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INSIDE TODAY

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Local business Profuse Inc. is looking for experienced professionals in the marketing field.

YHS Woksape
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JEREMY HOECK/P&D
Gail Sohler is retiring from Stockman's Livestock in Yankton after 51 years as owner of the business. An open house will be held in his honor on Tuesday.

Sohler Set To Hand Over The Reins

BY JEREMY HOECK
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More than a half-century ago, Gail Sohler purchased a fledgling livestock along East Highway 50 that had once-a-week sales and sub-par facilities.

He was 23 years old at the time. Sohler, now 75, eventually turned Stockmen's Livestock Market into one of the area's most successful auction markets, that attracts buyers and sellers from nearly 200 miles in every direction for 3-day-a-week sales.

"I'm not a bragger, but we've accomplished some really special things here," he said, as he sat down in the big chair behind the desk in his office.

Soon, the former national president of the Livestock Marketing Association will be stepping down. Stockmen's will hold a retirement party Tuesday from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. for Sohler, who will be turning over the management reins to long-time field rep and manager Duane Haberman.

Calling his job one where he "actually gets excited in the morning to come here," Sohler said he has no regrets about his 51-year career that now spans three or four generations of customers.

"I've enjoyed every day I've been here," he said.

Though aspects of the job have changed over the years, from video sales to expanded facilities to new customers, the constant has been Stockmen's knack for top-notch customer service.

"We empower our team members to do whatever it takes to make customers happy," he said. "Does that mean they occasionally make mistakes? Of course. But it's better to make a mistake by being too lenient than it is to alienate someone."

Living by the "golden rule" has always been a focus for Stockmen's, Sohler said.

"I always treat the customer the same way I'd want to be treated," he said. "Trust is so important."

As is consistency. An area he is especially proud of during his career is the Stockmen's staff, most of whom who have served between 20-50 years, Sohler said. Gary Stevens, who works in the office on sale days, has been with the com-

SOHLER | PAGE 3

Three Lessons

Vekich Shares A Trio Of 'Important Things' During Address To University Of South Dakota Graduates

BY DAVID LIAS
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VERMILLION — Saturday's speaker at the 126th spring commencement of the University of South Dakota told graduates he would like them to remember three important things from his speech.

"Important thing number one: You are not special," said Michael M. Vekich shortly before 1,400 candidates for graduation received their diplomas during the morning's ceremony in the DakotaDome.

"You are one of the 1,400 or so students in this graduating class ... For the past 125 years, hard-working, talented, disciplined, creative and passionate students have been graduating from this college," he said. "But you are unique. You are the only person who ever lived that has your exact genetic makeup. You're the only per-

son who has your history. Your life, up to this point, has been lived by no one else. You have one-of-a-kind gifts, and you have learned things and acquired skills and talents that are yours alone."

Vekich is CPA, CEO of Vekich Chartered of Minneapolis and is chair of HF Financial Corp and Home Federal Bank, South Dakota's largest publicly-traded savings bank. He is currently a member of the Board of Trustees, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities.

Previously, he was owner and CEO of Vekich Arkema & Company, a public accounting firm servicing clients in nine foreign countries. In 2008, Vekich was appointed chair of the Governor's 21st Century Tax Reform Commission by Minnesota Gov. Tim Pawlenty. He also served as acting director of the Minnesota State Lottery and as vice chair of the Minnesota Ballpark Authority Commission, which was responsible for the financing



DAVID LIAS/VERMILLION PLAIN TALK
Michael M. Vekich shared three important pieces of advice with the 1,400 candidates for graduation at Saturday's commencement exercises at the University of South Dakota.

and construction of Target Field in downtown Minneapolis.

In 2002, Vekich was a candidate for the nomination

USD | PAGE 15

FUN WITH COLORS



KELLY HERTZ/P&D

This participant in Mount Marty College's "Run In Color" fundraiser Sunday gets some pink powder directly applied to her as she neared the course's finish line in the parking lot of Laddie E. Cimpr Arena. The "Run In Color" event was a benefit event sponsored by MMC's student government to raise funds to purchase new playground equipment for the school's daycare. To see or purchase images from this event, visit spotted.yankton.net.

Bangladesh Death Toll Tops 600

DHAKA, Bangladesh (AP) — More than 600 bodies have been recovered from the garment-factory building that collapsed well over a week ago, police said Sunday as the grim recovery work continued in one of the worst industrial accidents ever.

Police said Sunday night that the death toll had reached 622. Well over 200 bodies have been recovered since Wednesday, when authorities said only 149 people had been listed as missing. The stench of decomposing bodies remains amid the broken concrete of the eight-story Rana Plaza building, and it is anyone's guess how many victims remain to be recovered.

The April 24 disaster is likely the worst garment-factory accident ever, and there have been few industrial accidents of any kind with a higher death toll. It surpassed long-ago garment-indus-

try disasters such as New York's Triangle Shirtwaist factory fire, which killed 146 workers in 1911, and more recent tragedies such as a 2012 fire that killed about 260 people in Pakistan and one in Bangladesh that same year that killed 112.

An architect whose firm designed the building said Sunday that it had not been designed to handle heavy industrial equipment, let alone the three floors that were later illegally added. The equipment used by the five garment factories that occupied Rana Plaza included huge generators that were turned on shortly before the building crumbled.

Masood Reza, an architect with Vastukalpa Consultants, said the building was designed in 2004 as a shopping mall and not for any industrial purpose.

Tyndall Legend Plihal Honored At Dakota Relays

BY JEREMY HOECK
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SIoux FALLS — Sally Plihal's journey back to the Howard Wood Dakota Relays was admittedly "out of the blue."

The former Tyndall track standout had no way of knowing she would be honored this past weekend.

"It was a big shock, really," Plihal said Saturday from Howard Wood Field in Sioux Falls, where was inducted into the Dakota Relays Hall of Fame.

Forty-two years after winning a National Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) women's high jump title, Plihal was suddenly thrust back into her track days.

Now a physician assistant in Omaha, Neb., she was surprised by a phone call a few months ago.

"I was seeing a patient when Bruce Conley (Hall of Fame committee chairman) called," Plihal said. "I had to get back to him, but it made me immediately think about my days in track."

"That was nice to start getting the cobwebs out of mind."

Making the trip to Sioux Falls with her two children, son Robert and daughter Erin, was like a flashback to her days competing for Tyndall High School, Plihal said.

Plihal's family moved to Tyndall in the early 1960's after her father retired from the U.S. Air Force. Though girls' sports were limited at the time, Plihal quickly became a successful track athlete.

At the South Dakota State Track Championships her junior year of high school, Plihal won the 100-meter hurdles, the high jump, long jump and ran a leg on the winning 400-meter relay squad.

Of course, in those days, the sport was held on vastly different surfaces — Tyndall, like many other schools, had a cinder track.

"When we came to Howard Wood, the high jump area was cement," Plihal said. "You couldn't



JEREMY HOECK/P&D

Sally Plihal, who won the National Amateur Athletic Union women's high jump title in 1971, was inducted into the Dakota Relays Hall of Fame in Sioux Falls Saturday.

use spikes or anything, you had to use tennis shoes. It was different competing in that kind of a situation."

Deciding to concentrate fully on the high jump, Plihal went on to win the AAU Junior Nationals and the AAU Junior Olympics. The summer of her junior year, in 1970, she claimed first place in the national AAU high jump in California — a title that earned her a spot on the United States Track and Field team.

Later that summer, Plihal traveled to Germany, Romania and Russia to compete. The following year, in 1971, she won the indoor National AAU high jump at Madison Square Garden in New York City.

It was a busy few years for her, but Plihal said she put everything she had into those events.

"When I had trained, everything was for that moment, so I prepared mentally and physically, and even spiritually, for that one event," she

PLIHAL | PAGE 15

This Flash Mob Rules!

Geocache Enthusiasts Bring Force To Meridian Bridge

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF
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On a bridge not far away, a gathering of intergalactic proportions took place Saturday.

Around 50 persons, some of them resembling Darth Vader, met on the lower deck of Meridian Bridge at Yankton.

There, in the cold winds blowing across the Missouri River, they formed a circle in the middle of the bridge. They pulled out their lasers at high noon and engaged in a battle of Star Wars — or, at least, air wars.

In the end, no Jedi was harmed, but the

group's members were held hostage — to their rounds of laughter as they formed a "flash mob" at the fun-filled science-fiction event.

Yankton resident Will Dangler noted the event's timing and its play on the Star Wars phrase, "May The Force Be With You."

"You check the date, and it's May 4," he explained. "So we say, 'May The Fourth Be With You.'"

Saturday's flash mob arose from a geocaching weekend organized by Dangler and his

MOB | PAGE 15