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Area Golfers Gear Up For
Postseason Action • **13**



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ROB NIELSEN/P&D

From left: Jay Harmelink, Neal LaCroix and Marlin LaCroix stand in what will soon become the Meridian Bridge RV Resort. Harmelink and the LaCroixs are building an RV park near the Nebraska side of the Meridian Bridge that aims to boost the number of available camping spaces in the area, help Yankton's local economy and do it all while preserving the natural surroundings.

A Camping Opportunity By Meridian

RV Resort Aims To Boost Local Economy, Preserve Setting

BY ROB NIELSEN
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For years, Jay Harmelink has been looking for the right opportunity to make his own contribution to the region's robust camping industry on his own land — and thanks to a new partnership, the vision of a new camping option in the

"We feel that it's going to really affect the downtown people," he said. "It's going to bring people in. I feel it'll open up shops, more eateries in the downtown area because of the accessibility. I think it's going to be a big plus for them."

MARLIN LACROIX

come along that had the same ideas as I did." Enter Marlin LaCroix of Yankton's LaCroix Construction — who has been responsible for building and adding on to a number of RV parks in the region — who partnered up with Harmelink to help him build what is hoped to become the largest RV resort in the area.

If you've ventured to the Nebraska end of the Meridian Bridge since February, you've probably noticed an uptick in construction activity off to the east of the bridge. This is the future location of the Meridian Bridge RV Resort.

Neal LaCroix of LaCroix Construction said the goal is for

Yankton area is beginning to take shape a short walk from downtown across the Meridian Bridge. "The idea has always been there, it's been there for years, but it's a big project of getting the land ready to utilize it properly for camping," he said. "It's just been there waiting for the right opportunity. ... I was waiting for the right guy to

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Rescue: 'First, We Prayed ...'



ROB NIELSEN/P&D

Dulce Vite (left) and Daniel Deanda (right) of South Sioux City, Nebraska, are shown in a room at Yankton's Avera Sacred Heart Hospital Monday — lucky to be alive. The two were involved in a Jet Ski accident Sunday that left them stranded in Lewis & Clark Lake for nearly four hours before rescue.

Jet Skiers Thankful Following Incident

BY ROB NIELSEN
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A windy day nearly spelled disaster for two jet skiers on Lewis & Clark Lake Sunday.

Daniel Deanda, 23, and Dulce Vite, 23, both of South Sioux City, Nebraska, were in Yankton enjoying a family gathering and trying out a new Jet Ski when the two became stranded on the lake for nearly four harrowing hours in rapidly deteriorating water conditions. They were subsequently rescued and taken to Avera Sacred Heart Hospital battling hypothermia, but otherwise in good condition. On Monday, they sat down with the *Press & Dakotan* to talk about the ordeal.

"We were all taking turns riding the jet skis and we went last," Vite said.

At the time, the wind started picking up and water

conditions on the lake were beginning to deteriorate, according to Vite.

"As we were going in, it was kind of windy — the waves were a little bit high," she said. "The waves were getting worse, so we were just going to turn around and go back."

For most of the day, the winds had been light and southerly, but then shifted to the north — becoming much stronger and bringing in colder temperatures.

And then something went terribly wrong.

"When I turned around to go back, our jet ski flipped and fell on top of us," she said. "We got it to flip it over ... but the Jet Ski didn't turn on. So we were out stuck in the middle (of the lake), it wouldn't turn on and it had a lot of water in it so it was sinking down. We were with it for a

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Haas Family Hires Private Detective

By The Associated Press

The family of a Yankton woman slain nearly a quarter century ago is making a renewed effort to find her killer.

The body of Tammy Haas was found 23 years ago in a ravine along a Nebraska highway just across the South Dakota border. Nineteen years ago, a jury found her boyfriend not guilty of manslaughter.

The *Argus Leader* reports that Haas' family last month hired private detectives to work on the case, using \$24,000 raised through social media. The Facebook page "Justice for Tammy Haas" has grown to more than 5,000 followers. Also in April, "Dateline NBC" listed the slaying in its "Cold Case Spotlight."

Mother Nancy Haas says the family hopes someone with knowledge of the case will come forward with information.

Yankton Moms Share Unique Honor



COURTESY PHOTO

Lynn Starzl (left) and Elizabeth (Starzl) Koerner share more than a mother-daughter bond. The Yankton women won the respective 2015 Mother of the Year and Young Mother of the Year titles and are believed to be one of the few — if not the only — mother and daughter to win state titles at the same time and both advance to the American Mothers, Inc., national competition.

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF
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Lynn Starzl and Elizabeth (Starzl) Koerner share more than the usual mother-daughter bond.

The Yankton women won the respective 2015 "South Dakota Mother of the Year" and "South Dakota Young Mother of the Year" titles from American Mothers Inc., The organization honors mothers, with its roots dating back to the Civil War.

Starzl and Koerner recently returned from Washington, D.C., where they represented the state in the national competition. A mother and daughter winning state titles in the same year was apparently one for the record books, Koerner said.

"As far as I know, it's never happened before," she said. "There have been years where the mother won it one year and the daughter won it another year. But I don't believe it has ever happened in the 80-year history of this contest where the mother and daughter were nominated at the national level in the same year."

Starzl, 61, and Koerner, 34, will be hon-

ored during an open house from 2-4 p.m. Sunday — appropriately, Mother's Day — at the Lewis & Clark Resort and Lodge. The lodge is located on Highway 52 four miles west of Yankton.

The open house is free and open to the public, with a short program at 3 p.m. Visitors can use the marina entrance.

WINNING THE STATE CONTEST

Because South Dakota doesn't sponsor an American Mothers chapter, Starzl and Koerner were nominated by Joyce Stevens of rural Crofton, Nebraska. Stevens holds a unique perspective, not only as a good friend of the Yankton women but also as Nebraska's "Mother of the Year" in 2012 and a current member of the American Mothers national board.

For good measure, Sunday's open house will feature music by Jan Schiferl of rural Fordyce, Nebraska — the Nebraska Mother of the Year in 2013.

Stevens and her daughter accompanied Starzl and Koerner to Washington for

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