



Teams Compete In First
Dakota Classic • 8

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Hojem Appointed Auditor

She Will Replace Former Auditor Paula Jones Beginning July 1

BY NATHAN JOHNSON
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As expected, the Yankton County Commission appointed Patty Hojem Friday to fill the office vacated by the resignation of former auditor Paula Jones.

It was announced during the commission's Tuesday meeting that Jones had submitted a letter of resignation due to ongoing health issues.

The resignation takes effect June 30.

Jones has been on medical leave since early February.

Beginning July 1, Hojem, the current deputy auditor, will serve the remainder of Jones' term, which expires March 1, 2015.

"I think we all are going to regret Paula not being here any longer," Commissioner Garry Moore said. "At this point in time, we'd like to thank her for her service and wish her the best."

Added Commission Chairman Bruce Jensen, "Paula has worked hard over the last 13 years, and she will be missed. People hate to see her go. Our prayers are with her to continue getting better."

Moore read through the resolution he wrote to appoint Hojem, and it was approved with a 4-0 vote. Commissioner Allen Sinclair was absent.

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KELLY HERTZ/P&D

This tribute to the late Mildred Cimpl was part of the 2013 Czech Days parade, which rolled through Tabor Friday. Cimpl was the longtime director of the Beseda Dancers. More photos from Czech Days will be in Monday's P&D. To see or purchase images from this event, visit spotted.yankton.net.

Cimpl Remembered During Czech Days Celebration

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF
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TABOR — Czech Days may be turning 65 years old, but the festival shows no signs of retiring or slowing down.

The ethnic celebration, which concludes today (Saturday), draws an estimated 10,000 visitors annually to the Bon Homme County community of about 400 residents.

The festival requires a great deal of work — and passing the torch to the younger generations. Czech Days has seen a surge of interest this year, which bodes well for the celebration's future.

Loretta Kortan has welcomed a large influx of new Beseda dancers who fill Sokol Park. The dancers will give their final performance of this year's event at 8:30 p.m. tonight (Saturday), preceding the coronation of the Czech Days Queen.

"People have enjoyed watching the Beseda Dancers from the start, and we have 239 dancers this year," she said. "This is the most beginners since I started (teaching) in 1979. We have never had 30 new people."

Kortan took over the reins of this year's Beseda Dancers with the Easter Sunday (March 31) death of long-time director Mildred Cimpl. Kortan is no stranger to the Beseda, which is Czech for "visiting" or "gathering place." She and her husband, Bob, danced the Beseda from 1964-99.

"Taking over Mildred Cimpl's job has meant more responsibility for me. She was the one all the dancers contacted beforehand. I merely helped her with the practice and setting up the groups. I had helped her since at least 1979," Kortan said.

"I have a co-director, Vicky Carda, my niece. I really appreciate her assistance. One person handling this many dancers is almost impossible. We also had four high school girls as well as four adult ladies help us out with the practices these last two weeks."

The 30 beginners range in age from second

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COURTESY PHOTOS

ABOVE: This shed was crushed by a powerful F-2 tornado that struck near Parker on June 24, 2003. Next week marks the 10th anniversary of that storm, as well as the F-4 tornado that struck Coleridge, Neb., on June 23, 2003, and killed one person. BELOW: This boat was wrapped around a pole during the Parker tornado.

Ten Years Ago Next Week, Tornadoes Pummeled Parker And Coleridge. For Some, The Memories Are Still Fresh

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF
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They lived in different states, but Sally Schroeder and Patty Hansen were reminded that a tornado's fury doesn't recognize borders.

Schroeder was living in Coleridge, Neb., and Hansen was living 10 miles northwest of Parker when they became a part of weather history 10 years ago.

On June 23, 2003, an F-4 tornado — with winds ranging from 207-260 miles per hour — struck Coleridge. The storm claimed one life, destroyed and damaged farmsteads, caused millions of dollars in damage and forced authorities to seal the town. The tornado hit an area 13 miles long and about three-quarters of a mile wide.

On June 24, 2003, Parker was slammed by a storm and became part of national history. Dubbed "Tornado Tuesday," the National Weather Service recorded 67 twisters in South Dakota during an eight-hour period. The number tied a national record for most tornadoes within a state in a 24-hour period.

The storm was later classified as an F-2 with winds between 113 and 157 mph, according to the Turner County history website. The dome of the Turner County courthouse in Parker sustained damage. In addition, the Turner County fairgrounds in Parker was left in shambles. With volunteer help, the Turner County Fair opened as scheduled for its August run.

A decade after those tornadoes, both Schroeder and Hansen hold vivid — and sometimes painful memories — of the twisters' impact on their lives and on those around them.

FIGHTING FOR AN ESCAPE

Patty Hansen was at home with her 4-year-old son, Collin, 1-year-old daughter Elizabeth and 5-year-old niece Kayti Marlette of Yankton. Hansen was making supper around 7 p.m., and Collin and Kayti were swimming in a small backyard kiddie pool.

Hansen's husband, Paul, came home from work and told them to head immediately to the basement.

"We scrambled to the basement," she said. "I still had the frying pan in my hand, and the kids were still dripping in their swim suits."

Marlette remembers a feeling of terror, huddled in the only room in the basement without windows.

"I was really scared. I thought, 'Oh, my gosh, we're going to die!'" she said "It was kind of like being in a tent during a thunderstorm, but a lot



Court Services Hires Officer In Preparation For New Law

BY NATHAN JOHNSON
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With changes in South Dakota's correctional system set to take effect in July, another court services officer is being added to Yankton County.

The South Dakota Public Safety Improvement Act was signed into law by Gov. Dennis Daugaard in February and aims to use intensive probation and parole to avoid the need to build new prisons. In also expands the number of courts that treat drug and alcohol offenders. Yankton County started a drug court earlier this year, and preliminary discussion of having a driving under the influence court has occurred.



Frieberg

Charles Frieberg, the chief court services officer for the First Judicial Circuit Court, said the new court officer will begin her duties July 24.

It will bring the total number of court services officers in Yankton County, excluding Frieberg, to seven. Frieberg oversees 19 across the circuit.

"The new Yankton County officer will specialize in our load of low-risk and administrative probationers," he

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Niobrara Couple Found Guilty Of Second-Degree Arson, Reckless Burning

From P&D Staff Reports

TYNDALL — A Niobrara, Neb., couple was found guilty of second-degree arson and reckless burning, both class 4 felonies, Friday in Tyndall after the trial had been postponed for nearly a year.

According to a press release from the attorney general's office, Charles Mark Johnson and Kimberly Sue Johnson pleaded not guilty in October 2010 after a fire destroyed Libby's Steakhouse in Springfield. The prosecution alleged the couple intentionally started the fire to collect insurance. Another downtown Springfield business was also destroyed and another third building was damaged. No one was injured in the fire.

The maximum sentence for the couple for both charges is 10 years in the state penitentiary and/or a \$20,000 fine. Sentencing is scheduled for Aug. 7 in Bon Homme County.

The Press & Dakotan had previously reported that the Johnsons were treated as separate defendants while the evidence and arguments were weighed. Yankton attorney Creighton Thurman represented Kimberly Johnson, and Menno state attorney Ken Bertsch represented Charles Johnson.

The case was investigated by the Division of Criminal Investigation and ATF, and prosecuted by the Attorney General's Office and the Bon Homme County States Attorney.