



Cool And Mostly Sunny

9 a.m.: **50** | 3 p.m.: **59**

FORECAST DETAILS: PAGE 2A

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**Yankton Woman's
Interest Leads To
Book About Local
Cemeteries**
RIVER CITY

It's Only A Test

Local Emergency Workers Learn From Tornado Exercise

BY NATHAN JOHNSON
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With the recent rash of tornadoes in Nebraska, local emergency responders felt the urgency to learn from a full-scale exercise Thursday.

The Yankton County Office of Emergency Management and the Bon Homme Office of Emergency Management collaborated for a scenario that involved Utica and Yankton being hit by tornadoes in Yankton County, and Springfield and Tyndall undergoing the same onslaught in Bon Homme County.

More than 50 people representing more than a dozen agencies from the two counties were at the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) near Eighth Street and Douglas Avenue in Yankton Thursday to take part in the training opportunity.

"Things are going well," said Yankton County Emergency Management Director Paul Scherschligt during a break from the day-long exercise. "The EOC is fully operational. The command staff is trying to get responders all the resources they need. We are currently keeping up with it."

In Yankton, the path of the tornado was south of Memorial Park and included the Yankton County 4-H grounds, where an event involving hundreds of people had been taking place. The extent of the injuries was not yet clear, Scherschligt stated of the scenario.

In Bon Homme County, the Springfield tornado had hit the Mike Durfee State Prison.

"Mike Durfee is a medium-security prison," said Megan Winckler, the public information officer for the Bon Homme County Office of Emergency Management, during a mock press conference. "There is a possibility that injured prisoners could be leaving the scene."



KELLY HERTZ/P&D
Emergency responders from Yankton and Bon Homme counties took part in a full-scale exercise Thursday in which several area communities were struck by tornadoes and received significant damage. In this photo, officials look over a large-scale model being used to represent Yankton. The shredded paper marks the path of the tornado. The model allows responders at the emergency operations center to better visualize the disaster and how to respond to it.

TEST | PAGE 11A

Cool, Wet Weather Ahead?

Odds Of El Nino Impact Forecasts For Region

BY DEREK BARTOS
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The region could be looking at a cooler and wetter-than-normal summer, according to information presented by weather forecasters during a media webinar Thursday.

The latest forecast models from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Climate Prediction Center show an increased chance of below-average temperatures and above-average precipitation for southeast South Dakota and northeast Nebraska throughout short-term and long-term outlooks, which extend through August. The data was provided during this month's Midwest and Great Plains Climate and Drought Update Webinar.

Presenter Jim Angel, Illinois state climatologist, said the forecasts are likely due to the beginning effects of El Nino conditions, which the region is expected to experience later this year.

The El Nino phenomenon occurs as the result of fluctuations in the equatorial Pacific Ocean, causing variations in climate patterns around the world. Historically, much of the Midwest and Great Plains have experienced cooler and wetter weather during El Nino events.

Angel said the current odds of an El Nino occurring exceed 65 percent by summer and remain high for the rest of the year. However, the strength of the event is unknown.

"It's not an exact science to forecast El Nino — sometimes nature can throw you a curveball — but at least at this point in time, the odds are pretty good we're going to see one," he said.

Angel added that there is some indication that the El Nino could be an early-peaking event, as well.

While the historical effects of El Nino are considered in the Climate Prediction Center's forecasts, the weather officials stressed that nothing is certain at this point.

"The thing to remember about El Nino is that each one kind of has its own personality," Angel said. "The effects can be varied from one to the next, so it's not always clear-cut how it's going to play out."

WEATHER | PAGE 11A

Woodward Named YHS Teacher Of The Year

BY ROB NIELSEN
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Yankton High School (YHS) teacher Leasa Woodward has enjoyed her 14-year tenure teaching in Yankton. Last week her contributions to education were recognized when she was given the Lewis & Clark Specialty Hospital Teacher of the Year award.

Woodward, who's taught American government and sociology for six years at YHS, said the award means a lot to her.

"It's very overwhelming" Woodward said. "It's a great honor, especially when I

know how good so many of my colleagues are at what they do."

According to Woodward, the award is voted on by the senior class and requires that a teacher have taught for at least five years at YHS.

She said the award means even more since it was decided by a student vote.

"To have the students vote on it, it's extremely meaningful to get positive feedback from them," she said.

YHS principal Jennifer Johnke said Woodward's abilities go far beyond teaching.

"She does a fantastic job, not only in teaching the curriculum but also connecting with the students," Johnke said. "She reaches them by connecting the content in the classroom to real-world experiences. She makes it realistic to them and makes it so they can understand and take that with them as they go off into their careers, college and beyond."

Woodward, a 1993 graduate of Hurley High School, began her career in Clark, South Dakota, before coming to Yankton



KELLY HERTZ/P&D
Leasa Woodward was named the Yankton High School teacher of the year last week.

TEACHER | PAGE 11A

Sacred Heart Accolades

Sacred Heart Middle School student Courtney Wenande (left) and Lynn Hiltunen of the Dakota Dance Association pose for a photo after Wenande was presented with the Brianne Cox Memorial Scholarship during Sacred Heart's annual Awards Day program Thursday morning. The program recognized the various academic and extracurricular accomplishments of the Sacred Heart students during the school year now ending. To see or purchase images from this event, visit spotted.yankton.net. (Kelly Hertz/P&D)



South Dakota's GOP Senate Candidates Meet In TV Debate

VERMILLION (AP) — Five Republicans running for U.S. Senate sparred over health care, the budget deficit and Mike Rounds' record as governor in a debate seen statewide.

South Dakota Public Broadcasting carried Thursday evening's forum on television and online.

It was the second debate among Rounds, state lawmakers Larry Rhoden and Stace Nelson, attorney and Army Reserves Maj. Jason

Ravnsborg and physician Annette Bosworth.

Nelson accused Rounds of supporting the Affordable Care Act and benefiting financially from it. Rounds said that wasn't true — that he opposed it as governor and would seek to repeal it in Washington.

The five meet in the June 3 primary and the winner will be on the November ballot against Democrat Rick Weiland and independents Larry Pressler, Gordon Howie and Clayton Walker.

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TOMORROW: Two YHS Seniors Ready To Join Ivy League Next Year

YANKTON RECYCLING THIS WEEK:
NORTH
OF 15TH STREET