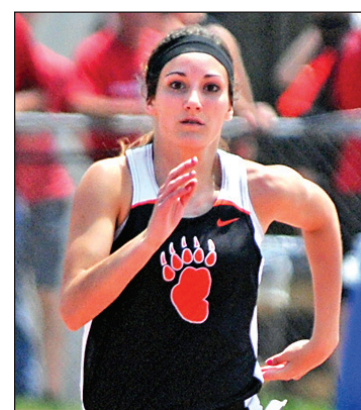




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*"In case you've already forgotten, I was Al Neuharth"*

## Celebrated Spirit

### Neuharth's Life And Legacy Remembered At USD Tribute

BY TRAVIS GULBRANDSON  
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VERMILLION — Al Neuharth is remembered around the world as a legend in the field of journalism for his founding of the *USA Today* among other achievements.

Those who gathered to celebrate his life on Friday morning were reminded of something Neuharth always remembered throughout his life and career — his roots in South Dakota.

Colleagues, friends and acquaintances gathered at AalFs Auditorium on the University of South Dakota campus to pay tribute to the Eureka native, who died April 19 at his home in Florida.

**"I did OK as a newspaper guy in Miami, and then nationwide after that, but I never lost my love for the sacred soil of South Dakota."**

AL NEUHARTH

Neuharth himself was on hand — via a pre-recorded videotape.

"In case you've already forgotten, I was Al Neuharth," he told the crowd.

"I did OK as a newspaper guy in Miami, and then nationwide after that, but I never lost my love for the sacred soil of South Dakota," he added.

Those who knew and worked with him confirm this.

Jack Marsh, president of the Al Neuharth Media Center, described Neuharth as being "South Dakota through and through."

"His first directive to me as a new employee was to create reasons for him and his young family to leave Florida and visit South Dakota for what he called 'reality checks,'" Marsh said.

Neuharth often returned to the state a half-dozen times each year, often bringing along family members.

"In South Dakota, we were familiar with a relaxed and unpretentious Al Neuharth," Marsh said. "He always insisted on taking the wheel, pumping his own gas and setting his own pace. When he wasn't in a hurry, he got off the interstate and took the back roads. As he surveyed the vast, open landscapes and the spectacular prairie sky, he regaled the children and other passengers with stories about growing up in the '30s, '40s and early '50s. ...

"It's like a breath of fresh air here," Al once told a television audience. "South Dakotans are the real thing. They can tell when the emperor has no clothes on. South Dakotans behave with each other, know each other and care for each other."

Sen. John Thune agreed, adding, "Al was from a different generation than I was, but I think he never forgot where he was from ... and that matters. And, it always came across."

"With Al, what you saw was what you got," Thune said. "He was authentic to the core. There was nothing phony about him, and I always



People who gathered Friday morning in AalFs Auditorium on the USD campus to celebrate the life of newspaper legend and 1950 USD alumnus Al Neuharth were greeted, at the program's opening, by a video message from Neuharth himself. He posthumously addressed audience members with a video segment taped before his death. Neuharth, the founder of *SoDak Sports*, *USA TODAY*, *Freedom Forum* and the *Newseum*, and died at his Cocoa Beach, Fla., home on April 19. He was 89.

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KELLY HERTZ/P&D  
Gasoline prices in parts of the Midwest have skyrocketed in recent weeks, with some pumps in Yankton reaching \$4 a gallon for regular unleaded for the first time ever.

## Up, Up And Away

### Gas Prices Roar Through The Roof

BY NATHAN JOHNSON  
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With gas prices in the region rising faster than temperatures in recent weeks — and heating up some tempers — a AAA South Dakota official said the situation is unlike any he has ever seen.

"It chills you to the bone," said Chuck Mai, a spokesperson for AAA South Dakota. "This is the time of year when prices are supposed to be coming down. Even with Memorial Day and the summer driving season right around the corner, this is typically the time of year when prices moderate."

"The one thing I've learned after 26 years of watching gas prices is that I don't know anything," he added. "The rule book is being re-written every day. A new set of factors will influence the price tomorrow that were not in play last week."

The average price of a gallon of unleaded gasoline in Yankton has risen 32 cents in the last week and 62 cents in the last two weeks.

According to a story this week in *USA Today*, gas prices in Iowa, Minnesota, Mis-

souri and Wisconsin are also rising. In Yankton, the price of a gallon of regular unleaded gasoline rose from \$3.49 to \$3.55 in the last week, according to AAA.

"It's a fine way to cap off his high school career, which officially comes to a close Sunday at the annual YHS commencement at the Summit Activities Center."

"The process starts out by students taking the PSAT (preliminary SAT)

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KELLY HERTZ/P&D  
Graduating Yankton High School senior Jacob Bies was recently named a National Merit Scholar.

YHS Graduation

## Bies' Hard Work Makes Him Merit Scholar

BY ANDREW ATWAL  
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YHS graduating senior Jacob Bies said he wouldn't be where he is today without the staff at Yankton High School.

Bies was recently named a National Merit Scholar and received a \$2,500 scholarship. In addition, he also received the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Chancellor's scholarship, which covers his full tuition.

It's a fine way to cap off his high school career, which officially comes to a close Sunday at the annual YHS commencement at the Summit Activities Center.

"The process starts out by students taking the PSAT (preliminary SAT)

exam," said Jacob's father, Marc Bies, a counselor at YHS. "The National Merit group identifies the top 50,000 PSAT scorers. Commended students are the top 34,000, while the other 16,000 are considered national merit semifinalists."

As a national merit semifinalist, Jacob also had to take the SAT exam to confirm his PSAT score. He also had to complete an application that showed his school provided academic rigor, a recommendation from a staff member, an essay and a list of extra-curricular activities.

"I had to write a 500 word essay about someone who inspired me," Jacob said. "I chose to write about my grandmother, who died about a year ago. I wrote about her and her impacts on my life."

He added that the entire application process, which began at the beginning of his senior year, was a little bit stressful.

"It was a lot of work for me," Jacob said. "I had to compile a resume, fill out all of my extra-curricular activities and just make sure I had everything done for the application."

He noted that writing the essay was a long process, but was able to have an English teacher at YHS look over the essay to make sure he had everything he needed.

"Mr. Crandall and Ms. Kuhl were instrumental in filling out the academic rigor and demographics forms," Marc

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## Effort To Aid Handicapped Rolls Into Yankton

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF  
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On her trips to Guatemala, Shelli Masek sees the agony suffered by local residents who can't walk because of disease or deformity.

"They have no way of getting around. They just crawl along the ground," the Sioux Falls woman said.

Masek sees and learns of similar situations around the world. She helps alleviate their suffering as coordinator of volunteers and donations for Hope Haven International Ministries. Since 1995, the Sioux Falls-based ministry has provided wheelchairs for destitute persons around the globe.

The ministry collects used wheelchairs, which are refurbished by prison inmates through Pheasantland Industries in Sioux Falls and then shipped globally.

Now, a Yankton business and organization are helping those persons experience the personal freedom of mobility so taken for granted by most persons.

On Friday, Karl's Appliances in Yankton provided a collection point for used wheelchairs and other items. Currently, 23 Karl's stores in six states are participating in the project.

"It's not only the wheelchairs but also walkers and crutches. We have even got some foot pads," said store manager Ray Sparks.

"Some of the people we talked to, they said the wheelchairs broke down and they didn't know how to repair them or what to do with them."

The first donations came not only from Yankton but also from outlying communities such as Fordyce, Neb., Sparks said. The initial contributors were individuals, but area hospitals and nursing homes have been con-

tacted about future donations, he said.

Sparks believes the donations will grow through word of mouth and through publicity such as the *Press & Dakotan* article.

The need is great and steadily growing, Sparks said. "In 2012, (Hope Haven) shipped more than 5,600 wheelchairs to 106 countries all over the world."

Friday's collection provided important momentum, but the local work has just begun, he said.

"This was more of a kickoff than anything else," he said of Friday's collection. "This (project) hasn't ended. We will continue taking donations every day, then send the wheelchairs and other items each Thursday on our trucks to Sioux Falls."

Meanwhile, the Yankton Rotary was asked to assist

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CATHY SUDBECK/P&D  
Yankton Rotary members and Karl's Appliance employees prepare the initial shipment of wheelchairs eventually bound for the rest of the world. Present for Friday's collection were (from left) Hollie Hallberg and Jim Danner of Karl's, Mike Healy of Rotary, Ray Sparks of Karl's, and Simon Fuller and Matt Hanson of Rotary.