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On The Rebound

After Disease And Drought, Deer Numbers Rising

BY ROB NIELSEN

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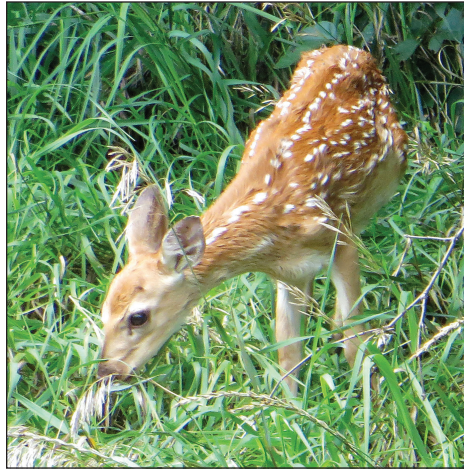
After the 2012 drought set the area's deer back, South Dakota Game, Fish & Parks (GF&P) officials say they're seeing the population in the Yankton region starting to rebound.

Julie DeJong, regional wildlife manager with the GF&P, told the *Press & Dakotan* that there are good signs the population is recovering in the area.

"What we're seeing in a lot of our regions is, we're not seeing the 1:1 ratio of fawns to does," DeJong said. "What we saw last year is a good positive number. We had 1.4 fawns per doe, which is a good ratio. That means at least more than one fawn for every doe is making it to the fall. We also look at data, during that time, on how many bucks there are per doe and what we found in Yankton County last year was for every one buck, there were about three does. That's a good indication of a recovering population."

To judge population trends, GF&P uses harvest data gathered by deer hunters the previous fall. DeJong said the department is looking over those numbers to see if the trend has continued.

"The fawn-to-doe ratio and the buck-to-doe ratio are really good indicators and good signs that the population may be turning around, but right now we haven't been



KELLY HERTZ/P&D

Game, Fish and Parks officials say area deer numbers are recovering after drought and disease whittled down the population three years ago.

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KELLY HERTZ/P&D

Yankton Mayor Dave Carda, right, presents 2014 Citizen of the Year Ben Hanten with a special commemoration during a reception honoring Hanten Saturday at the Yankton Elks Lodge.

Vision Makes Hanten Special

Yankton Businessman, Entrepreneur Honored As Citizen Of The Year

BY ROB NIELSEN

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Ben Hanten has held a number of titles over the year — computer salesman, publisher, editor, entrepreneur, bartender, business owner, "co-founder of ..." and so on.

Saturday, he was officially able to add a new one to his resume: 2014 Citizen of the Year.

Hanten told the gathered audience that one thing that has always driven him is being told something won't work.

"When you start saying that it won't work here, that's when I get a little excited and that's when I want to dig in and help," Hanten said. "I think we're finding more and more people who are thinking that way and it's a lot of fun."

The award was presented to Hanten at the Saturday ceremony and celebrated a number of mentors, friends and colleagues of his at the Yankton Elks Lodge.

A mentor of Hanten's, Lawrence Diggs, said he saw something in Hanten when the honoree was just a teen.

"I met Ben when he was in high school," Diggs said. "I was impressed right from the beginning because he already had this vision of being an entrepreneur. And when I say 'had a vision,' I mean that he was taking something that he knew and making a business out of it. That inspired me to want to be connected with this

HANTEN | PAGE 3



KELLY HERTZ/P&D

Ben Hanten, Yankton's 2014 Citizen of the Year, was honored Saturday during a reception at the Yankton Elks Lodge. Hanten is a local businessman and entrepreneur. The award was sponsored by a coalition of civic organizations. The *Press & Dakotan* was also one of the sponsors.

State Commission May Give More Aid For Roads, Bridges

BY BOB MERCER

State Capitol Bureau

PIERRE — The state Transportation Commission opened talks last week about possibly sending several millions of dollars more to counties and communities for local roads and bridges.

Transportation Secretary Darin Bergquist suggested the commission could add \$500,000 to the striping program that already receives \$500,000.

Bergquist also offered that \$1 million more could be considered for the community access grants program that serves cities with populations under 5,000; and \$1 million more could flow into the agri-business grants program that assists with rural projects.

All of those programs saw funding reduced in recent years by the commission, as the state Department of Transportation took aus-



Marquardt

terity steps to put more money into maintaining the state highway system.

The commission oversees the striping, community access and agri-business assistance as well as another grant program for industrial park projects.

The three grant programs together received \$2 million annually in recent years — \$1 million for community access and \$500,000 apiece for industrial park and agri-business projects — after previously getting \$3.5 million annually.

Bergquist laid out his ideas for restoring more local aid at the commission's meeting Thursday, as he briefed members about the increases in taxes and fees approved by the

ROADS | PAGE 3

Lawmakers Still Sorting Neb. Property Tax Options

BY GRANT SCHULTE

Associated Press

LINCOLN, Neb. — With the session more than half finished, Nebraska lawmakers are still sorting through ways to lower property taxes while balancing the state budget.

Bills slated for debate include personal property tax legislation to benefit businesses and a \$45 million annual increase for the state property tax credit fund, which reduces the amount property owners must pay.

Some say the state can and should do more, but others are tamping down expectations that other property tax measures will be approved this year.

"I think folks would like to see something miraculous, a base-clearing home run rather

TAX | PAGE 11

Sports



MMC Splits With Concordia
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Today



Chat With The P&D Sports Staff From 3:30-4:30 p.m.
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