



Warmer With Late Storms

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Area Stars Shine At State Track Meet • **8**

YANKTON DAILY PRESS & DAKOTAN



Bon Homme Falls In State Baseball Final • **8**

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McCain Visits Syrian Rebels

EU Officials Lift Arms Embargo On Opposition Forces

BY SUZANNE GAMBOA
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Sen. John McCain, a proponent of arming Syrian rebels, quietly slipped into Syria for a meeting with anti-government fighters Monday.

Spokeswoman Rachael Dean confirms the Arizona Republican made the visit. She declined further comment about the trip.

The visit took place amid meetings in Paris involving efforts to secure participation of

Syria's fractured opposition in an international peace conference in Geneva.

And in Brussels, the European Union decided late Monday to lift the arms embargo on the Syrian opposition while maintaining all other sanctions against Bashar Assad's regime after June 1, British Foreign Secretary William Hague said following the meeting.

Two years of violence in Syria has killed more than 70,000 people. President Barack Obama has demanded that Assad leave power, while Russia has stood by Syria, its closest ally in the Arab world.

McCain has been a fierce critic of Obama administration policy there while stopping short of backing U.S. ground troops in Syria, but he supports aggressive military steps against the Assad regime.

Gen. Salem Idris, chief of the Supreme Military Council of the Free Syrian Army, accompanied McCain across the Turkey-Syria border. McCain met with leaders of the Free Syrian Army from across the country, who asked him for increased U.S. support, including heavy weapons, a no-fly zone and airstrikes on Syrian government and Hezbollah forces, according to The Daily Beast, which first reported the senator's unannounced visit.

The White House declined to comment late Monday.

A State Department official said the department was aware of McCain crossing into Syrian territory on Monday. Further questions were referred to McCain's office.

Last Tuesday, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee voted to provide weapons to rebels in Syria, as well as military training to vetted rebel groups and sanctions against anyone who sells oil or transfers arms to the Assad regime. McCain is a member of the committee.



District 18 Rep. Bernie Hunhoff (D-Yankton) was the featured speaker during Monday's Memorial Day service held at Yankton's Fantie Memorial Park.

Honoring Heroes

Yankton Ceremony Honors War Sacrifices

BY ANDREW ATWAL
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District 18 state representative Bernie Hunhoff said he was "honored" to give the keynote speech at the annual Yankton VFW Memorial Day program Monday, and he spoke of those who died for their nation with the highest honors.

Specifically, Hunhoff spoke about stories of the soldiers from South Dakota and the patriotism the state displays.

"This is a day we need to remember the soldiers that didn't return home from war," he told the crowd at Memorial Park. "During the battles South Dakota soldiers have fought in, the state has lost around 3,000 soldiers in wars."

Hunhoff added that it's up to the rest of us — teachers, family members, friends and community members — to tell the stories of soldiers who did not return home from war.

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REP. BERNIE HUNHOFF

"There are no stories more telling about us as a people than the stories of soldiers who have served overseas," he said. "George McGovern, for example, served in World War II as a bomber pilot and flew around 35 bombing missions. After the war ended, he could have come home im-

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More Rain Swamps Parts Of S. Dakota

Flash Flooding Reported After Two Nights Of Storms

From P&D and AP Reports

SIOUX FALLS — More overnight thunderstorms brought heavy rain to Sioux Falls and other areas of southeastern South Dakota, inundating an area already dealing with flash flooding.

The Sioux Falls airport received 1.25 inches of rain by Monday morning, but gauges on the city's outskirts reported amounts as high as 2.8 inches, said Mike Gillispie, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service office in Sioux Falls.

The heaviest amounts from Sunday evening and early Monday were reported to the south between Canton and Beresford and east to Sioux Center, Iowa, with totals ranging from 3 inches to more than 6 inches. Between 3 and 5 inches fell in parts of Sioux Falls the previous night.

Gillispie said the weather service hadn't received reports of homes being overtaken by flooding, but residents have been dealing with basement flooding and pooling of water in lowland areas.

"Everything's ponding up," he told The Associated Press. "It all just came too quick."

Much of the Yankton area missed out on the flooding, but did receive a healthy dose of rain Sunday night and Monday morning. Yankton officially received .83 of an inch of rain as of Monday morning, and the Yankton airport recorded 1.02 inches. Centerville topped area readings with 3.30 inches late Sunday night. Other area totals included: Tyndall, 1.75 inches; Vermillion, 1.12; Pickstown, .68; and Mitchell, .41.

RAIN | PAGE 3



KELLY HERTZ/P&D
A fleet of kayaks at Riverside Park prepared to race Friday night on the eve of the annual South Dakota Kayak Challenge. More than 140 kayakers from across the country competed in the 72-mile trek Saturday that ran from Yankton to Sioux City, Iowa.

Kayakers Revel In River Challenge

BY ANDREW ATWAL
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More than 140 kayakers from across the country were in Yankton this weekend for a 72-mile journey down the Missouri River to Sioux City.

The South Dakota Kayak Challenge, in its fourth year, began Saturday morning at 7 a.m. at Riverside Park, and racers had until Sunday afternoon to finish the challenge.

"It's a wonderful opportunity for our team to show off the beauty of the Missouri River," said Jarett Bies, co-founder of the challenge. "The area we hold the kayak race is one of the most scenic and beautiful stretches of the

river. It's a great opportunity for people to come and experience that beauty first hand."

The first South Dakota Kayak Challenge took place in 2010, and Bies said the event has been growing ever since.

"The South Dakota Department of Tourism took note of a kayaking event in Missouri and approached Steven Dahlmeier (the co-founder of the event) and to ask us if we could put together and comparable event in South Dakota," Bies said. "We want to continue to make these events safe and open to everyone. We don't have any time cut-offs for checkpoints like some races do. Anyone from a beginner to a hard-core paddler can come out and

make the event their own."

He added that he has been kayaking for about 15 years and said one of the things he loves about it is the tranquility and that you can get to places on the river you can't reach with a boat.

"It's also very intimate in that you're only a few inches off the surface of the water," Bies said. "You don't get that with a boat or Jet Ski. It's physically intense, but it's also very rewarding and the opportunity to explore either a small stream or huge river is very appealing to me."

KAYAK | PAGE 3

Calif. Wildfire Forces Evacuations

SANTA BARBARA, Calif. (AP) — A wildfire forced more than 1,000 people, including Memorial Day campers, to evacuate the mountains of California's Santa Barbara County, officials said.

The fire broke out about 2:45 p.m. Monday in Los Padres National Forest about 15 miles north of Santa Barbara and quickly surged to 700 acres amid winds of about 20 mph, U.S. Forest Service officials said.

The fire was threatening about 50 homes, many of them cabins and vacation rentals, and 50 to 75 residents had evacuated, county fire Capt. David Sadecki said.

Paradise Road and the many camp-

grounds along it were closed, forcing about 1,000 campers to evacuate, Sadecki said.

A U.S. Forest Service garage and two vehicles had burned, he said.

The American Red Cross set up an evacuation center at Santa Barbara City College and another was set up for horses stalled in the area's many stables.

The National Weather Service said the winds may get worse as night falls, but fire officials said they may also get help from the weather.

"We're hoping the temperatures drop and the humidity rises," Sadecki said.



MAY MARCH IN YANKTON

Numerous protesters marched from the Meridian Bridge, to Broadway and through historic downtown Yankton Saturday as part of the March Against Monsanto. Marches took place in 36 countries Saturday. Protesters said they wanted to bring attention to the dangers from genetically modified food and the companies that produce it. (Andrew Atwal/P&D)

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