

Vermillion Town Hall Meeting Set

A Vermillion/Yankton town hall meeting to discuss how to better link the two communities, both economically and culturally, will be held as part of the weekly 1 Million Cups meeting on Wednesday, Jan. 28, starting at 9 a.m. at the Avera Professional Pavilion in Yankton.

Scheduled panelists include Jim Abbott, president of the University of South Dakota; Larry Ness, CEO of First Dakota National Bank; John Kramer, president of Yankton Area Progressive Growth; Nate Welch, executive director of the Vermillion Area Chamber & Development Company; and Ben Hanten, president of Think 29. Panelists will be taking feedback and questions from the audience.

The public is encouraged to attend.

eBooks Available At Yankton Library

Did you know that the Yankton Community Library has a large selection of eBooks available for check out to card holders? If not, then consider joining the library staff on Thursday, Feb. 12, at 6:30 p.m. to learn how to access and use eBooks through the library's free service OverDrive, which can be accessed via South Dakota Titles To Go ... on the library's web site.

During the class, participants will learn how to set up an account, search for a title or author, place a hold, check out an item, and much more. All of your questions will be answered so that you can use OverDrive in the comfort of your home or when you are on the go.

If you don't currently have an OverDrive account, arrive at 6 p.m. so staff can help you set up your account. Then you'll be ready to search and find when the class begins.

This class is free of charge, but pre-registration is required. It is limited to 15 participants. You can register by calling the library at 668-5276 or stopping at the library, 515 Walnut Street.

No School For Yankton Students Jan. 30

A one-day in-service program for Yankton School District teachers will be held Friday, Jan. 30. There will be no school for students in preschool through grade 12 that day.

Food

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the state, second only to the Sioux Falls School District.

According to Kramer, that combined buying power will help maintain the low per-plate costs seen across the Yankton School District and reduce future rate increases.

"For example: in 2012-2013, national food costs increased by 3 percent; in 2013-2014, national food costs increased by 5 percent - so, in two years, food costs increased by 8 percent," Kramer said. "Plus, during that same timeframe we had to increase the portions we were serving, which equaled a 30 cent increase per serving. By being a part of the ESD Buying Group, with national food costs going up and per-serving costs increasing, I was able to save anywhere from 3-5 percent below what the costs were in 2013-2014."

Superintendent Dr. Wayne Kindle said the savings the district was able to pass on to the students have kept the program one of the most reasonable in the state.

"Our Food Service Program is one of a handful that is profitable and yet able to not only keep meals affordable but also enjoyable for our students," he said. "The ESD buying group has allowed the members involved to make bulk purchases at a reduced cost. They also share a wealth of experience, expertise and passion for their profession. The mix of these three ingredients makes for a recipe of success."

Kramer said she would have been happy with just keeping prices steady, so she was proud that Yankton was one of a few schools who didn't have to raise prices.

"I was really worried because of all the new regulations and having to serve all the additional fruits and vegetables, and what it was doing to my plate cost, that I would have to raise prices," she said. "Instead, in two years, I went up a total of 4 cents per plate and haven't had to pass those costs on. I believe the buying group has kept those costs down."

Kramer said the buying group works by placing the top 100 food items purchased by the schools and putting them into a 'Market

Basket' and then putting out a RFP (request for purchase) which is treated like a bid.

However, unlike a traditional bid, the buying group looks beyond price.

"The difference is we have a score card when we get the RFP back from our distributors," she said. "We score on several different areas. Pricing is a big percentage of the score card. But we also go on past history. We do a lot of ordering online; we don't usually see a salesman so we want to be sure they have good online services for us."

Each of the schools does its own score card individually and then combines it with the other school's to come to the decision on which vendor will be selected.

"It might be one company was the low price bidder, that doesn't mean they will get our business depending on the experiences we have had with that company," Kramer said. "We do a lot of investigating into the companies: how many outs do they have, what are their on-hand percentages, what their sanitation inspections have been - just a lot we take into consideration."

Kramer added another benefit of the buying group is the shared responsibilities of finding new foods to meet the new nutritional requirements.

"The chicken nugget I served last year is not the same chicken nugget I am serving this year because of the change in whole grain requirements - everything has to be whole grain that we are serving, at least 51 percent or more," she said. "It is nice to have the split finding those food products. We spend a lot of time looking for products and evaluating them, making sure they taste good, meet the nutrition standards and quality. Sometimes the products don't work out and we will go back and say, 'We didn't like this. Did it work at your school?' It is nice to work off each other."

The buying group also combined their NOI (net-off invoice) funds to make their commodities go further.

The NOI program is available to school food administrators to purchase an approved end product directly from a distributor and then billed at a net price. The net price is determined by reducing the agreed-upon

gross price by an amount at least equal to the value of donated food (commodities) contained in a case of approved end-product identified in the processing agreement.

"It is nice that each of us has a special talent that we can contribute to the group," Kramer said. "Chris (Beach) at Harrisburg is very good on wording the RFPs; at Brandon Valley (Gay Anderson) is great at figuring the percentages for us and researching food cost; Laura (Dubu) at Brookings is a dietician; and me, I am not only secretary for the group but I also am into looking for new products. I have an eye for that."

The now four-school group is already starting to work on savings for next year.

"The Food Service Program in the Yankton School District is second to none led by Sandi Kramer," Kindle said. "We are also blessed by having a superb group of food service workers who prepare every meal with TLC. I am grateful to all of these folks who prepare the meals for our students."

Legion Honors



At the American Legion membership dinner held at the Yankton VFW Jan. 20, Boy State and Girl State honorees and a South Dakota State Trooper Academy attendee were recognized. Pictured are, from left: Fran Johnson, commander of Yankton American Legion Post 12; John Darcy, Boy State coordinator; Dave Dannenbring and his son John Dannenbring, YHS Boys State governor; LaChelle Thiesse and her daughter, Allie Thiesse, SD State Trooper Academy attendee, and Allie's father, Dave Thiesse; Johanna Lippert, Girl State delegate, and her mother, Susan Lippert. Not pictured: Betty Adam, Yankton Legion Auxiliary president, and Gert Boyles, Girls State chairperson.

KELLY HERTZ/P&D

Prestigious Scholarship Day At MMC Set

Mount Marty College Office of Admissions will soon be holding Prestigious Academic Scholarship Day on the college's campus in Yankton. The event will be held on Thursday, Jan. 29, and is an opportunity for potential MMC students to compete for scholarships of up to full tuition.

Admitted high school seniors who have a minimum of a 3.5 cumulative high school GPA and a 24 ACT/1090 SAT (reading and math) score are invited and encouraged to participate.

The deadline for admission to the College and registration for this event is Friday, Jan. 23.

For more information on Prestigious Academic Scholarship Day or to register visit www.mtc.edu/admissions/events/scholarship-day.aspx or contact the Office of Admissions at 605-668-1545 or 855-MT-MARTY (686-2789).

Plan

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a collection of numbers in rows and columns next to agencies and programs, but behind the numbers are people's lives," Ricketts said. "We must be mindful that every dollar is precious. The dollars that fund our budgets are dollars earned by hardworking Nebraskans."

The tax plan would steer \$120 million in state money over two years into Nebraska's property tax credit fund, which offsets what all property owners pay. It also would set aside \$23 million to expand an existing tax exemption on military retirement pay, and reduce the percentage of agriculture land value that local govern-

ments can tax.

Currently, local governments can levy taxes on 75 percent of agriculture land values. The governor's proposal would lower it to 65 percent. In exchange, the state would boost K-12 school funding by nearly \$59 million to make up for school districts' lost revenue.

Sen. Mike Gloor, chairman of the tax-focused Revenue Committee, said his committee will work closely with the governor and members of the budget-writing Appropriations Committee as they review a variety of proposals, including some that would create new local income and sales taxes to pay for property tax reductions.

"That's the reason we have committee hearings, and the reason we don't do this in a vacuum," the Grand Island lawmaker said.

"You've got to fully vet all of these bills."

Ricketts declined to comment on any tax bills, saying he'd let the Legislature do its work.

Sen. Jeremy Nordquist of Omaha, an Appropriations Committee member, said Ricketts presented a "prudent" budget that represented a good start for a first-year governor.

"I think we very much can work together ... on property tax relief," he said. "There really is more than enough support to do something substantial on that."

Ricketts also unveiled a \$250,000-a-year pilot program that would use public-private partnerships to offer career training starting as early as junior high. It's modeled after the Michigan Advanced Technology Training Program, which provides paid on-the-job training in manufacturing

and technology fields.

Ricketts mentioned his new economic development director, Brenda Hicks-Sorensen, who was lured from her job as a Wisconsin business recruiter.

"We need to evaluate what we are doing to encourage small business to expand and grow," Ricketts said. "We need to have a plan to attract business investment as well as business relocations."

The governor also recommended that lawmakers steer clear of the state's cash reserve, except to cover two one-time expenses — \$5.5 million to pay Kansas in a legal dispute over the Republican River, and \$17.2 million to reimburse the federal government for child welfare services that the state failed to properly document.

But Ricketts said he'd like to see the cash reserve

drawn down to about \$500 million in the future and return the rest to taxpayers.

He also urged lawmakers to add more money to a college tuition-assistance program for members of the Nebraska National Guard.

Ricketts urged Congress and President Barack Obama to approve the Keystone XL oil pipeline. Pipeline developer TransCanada announced Tuesday it had taken the legal steps to start claiming access to land in Nebraska from property owners who haven't reached agreements with the company.

"Whether it is new health care mandates on employers, EPA overreach on carbon emissions and the waters of the US, or the delay of the Keystone XL pipeline, Washington just does not get it," Ricketts said.

OBITUARIES

Bernice Pederson

Bernice C. Pederson, 94, of Yankton passed away late Wednesday, Jan. 21, 2015, at the Avera Sister James Care Center, Yankton.

Mass of Christian Burial will be 10:30 a.m. Monday, Jan. 26, at St. Columba Catholic Church, Mayfield, with the Rev. Randy Phillips officiating. Burial will be in the parish cemetery.

Visitations will begin at 5 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 25, at the Opsahl-Kostel Funeral Home & Crematory, Yankton, with a Wake service at 7 p.m. Visitations will resume one hour prior to the service at the church.

Tonight's Special • 5-9 pm
All you can eat
Shrimp
Yesterday's Cafe

ABS

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was called at the time, opened on West Ninth St. in Yankton and was originally an outreach program through the Mental Health Center.

Several month after opening, "the workshop" asked the people involved with the project to submit ideas for a new name. The people chose "Community Projects Unlimited."

Winterringer wrote that in 1978, the program separated from the Mental Health Center and became the Yankton Area Adjustment Training Center (YAATC) with Bud Carson as its executive director.

"Through his dedication and visions, YAATC began expanding its services," Winterringer said.

In the fall of 1978, two group homes were opened, at 206 E Fourth St. and 405 Linn St.

According to Winterringer, the homes provided new options for people in Yankton with developmental disabilities.

"This was all part of a disability movement," Kathol said.

Before this time, the state and parents of the disabled decided everything for people with disabilities, Kathol noted.

"They have come so far," she said. "We had to talk to talk some parents into believing that their kids could live on their own."

Vocational director Gigi Healy recalled a time when they told some parents that their child was able to live on their own.

"I remember them saying, 'What are you thinking?' But now these people are strong allies for their kid," Healy said.

There were several Yankton families that had previously turned to the South Dakota Developmental Center in Redfield to provide residential support, Winterringer said.

"Some people have been in institutions so far away," Kathol said. "This project was able to bring people back near their families and homes in Yankton."

Carson continued to advocate for the expansion of services in Yankton.

"He even took his whole family to Washington, D.C., to advocate for funding to build a third group home in Yankton," Winterringer said. "This home was built at 600 E 10th St in 1979."

In May of 1982, YAATC moved to a newly constructed workshop and current home.

It wasn't until 1987 that YAATC began to provide job development services to assist people in finding jobs within the Yankton community.

"Bud Carson continued to focus on the expansion of services and advocating for people until he retired at the end of 1999," Winterringer said.

In 2005, YAATC changed its name to Ability Building Services.

"It was (part of) a statewide movements to remove the stigma of the name 'adjustment training centers,'" Winterringer said. "We chose this name to reflect our values."

According to Winterringer, ABS became a "Person Centered Organization" and began focusing on helping each person attain the life that they wanted.

"These services that we have now are very person-driven," Kathol said. "We are trying to be a resource to get people connected to the services that we have to offer so they can become part of this community."

Today, ABS has eight agency-owned residential facilities. ABS provides many services to people in their own homes and apartments, and continues to provide vocational training and employment services.

Some services that ABS provides are professional and support services, vocational services, residential services, supported employment, nursing services,

service coordination, alternative to work, community involvement and special education services.

"This place is more than it was 40 years ago," Kathol said. "We will continue to progress."

For more information about ABS, call 605-665-2518 or go to www.abilitybuildingservices.com.

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