



Wynot, Crofton Take State Basketball Crowns • 10

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S.D. Legislative Session Heads Into Final Week

District 18 Lawmakers Ready For Long, Grueling Week Of Budget Concerns

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF
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The Legislature is entering the final week of its main run, but lawmakers still must tackle major issues such as education, economic development and Medicaid expansion.

The District 18 delegation — Sen. Jean Hunhoff (R-Yankton) and Reps. Bernie Hunhoff (D-Yankton) and Mike Stevens (R-Yankton) — shared updates at Saturday's crackerbarrel on the heavy load still awaiting them when they return to Pierre.

"It's like a close basketball game, and it's going down to the wire," Bernie Hunhoff said.

The remaining issues are so heavy that the House Republicans had scheduled a caucus for 6 p.m. Sunday, Stevens said.

As a freshman lawmaker, Stevens has found the process interesting but at times exhausting. "It's been a lot of fun, but I'm ready for it to be done," he said.

The state budget — usually passed in the session's final moments — has become murkier with uncertainty over federal funds, Jean Hunhoff said.

"We're concerned about federal sequestration," she said, as the funding cuts went into effect last Friday.

Revenue figures are similar from the governor's office and the Legislative Research Council (LRC), which helps in finalizing the budget, she said in separate remarks.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

A major bill awaiting lawmakers will be heard today (Monday) when a bipartisan economic development plan receives a House State Affairs committee hearing.

As House Minority Leader, Bernie Hunhoff and other legislative leaders unveiled the "Building South Dakota" plan last week at a press conference.

"It's a really big bill. We need to pass it the way it is," Hunhoff said Saturday.

Past efforts targeted large companies and provided incentives whether needed or not, Hunhoff said. Those efforts included a fund referred to and defeated at the polls last November, he said.



Hunhoff



Stevens

"I'm not opposed to economic development for large companies, but not at the expense of schools from the general fund," he said.

Under the new bill, incentives will go to companies that otherwise wouldn't come to South Dakota. The bill also calls for more accountability and transparency, making it easier for local and state officials to vet these companies.

"Building South Dakota" will tap into new money in the unclaimed property fund, along with the contractor's excise tax for companies receiving the incentives, Hunhoff said.

"Building South Dakota" will benefit education, affordable housing and rural economic development, Hunhoff said.

"This will broaden our effort," he said, noting its passage would mark one of the largest economic development packages ever offered by state government.

EDUCATION FUNDING

Bernie Hunhoff called for a 4 percent increase in state aid to education this year to help make up for an 8.6 percent cut followed by a freeze in recent years.

Even the current 3 percent increase only amounts to a 1.5 to 1.8 percent increase because it includes one-time money that won't be replaced, Hunhoff said.

In response to a question, Jean Hunhoff noted the state can only spend the interest on the education enhancement trust fund. A two-thirds majority of the Legislature is needed before touching the principle, she said.

The state and school districts are also facing increasing pressure for funding special education, English as a Second Language (ESL) and other special services, she said.

The ESL needs have become critical in

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CELEBRATING SERVICE TO YANKTON



KELLY HERTZ/P&D

Brooks and Vi Ranney were honored Sunday as Yankton's 2012 Citizens of the Year. Several hundred people packed the Yankton Elks Lodge for a reception and special program. Shown here, State Rep. Bernie Hunhoff (D-District 18) presents the Ranneys with a proclamation from Gov. Dennis Daugaard declaring Sunday "Brooks and Vi Ranney Day" in South Dakota. The *Press & Dakotan* is a co-sponsor of the Citizen of the Year Award.

Yankton Citizens Of The Year Vi And Brooks Ranney Honored

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF
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Brooks Ranney has literally known many area residents even before they were born.

Dr. Ranney established his medical practice in Yankton as a pioneer in obstetrics and gynecology, providing prenatal care and delivering hundreds of babies. For decades, he sought to improve women's health care, not only for Yankton but around the world, until he retired in 1995.

His wife, Vi, has become recognized for her work with the region's arts scene and as a tour leader on worldwide excursions for a local travel agency.

The Ranneys also serve as active members of the United Church of Christ (Congregational) in Yankton and belong to a number of fraternal and charitable organizations.

Now, the Ranneys are Yankton's "Citizens of the Year" (COY) for 2012. They were recognized during Sunday's program at the Elks Club — a fitting location, as Brooks has belonged to the lodge for 65 years.

The "Citizen of the Year" award is co-sponsored by the Press & Dakotan and a number of community organizations. P&D publisher Gary Wood presented the COY plaque to the Ranneys at the conclusion of Sunday's program, which featured tributes to the couple.

The afternoon even served as a belated 98th birthday party for Brooks, complete with cake and the singing of "Happy Birthday" by the audience.

"It's an absolutely overwhelming feeling to hear all these kind words today," Vi said.



KELLY HERTZ/P&D

The United Church of Christ (Congregational) Choir, of which the Ranneys are members, sang two songs during Sunday's Citizens of the Year reception. To see or purchase images from this event, visit spotted.yankton.net.

She spoke warmly of her husband's medical achievements which improved women's lives. She added that she felt honored yet unworthy of sharing the award with him.

"Truly, I felt this (COY) honor was long overdue for Brooks," she said. "He has made such a difference in the field of women's health care."

Vi said she didn't fully realize the extent of her husband's

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PHOTO: LINDA WUEBBEN

Kathy Hoebelheinrich of rural Menominee contracted encephalitis when she was 10 years old in 1975 and, due to complications from her treatment, was left paralyzed from the neck down. She has since received around-the-clock care from her family. But Hoebelheinrich, shown here with her dog Max, is hoping to find a facility that could support her and her extraordinary needs. "There are many types of assisted living places, along with long-term care facilities," she said, "but none that can fully accommodate individuals who require full 24-hour care and the ventilator care, as well."

A Wish For A New Home

Menominee Woman Dreams Of Finding A New Place To Call Home

BY LINDA WUEBBEN
P&D Correspondent

MENOMINEE, Neb. — Kathy Hoebelheinrich has a list.

But she doesn't call it a bucket list.

"It's my list of goals, wishes and dreams," said Hoebelheinrich. "At the top of my list is a project which I feel very strongly about. I'm looking for a new home."

Hoebelheinrich's search for a new home is not the same as it would be for most people.

In 1975, she contracted encephalitis at a 10-year-old and, due to complications during treatment, she became paralyzed from the

neck down. She requires a ventilator to breathe every second of every day.

Despite her rare medical challenges, Hoebelheinrich hopes to find others with similar circumstances who want to build a home together that could accommodate their needs.

Hoebelheinrich's spinal condition is similar to that of the late actor Christopher Reeve, who only lived nine years after being injured in a horse-riding accident.

Thanks to Hoebelheinrich's compassionate support system of family and friends, she is still alive, finding comfort on her family's farm near Menominee. But she is very aware of the aging process. As she gets older, so does her mother, Johanna, and her brother, Larry, both

of whom have given her years of devoted care, 24 hours a day.

"There are many types of assisted living places, along with long-term care facilities, but none that can fully accommodate individuals who require full 24-hour care and the ventilator care, as well," said Hoebelheinrich.

Her family has looked for suitable places where the level of care she needs can be maintained. None exist outside of a hospital facility.

"My dream would be for a home to be built which could support people like me ... with private rooms and bathrooms large enough for

HOME | PAGE 13



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