



Mostly Sunny

9 a.m. **60** 3 p.m. **73** | DETAILS: Page 2

WEDNESDAY ■ November 4, 2015



MMC Tops
Dakota
Wesleyan

PAGE 7



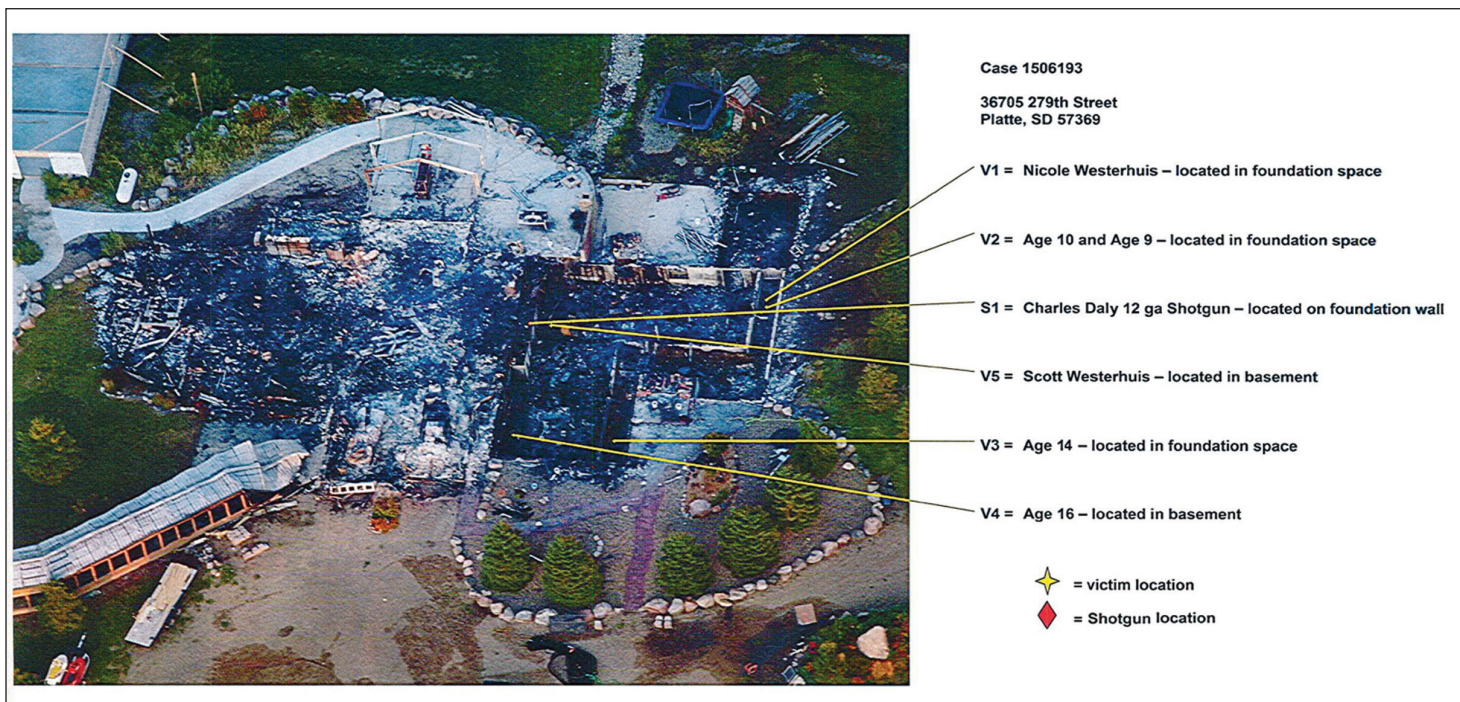
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Platte Inquiry Released



GRAPHIC: DIVISION OF CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION

Safe And Voice Message Among Key Evidence Missing From Scene Of Platte Murders-Suicide

BY BOB MERCER
State Capitol Bureau

PLATTE — Grim details about the Westerhuis family slayings became public Tuesday. So did some major questions that investigators can't or won't yet answer.

State Attorney General Marty Jackley went before a meeting hall filled with Platte community members and news reporters from across South Dakota to reveal what he said is known for certain and what remains mystery from the six killings and fire on Sept. 17.

He said Scott Westerhuis appeared to have acted alone in murdering his wife, Nicole, and their four children. He said there wasn't any evidence or indications that Nicole or the children participated.

All the evidence has pointed in one direction and there was no evidence pointing elsewhere, Jackley said.

"Today is the conclusion of the death investigation to bring closure to the community," he said.

Investigators recovered the remaining metal portions of a badly burned 12-gauge pump shotgun they think that night. It was about three feet from the body of Scott Westerhuis.

The gun held five rounds in its magazine and one in its chamber. Investigators found evidence of six Winchester shells that likely were fired at the wife and children.

They also found a spent round in the gun's chamber that Scott Westerhuis evidently fired into his brain, killing himself.

One round remained in the magazine. Before shooting himself, Westerhuis started the house afire. A trained dog used at fire scenes found a sign of accelerant near his body. But samples sent to North Dakota for testing proved inconclusive about what might have been used, according to Jackley.

He described the fire as "catastrophic." The house was completely destroyed.

The order of the deaths remained unclear.

The bodies of the two sons — 16-year-old Michael Arend, who was shot in the head; and 14-year-old Connor Egan, who was shot in the neck, right chest and left shoulder — were found in bedsprings below their rooms after they fell through the burning floors.

In the bedspring found beneath where the master bedroom had been were the remains of the mother, Nicole, who had been shot in the head, and the two daughters,



Jackley

Bon Homme County

Wind Farm Measure OK'd

Commission Responds To Controversy

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF
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TYNDALL — In the wake of local controversy, Bon Homme County wind farms may face new regulations.

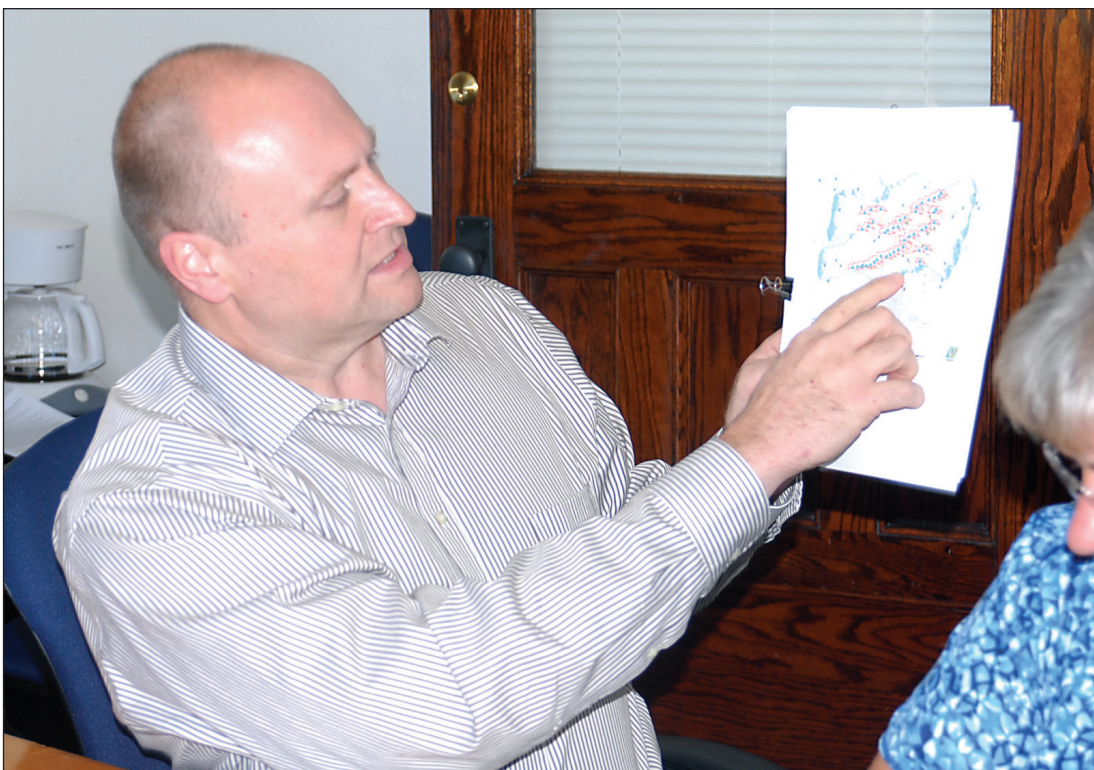
The Bon Homme County Commission has unanimously passed a wind energy measure as part of its zoning ordinance. The county currently doesn't address wind farms.

The measure, known as Article 17, received its second reading and final approval at Tuesday's regular meeting. Commissioners Russ Jelsma, John Hauck, Duane Bachmann, Mike Soukup and John Fathke voted for the measure.

The newly-constructed Beethoven wind farm near Tripp will be grandfathered under the new zoning regulations. The proposed Prevailing Winds project, scheduled for a nearby site, will fall under Article 17.

Hauck raised the only concerns expressed by commissioners during Tuesday's meeting. "I'm not a fan or supporter (of wind farms)," he said.

But in the end, Hauck not only supported Article 17 but brought



RANDY DOCKENDORF/P&D

Prevailing Winds project manager Roland Jurgens provides data on wind farms during Tuesday's Bon Homme County commission meeting. The commissioners unanimously approved a wind-energy measure as part of the county's zoning ordinance.

it to a vote among the commissioners. He previously said he saw wind energy as badly-needed economic development, particularly after Bon Homme County lost out on a proposed grain-handling facility.

"I'll make the motion (for Article 17), even though I don't want to see (wind farms)," he said.

Article 17 legal notices will

now run two weeks in the county's newspapers designated for legal publications. The measure then becomes effective after a 20-day period, in this case Dec. 9.

However, Article 17 can be referred to the ballot — and put on hold — by petitions containing 194 valid signatures. Opponents could start circulating petitions immediately after Tuesday's pas-

sage of Article 17. If referred, the measure would then be placed on the ballot in a special election.

The Beethoven wind farm lies in Bon Homme, Hutchinson and Charles Mix counties. In September, NorthWestern Energy finalized its purchase of the

WIND | PAGE 3

Large-Scale Exercise Set Next Month In Bomber Training Site

RAPID CITY (AP) — The first large-scale exercise in a huge bomber training area over the Northern Plains is scheduled for early next month.

The exercise is set Dec. 2-3 in the 35,000-square-mile Powder River Training Complex over the Dakotas, Montana and Wyoming, according to Ellsworth Air Force Base in South Dakota.

The exercise "is designed to train aircrew under realistic scenarios," and people in the region can expect to see many different types of aircraft in the sky, the Air Force said. Non-military aircraft are urged to check Federal Aviation Administration notices and avoid areas where the military planes will be flying.

The Air Force has said previously that as many as 88 civilian flights a day could be delayed when large-scale exercises are conducted.

"This type of training is limited to 10 days each year, with each exercise lasting no more than three days, and (will) only occur once every three months," the Ellsworth statement said.



KELLY HERTZ/P&D

Toby Morris of Dougherty and Company speaks to the Yankton County Commission Tuesday about a draft of a developer's agreement to build a grain facility and industrial rail park at Napa Junction. Commissioners said they want to examine the agreement closely before voting on it. Also Tuesday, the commission accepted a \$6 million state loan to reconstruct Deer Boulevard to the rail park into an industrial-grade road.

County Gets First Look At Developer's Agreement

BY ROB NIELSEN
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A Dakota Plains grain facility at Napa Junction is moving closer to reality.

During the Yankton County Commission's regular meeting Tuesdays, commissioners got their first look at a draft of a developer's agreement that would build an industrial rail park on 196 acres of land at Napa Junction, with its centerpiece being the grain facility.

Toby Morris of Dougherty and Company was on hand Tuesday to walk commissioners through some of the language of the rough draft, assuring that no action had to be taken immediately.

"Today, we're not asking to pass it by any means," Morris said. "It needs to be absorbed, looked into. I worked a lot with (State's Attorney) Rob (Klimisch) and (Planning & Zoning Director) Pat (Garrity) to get it to a point where we thought it was presentable to you. But by all means, it can still be altered or changed depending on whatever concerns you might have."

Commission chairman Todd Woods said that's exactly what the commission intends to do in preparation for the next meeting.

"There's a lot of legal (language) ... and I want to take some time to digest it over the next couple of weeks," Woods said. "Sometimes it's tough to make that decision on the spot. We're going to look through the details and if we have some more questions, we'll ask them of Toby, Pat Garrity and Rob Klimisch."

Woods said one of the major highlights of the developer's agreement is that it places liability for payment and development of the facility solely on Dakota Plains.

"That's been pretty much the consistent message that I've heard since we've been discussing this for the past 11 months: that the liability is not on the county in regards to paying off the \$6 million (road) loan," he said. "It even talked about the fact of if Dakota Plains would go bankrupt, then we have a tax lien on the property. Those were the first things they got cleaned up, so there is no liability to

COUNTY | PAGE 9

