



Bitterly Cold And Windy

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Fresh Faces Move Onto Commission



Yankton County auditor Patti Hojem swears in new County Commission members, from left, Todd Woods, Raymon Epp and Deb Bodenstedt during Tuesday's reorganizational meeting. Newcomer Don Kettering was not in attendance.

KELLY HERTZ/P&D

Bridge Issue Dominates Agenda

BY ROB NIELSEN
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While the focus of Tuesday's meeting of the Yankton County Commission was to swear in four new commissioners and start the process of reorganization, members of the outgoing commission had one more order of business — a presentation on outstanding issues with the Old Highway 50 bridge across the James River, also known as the Fleeg's Bridge.

Dan Johnson of Johnson Engineering was on hand to present findings of recent inspections of the bridge.

"As a result of our September 2014



Freng

inspection, it did reveal that the channel bottom under span three was 5.7 feet deeper than the top of bent (support column) four's pile cap," Johnson said. "The other significant issue that we found is the bank erosion at the southeast bank of the bridge is continuing to migrate towards the south and east abutment."

Johnson said these issues have necessitated more frequent inspections of the bridge.

"This bridge has been inspected bi-

annually since 1982," he said. "The structure is currently recommended for annual inspection — that was a recommendation we made as a result of this last inspection we made in September."

The main recommendation is to add additional riprap under spans three, four and five to bring the riverbed elevation up to 1.151 feet above sea level, bringing the elevation to 18-inches above the bridge's pile caps.

Johnson said the use of riprap to fix issues with the bridge isn't a new practice.

"The rock placement has been oc-

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PUC Gives Keystone Chance To Keep Permit

PUC Wants To See State Permit Evidence For Pipeline

BY BOB MERCER
State Capitol Bureau

PIERRE — TransCanada will be allowed to show why the state permit issued in 2010 for constructing the segment the Keystone XL oil pipeline through South Dakota should remain valid.

The South Dakota Public Utilities Commission decided Tuesday to allow TransCanada to attempt to certify the project would still meet conditions set in the permit.

The Yankton Sioux Tribe and the Rosebud Sioux Tribe, backed by other tribal and landowner organizations, wanted the commission to dismiss TransCanada's application.

Their central argument was that 30 changes identified by TransCanada require a new permitting process.

The commission however voted 3-0 to deny the dismissal requests.

South Dakota law requires that a proposed project, if construction hasn't proceeded after four years, certify that it will still meet the permit conditions.

The commission listened for more than 30 minutes Tuesday to lawyers and other representatives for the various sides present summaries of their arguments.

"At best the tribes' motion is premature. It's very premature," Gary Hanson, the commission's chairman, said after all were heard. "Under South Dakota law the applicant has a right to a hearing."

The project, which would ship tar-sands oil from Alberta to the U.S. Gulf Coast, has been stalled because President Barack Obama hasn't agreed to let the pipeline pierce the Canada-U.S. border.

Republican majorities in the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives plan legislation as an attempt to force the Democratic president into

also

White House Says It Will Veto Bill To Approve Pipeline
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Vermillion

Banker Sees Ag Sector Making Adjustments

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF
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VERMILLION — The new year is bringing with it a time of adjustment for farmers, a local banker says.

The market is seeking a balance between lower commodity prices and accompanying input costs that haven't decreased accordingly, according to James Bohnsack with the First Dakota National Bank branch in Vermillion.

"Farmers are looking to tighten their belts," the agribusiness loan officer said. "They are watching their

input costs and other expenditures."

However, he remains optimistic about the farm economy, even with a few bumps in the road ahead.

"I think we are going strong as an industry," he said. "With any business, there needs to be some caution. But the ag industry as a whole is thriving and doing well."

Bohnsack offered his thoughts to the Press & Dakotan while manning the bank's booth at the Dakota Farm Show in Vermillion. The three-day show kicked off Tuesday and runs through Thursday in the Dakota-Dome on the University of South



RANDY DOCKENDORF/P&D

Nearly 300 exhibitors fill the DakotaDome during the 32nd annual Dakota Farm Show in Vermillion. The show opened Tuesday and runs through Thursday.

Dakota campus.

When it comes to the current lower crop prices, Bohnsack put the market in historical perspective.

"We have had high commodity prices the last 7 to 10 years," he said.

"Commodities like corn and beans are down, but that's from highs that were significantly up (the previous years). The prices are down, but

SHOW | PAGE 3

Strong Dollar Means Cheap Gas For US, Pain Abroad

BY JOSH BOAK
AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON — As the global economy has weakened, a forcefully stronger U.S. dollar has emerged.

The fallout from the greenback's appreciation is reverberating around the world. A more valuable dollar translates into cheaper oil and the imports lining U.S. store shelves. That represents both a boon for American consumers and a hardship for major oil producers such as Russia, Nigeria and Saudi Arabia.

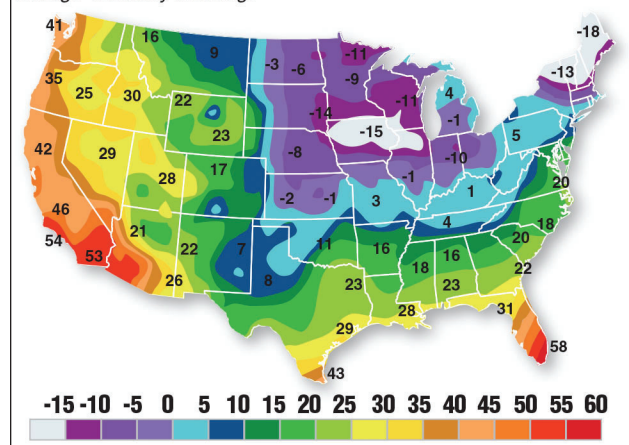
Major companies such as Nike, Costco and ConAgra Foods warn that the stronger dollar is cutting into their overseas revenue — a trend that could pressure some of the biggest brand names in the stock market.

The combination of falling oil prices and a rising dollar has even led some economists to suggest that average U.S. consumer inflation could approach zero early this year. If it does, the Federal Reserve might have to alter its calculations about when to raise a key interest rate for the first time since the financial crisis

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Arctic blast to continue all week

Weather forecasters say freezing temperatures could reach as far south as Atlanta this week, as parts of the U.S. are already seeing temperatures fall below zero. The map below shows forecast lows through Thursday morning.



Source: NOAA
Graphic: Greg Good, Tribune News Service

Snow Expected From Midwest To Northeast, Then Bitter Cold

CHICAGO (AP) — A winter weather system expected to dump more than a foot of snow in some places has begun its trek east, with a separate blast of arctic air right on its heels.

Here are some things to know about this latest round of weather and its expected impact:

SNOWY COMMUTE

A storm that buried parts of the upper Plains and Midwest in snow, including 6 inches overnight in parts of central Illinois, wasn't sparing states as it crawled across the Ohio Valley and Northeast, according to National Weather Service. Some locations will be hit hard, including by lake-effect snow,

and could see accumulations up to 15 inches.

Washington, D.C., was hit by an unexpected 4 inches of snow early Tuesday after forecasts called for only an inch. Mayor Muriel Bowser said the morning commute was rougher than anticipated because of the weather, which also prompted numerous flight cancellations at Reagan National Airport, but that she expects the traffic to smooth out by the afternoon commute.

The system also brought snow to New Jersey, Pennsylvania and other eastern states on Tuesday.

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TOMORROW: New Technology Planned For SD 911 System

