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## Gertsema Moves On

Superintendent Leaves YSD After More Than Two Decades

BY ANDREW ATWAL

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KELLY HERTZ/P&D  
**Dr. Joe Gertsema is officially leaving the post of superintendent of the Yankton School District as of Monday. Gertsema has been with the district for 22 years and has overseen numerous changes, including the construction of the Summit Activities Center, a joint city-school facility, in 1996.**

Joe Gertsema is leaving the Yankton School District (YSD) after 22 years, but he's not leaving education.

Gertsema, whose official last day with the district is Sunday, is now teaching school finance at the University of Sioux Falls as well as an additional course at Dakota Wesleyan University in Mitchell.

"I just started teaching college classes this week, but teaching on the college level has always been on my bucket list," he said. "Over the course of time as an administrator, I've been to pick up a lot of experience and I'm looking forward to sharing it with aspiring school educators."

Gertsema announced his resignation last December. He said had been contemplating the decision to resign for about a year and felt that it was a good time for him to leave.

He said it was a privilege to serve as superintendent of YSD.

**"Being superintendent at YSD was my job for more than 20 years and I know I'm leaving the district better than I found it. I hope YSD continues to improve and thrive."**

JOE GERTSEMA

"My time here went quickly, and I viewed it as an honor to serve here as superintendent," Gertsema said. "I'm most proud of student achievement during my time as superintendent, but this is the result of many people doing their jobs, including teachers, administrators and other employees — everyone contributes to student success."

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## Fighting The Fight Against Cancer

The battle against cancer took center stage at Riverside Park Friday night for the opening of Yankton's annual Relay for Life fundraising event. The flurry of activities opened with a group photo of the survivors in attendance (above), taken at the park's amphitheatre. RIGHT: After the opening ceremony came the Survivor Lap around Riverside Park, which was led by 2013 honorary chairman Chris Schloss (center) and 2014 honorary co-chairpersons Amy (left) and Celia Miner. Music, games and other activities were scheduled until the closing ceremony, set for 5:30 a.m. today (Saturday). To see or purchase images from this event, visit [spotted.yankton.net](http://spotted.yankton.net). (Kelly Hertz/P&D)



## Three Counties See Changes In Court Officials

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF

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Three area South Dakota counties have received new court officials in moves resembling a domino effect.

Presiding First Circuit Judge Steven Jensen of Elk Point, who oversees 14 southeast South Dakota counties, appointed the officials.

"It started when Linette Schnabel retired as Hutchinson County clerk of courts," said Kim Allison, First Circuit Court administrator in Yankton.

Jensen named Dorene Winckler — who had been the Douglas County clerk of courts in Armour — as the new Hutchinson County clerk of courts in Olivet. Winckler graduated from Plankinton High School, and she received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Mount Marty College in Yankton.

With Winckler's transfer, Jensen then named Denise Sparks — who had been the Charles Mix County deputy clerk-magistrate in Lake Andes for the last 11 years — as the Douglas County clerk of courts.

The changing of the guard in the two neighboring counties represented somewhat of an unusual twist, Allison said.

"Clerks don't normally go from one county to another in the same position," she said. "We often do have deputy clerks who are hired as clerks."

The job change represented a homecoming for Winckler in more ways than one, Allison said.

Winckler worked as a deputy clerk in Hutchinson County from 1994 until 2002,

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## Local Man Finalist For Inspiring Coaches Award

Public Can Go On Facebook To Vote For Buffington Through July 21



COURTESY PHOTO  
**Gayville-Volin educator and coach Larry Buffington is one of 10 national finalists for the 2013 Brooks Running Company Inspiring Coaches Award. Nominations were submitted through social media, and the public can go to [www.facebook.com/brook-running](http://www.facebook.com/brook-running) to vote on the nominees through July 21.**

BY DEREK BARTOS

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GAYVILLE — On the track, many of Larry Buffington's athletes focus on leaping hurdles.

Away from the track, the coach works tirelessly to remove them.

"My philosophy is to find out what they want and help them get it. If they have something in the way, help them get rid of it," said Buffington, who serves as Gayville-Volin's head cross country and boys' track coach. "If their dream is big enough, they'll figure out a way around the obstacle."

In his 30 years of coaching, the past 15 of which he has spent in Gayville, Buffington has religiously put his philosophy to use. Whether it's offering advice on how to achieve a certain goal, providing a quip for motivation or getting a pair of shoes

donated for an athlete, the coach has constantly done what he can to inspire those around him.

"I've found that if you put time and effort into kids, you'll get time and effort back from them," he said.

In recognition of his efforts, Buffington has been named a top 10 national finalist for the 2013 Brooks Running Company Inspiring Coaches Award. In its third year, the Inspiring Coaches program honors high school track and cross country coaches who motivate their teams and communities through their leadership.

With the honor, Buffington has been awarded an all-expenses-paid trip to Seattle in August for a camp featuring some of the nation's top high school coaches.

As one of the 26 finalists, Buffington also will receive \$5,000 in Brooks sports

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