



Mostly Sunny And A Bit Chilly

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INSIDE TODAY



Area Teams Compete
At Dan Lennon • 7

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City To Save \$168,000 By Refinancing Loan

BY NATHAN JOHNSON
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By agreeing to refinance a loan Monday, the Yankton City Commission will save the municipality approximately \$168,000.

Yankton has an outstanding State Revolving Fund (SRF) loan it used to pay for renovating and updating the wastewater treatment facility. The remaining funds to be paid are just more than \$3.8 million.

"It's a chance for us to save some money over the remaining life of the old SRF loan," City Finance Officer Al Viereck said during Monday night's commission meeting. "Any chance we get to pursue stuff like this, we do our best to try to come up with a proposal."

The loan was issued at an interest rate of 3.5 percent.

Permission has been granted by the State of South Dakota to refinance the loan in the private market. It is anticipated that the bonds will be issued at an approximate average interest rate of 2.2 percent.

City officials have been working with Toby Morris of Dougherty and Company LLC, as well as bond counsel Todd Meierhenry to accomplish the issuance of bonds.

"The \$168,000 is based on their best-case estimate as of last Thursday," Viereck said. "The actual day you close will (determine) it, but it typically doesn't fluctuate much over a short period of time. We'll have the actual savings when we

LOAN | PAGE 12

AP: Johnson Won't Seek Re-Election

Press Conference Set For Today In Vermillion

BY THOMAS BEAUMONT AND DAVID ESPO
Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS — Democratic U.S. Sen. Tim Johnson of South Dakota plans to retire at the end of his term, Democratic officials said Monday — a departure that gives Republicans a prime opportunity to pick up a seat as they attempt to win back control of the chamber in 2014.

Johnson, the chairman of the Senate Banking Committee, suffered a brain hemorrhage in 2006 and later returned to the Senate and won re-election in 2008 while sometimes using a motorized scooter.

The officials who described Johnson's plans spoke to The

Associated Press on condition of anonymity, saying they were not authorized to pre-empt a formal announcement expected Tuesday in South Dakota.

Johnson, 66, is the fifth Democrat to decide to step aside at the end of the term in 2014, joining Carl Levin of Michigan, Tom Harkin of Iowa, Jay Rockefeller of West Virginia and Frank Lautenberg of New Jersey. Two Republicans also have said they plan to retire, and the GOP must gain six seats to win a majority.

Of the five states, South Dakota is seen as the most favorable to Republicans, who control the

JOHNSON | PAGE 2



State SO Tourney Moving On



A large crowd was on hand at the Summit Activities Center earlier this month for the opening ceremony of the 2013 South Dakota State Special Olympics Basketball Tournament. After a successful three-year run in Yankton, the tournament will move to Pierre starting next year.

KELLY HERTZ/P&D

After Three Years In
Yankton, Tournament
Will Move To Pierre
Beginning In 2014

BY DEREK BARTOS
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Following a three-year stint in Yankton, the Special Olympics South Dakota (SOSD) State Basketball Tournament will not be returning to the city in 2014.

The SOSD has announced that the bid to host the tournament from 2014-2016 has been awarded to Pierre.

"We're obviously disappointed because we really enjoyed hosting the tournament," said Lisa Scheve, director of the Yankton Convention and Visitors Bureau. "The community of Yankton has done a great job of supporting the Special Olympics state organization over the last number of years."

SOSD sports director Mel Froesch said that while the organization chose Pierre, the decision was more about offering another site the chance to host, and not necessarily about any inadequacies with what Yankton has to offer.

"It has to do with the opportunity it provides to the community and awareness of Special Olympics in that community," she said. "I think the committee felt we needed to give Pierre that opportunity."

Earlier this month, Yankton hosted the 2013 SOSD State Basketball Tournament at the Summit Activities Center and the Yankton Middle School. With 592 athletes participating and bleachers at both facilities constantly filled with spectators, the turnout was one of the largest in the event's history. Approximately 250 people also volunteered their time to help

OLYMPICS | PAGE 2

Decision 2013

Becker: Common Sense Approach Needed

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is a the first in a series of profiles on the candidates for the Yankton school board. The election is April 9.

NAME: Duane G. "Butch" Becker
FAMILY: Married, Wife Gloria, with a combined four children and five grandchildren.

EDUCATION/OCCUPATION: Business Law, Accounting, Engineering/Commercial Claims Consultant, Technical Training advisor.

1. Why do you want to be on the Yankton School Board?

I believe my education, experience and my common sense approach in as-



Becker

sessing problems would be invaluable evaluating the school's insurance, management & finances.

2. How would you address the budget shortfall at YSD? Would you ever consider supporting another opt-out attempt?

a. We may have received unbalanced budgets in the past but, it's hard to believe we've had a budget shortfall when we had Millions in "reserve funds" when so called budget shortfalls were declared
b. "Shortfalls" and unbalanced budgets are the result of poor planning/budgeting.

In one's business and also personally, you don't gain by incurring spending decisions that have no funding or in the case of the school, income.

c. I would not support another opt-out so long without looking at the budget and assessing where savings can be adopted but one should never say never.

3. Besides the budget, what would you say is the No. 1 issue facing the school district?

a. The administration's preparation of a balanced budget is the No. 1 issue;
b. Transparency about the issues and decisions that affect taxpayers is para-

BECKER | PAGE 12

City Candidates Debate Sports Complex At Forum

BY NATHAN JOHNSON
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Does Yankton need a new multi-use sports complex?

The seven candidates for the Yankton City Commission were asked for their thoughts on the subject Monday during a forum sponsored by Yankton Interchange and the Yankton Area Chamber of Commerce held at Minervas.

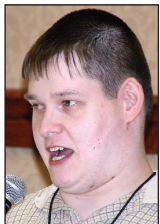
The candidates are vying for three open seats on the commission in the April 9 election. Absentee voting began

Monday.

Charlie Gross and Brad Woerner are incumbents. The remaining candidates seeking a three-year term are Thomas Bixler, Brooke Blaaid, Chris Ferdig, Edward Gleich and Michael Schumacher.

In September, the City Commission hired Stockwell Engineers of Sioux Falls to conduct a study of the community's sports facility needs. The contract was for \$57,600.

A preliminary report on the consultant's findings is expected in late April or early May.



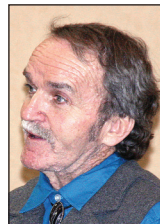
Bixler



Blaaid



Ferdig



Gleich



Gross



Schumacher



Woerner

Bixler said he believes Yankton's current sports facilities are more or less adequate.

"I do not believe that a sports complex — at least a big one — is needed at this time," he said. "If you build a big complex, you have all the sports played in that. What's the use for the fields and things they have now to play their sports?"

The term "complex" has yet to be defined, according to Woerner.

"We've hired an outside consultant to investigate what the wants versus the needs are," he said. "Once we get to the point where we can wrap our hands around that and accept that need — if there is one — it has to be a public/private partnership moving forward. We have to get the buy-in from all the ath-

letic groups, youth groups, etc. To approach it from a public money standpoint, I don't think is going to work. We need more than that. We need the community spirit behind it."

A good location for a complex would be on the city-owned property south of the Chamber of Commerce building, Gle-

COMPLEX | PAGE 14

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TOMORROW: Briefing Held On Status Of South Dakota Children

YANKTON RECYCLING THIS WEEK:
SOUTH
OF 15TH STREET