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Charles Mix County

Arrest Made In Crash

Man Faces Two Counts Of Vehicular Homicide

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF
randy.dockendorf@yankton.net

LAKE ANDES — A Lake Andes man has been arrested on two counts of vehicular homicide after voluntarily surrendering himself to authorities.

Ronald Fischer Jr. was arrested Tuesday afternoon in connection with a July 8 crash in Pickstown. A warrant had been issued for Fischer's arrest in the deaths of Robert Klumb of

Pierre and Maegen Spindler of Cazenovia, N.Y.

Charles Mix County Sheriff Randy Thaler arrested Fischer on the charges. Fischer is being held on \$200,000 cash bond, the sheriff said.

In a news release, Thaler said he had put the word out that he was looking for Fischer and had an arrest warrant.

At 3:30 p.m. Tuesday, Fischer voluntarily surrendered himself to Thaler at the Charles Mix County sheriff's office in Lake Andes.

Thaler then took Fischer into custody.

In a news release, authorities allege that Fischer had a blood alcohol content of more than twice the legal limit when the vehicle he was driving struck and killed Klumb and Spindler.

According to the charges, Fischer's vehicle failed to stop at the stop sign located where U.S. Highway 18 intersects with S.D. Highway 46. The vehicle then allegedly traveled into a private parking lot, where it hit Klumb and Spindler.

CRASH | PAGE 2



Red Cross Drops Sole Paid Staffer In Yankton

BY DEREK BARTOS
derek.bartos@yankton.net

In its continuing effort to streamline services and to cut costs, the American Red Cross of Eastern South Dakota has eliminated its branch manager position in Yankton.

"We've consolidated to better use donor dollars," said Tony Burke, Red Cross community chapter executive officer for eastern South Dakota. "Essentially what we're doing is focusing on getting more resources into the community in a more efficient way."

Duties of the part-time position, held by Deb Bodenstedt, included public relations, coordinating volunteer efforts and assisting with disaster preparedness and response, safety classes and fundraising. Bodenstedt's final day of employment was last Wednesday.

"This has nothing to do with her and what she was doing or not doing," Burke said. "This is purely because of consolidation so we can provide more efficient services."

Tasks performed by the branch manager now will be handled by area volunteers and the Sioux Empire Chapter in Sioux Falls.

Burke stressed that while the administration duties will be handled differently, Red Cross services for the Yankton area will remain, and should even improve over time as more money becomes available.

"We have a core group of volunteers in Yankton County that will continue to provide services to the community as they always have," he said. "The advisory unit chair is staying the same, and our disaster action team of volunteers is staying the same. We're really providing the same services for less dollars because we won't have paid staff down there."

STAFFER | PAGE 3



American Profile

* * *

Tests Tie Vehicle To Fatal Hit-And-Run

BY NATHAN JOHNSON
nathan.johnson@yankton.net

Lab tests have tied a vehicle seized in connection with a fatal hit-and-run east of Yankton to the incident, according to Yankton County Sheriff Jim Vlahakis.

He said the results related to the May death of 23-year-old Joseph Bret Jackson were recently returned to his office.

"Forensic lab DNA test results indicate that the vehicle we seized was the vehicle that was involved in the accident," Vlahakis stated. "The investigative reports and other evidence have now been turned over to the Yankton County State's Attorney Office for review."

The examination of the vehicle was done by the South Dakota Forensic Lab.

Autopsy and toxicology reports have also been returned, Vlahakis said.

He declined to comment any further on the case while State's Attorney Rob Klimisch evaluates his options.

The body of Jackson was found west of East Side Drive on 309th St./Old Highway 50 at approximately 3:45 a.m. May 3.

The vehicle was seized by the sheriff's office May 13 in Mission Hill. The suspected driver of the vehicle was also identified by authorities. However, the individual's name has not been released and no arrest has been made.

Jackson had recently moved back to Yankton after spending some time in Minnesota. He was to have started a new job with a local construction firm days after his death.

You can follow Nathan Johnson on Twitter at twitter.com/AnInlandVoyage

Daugaard: More Foster Care Families Needed

BY NATHAN JOHNSON
nathan.johnson@yankton.net

South Dakota's first lady says the state needs more foster parents and is attempting to recruit people interested in what she believes is fulfilling work.

"I'm on the road promoting through (community service groups) to try to get people to commit to know more about foster care and possibly becoming a foster family," Linda Daugaard said after speaking with the Yankton Rotary Club Tuesday at the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club.

She kicked off her "FosterOne campaign" in June and has appearances scheduled through August.

"My goal is to get 1,000 'commit to know more' cards filled out and followed up with," Daugaard stated, referring to postcards she has at events that people can use to request more information about becoming a foster parent. "We have more than 100 so far."

During her talk, Daugaard said Yankton has nine foster families, seven of which are currently at capacity. Ten children are in foster care locally.

South Dakota has 680 foster families that care for 685 children.

"Right now, we don't have a deficit of foster families, but we need more foster families for different sibling groups or medically-challenged children," Daugaard said. "We need to fit the children with the right foster family."

Usually, kids spend less than a year in foster care and often return to their biological families. The goal of the state is to get the children and parents to a point



NATHAN JOHNSON/P&D
South Dakota First Lady Linda Daugaard spoke with the Yankton Rotary Club Tuesday at the Hillcrest Golf and Country Club as part of her "FosterOne campaign" to encourage people to become foster parents.

where the home is safe and that their needs are met so they can function again as a healthy family, Daugaard stated.

The state prefers to find foster homes in the communities of the

children so they don't have to be transferred to different schools and face other complications from moving.

DAUGAARD | PAGE 11

NTA Gets Close Look At Rural Technology Issues



COURTESY PHOTO
This crew — which includes Nebraska Telecommunications Association president Eric Carstenson performing the "dirty job" for a day — is installing fiber optics in Cedar County, Neb.

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF
randy.dockendorf@yankton.net

HARTINGTON, Neb. — Things got a little down and dirty for the newest worker on a fiber-optic construction crew.

Eric Carstenson, president of the Nebraska Telecommunications Association (NTA), helped install new fiber-to-the-premises last Thursday for Hartelco at a rural site. The project includes 179 miles of fiber optic cable and will serve 355 customer locations.

"Our Hartelco serving area will then be 100 percent covered by fiber optic cable," said Hartelco general manager Bill Dendinger.

Similar to host Mike Rowe on the Discovery Channel series "Dirty Jobs," Carstenson got his hands dirty helping with trenching and other parts of the installation. In the process, he saw — and felt — first-hand what compa-



nies do to serve their customers.

As part of his regular NTA duties, Carstenson advocates for telecommunications projects. The Hartelco experience provided him with a keen insight into the obstacles facing rural Nebraska in obtaining technology commonly found in urban areas.

"When you travel around Nebraska and see the vast amount of land Nebraska's telecommunications companies have to cover, you really begin to understand the huge challenge they face," he said in a news release.

In the end, the Hartelco project will help its

NTA | PAGE 3

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TOMORROW: Special Display Goes Up At The Kanner Building

YANKTON RECYCLING THIS WEEK:
NORTH
OF 15TH STREET