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For nearly a quarter-century, Frank Kloucek of Scotland has represented District 19 in the South Dakota Legislature. "The work is 24/7, year-round. You're always on duty," he said. Kloucek, a Democrat, served for 22 years before losing to Republican Bill Van Gerpen of Tyndall in the November general election.

KELLY HERTZ/P&D

Frankly Speaking

Longtime D19 Lawmaker Reflects On Career

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF

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SCOTLAND — Frank Kloucek's burning desire for political office began as a teenager on a bus trip.

"We went to the Legislature on a Senior Class trip to Pierre. We took tours of the capitol and watched the session from upstairs in the gallery," he said. "I saw (lawmakers) George Shanard and Roger McKellips debate down on the floor, and I knew right then that I wanted to be a legislator someday."

Kloucek pursued his dream sooner than expected.

"I wasn't planning to get into politics until about now, in my 50s," he said. "But then there was the farm crisis in the 1980s, and I got involved at an earlier start than I intended."

The Scotland Democrat ran three times for a District 19

seat before winning his first term in 1990. Despite the losses, and running in a heavily Republican district, he said he never became discouraged.

"I thought it would happen," he said of winning office. "I had a belief in the people."

Kloucek served in office for 22 years before losing to Republican Bill Van Gerpen of Tyndall in November's general election. Van Gerpen is no stranger to the Legislature as he, like Kloucek, has served in Pierre.

Under new legislative boundaries, District 19 took a decided shift to the east. Bon Homme County was split into two districts, with the northeast section joining Douglas, Hutchinson, Hanson and McCook counties to form the new District 19.

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Lawmakers Look Ahead To Session

District 18 Legislators: Education Funding Will Again Be A Tug Of War

BY NATHAN JOHNSON

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When it comes to the 2013 session of the South Dakota Legislature, District 18's legislators are in agreement on the top issues they will face: economic development, education and health care.

The Legislature will get under way Jan. 8 for the 38-day session.

The Press & Dakotan surveyed Democratic Rep. Bernie Hunhoff, as well as Republicans Sen. Jean Hunhoff and Rep. Mike Stevens, this week about their expectations.

Setting the tone on the education issue, Gov. Dennis Daugaard proposed in his budget address last month to give school districts a 3 percent increase in funding.

"Most lawmakers recognize that education is the place where state government can have the biggest impact on business and industry," Rep. Hunhoff said. "The number one public policy issue we face as a state is whether the current per pupil spending levels are adequate, or should we seek to help schools recover from the deep cuts they experienced over the last two years? Are current levels 'the new norm,' as some of my colleagues have argued, or can we do better?"

Stevens, a long-time Yankton School Board member who will now be a freshman member of the House, said the 3 percent funding increase is a good place to start.

In order to improve funding for eco-



J. Hunhoff



B. Hunhoff



Stevens

nomics development, education or health care, Sen. Hunhoff said it will require a growth in revenues and/or a decrease in expenditures.

"More funding for education and health care will require solutions that the taxpayer can support," she stated. "There will be discussion as to how to measure outcomes for students and support a needed South Dakota work force. Medicaid funding must address provider reimbursement that will sustain services in rural communities. Any expansion to Medicaid must include analysis of dollars available for present coverage, as well as what could be potential expenditures for the state if the federal government cannot continue to fund Medicaid at what is mandated under health care reform."

Democrats have said they will make the expansion of Medicaid now available under the Affordable Care Act one of their top priorities this year. According to the Center

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Flex Fuel Pumps Open In Hartington

From P&D Staff Reports

HARTINGTON, Neb. — Two new flex fuel pumps are now open at the Stop N Go in Hartington, Neb. A grand opening is planned for a later date.

These flex fuel pumps are located at 605 North Robinson in Hartington. They are two of approximately 80 E85/flex fuel pumps in Nebraska that offer fuel blends that include renewable ethanol. Flex fuel vehicles owners will find E30 and E85 at this location.

These pumps will also offer unleaded and E10, the most commonly sold fuel in the state.

To find a list of retailers that offer E85 and other mid-level ethanol blends, visit the Nebraska Ethanol Board website at www.ne-ethanol.org or check the Nebraska Corn Board website at www.NebraskaCorn.org.

One in 10 Nebraska motorists currently own a flexible fuel vehicle that can run on any

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City Bans May Prompt S.D. Ban On Texting And Driving

BY CHET BROKAW

Associated Press

PIERRE — The South Dakota Legislature has repeatedly refused to ban texting while driving, declining to join the 39 other states that have already done so.

However, South Dakota lawmakers may look more favorably on the idea this year because four South Dakota cities in the past year have imposed their own bans on texting.

Sen. Mike Vehle, R-Mitchell, who plans to introduce a texting ban in the legislative session that begins Tuesday, said lawmakers who have been sitting on the fence might support a ban now that Sioux Falls, Brookings, Watertown and Huron have passed their own.

Vehle said it's time to pass a state law banning texting while driving so the law is the same in every community. His measure would prohibit cities and counties from having bans that differ from his proposed state law, which would prohibit writing, reading or sending text-based messages while driving.

"What I'm trying to avoid is a patchwork of different laws as you're driving down the road," Vehle said. "It should be the same all the way across the state."



Vehle

U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood is trying to get the remaining 11 states to enact bans, citing statistics that indicate texting while driving is dangerous. A DOT website, www.distraction.gov, says a 2009 study of commercial vehicle drivers found those texting while driving were 23 times more likely than non-texting drivers to be involved in crashes, near crashes or other risky activity such as drifting into another lane.

The DOT also reports that 18 percent of all 2010 crashes resulting in injuries involved a distracted driver. Those distractions include texting, using a cellphone,

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