

## 'Jolene's Law' Task Force To Meet In Pierre

PIERRE — Jolene's Law Task Force will meet Monday, Dec. 1, in Room 413 of the State Capitol, at 10 a.m. (CDT).

The task force will continue its discussion of child sexual abuse in the state and consider potential legislation for the 2015 Legislative Session and other potential committee action. The complete agenda will soon be available at the Legislative Research Council website: [www.legis.sd.gov](http://www.legis.sd.gov).

The meeting is open to the public and public testimony will be heard in the afternoon.

Jolene's Law Task Force members include Sen. Deb Soholt (Sioux Falls), Rep. Peggy Gibson (Huron), Rep. Jenna Hagggar (Sioux Falls), Sen. Alan Solano (Rapid City), Ms. Christine Bisek (Pierre), Mr. Cam Corey (Watertown), Ms. Daniele Dosch (Rapid City), Dr. Nancy Free (Sioux Falls), Ms. Ann Larsen (Pierre), Ms. Angela Lisburg (Pierre), Ms. Jolene Loetscher (Sioux Falls), Ms. TateWin Means (Pine Ridge), Ms. Hollie Strand (Rapid City), Ms. Virgena Wieseler (Pierre) and Ms. Colleen Winter (Pierre).

## Field

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As a result, the commission chose to table the motion of the renaming of the stadium. The commission will discuss the issue again with the involvement of the YBA during their Dec. 8th meeting.

During the meeting, city manager Amy Nelson also updated the commission on recommendations pertaining to the city's noise ordinance and special events.

"We were directed to monitor and take decibel readings from actual events (this summer) and think about and respond to complaints for noise," Nelson said. "We did this throughout the summer, which tends to

be the time where people notice noisy activities more because there's more going on. We did have some complaints, although most of the complaints were at private residences. We only had five complaints that were related to noise in the central business district."

None of the complaints were connected to special events such as Riverboat Days or the Fourth of July, Nelson said.

"I really didn't feel that, based on the number of noise complaints we had this summer — or lack thereof — or based on the decibel readings that the police department took, that in reality there was really a need at this point to amend the noise ordinance," she said. "I think our current ordinance helps create a balance between allowing our police

department to address noisy activity while at the same time allowing us to maintain our values of celebratory events and things we like to do in our community."

In other business, the commission:

- Voted to approve a contract with Wellf Construction for a new collector well for \$9,213,103.94.
- Approved two plat reviews.
- Closed out projects including the sports court at city hall and the Mulberry St. sewer/pavement project.
- Approved a renewal of the library agreement between the city and county.

You can follow Rob Nielsen on Twitter at [twitter.com/RobNielsenPandD/](https://twitter.com/RobNielsenPandD/). Discuss this story at [www.yankton.net/](http://www.yankton.net/)

## Giving

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card, tell how many in their household and show an address."

Size of the household determines amount of food provided.

"Low-income people who can't afford to shop like you or I might do, depend on this," Lynch said. "Receiving this might allow them to buy other groceries. If they are working, they might buy a gift for a family member. This 'Food and Fruit Basket' is a gift for them from the community through the Contact Center."

### MAKING IT HAPPEN

When recipients come back to the Contact Center near Christmas to get the makings for their meal to cook, they will have the choice of ham, turkey or a gift card for Hy-Vee. They may choose ingredients for a pie. Other food ready to prepare will be enough for a complete holiday dinner.

Kelli Stange has worked with this project all 14 years she has been on staff at the Contact Center. She now leads it.

"Holiday Food and Fruit Basket started with Mary

Gannon's Greater Yankton Gifts," she said. "It got too big for us to handle, so United Way coordinates 'Toys for Kids' with lots of people's help and we do the food part."

"This year's Contact Center goal is to provide Holiday Food and Fruit Baskets for 350 families and about 100 shut-ins," Stange added.

Knights of Columbus members spend many hours at the Contact Center in the assembly line process to sort, sack and carry the meal ingredients to the recipient's vehicle.

"I hope the Holiday Food and Fruit Basket project makes a difference," Stange said. "It's been rewarding to see ones who appreciate it. You see ones who wouldn't know what to do otherwise if we didn't do this. To be here for those families that otherwise wouldn't have a Christmas is important to us. Some are embarrassed to come down. We don't want anyone to go without. I think the number of recipients will be up this year."

### NEED AND RESPONSE

The Contact Center is averaging 30 new families a month, said Dionne Hento of the center's staff. She compiles usage data for its programs and projects.

"All of this depends on what is donated," Lynch said. "People around Yankton step up. Money is used to buy what is needed."

Lynch grew up in Yankton and her mother, Marge Gross, is one of the founding members of some Contact Center programs.

"There have been families who do not exchange gifts and make that donation to the Contact Center," Lynch said. "Others donate food items. The Hy-Vee 'Free Turkey when you buy a Ham' promotion (good through Nov. 27) is a way some give extra meat to the Contact Center. We are grateful to those who help make this happen."

People in need can access the Contact Center Food Pantry, Emergency Assistance for rent, utilities and medications. For more information or to sign up for Holiday Food & Fruit Basket, call (605) 260-4400 Ext. 2.

Funds for Contact Center programs and projects come from United Way, City of Yankton, Yankton County, area businesses, churches, organizations, families and individuals. Donations may be sent to: Contact Center Food Pantry, 321 West 3rd St., Suite B02, Yankton, SD 57078.

## MMC

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"Historically, as we have rolled out our open houses to raise awareness about the program, we have had a lot of interest," McCuin said. "But, the cost in previous years was close to \$525 per credit hour. That is not really doable for most teachers. Also, it was quite a bit higher than similar programs being offered at area colleges. Can you really go to Mount Marty? Can you really justify that the education would be so much better here that the increased cost would be worth it?"

She stressed that it was never a case of there not being interest in the program.

"We had teachers who would sign up in January, February and March, but when it came to June, we would have people drop out just before the class would start," McCuin said. "We would have to wonder if we could even really make the class run, were there enough students to pay for the course or would we go in the red? If we get under a certain number of students, you have to ask if it is a viable program."

Recognizing that the issue came down to affordability, MMC went to work on revamping the cost associated with the program, reducing tuition and fees to \$325 per-credit-hour.

Yet, McCuin said they wanted to go even further.

To address the issue, Mount Marty College not only adjusted the per credit hour cost of the program, it decided to approach area businesses and ask if they would be willing to help support Yankton teachers.

"Celia Miner said it just seemed that there must be businesses in town that would support Yankton teachers getting their master's degree," McCuin said. "They would support Mount Marty being the local provider of that program. All of our students would benefit, their grandchildren, their children, whoever this business is, they will see the actual rewards for their family members who are members of this community."

MMC approached Ness at First Dakota Bank, and he saw the value and generously gave to the program.

"We can't thank Larry Ness at First Dakota Bank enough for making that commitment, saying, 'Here, what if I gave you \$20,000? Do with it what you like, but I would like it to go to Yankton School teachers. I would like it to support Mount Marty. I would like them to be the First Dakota Masters Scholars,'" McCuin said.

With the donation in hand, MMC went to work deciding how to assist as many teachers as possible.

"We decided that the best way was to offer \$2,000 scholarships to the first 10 teachers from any of the Yankton public or parochial schools who enrolled to use toward their costs of the program," McCuin said. "Our master's program is either 30 or 33 credits based on which track the student chooses. It works out to a savings of about \$66 per credit hour. That is a significant savings."

Yet, according to Yankton School District (YSD) superintendent Dr. Wayne Kindle, it is a gift that will keep on giving.

"Based on the master contract salary schedule we have with teachers, the first year in

the program they will see an additional credit to their pay by \$1,250," he said. "The second year in the program, they will see an increase of \$1,500. After graduating from the program, each year they will get an additional \$2,750 going forward."

However, Kindle said the people who will truly be rewarded are the students in each of the teacher's classrooms.

"It is very beneficial for our students, because these particular teachers who get involved with this program in curriculum and instruction, the work they do and the preparation they do, will be a direct reflection of the classroom and the grade they teach," he said. "That is really

the beauty of this program that I like so much — it is very inclusive of what our teachers are doing in the classroom."

He added YSD and MMC have a great working relationship and this just extends that relationship.

"I believe if we have a college in town like this, we need to be working hand in hand with them to benefit our teachers so one, they don't have to travel. They can stay in their classrooms and teach during the school year," Kindle said. "In Yankton, we have 60 percent of our teachers who have a master's degree or above and we are proud of that. We also want to encourage those teachers who don't have their master's degrees to go back to school and get

them. When it is right here at home, there is no better time or place to do it than right here."

Kindle added that the design of the MMC program is one that focuses on what is truly important for the teachers, improving their ability to teach to their own students.

"It has been designed to accommodate the teacher teaching in the classroom, to be able to stay and do that, not have to step out of the classroom to take time off," he said. "It is extending the partnership and the collaboration we have with Mount Marty. We have our AP (advanced placement)/Dual credit courses with Mount Marty. We will be supporting this master's course through our master

contract and we are looking to additional professional development opportunities with the college."

The program, which has been designed to take two school years, is unique in that the courses which require in-class time have all been scheduled for the summer, with the classes in the fall and spring semesters being the research portion of the program with no class-time requirements.

"This isn't a canned, 'go read this book and write a report on it for me' class," warned McCuin. "This class will require a lot of independent work. It will require more investment from students than a typical three-credit book class. But at the same

time, it will allow teachers to remain in the classroom working with their students, doing their research right in the classroom, and as a result, becoming better teachers."

For more information about MMC's Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction visit [www.mtmc.edu/academics/prgram/med.aspx](http://www.mtmc.edu/academics/prgram/med.aspx) or contact McCuin at 605-668-1522 or email her at [Deborah.mccuin@mtmc.edu](mailto:Deborah.mccuin@mtmc.edu).

Follow Shauna Marlette on Twitter at [@shaunamarlette](https://twitter.com/shaunamarlette). To comment on this story go to [www.yankton.net](http://www.yankton.net).

304 W. 3rd, Yankton 665-6234



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**Tuesday, December 2nd**  
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[jay.a.pipes@mail.mil](mailto:jay.a.pipes@mail.mil)

Please RSVP by December 2nd.