

Press & Dakotan

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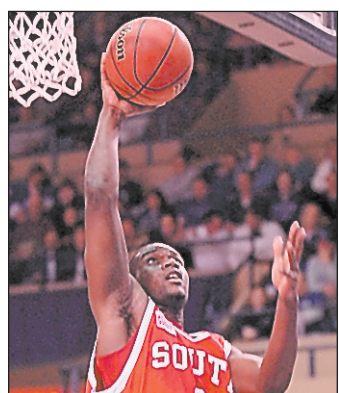
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**PRESS & DAKOTAN
LIVE SPORTS CHAT**



WEDNESDAY 3 TO 4 P.M.
www.yankton.net/live_chat

INSIDEtoday



Postseason

■ USD Falls To Creighton In First Round Of CIT Tourney. **PAGE 9**

CLARIFICATION

In the caption for the photo Rep. Nick Moser that appeared in Tuesday's *Press & Dakotan*, it should have noted that the three District 18 lawmakers were speaking at a meeting of Yankton's American Legion Auxiliary, held at the Yankton VFW.

3 Days Until Spring!

WEATHER

9 a.m.	3 p.m.
FOGGY	
32	49
Early and late fog, sunshine in between	

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RECYCLING

River City Recycling This Week
SOUTH of 15th St.



TOMORROW

■ **VIBORG:** Last Call For Viking Basketball.

* * *



Blaze Destroys Rural Home

BY NATHAN JOHNSON
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Firefighters struggled Tuesday morning with a house fire west of Yankton that will probably make the structure a total loss.

The Yankton Fire Department was called to the residence of Mary Jane Amon just before 8 a.m. The house is located along Highway 52 about a half-mile east of Captain Norm's.

The fire had started in the basement of the home, perhaps three or four hours before firefighters were alerted.

"In 30-some years, it's one of the tougher fires I've had to fight because we couldn't get to it," Deputy Fire Chief Larry Nickles said. "We changed tactics three times in the first 20 minutes because nothing was working. You've almost got to let it come to you. There were no windows to the basement. The floor was not safe. The exterior stairway had so much heat coming out of it, that the guys couldn't stay down there."

Neither Amon nor her husband were home at the time of the fire. After arriving on the scene, she had to be taken to the hospital by ambulance because of extreme anxiety.

The fire had burned a hole



KELLY HERTZ/P&D

Firefighters work on a second-story window while flames leap from the roof during a residential fire Tuesday morning west of Yankton. The home was severely damaged in the blaze. Firefighters from three departments were summoned to battle the flames. No injuries were reported.

■ **FIRE,** Page 7 please

Highway 46 North Of Lesterville Closed

From P&D Staff Reports

The South Dakota Department of Transportation has closed Highway 46 north of Lesterville.

The roadway between the Lesterville and Menno intersections was reduced to one lane Monday due to water eating away at the north shoulder. The decision to close it entirely was made around 10:30 a.m. Tuesday, according to SDDOT Yankton-area Engineer Kon Peterson.

"It has affected the structural integrity and the safety of the road," he said. "We're starting to see a little settlement. In the interest of safety, we elected to close the road there before something collapsed or affected a motorist. Until the water recedes and we can do some repair work, it will be closed."

Motorists are being encouraged to seek alternate routes.

Peterson added that Highway 48 at the Iowa state line has been closed due to flooding along the Big Sioux River. Also, an extended portion of Highway 19 south of Centerville has been closed because it has gone under water.

Irish Priest Finds St. Patrick's Day Special

After Struggle, Gallagher Wins Green Card, New Home As Permanent U.S. Resident

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF
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ARMOUR — This St. Patrick's Day, Father Cathal Gallagher sports a green item more valuable to him than any other.

"I have a green card. I belong. I am a permanent resident of the United States," the Irish-born priest said with joy and pride in his voice.

The card represents more than legal status for Gallagher, who serves St. Paul the Apostle Church in Armour and St. Mary's Church in Stickney. It also represents the battle waged by his former parishioners in DeSmet, Iroquois and Arlington to fight his 2008 deportation because of a bureaucratic tangle.

But the struggle went far beyond his Catholic parishes or even the borders of Kingsbury County. People of different faiths used all channels, including

NEB. LEGISLATURE

Texting Ban While Driving Advances

First-Round Approval Barely Passes By Two Votes, Measure Still Not Veto-Proof

BY NATE JENKINS
Associated Press Writer

LINCOLN, Neb. — By a razor-thin margin, Nebraska lawmakers gave first-round approval Tuesday to a proposed ban on texting while driving, putting the state on track to join a growing number of states with similar laws.

Passing the first of three rounds with just two votes to spare, the bill is not yet veto-proof. Gov. Dave Heineman hasn't said if he supports the plan, and his office didn't immediately respond to a message.

Lawmakers mustered enough votes in 2007 to override his veto and push a bill into law that bans people under age 18 from texting and talking on cell

phones while driving. The sponsor of that measure, Sen. John Harms of Scottsbluff, also introduced this year's bill to expand the law. Harms said he didn't know Heineman's stance on the bill.

During debate Tuesday morning, it appeared the governor's opinion wouldn't matter as opponents, one after another, battered the proposal. They said it would be difficult to enforce, that existing laws against careless and reckless driving already gave police the ability to pull over texters, and it could give police another reason to unnecessarily pull over minorities.

"I didn't know if the bill would see daylight," Harms said after the 27-19 vote to advance the bill to second-round debate.

It takes 25 votes to pass a bill, and 30 to override a veto.

Harms, who began tackling the issue after he nearly rear-ended a car several years ago on the interstate while talking on a handless cell phone, gave lawmakers a long list of statistics showing texting while driving is dangerous. Among them was a 2009 study by the University of Utah that found drivers who texted were 600 percent more likely to crash than drivers talking on cell phones.

Opponents acknowledged that texting while behind the wheel is dangerous, but questioned whether legislation would actually slow the practice.

Sen. Mike Gloor of Grand Island

■ **TEXT,** Page 3 please

County OKs River Gauge

Public Data Would Help Determine Any Future Flooding Impact

BY NATHAN JOHNSON
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The Yankton County Commission agreed to enter into a partnership Tuesday that will make way for a gauge to be installed along the James River.

The gauge, which has been discussed for years, will be located at the Johnson Bridge along 303rd Street west of Volin.

Initially, a temporary gauge will be installed — possibly within a week — and then a permanent gauge will be put in place.

"Right now, we're trying to base all of our estimates on safety preparations — whether that is sandbagging, evacuations or roadwork — off the gauge in Scotland," said Yankton County Emergency Management Director Jeremy Dangel. "There are a couple big variables that happen between here and there — namely, the Highway 46 and Highway 81 bridges."

The data recorded by the gauge will be available to the public via the Internet.

"This will allow us, as well as the people of Yankton County, to know on a day-by-day basis what the river looks like and what the forecast projections look like. Once that gauge has been established for a couple years, they'll also have impact statements on there so they know what



Dangel

■ **COUNTY,** Page 2 please

SINGING 'SING'



KELLY HERTZ/P&D

Members of the Yankton High School Chorale perform the jazz standard "Sing, Sing, Sing" during the YHS Jazz Concert Tuesday night at the high school theatre. Various vocal and instrumental ensembles performed during the show. To see or purchase images from this event, visit spotted.yankton.net.

CATCH ALL THE MADNESS

TODAY'S THE LAST DAY to Enter!

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