

# YANKTON DAILY PRESS & DAKOTAN

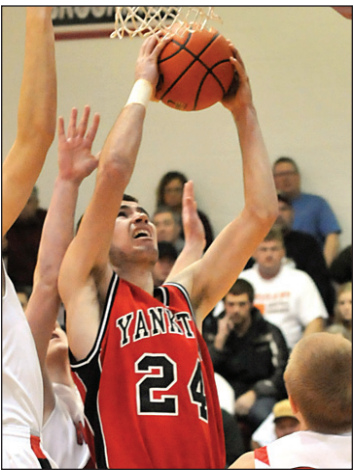
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## INSIDE TODAY



**American Profile**

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## Venezuelan Leader Chavez Dies At 58

BY FRANK BAJAK  
Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela — President Hugo Chavez, the fiery populist who declared a socialist revolution in Venezuela, crusaded against U.S. influence and championed a leftist revival across Latin America, died Tuesday at age 58 after a nearly two-year bout with cancer.



Chavez

Vice President Nicolas Maduro, surrounded by other government officials, announced the death in a national television broadcast. He said Chavez died at 4:25 p.m. local time.

During more than 14 years in office, Chavez routinely challenged the status quo at home and internationally. He polarized Venezuelans with his confrontational and domineering style, yet was also a masterful communicator and strategist who tapped into Venezuelan nationalism to win broad support, particularly among the poor.

Chavez repeatedly proved himself a political survivor. As an army paratroop commander, he led a failed coup in 1992, then was pardoned and elected president in 1998. He survived a coup against his own presidency in 2002 and won re-election two more times.

The burly president electrified crowds with his booming voice, often wearing the bright red of his United Socialist Party of Venezuela or the fatigues and red beret of his army days. Before his struggle with cancer, he appeared on television almost daily, talking for hours at a time and often breaking into song of philosophical discourse.

Chavez used his country's vast oil wealth to launch social programs that include state-run food markets, new public housing, free health clinics and education programs. Poverty declined during Chavez's presidency amid a historic boom in oil earnings, but critics said he failed to use the windfall of hundreds of billions of dollars to develop the country's economy.

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## South Dakota

# Economic Plan Survives

### Lawmakers OK Bill For Development Despite Split Attempt

BY DIRK LAMMERS  
Associated Press

PIERRE — A comprehensive bipartisan economic development plan intended to help recruit projects to South Dakota survived a Republican lawmaker's attempt to split the bill in five parts Tuesday.

Rep. Stace Nelson, R-Fulton, argued the Building South Dakota Fund measure is full of pork and covers too many unrelated topics. He asked the House to split the measure into five separate bills covering an economic development fund, housing,

workforce education, the Governor's Office of Economic Development funding and English education.

"All of these can be separated and stand alone," Nelson said.

Lawmakers shot down that proposal before approving the comprehensive measure 56-13.

Republicans and Democrats worked for the past two months to find a compromise to help level the playing field with other states that do a better job recruiting large projects.

House Republican Leader David Lust of Rapid City said

the bill incorporates components important to increasing jobs in South Dakota.

"This is one framework that addresses economic development," Lust said. "They are intertwined, intermingled and interdependent."

Lust chided Nelson for springing his motion on the House at the last minute amid a busy calendar in the last week of the legislative session. Nelson defended the move, saying the bill is a hodgepodge of subject matters and South Dakota law requires legislative issues to be handled individually.

Tension between Lust and Nelson dates back to last year's session, when Nelson and another lawmaker were kicked out

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# Many Questions Answered

### Auditors Provide Assessment Of Operations At Co. Auditor's Office

BY NATHAN JOHNSON  
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State auditors gave the Yankton County Commission peace of mind Tuesday by laying to rest many questions that have arisen as a result of the turmoil of the last few months.

Concerns peaked in January when the Yankton County Auditor's Office did not finalize property tax levies on schedule. That issue was resolved last month after Yankton County Auditor Paula Jones abruptly took a leave of absence from her position for medical reasons.

However, many other items stemming from the Auditor's Office were still the source of uncertainty for county officials.

"A request was made by the Yankton County Commission to perform an assessment of the status of the current operations at the county Auditor's Office to address concerns raised by Yankton County government officials and provide assistance in resolving some of the issues we found," said Russ Olson of the South Dakota Department of Legislative Audit (DLA).

The DLA conducted interviews with the Yankton County Commission, State's Attorney Rob Klimisch, Sheriff Jim Vlahakis, Highway Superintendent Brian Gustad, Register of Deeds Brian Hunhoff and employees of the auditor's office to determine the concerns.

The investigation led to the creation of a list of almost a dozen questions county officials felt needed to be addressed in relation to the Auditor's Office.

• The first source of concern was the tax notices not being available at the beginning of January as is typically the case. That issue was settled with assistance from the South Dakota Department of Revenue. One question that remains is whether or not an outside telephone tax is being levied, as it was not found in the county's tax software recap. Olson said the matter is still being investigated before a final determination is made.

• County departments had not received budget information since approximately October and had received no information about their 2013 budgets from the Auditor's Office. The DLA was able to establish the budgets for 2012 and 2013. However, it



KELLY HERTZ/P&D

Russ Olson of the South Dakota Department of Legislative Audit gave a report to the Yankton County Commission Tuesday to address questions raised due to the recent turmoil in the Auditor's Office.

chided Yankton County for not properly publishing last year the provisional, or tentative, 2013 budget in its official newspapers, which includes the *Press & Dakotan*. Only the means of finance and total appropriations were published, but more detailed expenditures should have been included.

• The double payment of some claims by the Auditor's Office was studied. This issue stemmed from the Highway Department. It is believed that when the office of the Highway Department superintendent was moved from the Yankton County Government Center to the new highway shop, some bills were still being sent to the old location and created some confusion. This situation has

since been resolved. Olson said the DLA is continuing to examine the possibility of other double payments.

• Another concern was undeposited checks in the Auditor's Office. County Auditor's Office employees went through Jones' desk and found two checks in the amount of \$207 and \$405. A review of receipts did not turn up any other undeposited checks.

• The fifth source of concern was County Commission meeting minutes not being published for an extended period of time. That issue has since been resolved.

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# Crofton Team's Extra Effort Makes History

BY DEREK BARTOS  
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CROFTON, Neb. — When the Crofton boys' basketball team began preparing last summer for its season, its goal was the same as every team's that had come before them — be the first to qualify for the state tournament.

"I'm sure it was on every bulletin board throughout the years," said head coach Todd Strom. "I know it was on ours."

Knowing it faced a tough road as it entered its first year in the competitive Mid-State Conference, the team put in extra effort during its offseason and throughout the year, Strom said.

"We'd hoped by the end of the year we'd be playing well enough to make it out of our subdistrict and get a chance to be the first ever team to get a berth to the state tournament," he said. "I think our hard work and the regular season tested us and developed us enough that we were able to get to that point."

The team's dream came to fruition last week when the Warriors survived a 51-50 nailbiter against Hartington Cedar Catholic in the District C2-4 championship game and earned a trip to Lincoln.

Crofton will take on top-seeded Sutton at 9 a.m. Thursday in the opener of the Nebraska State Class C2 Boy's Basketball Tournament.

"As a team we feel very proud, and yet we are humbled by the fact that we are the first," Strom said.

"It's good for the kids. It's good for the community. It's good for everybody all the way around," added Crofton athletic director Ann Kramer. "It's a nice position to be in."

This will actually be the third time the Crofton boys' program has played in the state basketball tournament, having last participated in

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# Years After Service, Veterans Get Their Diplomas



RANDY DOCKENDORF/P&D

Stan Varilek of Tabor (center) proudly holds his Bon Homme High School diploma as an honorary member of the Class of 2012 — or 65 years after his original graduation date. Bon Homme Superintendent Bryce Knudson (left) and Bon Homme County Veterans Service Officer Rich Beringer (right) assisted to getting the diplomas for five veterans.

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF  
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TYNDALL — Stan Varilek proudly held his Bon Homme High School diploma as a member of the Class of 2012.

But unlike his "classmates," Varilek took more than four years to receive his diploma.

Actually, he waited 65 years. Varilek received an honorary high school diploma. State law provides for the award of honorary diplomas to honorably discharged veterans who didn't complete their education because of military service during the World War II, Korea or Vietnam eras.

"I would have graduated in 1947," he said. "I took one year of high school (at Tabor), then left to work on the farm. I went into the military and served from December 1951 to 1953 with the Marine Corps during the Korean War. I served for a time in Japan with the security forces."

Varilek served one year, four months and five days overseas. A life member of Kortan-Hatwan American Legion Post No. 183 in Tabor, he was awarded the National Defense Service Medal, Korean Service Medal and United States Service Medal.

"After the war, I got married and went into farming



## Bon Homme County

diploma that he never received.

Then came the state law that provided for the honorary diplomas.

"It came up in a newsletter, and we talked about it at Legion and VFW meetings," Varilek said. "I was at the (Bon Homme County) courthouse to do other business, and I decided to stop at (Veterans Service Officer) Rich Beringer's office and ask about the diploma."

Beringer checked his records on the spot and came up with good news. "I said to Stan, 'You're eligible (for the diploma) according to our records, so we can get the ball rolling,'" Beringer said.

The effort snowballed, as four other veterans or

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