



**Bucks Knock Off
O’Gorman • 8A**

YANKTON DAILY PRESS & DAKOTAN



**A Blind Girl’s
Visions Aren’t
What They
Seem In
This Year’s
YHS One-Act
Play Entry
RIVER CITY**



Businesses Affected By Lack Of County Tax Data

BY NATHAN JOHNSON
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With no property tax bills available for Yankton County property owners, businesses in the real estate market are doing what they can to keep transactions moving.

Almost four weeks into the new year, they said the situation is mostly an inconvenience at this point. However, they warned that the longer the Yankton County Auditor’s Office goes without getting tax bills calculated, the more serious the situation will become.

“People won’t be able to buy a house and move until the taxes are done. It hasn’t happened to us yet, but it will happen if this is not fixed,” said Carol Breck of Lewis & Clark Realty, Inc. “So far, it has caused us not to be able to give clear-cut monetary answers to our buyers and sellers as to how much they are going to have to come to the table with, how much they are going to be owing next year or what their whole payment will be. There are so many things affected by not knowing what the taxes are. The biggest thing is, it’s a slow-down. It causes one more cog to not move together so we can’t get deals closed.”

The Press & Dakotan reported Thursday that the Yankton County Auditor’s Office has not yet calculated the 2012 property taxes payable in 2013 to the satisfaction of the South Dakota Department of Revenue. According to that department, Yankton County is the only county in South Dakota not to have its tax levies finalized.

No indication has been given as to when the situation will be resolved.

Denny Breck, also of Lewis

TAXES | PAGE 2A

FIRE CLAIMS HOME WEST OF YANKTON



KELLY HERTZ/P&D

The Yankton Fire Department responded to a blaze Thursday at a manufactured home along Powerline Drive west of Yankton. The report of the fire was received at approximately 3:30 p.m. and firefighters were on scene for two hours. The owners were not home at the time of the fire, and the structure is considered a total loss. The cause of the blaze is undetermined, according to Deputy Fire Chief Larry Nickles. Also Thursday, Gayville and Volin firefighters were called to a house fire in the 200 block of Windsor Street in Volin during the noon hour. Responders were using fans to ventilate smoke out of the structure while the Press & Dakotan was on scene.

S.D. Lawmakers Reject Bill Relaxing Gun Permit Law

BY CHET BROKAW
Associated Press

PIERRE — A measure that would have allowed most South Dakota residents to carry concealed weapons without permits was rejected by a legislative panel Thursday after opponents said it could prevent law officers from stopping some crimes and encourage criminals to carry hidden guns.

The House Local Government Committee voted 7-6 to kill the legislation. But the measure’s main sponsor, Rep. Lance Russell, said he may ask the full House to override the committee and debate the bill, which he said would help law-abiding citizens protect themselves without causing any increase in crime.

The bill would have allowed people to carry concealed handguns without a state permit as long as they met fed-

eral qualifications for owning guns. Federal law prohibits convicted felons, drug addicts, some people with mental health problems and those convicted of domestic violence from possessing guns.

The measure also would have prevented law enforcement officers from searching or detaining people just because they had a pistol or revolver.

Rep. Tim Rounds, R-Pierre, chairman of the committee, said some people saw the bill as a way to let Washington know they oppose federal gun control efforts. President Barack Obama has called for required background checks for all gun sales and a ban on military-style assault weapons and high-capacity ammunition magazines in the wake of last month’s slaying of 20 children and six adults at an elementary school in Newtown, Conn.

GUNS | PAGE 12A

Court Upholds Hyperion Permit

Company Moves Closer
To Building \$10B Refinery

BY DIRK LAMMERS
Associated Press

SIoux FALLS — The South Dakota Supreme Court on Thursday upheld the approval of an air quality permit that would allow a Texas company to begin constructing a proposed \$10 billion oil refinery.

Opponents sued the Board of Minerals and Environment, saying the board erred when it approved the Hyperion Energy Center permit because its study did not include a full-scale environmental impact statement.

Attorneys for Dallas-based Hyperion and the board contend that an environmental impact statement was not required and that board members took into account all relevant environmental issues.

“Although an EIS was not prepared in the air quality permitting portion of this regulatory proceeding, the record indicates that other EIS concerns will be addressed in other regulatory proceedings that are necessary to construct and operate the proposed facility,” Justice Steven Zinter wrote in the unanimous opinion.

Preston Phillips, Hyperion’s vice president, said the permitting effort has been a long, methodical process and the company is extremely pleased by the ruling. He said the company will likely ask the board to extend the current March deadline that requires Hyperion to begin construction.

“Given the fact the Sierra Club’s appeals have consumed more than 16 of the 18 months we have for a construction-start window, it is likely we will apply to the Board of Minerals and Environment for an extension to our permit,” Phillips said in statement. “We’re eager to push the project forward, but the constant delays by the Sierra Club make it difficult to bring people on board and begin construction.”

Hyperion’s proposed refinery would process 400,000 barrels of Canadian tar sands crude oil each day into low-

PERMIT | PAGE 12A

A Union Of Voices

MMC Professor Forms New Community Chorus

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF
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Kenneth Tice holds simple rules for singers joining his new Mount Marty Choral Union.

“I need people to show up and really be ready to sing,” he said. “They’ve got to want to express themselves. If they want to sing, I’ll find a place for them.”

His rules may be simple, but the Mount Marty College assistant music professor holds high expectations for the community chorus. The choir will launch its initial season with concerts in April and May.

The first rehearsal will be



Yarbrough

the surrounding area, and no connection to MMC is required.

“This is community outreach. This is open to anyone from high school freshmen on up,” Tice said. “We aren’t having auditions for our first outing. People can just come to rehearsal. We will pass out the

music and get going. As we add more members, we’ll make adjustments.”

The Choral Union, accompanied by an orchestra, will undertake an ambitious start to its schedule, Tice said.

The April 11 spring concert includes pieces from Edward Elgar’s “Scenes from the Bavarian Highlands, Op. 27,” and James Mulholland’s “Mementos of Millay.”

The May 5 concert will feature the 75th anniversary for MMC with a commissioned work by University of South Dakota composer Stephen Yarbrough.

“I’m already working with



RANDY DOCKENDORF/P&D

Kenneth Tice, assistant music professor at MMC, is launching a new community chorus known as the Mount Marty Choral Union.

the Mount Marty mixed choir on the 75th anniversary-commissioned piece. It’s been suc-

cessful so far,” Tice said.

Two MMC vocalists say they are excited about joining the

UNION | PAGE 12A

Jobless Claims At 5-Year Low

WASHINGTON (AP) — The number of Americans seeking unemployment aid fell last week to the lowest level in five years, evidence that employers are cutting fewer jobs and may step up hiring.

The Labor Department says weekly unemployment benefit applications dropped 5,000 to a seasonally adjusted 330,000. That’s the fewest since January 2008. The four-week average, a less volatile measure, fell to 351,750. That’s also the lowest in nearly five years.

The decline may reflect the government’s difficulty adjusting its numbers to account for layoffs after the holiday shopping season. Layoffs spike in the second week of January and then plummet. The department seeks to adjust for those trends, but the figures can still be volatile.

Applications are a proxy for layoffs. While layoffs are falling, hiring has been modest in recent months.

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