



USD Women Fall To SDSU • 8

YANKTON DAILY PRESS & DAKOTAN

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RIVERS OF WOE?



ABOVE: A water district official gets a close-up view of the Missouri River siltation at the mouth of the James River during Wednesday's tour. BELOW: Riverfront property owner Gerald Koster describes sediment problems to members of two James River water boards and Yankton County Commissioner Allen Sinclair.

Sedimentation Near Mouth Of James River Stirs Concern

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF
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As he looked out onto the Missouri River, Gerald Koster saw a mass of silt and weeds choking the life out of the water. The scene is a familiar one near Springfield and Niobrara, Neb., but the problem has shifted downstream. Koster took officials on a tour Wednesday of the sediment along his property just east of Yankton, near Highway 50. The siltation also backs up the James River, which enters the Missouri River at the site, Koster said. "At one time, we had water 15 feet deep. We used to water ski," he said. "Now, there's no water at the mouth of the Jim. You can drive a four-wheeler across the (Missouri) river anywhere you want." Koster has lost his river access because of the sand dunes. However, he sees the siltation problem creating problems far beyond his property. The Missouri River sediment is creating a backlog for the entire James River basin, all the way up to North Dakota, he said. "The water isn't coming out of the James River as fast as they would like," he said. "But with the (James) river the way it is, the water isn't moving out of there." Greg Koepsell organized Wednesday's tour for the Lower James board, the James River Water Development District (JRWD) and Yankton County Commissioner Allen Sinclair. Koepsell owns land has served as a Lower James board member since 1987 and is the last remaining member from that time. Koepsell said he requested a tour of Koster's property to highlight the sediment problems. However, he wasn't prepared for what the group found on its tour. "If it wasn't for Gerald telling me about the problem, I never would have dreamt it," Koepsell said. "When I looked at (the sil-

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Scotland Man Convicted Of Second-Degree Murder

From P&D Staff Reports

PARKER — A Scotland man has been found guilty of second-degree murder in the death of his infant son and faces a mandatory life sentence in the state penitentiary. Chris A. Miller, 39, was convicted Wednesday by a Turner County jury on the Class B felony. The verdict followed a week-long trial in Parker. The jury also convicted Miller of aggravated assault, a Class 3 felony, punishable by up to 15 years imprisonment and a \$30,000 fine.

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Officials: Be Alert To Radon Dangers

BY DEREK BARTOS
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It's invisible, it can be deadly and it's in many area homes. Radon is a colorless, odorless gas that, according to the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), continues to be found in a high number of residences in the state. A recent DHHS analysis of radon data showed that as more homes in Nebraska have been tested for radon, the state average has increased to 6.3 picocuries per liter (pCi/L) of air, compared to 5.9 pCi/L in 2010. The Environmental Protection Agency has set the health standard for radon at 4.0 pCi/L. "The data supports what we've known for some time," said Sara Morgan, indoor air quality program manager for the DHHS Nebraska Radon Program, in a news release. "Nebraska homes are very likely to have high levels of radon." Both Knox and Cedar counties

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City Prepares For Potentially Dry Year

Water Intake Options, Conservation Measures Are On The Table

BY NATHAN JOHNSON
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With the potential for the drought to stretch into this summer and lead to low flows from Gavins Point Dam, the City of Yankton is examining options to keep its surface water intake operational. The Corp of Engineers could reduce flows to as low as 9,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) if reservoir levels shrink this year, according to Kyle Goodman, the director of Environmental Services for Yankton. "The intake would still be below water at that rate, but it would be above our critical pumping area," he said. "If we tried to pump, it would create a vortex, suck air and then the pump would lock up." The flood of 2011 caused radical changes along the Missouri River, Goodman explained. "Right now, releases from Gavins Point are at 14,000 cfs, and we're seeing the lowest level along the river that we've ever seen. The flows are still up there a ways, but the water level is lower," he said. "Prior to the flooding, to see a river level this low, the flows would have to be around 9,800 cfs. It's really changed a lot. We're about a foot lower than what we thought we would be at this time." The Corps has warned entities below Gavins Point that next winter they need to have their water intakes prepared for flows of 12,000 cfs. Plans were to have releases at that rate this winter, but intakes were not prepared for that given the post-flood river bed.



Nelson

The city has asked the Corps to briefly reduce releases at Gavins Point to 12,000 cfs so it can determine if its intake could operate at that level. However, the Corps has declined that request. "We think we're going to be OK at 12,000 cfs," Goodman said. The city has the ability to lower its intake by approximately a foot, but Goodman said he is reticent to do that because last year the structure had to be raised due to a sandbar that formed and covered it up. The sandbar hadn't been an issue prior to the 2011 flood. Divers are scheduled to come in several weeks to determine the sandbar level in relation to the intake. "We're going to see where the sand bar ends up after the low winter flows," Goodman said. When the intake was hampered by the sandbar last year, the city installed a temporary intake. That would likely be the remedy again this year if problems are encountered with the permanent intake. The city is currently having an engineering firm complete a study of its water treatment system needs in the future. One of the goals will be to reduce reliance on the water intake. Options being examined include

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Yankton County Taxes Taking Longer Than Anticipated To Finalize

BY NATHAN JOHNSON
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Property tax bills were not made available to Yankton County taxpayers Wednesday as County Auditor Paula Jones hoped, and she was still processing them late in the afternoon. "I've run the tax list, and the program has calculated all the taxes," she told the Press & Dakotan. "There is a utility I still have to create. In order to do that, everybody (in the Yankton County Government Center) has to be out of the tax program. Once the utility is created, the Treasurer's Office will be able to see the bills." Jones was optimistic that the Treasurer's

Office would have its file copy today (Thursday). Yankton County Treasurer Pam Marchand said she will issue a media release when her office is prepared to share tax bills with property owners. Jones stated that, after last year's ordeal when incorrect levies were applied in some cases due to a data entry error, she is making every effort to ensure the tax bills are right. "Right now, I'm just waiting for the (tax program company) to say, 'You're good,'" she said.

You can follow Nathan Johnson on Twitter at [Twitter.com/AnInlandVoyage](https://twitter.com/AnInlandVoyage)



CALL IT A DRAW

Visual artist Cheryl Peterson-Halsey works with Yankton Middle School seventh grader Brandon Cwach on a drawing exercise using a technique called Zentangles during a workshop held Wednesday at YMS. Peterson-Halsey is conducting a two-week artist-in-residency program, which wraps up Friday, that focuses on visual problem solving and use of spatial intelligence through art. Peterson-Halsey's residency is sponsored by Yankton Area Arts, with support provided by the South Dakota Arts Council with funds from the State of South Dakota, through the Department of Tourism and State Development, and the National Endowment for the Arts. (Kelly Hertz/P&D)