



YANKTON DAILY  
**PRESS & DAKOTAN**

VOLUME 138  
NUMBER 41

The Dakotas' Oldest Newspaper | **12 PAGES** | [www.yankton.net](http://www.yankton.net)

75¢  
8 38894 00002 4

# Johnke Set For YHS Reins

## Assistant Principal Moving Up To Replace Kindle

BY ANDREW ATWAL  
[andrew.atwal@yankton.net](mailto:andrew.atwal@yankton.net)

Jennifer Johnke is ready to further her career at home at Yankton High School (YHS).  
"I taught math at YHS for nine years, before I moved into my current position as YHS assistant principal," she said. "I know that YHS is a great place to work and when the opportunity came up for the principal position, I decided I wanted to apply for it."  
After four finalists were interviewed for the YHS principal position in May, board members said Johnke stood out as the candidate they wanted to hire.

A few weeks later it was announced that she would take over for Wayne Kindle as YHS' new principal for the 2013-14 school term.  
Johnke had been the assistant principal at YHS for the last three years and had also previously served as a dance coach for eight years.  
She said her new role as principal will have a lot more facets to it compared to her current position as assistant principal.  
"My main duties as assistant principal have primarily been discipline and attendance," Johnke said. "The principal of the school oversees everything that happens in the building, so there is a lot more

responsibility that comes with the new position."  
She added that she is excited to get started and work with students, teachers, parents and community members.  
"I enjoy those relationships I've built throughout my time here in Yankton so far," Johnke said. "However, there is a lot we need to get done this summer. We will have to hire a new assistant principal and then I will continue to work with Dr. Kindle to assure a smooth transition. He's been a great mentor for me thus far, and I know he will continue to be that."  
YSD board member Jim Fitzgerald said Johnke has been committed to the educational process of students for many years.

JOHNKE | PAGE 12



KELLY HERTZ/P&D  
After interviewing four finalists, Yankton School District (YSD) school board members chose current Yankton High School (YHS) assistant principal Jennifer Johnke to replace Wayne Kindle as principal of the school. Johnke said she is looking forward to her new position and working with students, staff, parents and members of the community.

# Leaving The Streets Behind

## City Employees Retiring After Nearly A Century Of Combined Service

BY NATHAN JOHNSON  
[nathan.johnson@yankton.net](mailto:nathan.johnson@yankton.net)

The City of Yankton's street department will see approximately 92 years of experience walk through its garage doors for the last time this week.  
The retirements of Kim Hacecky, Danny Roth and Bob Simonsen officially take effect Friday. They have worked in the street department for 38 years, 28 years and 26 years, respectively.  
"I remember when I first started down here," said Hacecky, who began employment with the department when he was 19 years old. "It didn't seem like that long ago."  
"We were the kids then," he added, looking at Roth and Simonsen.  
Hacecky operates the street sweeper full time in the summer months, Roth does a bit of everything, and Simonsen paints streets and makes street signs. They all ran snow plows in the winter months.  
"I'll miss this place and the people quite a bit," Roth said.  
Adam Haberman, who only became the street superintendent/public works manager in May but has known the retirees for six years, said they took pride in their work.  
"You couldn't ask for better employees. They're a great group of guys," he stated. "They were hard workers and had years of knowledge. You could tell them to go to work, and they knew what to do."  
Hacecky, Roth and Simonsen said they would have kept working in the department if it weren't for a change in the city's retiree benefits. As of Jan. 1, the city will no longer contribute 50 percent of a retiree's health insurance premium until he or she reaches Medicare eligibility. The retiree's spouse could also receive the benefit. The decision to discontinue the policy was made by the City Commission in 2010.  
"That's \$6,000 you've got to come up with every year if you retire and don't have it," Simonsen said. "That's a lot of money."  
The departure of Hacecky, Roth and Simonsen is part of a larger loss of experience the department is facing. Dave Leyden, the former street superintendent/public works manager, resigned in May after more than 25 years, and Leonard Christensen will retire in November with 27 years under his belt. Christensen is also leaving to take advantage of the retiree health benefit.  
The three street department retirees started in the same position — on the garbage truck.



KELLY HERTZ/P&D  
The retirements of City of Yankton street department employees Kim Hacecky, Danny Roth and Bob Simonsen officially take effect Friday. They have worked in the department for 38 years, 28 years and 26 years, respectively.

# Change In City Employee Benefit Contributing To Retirements

BY NATHAN JOHNSON  
[nathan.johnson@yankton.net](mailto:nathan.johnson@yankton.net)

An upcoming change in the City of Yankton's health insurance benefits is leading some employees to retire earlier than planned.  
As of Jan. 1, the city will no longer contribute 50 percent of a retiree's health insurance premium until he or she reaches Medicare eligibility. The retiree's spouse could also receive the benefit.  
It is available to retiring employees who have a mini-

um of 15 years of service and have been insured through the city for at least five years.  
The *Press and Dakotan* is aware of at least four employees who have cited the issue as a reason for retirement, saying they can't afford not to take advantage of the benefit they have earned through years of employment.  
The health insurance policy for retirees was first enacted by the City Commission through a resolution in 1965. In 1992, it was decided to continue the benefit but to

CHANGE | PAGE 11



EMILY NIEBRUGGE/P&D  
Margie O'Hara of Yankton will offer a fundraising event Saturday at Riverside Park when she teaches three straight yoga lessons. The money raised from the event will be sent to Children of the Promise, an organization that works to bring relief to the island nation of Haiti.

# Local Yoga Instructor Using Her Passion To Aid Children In Haiti

BY EMILY NIEBRUGGE  
[news@yankton.net](mailto:news@yankton.net)

Margie O'Hara of Yankton is blending two of her passions to create a fundraiser: yoga and helping raise awareness for abandoned children in Haiti.  
O'Hara is hosting a yoga fundraiser at Riverside Park on Saturday. She will teach three back-to-back lessons at 9 a.m., 10:15 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. just west of the baseball diamond.  
O'Hara said anyone can participate, even if they have never done yoga before. She will accept free-will donations, which will be sent to the Children of the Promise organization to help orphaned children in Haiti.  
"I have nieces and nephews from Haiti and that cause is near and dear to my heart," O'Hara said. "I

want to do something to try and raise money for them."  
O'Hara's has an adopted niece and nephew from Haiti, as well as great nieces and nephews. Her family does mission work in Haiti through Children of the Promise.  
O'Hara said the organization provides for physical and emotional needs of infants who have been abandoned and tries to reunite the infants with their families whenever possible. If that's not possible, O'Hara said they facilitate helping to get the children adopted if they can never be reunited with their birth families.  
"All of the kids used to be in one big building, and one of the things they're working on right now

YOGA | PAGE 12

# River Events Thriving In Yankton

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF  
[randy.dockendorf@yankton.net](mailto:randy.dockendorf@yankton.net)

Dugan Smith never stops marveling at what's found in the Missouri River.  
The National Park Service ranger noted this year's annual river clean-up at Yankton — which started at Gavins Point Dam and runs about four miles east — may have come up with some of the largest and most unusual things yet. Smith's son even found an 1891 piece of china made in England.  
"We're still finding things floating down the river from the flooding two years ago," the ranger said. "The amount has stayed the same, tonnage wise, but now we are finding unique things such as barrels, docks and chunks of stuff. We even had an aluminum dock that floated down with the flood."  
The dock wasn't the only major item found during the clean-up, Smith said.  
"We found an aluminum boat on a sandbar," he said. "We lifted the boat out of the sand, left it intact and took it ashore. The City of Yankton used its front-end loader and crushed (the boat) into pieces for scrap metal."  
It's all part of the continued growth of three river-oriented events in Yankton — the 10-year-old clean-up, five-year-old school festival and four-year-old clean boat event combating invasive species. The river events draw hundreds of participants annually.  
This year's events are barely completed, but about a half-dozen organizers met Wednesday to start plans for next year. They set the 2014 school festival and clean-up for May 2-3, respectively. The dates for the clean-boat event remain to be determined.  
The school festival at Riverside Park has grown dramatically, from 125 students the first year to about 400 students this year. The event at

RIVER | PAGE 3

## INSIDE TODAY



The New American Farmers • **relish**

**CHOOSE YANKTON'S  
EAR, NOSE & THROAT EXPERTS**  
Call (605) 665-6820 for an appointment.

Dr. David V. Wagner



Matt Rumsey, AuD, CCC-A

**Avera**  
Medical Group  
Ear, Nose & Throat  
Yankton