the limit.

The bill's passage on a 257-167 vote in the House sealed a hard-won political triumph for the president less than two months after he secured re-election while calling for higher taxes on the wealthy.

In addition to neutralizing middle class tax increases and spending cuts taking effect with the new year, the legislation will raise tax rates on incomes over \$400,000 for individuals and \$450,000 for couples. That was higher than the thresholds of \$200,000 and \$250,000 that Obama campaigned for. But remarkably, in a party that swore off tax increases two decades ago, dozens of Republicans supported the bill at both ends of the Capitol.

The Senate approved the measure on a vote of 89-8 less than 24 hours earlier, and in the interim, rebellious House conservatives demanded a vote to add significant spending cuts to the measure. But in the end they retreated.

Supporters of the bill in both parties expressed regret that it was narrowly drawn, and fell far short of a sweeping plan that combined tax changes and spending cuts to reduce federal deficits. That proved to be a step too far in the two months since Obama called congressional leaders to the White House for a postelection stab at compromise.

Majority Republicans did their best to minimize the bill's tax increases, just as they abandoned their demand from earlier in the day to add spending cuts to the package.

"By making Republican tax cuts permanent, we are one

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No. 1 FOR 2013



PHOTO: AVERA SACRED HEART HOSPITAL

Jessica and Dan Guthmiller, Menno, welcomed daughter Abby Marie Guthmiller to their family at 6:03 p.m. New Year's Day — the first baby born at Yankton's Avera Sacred Heart Hospital in 2013. Abby weighed six pounds, 13 ounces and measured 19 1/2 inches. She will join big brothers Lane, 4, and Eric, 2 1/2, at home in Menno. There are about 600 babies born each year at Avera Sacred Heart Hospital's Women's Center.



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TOMORROW: Yankton Native Getting Dose Of Reality In NYC

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