

### Prison Honors Employee Of The Quarter

Warden Jordan R. Hollingsworth announced the following award on Oct. 31, 2012, at the Federal Prison Camp, Yankton.  
Carl W. Stohr, Correctional Officer, was recognized as Employee of the Quarter for his exceptional job in maintaining security and deterring contraband introduction.  
Mr. Stohr's work ethic, dedication, and excellent communication skills are an asset to Correctional Services.  
It is with great pleasure that we recognize these accomplishments.

### Local Modern Woodmen Members Plant Trees

On Nov. 10, 2012, local Modern Woodmen of America members gave a lasting gift to the community. Members of the Yankton Modern Woodmen Summit 18126 gathered at Rotary Park to plant Black Hills Spruce trees.  
The project was part of the Plant A Tree Program, a nationwide program introduced by Modern Woodmen for its members in 2004.  
"This program allows Modern Woodmen members to give the community a lasting gift," says Tammy Matuska, leader of the local Modern Woodmen Chapter 18126. Keep Yankton Beautiful and the City of Yankton coordinated the event.  
"The name Modern Woodmen honors the pioneer woodmen who cleared the forests to build homes and secure futures for their families. Modern Woodmen offers financial services to help clear away members' financial burdens. And planting trees is an important way to create a secure future for families, communities and the environment," Matuska says.

Through the Plant A Tree Program and the help of its members, Modern Woodmen has planted thousands of trees across the United States. For more information, contact Matuska at 689-0406.  
Coordinated by local Modern Woodmen members, chapters provide opportunities to connect through social activities and volunteer projects. Youth service clubs provide young Modern Woodmen members with opportunities to volunteer, be patriotic, learn new skills, make friends and have fun.  
For more information about the local chapter or club and how you can get involved, contact Tammy Matuska at 689-0406.  
As a tax-exempt fraternal benefit society, Modern Woodmen sells life insurance, annuity and investment products not to benefit stockholders but to improve the quality of life of its stakeholders-members, their families and their communities. This is accomplished through social, charitable and volunteer activities. Annually, Modern Woodmen and its members provide more than \$23 million and nearly 1 million volunteer hours for community projects nationwide.

### Curr Hired As Yankton Local Office Manager

PIERRE — Lacey Curr has been hired as the Department of Labor and Regulation's (DLR) local office manager in Yankton. She will also manage the Lake Andes office.  
In 2008, Curr was hired by the DLR in Rapid City as an employment representative. She was promoted to employment specialist shortly after. As an employment specialist, she focused on working with the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) program. Last year, she transferred to the Yankton office where she continued to work with WIA and Re-Employment Intensive Services.  
"We are excited to have Lacey join the management team," said State Labor and Regulation Secretary Pam Roberts. "She is a motivated individual and has proven to be a strong asset to the department."  
After working with DLR for several years, Curr has a good understanding of what the Yankton office can do to reach their goals. Curr hopes to continue providing quality customer service to job seekers and finding skilled workers for local businesses.  
"I feel it is important to help job seekers gain the required skills to compete in today's workforce," said Curr. "I also want to increase our community outreach, especially to the smaller surrounding communities to promote our services."  
Curr attended National American University in Rapid City. She graduated in 2008 with a bachelor's degree in applied management and athletic training.  
Curr enjoys spending time with her family, staying active and riding horses. Since moving to the Yankton area, Curr has been involved with the Yankton Chamber of Commerce. Her fiancé, Mike Johnson, is a manufacturing engineer at Applied Engineering.

### Small Business Week Awards Nominations

WASHINGTON — A new online portal has been launched by the U.S. Small Business Administration to accept nominations for its 2013 National Small Business Week Awards, including the annual Small Business Person of the Year award.  
The dedicated web portal, accessible at <http://nationalsmallbusinessweek.sba.gov/>, will make it easier to submit and track submissions of nominees for Small Business Week 2013, and is now actively accepting nominations of noteworthy small businesses.  
Since 1963, National Small Business Week has recognized the outstanding achievements of America's small businesses for their contributions to their local communities, and to our nation's economy. In 2013, the 50th year celebration will honor the nation's 27 million small businesses.  
SBA Awards given in celebration of National Small Business Week include the following awards:  
• National Small Business Person of the Year (chosen from among state award winners from each of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Guam)  
• Phoenix Awards (recognizing outstanding accomplishments during disaster recovery)  
• Small Business Prime Contractor of the Year  
• Small Business Subcontractor of the Year  
• The Dwight D. Eisenhower Award for Excellence (recognizes large prime contractors who have used small businesses as suppliers and contractors)  
• SBA 8(a) Graduate of the Year (for recent graduates of the SBA's 8(a) contracting program)  
• Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Excellence and Innovation Award (nominations of SBA-funded SBDC Service Centers)  
• Women's Business Center (WBCs) of Excellence Award (nominations of SBA-funded WBCs)  
• Veterans Business Outreach Center Excellence in Service Award (nominations of SBA-funded Veterans Business Outreach Centers)  
In addition to the portal, nominations can also be sent directly to SBA District Offices, which can be located online at <http://www.sba.gov/about-offices-list/2>. All nominations must be submitted or postmarked to the SBA by Jan. 3, 2013.  
Winners of the Small Business Person of the Year awards and winners in the other award categories will be invited to Washington, D.C., to compete for national titles and to attend National Small Business Week events in 2013.



Submitted photo  
Pictured is KPI employee Linda Stock with the group of individuals who helped lead fundraising efforts. Front (left to right): Marsha Moser and Heather Jensen. Back (left to right): Shelley Kennitz, Linda Stock, Casey Sloan, Kristi Christiansen and Jill Stanage. Not pictured: Stacy Ryken.

### Kolberg Helps In Efforts To Raise \$20K For Employee

Through charitable employee and community contributions, local manufacturer Kolberg-Pioneer, Inc., was able to help in efforts to raise more than \$20,000 for employee Linda Stock, who has worked for the company since 1987 in the technical publications department and was diagnosed in July with a blood cancer called Myelodysplastic Syndrome.  
Several fundraising efforts were held, including selling "Team Stock" bracelets, holding raffles, splitting proceeds with local artisan Jean Koupel, working with Scentsy and Tupperware consultants who donated proceeds, and hosting a community benefit at Rounding 3rd in downtown Yankton. More than 400 people attended the benefit, and were entertained by the band "Mrs. Begley and the Boys," which donated its time for the event.  
"Because of all of the bills that piled up due to testing and treatments, we decided to try to help out Linda as much as we could," said Casey Sloan, who works in Service at Kolberg-Pioneer. "Linda is extremely grateful for everyone's support — every little bit helped."  
Stock, who will have a bone marrow transplant, will undergo chemo treatments in Omaha, Neb., for a few months, and hopefully return to Yankton in February.  
"I've realized through all of this how great KPI and its employees are, as well as the community of Yankton and all of my friends and family," Stock said. "I'd like to thank everyone for their support-it means so much!"  
To donate to Linda Stock's medical fund, please contact Casey Sloan at [casesloan@kolbergpioneer.com](mailto:casesloan@kolbergpioneer.com).

### Brandt Honored As HSC's October Employee Of Month

Donita Brandt was honored as the October Employee of the Month at the South Dakota Human Services Center (HSC), Yankton, announced Administrator Ric Compton, MPH.  
Brandt began working at the Center in March of 2003. She is a Certified Nurse Aide, and has served HSC's Psychiatric Rehabilitation Program as a Mental Health Technician.  
HSC colleagues recognized Brandt for modeling all of the Pillars of Character Counts including: Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring and Citizenship. Brandt was honored for her commitment to high quality patient care and her dedication to performing outstanding work.  
Brandt's family includes her husband John Brandt, their son Todd and daughter Mindy, who both live in Yankton with their families, seven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.



Brandt

### USD's Thin Elk Recognized

VERMILLION — Gene D. Thin Elk, director of Native Student Services at the University of South Dakota, was named a recipient of the Dr. George Blue Spruce Jr. Award presented by Pathways Into Health at the 2012 Achieving Excellence, Harmony, and Balance Conference at Rapid City this fall.  
The Dr. George Blue Spruce Jr. Award recognizes an individual that has demonstrated a genuine commitment to the reduction of health disparities; is an advocate of increasing AI/ANs into the health professions; is a strong mentor and serves as a positive role model for AI/AN youth and health professionals. George Blue Spruce Jr., DDS, MPH, is an enrolled member of the Pueblo Tribe (Laguna/Ohkay-Owingeh), is the first recognized American Indian dentist and the first American Indian dentist to hold the title of Assistant Surgeon General.  
Thin Elk, a Sic'angu, C'okan-Towela Band, Lakota from the Rosebud Sioux Tribe, is the originator of the Red Road Approach — a culturally-based, therapeutic recovery and wellness model based upon Lakota, Dakota and Nakota indigenous cultural life ways and teachings. During the past three decades, Thin Elk has utilized the Red Road Approach in his services consultations, healing and cultural training work with numerous Native Tribal Nations, Corporations, Rancherias and Pueblos, and has advised and consulted with major universities, banks, hospital, and corporations as well as with the United States Army Psychiatric Hospital and Sanford Health's Health Disparities Research Center.  
As director of Native Student Services at USD, Thin Elk has been recognized nationally and internationally for his exceptional leadership in the field of Native American drug and alcohol rehabilitation, wellness and cross-cultural training. He has been featured in several publications, including *Time Magazine's* Top 100 People of the Year, *Newsweek's* New American Heroes and as a Who's Who in Business World Wide.

## For Economy's Sake, Consumers Pick A Good Time To Spend

BY WALTER HAMILTON AND RICARDO LOPEZ  
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As you pack into the mall with hordes of other shoppers, think of it as an act of economic patriotism.  
With your shopping bags full of holiday gifts, you'll once again be playing a central role in the U.S. economy.

After trenching in the early days of the recovery, consumers are reasserting themselves as the key driver of U.S. economic growth. And that's coming at an opportune time, given that other economic propellants such as manufacturing and exports have slowed.  
"The consumer is allowing the economy to hang in there," said Brian Wesbury, chief economist at First Trust Advisors in Wheaton, Ill.  
Consumer spending accounts for about 70 percent of economic activity, and the holiday season constitutes as much as 40 percent of annual retail sales.

Chastened Americans went into a rare defensive crouch following the recession and housing bubble, slashing their spending on all sorts of items. Businesses picked up some of the slack. But that tide is weakening as business activity slows amid dull global growth and gridlocked budget talks in Washington.  
Consumers are filling the void.  
Their willingness to spend has been bolstered by improvement in the job and housing markets. Retail activity helped the economy muster a 2 percent annual growth rate in the third quarter. That's far from exuberant, but it would have been worse otherwise, experts say.

And with corporate executives fixated on the "fiscal cliff" drama over potential tax increases and spending cuts, a robust holiday shopping season could provide a crucial economic counterbalance.  
"Exports are down. Business investment is down," Wesbury said. "But the consumer was strong in the third quarter. The consumer was the reason the economy expanded."  
The Conference Board, a business research group, said early this month that Americans' confidence in the economy reached its highest level in nearly five years in October. Many were encouraged by an improving labor market, the group said.

Holiday spending is forecast to rise 4.1 percent to \$586.1 billion, according to the National Retail Federation. That's slightly below the 5.6 percent gain retailers enjoyed last year.  
Experts say a big chunk of people's holiday budgets could be spent over Black Friday, the traditional kickoff to the holiday shopping season. Last year, consumers spent \$52.4 billion during the Thanksgiving holiday weekend, up from \$45 billion in 2010.

The improvement is being paced by shoppers such as Susan Delgado, 38, a medical biller, who was at the Glendale Galleria in Glendale, Calif., this week with her sister.  
Her family plans to visit relatives in the Sacramento, Calif., area next month, their first out-of-town Christmas trip since her husband was laid off from an auto repair shop in 2010.

He found new work six months later but took a pay cut, forcing the couple to cut back on shopping and eating out. Feeling they've regained their financial footing, the couple have nearly doubled their gift budget to almost \$1,000.  
"You can't go home and not have gifts for the kids," Delgado said.  
Andy Spyros, president of Los Angeles gift boutique Hand-made Galleries LA, expects this holiday shopping season to be the strongest since 2008, with shoppers willing to buy more expensive items.  
"This season will be even better than last," Spyros said. "Everyone has their gift lists out again."  
This holiday season, Spyros said she hopes to sell \$40,000 worth of merchandise, almost one-third more than last year. And she hired two more employees recently.

Sentiment is similarly upbeat at the nation's retail giants.

Sears Holdings Corp. held a pre-Black Friday sale at stores last week and turnout was strong, said Brian Hanover, a spokesman.  
"People are ready to shop," Hanover said.

Much of the improvement is coming from high-end shoppers shelling out on luxury items, said Brian Sozzi, chief equities analyst at Nothing But Gold Productions. The middle class remains hesitant.  
"The middle-income consumer is not willing to trade up," Sozzi said. "They're still not willing to go out and buy that \$500 handbag on their credit card."  
And as Black Friday demonstrates, everyone's after a bargain.

Consumer spending is "not hurting but by no means is this a consumer-spending recovery," said Chris Christopher, an economist at IHS Global Insight.  
Other experts are more upbeat. After whittling down their debts in the past few years, consumers are more willing to open their wallets, optimists say.  
Wesbury pays close attention to discretionary income — the amount of money consumers have left after paying regular monthly expenses such as rent, debt payments or property taxes. By one measure, discretionary income is the best it's been since 1984.

"We're going into the holiday season in good shape," Wesbury said. "Consumers are in a lot better financial shape than a lot of people believe."

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BRIAN WESBURY

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