



Partly Cloudy

9 a.m.: **35** | 3 p.m.: **52** | DETAILS: PAGE 2

WEDNESDAY ■ March 18, 2015



Yankton Wins Five Events At Bob Prince
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Mixed Reviews For Session

District 18 Lawmakers Flash Sharp Divisions During Yankton Public Forum

BY SHAUNA MARLETTE
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While the 2015 regular session of the South Dakota Legislature ended last Friday, the issues faced by the District 18 delegation haven't gone away. A public forum held Monday at the Yankton VFW showed Reps. Mike Stevens (R) and Jean Hunhoff (R) and Sen. Bernie Hunhoff had differing opinions on what was accomplished and how successful their winter in Pierre had been.



Hunhoff



Stevens



Hunhoff

"I think it was a good session," Rep. Hunhoff said during the event, sponsored by the American Legion Auxiliary. "Not everybody wins and not everybody loses, but at the end of the day, we have a balanced budget." However, Bernie Hunhoff had a more critical view, one that caused Stevens to playfully call him "Mr. Happy" throughout Monday's forum.

"I don't agree with how the budget turned out, but that's why we have a two-party system," Bernie Hunhoff said. "We could do a lot better than that. Balancing the budget is a very important thing — and the Appropriations Committee does a very good job at that — but there are more important things than balancing the budget. We need to do a lot more or we just don't get anywhere." Sen. Hunhoff said there are major issues facing the state, such as education and work force devel-

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Quickly, Highway Bill Signed Into Law

BY BOB MERCER
State Capitol Bureau

PIERRE — No joke: Gov. Dennis Daugaard signed the highway and bridge funding legislation into state law Tuesday. Motorists will be able to drive 80 miles per hour, legally, on South Dakota's two interstate highways starting April 1. State Transportation Secretary Darin Bergquist said work crews will be busy removing the current 75 mph signs and putting up new 80 mph signs along I-29 and I-90 in the two weeks ahead. "We estimate we will need approximately 250 new signs at \$100 each," Bergquist said Tuesday. "Obviously not all 250 new signs will be installed at the same time on the same day, but the key, most important ones will be," he said. "We will continue to add additional 80 mph signs where appropriate in the following days, somewhat dependent on how fast the signs can be produced." The 80 mph won't apply in those urban areas where slower speeds were already set by the state Transportation Commission, such as around Rapid City and Sioux Falls. Also, another new law that allows an extra 10 mph for passing applies only on two-lane highways and doesn't apply on the four-lane interstates. The state taxes on motor fuels for highway travel will increase by six cents per gallon on April 1 as well. Gasoline and diesel will be charged state tax of 28 cents per gallon, while ethanol blends will be taxed according to the ratio of gasoline and alcohol. The state excise tax on vehicle purchases will change to 4 percent from the current 3 percent on April 1, too.

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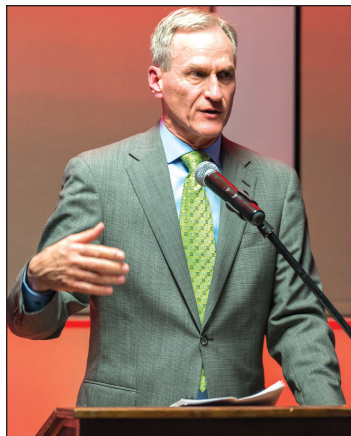


PHOTO: THOMAS HATZENBUHLER
Gov. Dennis Daugaard was the featured speaker at Tuesday's Vermillion Area Chamber & Development Company (VADC) annual banquet, held at the Vermillion Technology Center.

Governor Touts SD, Vermillion Offerings

BY ALAN DALE
Vermillion Plain Talk

VERMILLION — It was about food, community and special guests Tuesday evening at the Vermillion Technology Center as the Vermillion Area Chamber & Development Center (VADC) held its annual banquet as it was "Celebrating the YOU in Community." Taking part in the festivities was Gov. Dennis Daugaard, who spent much of the day in Clay County taking part in the banquet but also attending a ribbon-cutting ceremony at Polaris Industries, Inc. Daugaard spoke in front of 240 banquet guests and was introduced by University of South Dakota president Jim Abbott, who was proud to talk about one of his school's most well-known alumni. "(Daugaard) was reelected in 2014 by the largest margin in the history of South Dakota," Abbott said. "Gov. Daugaard relentlessly and tirelessly promotes South Dakota as a great place to expand existing businesses and to start new ones. Under his leadership, South Dakota has enjoyed strong economic growth, and employment currently exceeds pre-recession levels." Daugaard said how he was glad to be back in Vermillion and how impressed he was with his visit earlier in the day at Polaris. "We had a great afternoon and privilege of visiting Polaris prior to coming to this event," Daugaard said. "What (the expansion) says to us is that Polaris is not only impressed with Vermillion and South Dakota to make the investment in that facility, but (also) they are adding more than 50 percent to that facility to make this

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2 DAYS UNTIL
SPRING
#ThinkSpring

Healthy Smiles



COURTESY PHOTO

Dakota Smiles Mobile Dental Program will provide 50 area kids with free dental care this week. This will be the ninth consecutive year that United Way and Volunteer Services of Greater Yankton has brought the Smile Mobile to Yankton.

Dakota Smiles Mobile Dental Program Provides Care For 50 Yankton Students

BY JORDYNNE HART
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Almost every day, the Smile Mobile dental staff sees a child who is in pain because of untreated dental disease. Thanks to a partnership between United Way and Volunteer Services of Greater Yankton and the Dakota Smiles Mobile Dental Program, 50 area kids are receiving free dental care this week. The bus is located at Beadle School. These are children who have been unable to access adequate dental care. "Some kids don't have access to dental care for a number of reasons," Vice President of Public Benefit for Delta Dental Connie Halverson said. "So those kids are the people we aim to help." Through the funding of Delta Dental Philanthropic Fund, Delta Dental of South Dakota partnered with Ronald McDonald House Charities to start operation of

Ronald McDonald Care Mobile — essentially, a dental office on wheels. According to Delta Dental's website, the program supports the mobile outreach with paid staff and volunteer dental professionals who provide care on its two mobile units. "In 2008, we had so many requests from communities to come that we added a second truck and renamed it Dakota Smiles," Halverson said. United Way Administrative and Development Coordinator Tera Bartekoske said this is the ninth consecutive year that the Smile Mobile has come to Yankton. "In order for the bus to come here for the week, there is a cost of \$2,500," she said. "United Way covers the cost." The cost covers the dentist's pay during their week

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ASH Hospital Begins Room Renovations



KELLY HERTZ/P&D

Randy Bylander, planning and facility director at Yankton's Avera Sacred Heart Hospital, stands in an empty fifth-floor hospital room explaining the renovations planned for the floor beginning next week. The \$3.5 million will update the floor's patient accommodations.

BY SHAUNA MARLETTE
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A \$3.5 million, year-long renovation project is starting this week at Yankton's Avera Sacred Heart Hospital (ASHH). The project, which will update patient care rooms on its fifth floor/surgical floor, is being done to improve the hospital's patient care facilities. "We think that this project will make the accommodations much more comfortable for patients, their family and also our staff," said Doug Ekeren, president and CEO of Avera Sacred Heart Hospital. "We will be renovating bathrooms and converting a lot of what used to be semi-private rooms into one-bed rooms in order to meet the expectations of our customers." Currently, ASHH is licensed to house 144 hospital beds. However, Ekeren said the facility is set up currently for 105 beds and after the renovation is completed will offer numbers in the mid-80s. "With the continued shift from in-patient to

outpatient care, we don't see the in-patient utilization rate that we have in the past, so it takes a little pressure off the number of beds we need," he said. "We have been planning this for several years. We must improve our rooms to meet the expectations of our patients. They are requesting private rooms with enhanced amenities, and we can do this in a manner that will also improve patient and staff safety." As part of the renovation project, patient rooms will be re-designed with larger handicap-accessible bathrooms, making them safer for patients and staff. They will also have re-configured headwalls, new furnishings, new windows and an updated call light system. The Surgical Unit will also have new floor and wall coverings in the hallways and nurse's station areas. Ekeren said the improvements that will be seen in the rooms will be similar to those seen in the rooms renovated recently in the

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