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Predictions For 2013 • **1B**

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A Successful Season



PHOTO COURTESY MITCH JOHNSON
This bobcat, harvested by Yankton resident Mitch Johnson, is one of the furbearers captured during the first East River bobcat season allowed by the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks (GF&P) Commission. Nearly three dozen cats were caught in the authorized area of Buffalo, Brule, Charles Mix, Bon Homme and Yankton counties.

Nearly 3 Dozen Bobcats Harvested During First East River Season

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF
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When it came to trapping animals, Christmas arrived early for Mitch Johnson.

The Yankton man sought the prized bobcat in South Dakota's first season for the furbearer east of the Missouri River. The South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks (GF&P) commission approved the Dec. 8-30 season for licensed hunters and trappers in Buffalo, Brule, Charles Mix, Bon Homme and Yankton counties.

"I got (my bobcat) Christmas Eve in northern Yankton County, along the James River, in a thick cedar tree-covered area. I caught him in a trap," Johnson said.

"It was Christmas Eve, but it felt more like Christmas morning. Every time I checked the traps, it's very hard to explain the anticipation. It was a unique experience."

Johnson admitted he was concerned about the approaching end of the 23-day season.

"I knew I was running out of time. Actually, I didn't get my traps out until a couple of weeks into the season, but I had family obligations," he said.

"I was excited to get (my bobcat) before the snowstorm. Once you get the freeze in the ground, trapping is more difficult."

A SUCCESSFUL SEASON

Johnson's experience mirrored the feelings of other hunters and trappers, according to an area conservation officer.

Game warden Sam Schelhaas of Yankton County said he was pleased with the initial East River bobcat season.

"There was apprehension as we went forward with this first season, and nobody really knew what the number was going to be," he said.

"In my opinion, the bobcat season was a success. In the five counties that we had the opening, we had 33 bobcats that were harvested."

Charles Mix led the way with 14 bobcats, followed by Yankton with seven and Bon Homme and Brule with six each. Buffalo didn't record any harvested bobcats.

Sports enthusiasts welcomed the ability to seek bobcats east

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Schools Join Pop Tab Collection Drive

BY EMILY NIEBRUGGE
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When Laurie Holan of Yankton decided she wanted to show her son 1 million of something, she decided to start collecting pop can tabs.

Holan now has 715,000 pop tabs, and is reaching out to the elementary and middle schools to collect the rest and then donate them to the Ronald McDonald House in Sioux Falls.

The project now involves Sacred Heart Elementary School and Yankton's public elementary schools. The goal is to have 1 million pop tabs by April, when author David Schwartz will present his "Math + Literature = Learning = Fun" workshop for grades K-6.

"Before, we didn't have a time frame," Holan said. "We only need about 300,000 pop tabs more to go. With this author coming this year, we got Sacred Heart and all the public schools involved in October."

Although it has taken Holan 2 1/2 years to reach 715,000 pop tabs, Sacred Heart Elementary School librarian Jane Goeden is confident the schools can collect the rest by April.

"Once we explain to our kids what we're doing, they take off with it and they want to help others. It's something we do so often here, trying to help others," she said. "We're going to start explaining to our kids now that we want to get 1 million pop tabs. We almost positively feel we're going to get to 1 million since we're already up to 715,000. We're so close, and we have all of these schools involved."

Lincoln Elementary School principal Paul Struck has been coordinating Schwartz's visit, and said Lincoln has already collected 50,000 pop tabs.

"(Schwartz) likes to do something in conjunction with his books about math and science," Struck said. "He writes non-fiction books about math, science, numbers and how to understand those concepts. He's a very good author who

writes to the kids' interest. We're really impressed with the emphasis he puts on math and science."

Goeden said the schools are tying the author's presentation and the pop tab collection together so each student can understand the concept of what 1 million really is.

"We might make it into some type of a contest, but I know some of the schools are thinking about having a carnival," she said. "We're just doing different activities that have to do with the books. We are going to try to present the million pop tabs at the public middle school when they have them - we'll have them boxed up so we can make some type of assembly with them."

Struck said he knows it can be difficult for parents to collect the pop tabs, but is encouraging the collection since everything will go towards a good cause.

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KELLY HERTZ/P&D
Laurie Holan of Yankton displays some of the approximately 715,000 pop can tabs that have been collected by area schools. The goal is to raise 1 million tabs by April.

County Commission Reorganizes For 2013

BY NATHAN JOHNSON
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The Yankton County Commission agreed to raise employee salaries by 3 percent Thursday.

During their first meeting of the year, commissioners also selected Bruce Jensen to serve as commission chairman for another term. Additionally, Donna Freng and Mark Johnson were sworn in for new, four-year terms after their November re-elections.

Among those getting a 3 percent raise Thursday were the commissioners themselves.

Chairman Bruce Jensen will

now receive \$12,137 annually, and the other four commissioners will get \$11,399.

Jensen said he was happy that the county was able to give its employees the cost-of-living adjustment.

"We're very fortunate," he stated. "We've all worked hard to keep spending down."

In 2013, Jensen said he would like to see the county continue to position itself for success in the future.

"We don't want to become stagnant," he stated. "The big

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COURTESY PHOTO
Tom Walsh Jr. (pictured) and his father, Tom Walsh, Sr., were recently named as finalists for Burger King's North America Franchisee of the Year Award.

Burger King Honors Region's Franchisees For Success

BY DEREK BARTOS
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For Dakota King, Inc., people have always come first.

The Sioux Falls-based Burger King franchise, whose locations include Yankton, Vermillion and Beresford, has strived for nearly 40 years to help its customers, employees and the communities it serves.

"It all comes down to people," said Tom Walsh Jr., who owns Dakota King, Inc., with his father, Tom Walsh Sr. "If your people know you care and you take care of your people, they'll take care of everything else."

In recognition of their commitment and success, the father and son were recently named as finalists for Burger King's North America Franchisee of the Year Award. Candidates for the award are chosen based on successful operations, sales, community involvement and overall business model.

The Walshes were recognized among fellow franchisees, top Burger King executives and employees in attendance at the 2012 BKW North America Convention held in Las Vegas.

"Our franchisees' commitment to the Burger King brand and dedication to service at every

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