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YANKTON DAILY

PRESS & DAKOTAN



Recruiting: Do Setbacks Slow Offers? • 8



A WHITEWATER MEMORY



While it lacked the ferocious visual drama going on at Gavins Point a year ago at this time, the spillway gates at the dam were cracked open a bit this past weekend due in part to the extreme heat. The July heat coupled with the high system demand created above-normal temperatures within the transformers connected to the generators. In order to bring down the temperature of the transformers, the mega-watt load was reduced by opening the spillway gates by one foot. There was never any danger — just a vague, whitewater reminder of other days and far greater releases from the gates.

KELLY HERTZ/P&D

City OKs Interactive Art Exhibit By Bridge

BY NATHAN JOHNSON
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Yankton will soon become the latest community to initiate an interactive public art project that invites people to share their hopes and dreams in a public space.

The Yankton City Commission approved a proposal from Yankton Area Arts (YAA) Monday to allow "Before I Die" to be installed on the northern edge of the lower deck of the Meridian Bridge.

A 32-foot by 4-foot plywood wall will be erected with the words "Before I die I want to _____" stenciled on it. Chalk will be available for people to write in their thoughts.

It's an idea that has been used in New York City; Washington, D.C.; Berlin, Germany; and Melbourne, Australia, among other places.

"Not only would it be such an exciting opportunity for us, but we would be pioneers in South Dakota," said Amy Miner, executive director for YAA. "This is something that has gone global and is playing in some major cities around the country, including Minneapolis."

The organizers said they would like to place the installation near the bridge because of the amount of pedestrian traffic there.

"We're asking everybody to participate in this art project and share," said Sarah Mannes Homstad, who is on the YAA board of directors. "It could be something very light. It could be something weighing on their mind. The real depth of this project will be all these wonderful different responses that we get from people all over our own community."

To educate those at the City Commission meeting about the idea, a news segment on "Before I



KELLY HERTZ/P&D

Newly-minted Yankton school board member Matthew Pietz (left) is presented his new nameplate by district business manager Jason Bietz during Monday's meeting.

Yankton School Board

Health Cost Options Get Close Scrutiny

Specht Named New President

BY ANDREW ATWAL
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At its annual reorganization meeting, the Yankton School Board elected a new president and vice president who displayed hope for the future, despite ongoing budget problems within the district.

The board held its annual reorganization at its meeting on Monday, with Chris Specht moving from vice president to president, and Jim Fitzgerald taking the role of vice president for the 2012-13 school year. In addition, Matthew Pietz was sworn in as a school board member, replacing Verlin Ailts, who is retiring from the board.

"It's very exciting to be on the school board," Pietz said. "I'm anxious to get to work and hopefully get past the budget issues we've been having."

He added that one of his focuses will be getting better technology for students to learn from and use in their classroom activities.

"I'm focused on educating students in the very best way we can," he added.

Specht, who replaces Kathy Greeneway as board president, said the school board will continue to try to provide the best education possible for the children in the Yankton School District.

"This has been a challenging last year for everybody, not just the board, but the community and YSD's employees," he



Specht

Dry Conditions Still Stressing S.D. Crops

SIOUX FALLS (AP) — Dry conditions are taking a toll on crop development in South Dakota.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture says in its weekly crop and weather report that topsoil moisture is rated 41 percent short and 32 percent very short, and subsoil moisture is 44 percent short and 27 percent very short.

Another hot and dry early part of the week gave way to some cooler temperatures later in the week, but rain was still isolated.

The report says small grain harvest continued with both winter wheat and oats. Corn had an average height of 55 inches, ahead of the five-year average of 37 inches. Soybeans were at 45 percent blooming.

Public To Set Scope For Review Of GF&P

Landowners And Hunters To Have Input On Issues Covered

BY CHET BROKAW
Associated Press

PIERRE — Hunters and landowners will be able to help determine the issues covered in an independent review of the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks Department's management of wildlife issues, Gov. Dennis Daugaard's chief of staff said Monday.

The review by an outside consultant will focus on the department's Wildlife Division and how it handles research and management involving controversial subjects, such as mountain lions and elk in the Black Hills, Dusty Johnson told the Game, Fish and Parks Commission.

The public, along with members of the commission that oversees the department, will have a say in how the study is conducted, Johnson said.

"We've got landowners, we've got sportsmen and we've got a lot of people who care a lot about these issues," Johnson said.

Plans for a review by an outside consultant were made public over the weekend, but Johnson met with the commission Monday to explain the process of setting up the review, which will be guided by Jason Glodt, a policy adviser to the governor. Johnson said the review wouldn't include the department's Parks and Recreation Division.

Glodt said members of the public should send their suggestions to him by the end of July. Officials then will determine the study's scope and request proposals from companies or other organizations interested in con-



Johnson

ducting the study, which likely will start early next year and take up to six months to complete, he said.

The eight members of the appointed Game, Fish and Parks Commission also will submit their ideas.

Glodt said he hopes the study will give the public trust and confidence that the Wildlife Division is doing a good job in researching and managing wildlife. The cost of the study depends on its scope, but a similar study in neighboring Wyoming cost between \$100,000 and \$150,000, he said. Funds from the Wildlife Division would likely be used to pay for the review, he said.

Johnson noted that the Wildlife Division often deals with controversial issues that lead to a split in public opinion. He said Game, Fish and Parks Secretary Jeff Vonk suggested the study during a discussion with officials in the governor's office.

With a growing population of mountain lions in the Black Hills in recent years, the division has been under pressure to increase the number of hunting licenses for mountain lions because some hunters believe the cats are devastating the population of elk and deer. Other groups believe too many mountain lions are being shot.

Chris Hesla, director of the South Dakota Wildlife Federation, which

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River Events Grapple With Growth

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF
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One boy got up close and personal with an exhibit — a little more than he planned — during this year's Missouri River school festival in Riverside Park.

The student examined a blue sucker, intrigued by the mouth. The boy wondered what it would be like to kiss the fish — and then he did.

Other students, crowded around the fish tank, shrieked squeals of surprise and disgust. The boy himself pulled back in horror and quickly wiped off his mouth.

The incident showed anything is possible at the May event. This year's program drew a record 392 students from southeast South Dakota and northeast Nebraska — and next year looks even bigger.

"We had more than 30 students show up this year that we weren't counting on," said Mary Robb with the City of Yankton during a meeting Monday. "The Vermillion schools weren't able to come this year. With Vermillion back next year, we would be close to 500 students. Even if we grow to 20 presenters, we are still talking 25 students at each session."

The school festival is just one of three river-related events growing tremendously in a few short years.

The Missouri River clean-up has grown to about a six-mile stretch on both the South Dakota and Nebraska shores. About 120 volunteers and other workers collected 3.55 tons of trash this year. And the Clean Boat Event expanded to four weekends in May and June. The event, formerly held just one weekend, reached a much larger number of boaters urged to help prevent the spread of in-



RANDY DOCKENDORF/P&D

Steve Mietz, superintendent of the Missouri National Recreational River (MNRR), makes a point during Monday's planning meeting for next year's school festival, river clean-up and clean-boat event.

vative species. Organizers meeting Monday scheduled next year's school festival for May 4, the river clean-up May 5 and the

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