



Isolated Thunderstorms

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Will Yankton County Ride The Rails?



Toby Morris (left) Dougherty and Company and Brian McGinnis (right) of Planning & Development District III speak Wednesday night at a public hearing for a proposed Yankton County regional rail authority.

KELLY HERTZ/P&D

Obama Visits As First SD Tech Scholarships Are Awarded

BY REGINA GARCIA CANO
Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS — President Barack Obama is slated to speak this week at the commencement ceremony of a South Dakota technical school just months after he unveiled a proposal to make two years of community or technical college education “as free and universal as high school.”

While the president’s \$60 billion initiative has not gained traction in Washington, South Dakota has begun its own effort, in partnership with a wealthy state businessman, to funnel more students into schools that can teach them the technical skills employers increasingly demand.

Through the Build Dakota Scholarship Program, the state’s four public technical schools began taking applications for free college rides in February. So far, at least 260 of the more than 900 applicants have been awarded a financial aid package that includes free tuition, books and any materials required by their degree.

“Helping students with their financial costs and financial burdens to get back to school is a key piece,” said Mike Cartney, president of Lake Area Technical Institute in Watertown, where Obama will speak Friday. “Probably one of the biggest obstacles to getting a higher education it’s the cost”

Philanthropist T. Denny Sanford kicked in a \$25 million donation to help fund the program, and the amount is being matched by the state. Students interested in pursuing a degree in eight “high-need” areas — including automotive, building trades and construction, medical lab technicians and welding — are eligible to apply for a scholarship. In return, students agree to work in their chosen field for three years in South Dakota upon graduation.

Of the nearly 320 scholarship applications Lake Area has received, about 70 people received one and at least 38 have committed to starting school in the fall. One of those people is 40-year-old Teresa Peterson, who will pursue a licensed practical nurse degree.

The scholarship will allow the mother of three from Garrison, North Dakota, to take classes at Lake Area at the same time that her teenage daughter will start college in Bismarck. The scholarships are open to incoming out-of-state college students.

“As I get older and my kids are going off to school, I just got this nagging feeling that I never went to school,” Peterson said. “I started a family first and started working and I never got the opportunity to go to school and have a degree. My daughter has received \$24,000 in scholarships herself but that only pays for one year, so it will be very nice only having to worry about one of us in school.”



Obama

OBAMA | PAGE 14

Public Hears Facts About Rail Authority Proposal

BY ROB NIELSEN
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A Yankton County regional rail authority has a long ways to go before becoming a reality — but Wednesday served as an opportunity to move the idea forward.

The Yankton County Commission invited members of the public and officials from interested parties — such as Planning & Development District III and the Napa-Platte Regional Rail Authority — to comment on the county’s proposal to start its own rail authority.

Among those speaking at the forum Wednesday was Toby Morris of Dougherty and Company, who said that being a part of a regional rail authority gives

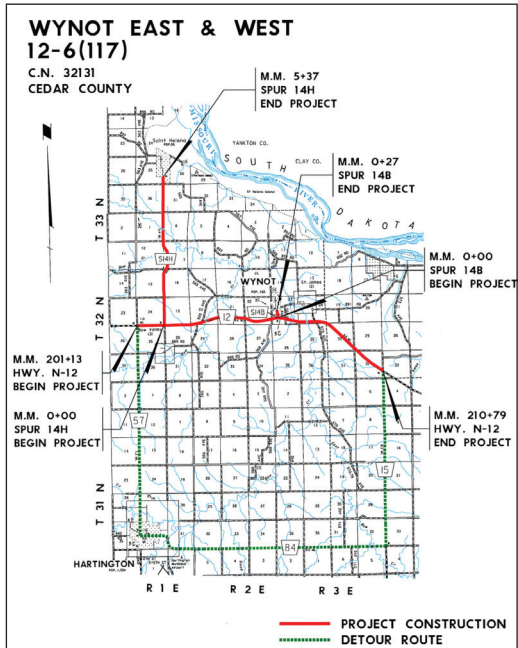
development in the included area a leg up.

“Those that have an authority are those that are one step further ahead when it comes to economic development,” Morris said. “This is just another tool in your toolbox.”

Brian McGinnis, community development specialist with Planning & Development District III, said these authorities constitute their own political body with regards to rail issues.

“South Dakota state law allows the formation of regional rail authorities and they are, in essence, a political subdivision of the state of South Dakota,” McGinnis said. “Political subdivisions may exercise powers as enabled by state law and as approved by the members of the board. They’re very similar to a city, county or any local

PROPOSAL | PAGE 14



This map shows the planned construction and detours for the proposed road and bridge work in the Wynot area.

MAP COURTESY OF NDOR

Our Towns | Knox County

Wynot Open House To Examine Road Project

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF
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WYNOT, Neb. — The Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR) will host an open house Tuesday to provide information on proposed projects in the Wynot area.

The open house will be held from 4-6 p.m. at the Wynot village office, located at 423 St. James Avenue in Wynot. The public is encouraged to attend the event.

“It’s a chance for the public to look at the plans and ask questions as well as get their comments,” said Rob Davis, district assistant construction engineer with the NDOR office in Norfolk.

The open house will cover the proposed

WYNOT | PAGE 14

Time To Dance

Dancers with Yankton’s Academy of Dance rehearsed Wednesday at the YHS/Summit Activities Center theatre for this weekend’s annual spring performance. This year, dancers will present the program “Dancing Through Time.” Showtimes are Friday at 7 p.m. and Saturday at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. To see more images from this event, visit www.yankton.net/. (Kelly Hertz/P&D)



SD National Guard Airmen To Be Deployed To S. Korea

SIOUX FALLS, (AP) — About 250 airmen from the South Dakota Air National Guard are deploying to South Korea.

The National Guard says the airmen from the 114th Fighter Wing gathered on Sunday for a mobilization ceremony at Joss Foss Field in Sioux Falls.

The airmen are deploying to the country in support of a rotational Theater Security Package to the region.

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TOMORROW: Yankton Children’s Choir Welcomes New Director

YANKTON RECYCLING FOR THIS WEEK
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OF 15TH STREET