



Sunny And Mild

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Inside Today

VOLUME 138
NUMBER 141

The Dakotas' Oldest Newspaper | **14 PAGES** | www.yankton.net

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YANKTON DAILY PRESS & DAKOTAN

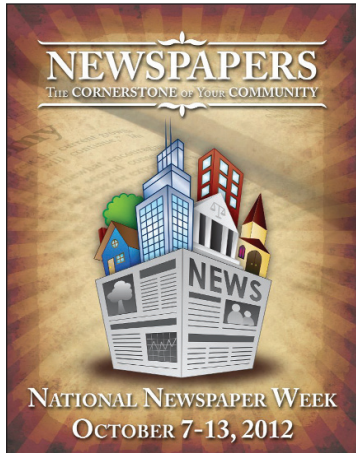
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A Bad Sign For Anglers?

New Boating Restrictions
Posted On Tailwaters, But
Some Fishermen Unhappy

BY NATHAN JOHNSON
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A U.S. Army Corps of Engineers effort to ensure safety below Gavins Point Dam has some fishermen seeing red — and not just the red of the signs that now restrict boating. Recently, a contractor hired by the Corps erected two large, reflective signs approximately 500 yards east of the observation lot wall below the spillway. When there are spillway releases, boaters will not be allowed to go upstream beyond the signs.

“We’ve been talking about this for years,” said Gary Ledbetter, the natural resources manager for the Corps at the Gavins Point Project. “There have been some incidents in the last couple years that have been close calls. We just felt like we needed to come up with something that would be safer for boaters.”

Previously, a buoy line was strung out much closer to the spillway to restrict boaters. It will soon be removed due to the new boundary established by the signs.

“Boaters would get up close to the buoy line and get into the eddies. Then they can’t navigate,” Ledbetter stated. “We had a capsized boat last year. We’ve had several instances of that. Luckily for those people, there were fishermen there to help them and there were no fatalities.”

Currently, the Corps is undertaking an education process to get boaters used to the new restriction, he added. With flows from the spillway projected to last through December, boaters won’t be allowed below the dam until at least next year.

“We want people to abide by the restrictions,” Ledbetter said. “Hopefully, over time, we’ll get cooperation. The number one thing is boater safety.”

However, some fishermen with guided tour businesses questioned the need for the change when contacted by the Press & Dakotan Tuesday.

“It doesn’t make sense to me the way they’ve done it now,” said Marilyn Wiebelhaus of Wynot, Neb.-based Wiebelhaus Guiding. “They talk about safety, but we’ll see what happens when people start going downstream to fish and start hitting stuff.”

Wiebelhaus said he has been boating the Missouri River between Gavins Point Dam and Ponca, Neb., for about 40 years. He has offered professional fishing tours of that area

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KELLY HERTZ/P&D
Gary Ledbetter, the natural resources manager for the Corps at the Gavins Point Project, is seen here with one of two new signs below the dam notifying boaters of new restrictions. The signs are located on the north and south shores, and a marker buoy has also been secured in the middle of the Missouri River.

S.D. Readies For 2 Executions In Next 3 Weeks

BY AMBER HUNT
Associated Press

SIoux FALLS — South Dakota rarely has executions, but now prison officials are getting ready for two in the next three weeks, barring last-minute legal twists involving inmates who have said they’re ready to die.

Corrections Department spokesman Michael Winder led local media on a tour Tuesday of the South Dakota State Penitentiary’s lethal-injection room and the holding cell where the inmates

are to be served their last meals before execution.

The prison is readying final details, such as where death-penalty supporters and protesters will be allowed to demonstrate outside the prison.

South Dakota’s last execution was in 2007, and that was the first one in the state in 60 years. The state now has four inmates on death row.

Eric Robert is scheduled to be put to death sometime next week. The exact day won’t be released until 48 hours before the execution.

Robert pleaded guilty to the April 2011 beating and suffocation of prison guard Ronald “R.J.” Johnson, for whom the prison’s training center is now named.

Robert, 50, has publicly embraced his impending death, telling a judge last October that he would kill again. In a June letter to The Associated Press, Robert repeated the sentiment, saying the state should put him to death so Johnson’s family can have justice.

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Crofton Teen Sees No Limits In Fight Against Tobacco

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF
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CROFTON, Neb. — Crofton teenager Olivia Monaghan doesn’t need to look far to see the grip of tobacco on its users’ lives.

“Both of my parents smoke, and they started and got addicted as teens,” she said. “I see how hard it is for them to quit and how hard it is for other people who have to go through that.”

Monaghan holds a personal stake in helping her parents kick the tobacco habit.

“I know a girl whose parents smoke.

OUR TOWNS

Knox County

She has asthma and can’t play sports without real breathing difficulties,” she said. “I have asthma, but I’m lucky enough that I haven’t had (breathing problems) happen. My parents don’t smoke in the house (because of my asthma).”

Now, Monaghan is taking her message to the state level. A Crofton High School

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PHOTO COURTESY: “NO LIMITS”
Crofton (Neb.) High School senior Olivia Monaghan serves on the Nebraska state youth board for the No Limits anti-tobacco organization. Monaghan has become the first Crofton student to serve on the state board.

YSD Superintendent: I’m ‘Embarrassed’ By Incident

BY NATHAN JOHNSON
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The superintendent of the Yankton School District is expressing regret over a weekend incident that resulted in his arrest for driving under the influence of alcohol.

Joseph Gertsema was arrested at approximately 1:20 a.m. Sunday after failing a sobriety test at a South Dakota Highway Patrol checkpoint about three miles east of Vermillion along Highway 50, according to Capt. Kevin Joffer, commander of the Sioux Falls district of the Highway Patrol. Gertsema was later booked into the Clay County Jail.

Gertsema, who has served as the Yankton superintendent for 23 years,



Gertsema

contacted the Press & Dakotan about the incident Monday night.

“You have to take responsibility and own your problem. That’s exactly what I’m doing,” Gertsema said. “I’m terribly angry with myself, and it’s going to take me a while to forgive myself. I want to apologize to my family and the community for my bad decision.”

Although he had consumed alcohol, Gertsema said he did not believe he was over the legal limit when he

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KELLY HERTZ/P&D
Laura Johnson, who graduated from Yankton High School in 2008, is set to begin a two-year term of service with the Peace Corps in Lesotho, which is a tiny country in Africa.

Yankton Native Eyes Peace Corps Mission

BY ANDREW ATWAL
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For many students, college graduation is a time for searching for a job.

However, for one Yankton native, graduating college meant a time for her to serve with the Peace Corps.

Laura Johnson graduated from Yankton High School in 2008 and attended the University of Oregon, where she majored in journalism with a minor in art. She graduated this past June.

Now she is set to begin a two-year volunteer service in Lesotho, a tiny nation located in southern Africa.

“I really thought that this would be the next thing in my life that would help shape me as a person and add to my bag of experiences,” Johnson said. “I had

thought about doing this for a long time. I started going to recruitment events on campus and talked to volunteers who had done it in the past.”

She added that almost everyone she talked to said there will be days that she will hate her decision, but after her time in Lesotho is over, she would not regret the experience.

Johnson started applying for the Peace Corps in June 2011, when she filled out the initial application online.

After she turned in the initial application, she was contacted for an interview. During the interview, she was presented with several hypothetical scenarios on things that could happen while she’s serving.

Even though applicants are allowed to put a location preference on their application, Johnson did not do so.

“I have a background in Spanish language, so if they wanted to send me to a Spanish country, they’ll see that I have that skill,” she said. “I was willing to take the challenge and knowing that it would be a surprise no matter what, even if I did put a preference on geographic region.”

She finally found out that she had been accepted into the program in the winter.

However, the nomination said she would be teaching in Northern Africa or in the Middle East. Without hesitation, she accepted.

Months later she found out she would be actually serving in Lesotho, which is in southern Africa.

Lesotho is a country that is landlocked by South Africa and is very mountainous. The country has a

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