



SDSU-USD Rivalry Gets A New Trophy ■ 8

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BRIAN CASSELLA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE President Barack Obama greets the crowd at his election-night headquarters with his wife, Michelle, left, and daughters Sasha and Malia, right, as they celebrate his re-election on Wednesday, in Chicago.

President Obama's Reward

A Lot Of Challenges Ahead: High Unemployment, Slow Economy, A Divided Congress, And More

BY PAUL WISEMAN AND CHRISTOPHER S. RUGABER
AP Economics Writers

WASHINGTON — Some reward. Here's the assignment President Barack Obama has won with his re-election: Improve an economy burdened by high unemployment, stagnant pay, a European financial crisis, slowing global growth and U.S. companies still too anxious to expand much. And, oh yes, an economy that risks sinking into another recession if Congress can't reach a budget deal to avert tax increases and deep spending cuts starting in January.

Yet the outlook isn't all grim. Signs suggest that the next four years will coincide with a vastly healthier economy than the previous four, which overlapped the Great Recession.

Obama has said he would help create jobs by preserving low income tax rates for all except high-income Americans, spending more on public works and giving targeted tax breaks to businesses. He used his victory speech in Chicago to stress that the economy is recovering and promised action in the coming months to reduce the government's budget deficit, overhaul the tax system and reform immigration laws. "We can build on the progress we've made and continue to fight for new jobs and new opportunity and new security for the middle class," Obama said. The jobs picture has already been improving gradually. Employers added a solid 171,000 jobs in October. Hiring was also stronger in August and September than first thought.

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Avera Sacred Heart Recognized As One Of The Best In Patient Care

BY ANDREW ATWAL
andrew.atwal@yankton.net

Avera Sacred Heart Hospital in Yankton was recently recognized as one of the best in the region for its patient care. Healthgrades independently measures hospitals based on data that is submitted to the federal government. No hospital can opt in or out of the analysis, and no hospital gets paid to be measured.

Avera Sacred Heart was just one of two hospitals in South Dakota to receive the outstanding patient experience award. This is its fifth straight year of winning the award.

Avera Sacred Heart was also ranked among the top 5 percent in the nation for outstanding patient experience in 2012.

The hospital won multiple five-star awards including for treatment of heart attack for the second year in a row, treatment of stroke also for the second straight year, treatment of pneumonia for the second year in a row, carotid surgery and for the treatment of bowel obstruction.

In addition, Avera Sacred Heart was ranked number two in South Dakota for the treatment of stroke, and number four in the state for gastrointestinal (GI) services and general surgery. The hospital has been ranked among the top five in each category for the past two years.

"I think that getting recognized really causes us to celebrate. We are really pleased that we're ranked with the top hospitals in the nation," said Pam Rezac, president and CEO of Avera Sacred Heart Hospital. "Most importantly, we hope the people we serve feel more confident in our services and care because we're being compared with the best of the best. It helps us insure patients that we give the very best care."



Rezac

Rezac said there is a national company that rates patient satisfaction, and all hospitals are required to participate in the patient satisfaction survey.

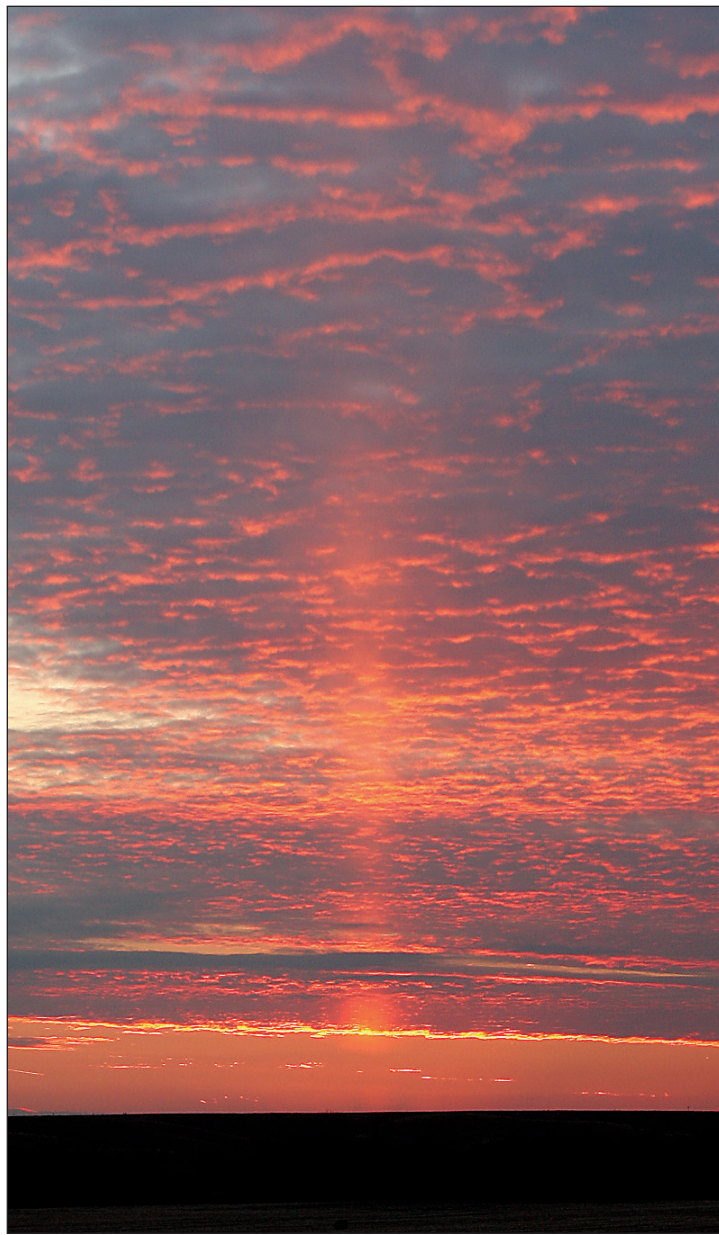
"The company compares scores of thousands of hospitals, and they rate and rank (the facilities) to determine which hospitals have the best experience," she said. Hospitals send over their clinical information through the Medicare program and submit all data based on specific areas. There are various criteria that hospitals are judged on whether they meet certain characteristics and protocols.

"We follow those guidelines each day and each hour to determine if we have fulfilled the correct protocol," Rezac said. "The criteria are all very detailed and this comprehensive approach would not be possible without the electronic medical record data. We are able to have these comparisons thanks to technology." She added that she was most satisfied when she found out the hospital had gotten the patient satisfaction award.

"This was the most significant because it was both clinical surveys and seeing how satisfied patients are with the services we provided," Rezac said. "It had both the clinical approach and

AVERA | PAGE 15

AUTUMNS' SUNSET



KELLY HERTZ/P&D

This red sunset last weekend featured a pristine shaft of light shooting skyward as the sun reflected off water particles in the air. The weather should remain comfortable enough to watch autumn sunsets for the next few days, but a cold plunge is expected to arrive Sunday. For forecast details, see page 2.

Voting Centers A Success, With A Few Challenges

BY NATHAN JOHNSON
nathan.johnson@yankton.net

While Yankton County voters and poll workers generally seemed to appreciate the new voting center concept introduced locally Tuesday, the process did encounter some challenges, according to Yankton County Auditor Paula Jones.

On Tuesday morning, Jones said there were issues with getting supplies to the voting center at The Rock House west of Yankton. The Yankton County Sheriff's Office was to deliver the items, she stated.

Yankton County Sheriff Jim Vlahakis could not be reached Wednesday for comment on what occurred.

That 50-minute delay in opening set off a chain reaction, Jones explained.

"Because we switched to the voting center concept and you could vote anywhere, that meant that all of the voting centers had to stay open the same amount of time," she said. "Maybe you were going to go to the one where the problem was and later in the day you were in town. Well, if that voting center wasn't open, that would not be in keeping with the concept of being able to vote anywhere."

After consulting with the Secretary of State's office, it was decided to invoke a statute that allows voting places to stay open late if there are issues earlier in the day. The goal was to make sure voters had 12 hours to cast a ballot, Jones said.

More confusion followed, as a typo from the auditor's office had voting centers posting signs saying that the polls would be open until 7:40 p.m. It wasn't until later in the day that clarification arrived that the closing time would be 7:50 p.m.

Late Tuesday afternoon, Jones said she was informed by the Secretary of State's Office that the state Republican Party had challenged the fact that the polls would be open past 7 p.m.

"The Secretary of State counseled with the Attorney General's office," Jones said. "The decision was that any ballot cast after 7 was to be treated as a

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Local Banks To Merge

BY DEREK BARTOS
derek.bartos@yankton.net

Bank 360 is merging into First Dakota National Bank, the two businesses have announced.

The Beresford-based Bank 360 has \$40 million in assets, with locations in Yankton, Beresford and Elk Point.

Under the agreement, Yankton-based First Dakota will take over the three branches and absorb their customers, and Bank 360 will cease to exist, according to First Dakota chairman and CEO Larry Ness. The Beresford and Elk Point locations will be fully staffed and will offer First Dakota's full line of products and services, while the Yankton branch of Bank 360 will be closed, he said.

Ness said he is excited about the opportunity to expand First Dakota's services to Beresford and Elk Point.

BANKS | PAGE 3



RANDY DOCKENDORF/P&D

Cedar County Assessor Don Hoelsing has seen a dramatic rise in land valuation during nearly two decades on the job. The county has seen a recent jump because of the TransCanada pipeline and the soaring farmland prices.

Pipeline, Crop Land Create Strong Tax Base In Cedar County, Neb.

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF
randy.dockendorf@yankton.net

HARTINGTON, Neb. — Oil flows through the TransCanada pipeline running across Cedar County, Neb. However, the project is also creating a flow of dollars that strengthens the tax base.

Critics argue the tax revenue for Nebraska will come to half the original estimate by TransCanada, according to an Omaha World Herald article. Officials for the Canadian oil company contend the tax payments will increase over time.

For Cedar County officials, the pipeline produces additional revenue that is holding down local property taxes. The construction

OUR TOWNS

Cedar County

phase of the project also brought an injection of cash while workers stayed, ate and made purchases in Cedar County.

The TransCanada pipeline will bring about \$335,000 in taxes to Cedar County in 2012, according to County Assessor Don Hoelsing. With completion of the pipeline, nearly \$1.4 million will be distributed in the coming year to all the qualifying government entities in

CEDAR | PAGE 3

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