

Noem

From Page 1

prove particularly challenging with the current budget woes, she said.

The impact of Army restructuring has already been announced for Yankton-based Charlie Battery.

Maj. Gen. Timothy Reisch, the adjutant general for South Dakota, spoke of the cuts during a recent interview with the Press & Dakotan. The 1st Battalion, 147th Field Artillery — which includes Charlie Battery — will lose 110 slots under Army restructuring, which goes into effect Sept. 1, 2012.

The reduction of 110 slots represents nearly 25 percent of the battalion's manpower, he said.

"You have a battalion with 479 slots, and you're taking 110 of them out," he said. "Any time you lose that many slots out of a battalion, there is going to be an impact."

"But I tell you, this isn't the first time there has been reorganization, and the Guard has always taken its time (in making decisions) and conditioned itself in a fair and consistent manner."

Reisch emphasized a South Dakota National Guard (SDNG) unit will remain in Yankton and retain its armory. However, the local unit will change its Charlie Battery name.

In terms of downsizing around the state, 16 different units are impacted by manpower cuts, Reisch said. The 1/147 is followed closely by the 139th Brigade, which is losing 104 slots.

Among area units, the 153rd Engineer Battalion is losing 11 slots, while

the 730th Area Support Medical Company of Vermillion is losing two slots, he said.

The SDNG will do its best to reorganize with minimal upheaval, Reisch said. "We will do it in such a manner as we take care of our soldiers to the best extent possible," he said.

The 1/147 will continue working with the Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS), Reisch said. The battalion will change from its current three firing batteries, each with six launchers, to two firing batteries with eight launchers each.

The reduction to two firing batteries can mean more soldiers will be seeking fewer available promotions, Reisch said.

The SDNG will continue fulfilling its dual role of a state mission while playing an active role in the war on terror, Reisch said. The SDNG has deployed more than 4,500 Army Guard members and more than 1,500 Air Guard members.

At the present time, Charlie Battery is not slated for another deployment, he said. However, the 730th Area Support Medical Company of Vermillion was recently notified it will deploy in July to Afghanistan for Operation Enduring Freedom.

The 730th and its 75 assigned members provide medical services.

"In my 5 1/2 months as adjutant general, we have had six mobilizations," he said. "And eight more units have been identified for deployment by the summer of 2013."

On the other hand, some units slated for deployment could be told to stand down as the situation changes in the coming months and year, the adjutant general said.

During Friday's interview with the Press & Dakotan, Noem said she supports the idea of a drawdown that would bring South Dakota troops home from combat.

"We want our boys and girls home," she said. "We want them to be here with us."

Noem said she couldn't speak specifically to some issues surrounding a drawdown, noting she doesn't have all of the inside military information. In that respect, she relies on the expertise of the military leaders.

"If the generals advise a plan of operation, then I can support it," she said.

Noem said she looked forward to speaking at the Veteran's Day banquet in Yankton.

Looking out at the packed room, she said it was important for veterans to gather not just for the annual banquet but at other times throughout the year.

"They know and can feel what other vets have seen," she said. "It's very beneficial that they share time together."

Veteran's Day also provides an important opportunity for the public, Noem said.

"We want to say 'thank you' (to veterans) for putting your life on the line," she said. "We need to thank them for their sacrifices (while in the service) and that they continue to make."

Veterans can teach valuable lessons, but those lessons must be captured now before the older generations pass away, she said.

"We need them to tell us their stories, and we need to learn from history," she said. "We must never repeat the mistakes of the past."

Deaths At Occupy Camps Bring Pressure For Shutdown

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) — Leaders across the country felt increasing pressure Friday to shut down Occupy encampments after two men died in shootings and another was found dead from a suspected combination of drugs and carbon monoxide poisoning caused by a propane heater inside a tent.

Citing a strain on crime-fighting resources, police first pleaded with and then ordered Occupy Oakland protesters to leave their encampment at the City Hall plaza where a man was shot and killed late Thursday.

The Oakland Police Officer's Association, which represents rank-and-file po-

lice, issued an open letter saying the camp is pulling officers away from crime-plagued neighborhoods.

"With last night's homicide, in broad daylight, in the middle of rush hour, Frank Ogawa Plaza is no longer safe," the letter said. "Please leave peacefully, with your heads held high, so we can get police officers back to work fighting crime in Oakland neighborhoods."

Late in the afternoon, police officers acting at the direction of Mayor Jean Quan distributed fliers to protesters warning that the camp violates the law and must be disbanded immediately. The notices warned campers they

would face arrest if tents and other materials were not removed, although the warnings did not say by when.

The city issued similar written warnings before officers raided the encampment before dawn on Oct. 25 with tear gas and bean bags projectiles before arresting 85 people. A day later, Quan allowed protesters to reclaim the disbanded site and the camp has grown substantially since then.

City Council President Larry Reid said outside City Hall on Friday that the shooting was further proof the tents must come down.



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<p style="font-size: small;">SATURDAY NIGHT 4 to 8 PM</p> <h3 style="margin: 0;">GRAND BUFFET (DINE-IN ONLY)</h3> <p style="font-size: large; color: red; margin: 0;">\$8⁰⁰</p>
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