

Imming

From Page 1A

rived at WNAX in 1992. He immediately sought to familiarize himself with SDSU and its teams.

“I wanted Jacks fans to realize they weren’t listening to an outsider. I was just as interested and concerned about the team as they were,” he said.

“On the other hand, I didn’t want to be a ‘homer’ and act over the top. I wanted to be accurate and honest about the team when I did Jackrabbit broadcasts.”

Imming was always friendly with the coaches and teams. However, his relationship became much closer and more personal when SDSU made the move from NCAA Division II to NCAA Division I. Former same-day or overnight road trips suddenly became, in the case of many basketball treks, a five-day work week.

But the grueling schedule also created benefits. Imming started traveling with the teams, gaining both insights and a deeper trust level with the coaches and players.

“You talked to players and coaches off the record as well as on the record. You learned all sorts of tidbits,” he said. “You learned about the players and their concerns. It may not have been something that you used right away, but it might have led to something that you used later on a broadcast, either during or after the game.”

Imming vowed to give as much effort each game as did the coaches and athletes.

“You looked at every game as if it was the next big game, even if one team was 5-0 and the other one was 0-5,” he said.

Imming also became more visible to fans, who felt a sense of kinship with the Jacks’ “voice.”

“Jackrabbit fans have always been a decent contingent. They travel as well as anybody in the league,” he said. “The fans knew me, and I didn’t know them. They introduced themselves, and that’s part of the fun. You met Jackrabbit fans who were other-

wise nameless.”

Imming found SDSU fans at the most unexpected places.

“Once, I was at the Cincinnati airport with my WNAX equipment case. I never thought anybody would know me, but a Jacks fan came up to me and introduced himself,” he said. “Another time, I ran into a fan in New York City. There is something familiar with WNAX.”

Imming enjoyed an unusually lengthy tenure with the current football and men’s basketball coaches, adding to the strong SDSU bond.

“In 19 years, I worked with only two football coaches. We have John Stiegelmeier, and before him was Mike Daly,” he said. “With men’s basketball, I worked with Scott Nagy for 16 of the 19 years. The other coaches were Jim Thorson, who now coaches Mount Marty College in Yankton, and Brad Soderberg.”

Imming’s impact has been immeasurable, Stiegelmeier said.

“Steve Imming is very deserving of this award,” the coach said. “Steve literally touched hundreds of thousands of fans and Jackrabbit alumni for 19 years as he painted a picture of our football team and men’s basketball team over the radio. Not only did he paint the picture, but he painted a positive picture and literally became part of the SDSU team.”

Imming showed an extraordinary work ethic and perfectionism, Stiegelmeier said.

“We ask our players to do all they can to prepare to perform up to their potential, and Steve did the same. He was meticulous in his approach,” the coach said. “If and when we changed the depth chart without telling him, you could sense a feeling of setting him back in doing his job. Never did he say anything; he just made the changes and did his job to perfection.”

Using athletic terms, Imming deserves the title of “MVP,” Stiegelmeier said.

“After EVERY radio interview, at the end, Steve said, ‘Alrighty!’ I loved it,” the coach said. “I consider Steve Imming a dear friend, and I know he is a Jackrabbit.”

Nagy likewise feels Imming definitely deserves the award.

Nagy noted the positive feedback from fans who lived a distance from Brookings and knew the Jacks through Imming’s voice.

“Steve did a great job of covering a game,” Nagy said. “He was not only describing the game, but listeners knew he was a fan of South Dakota State. If the calls didn’t go our way, he let (the listeners) know it.”

Imming shared the ups and down of the difficult transition to NCAA Division I, witnessing the tough initial seasons which have given way to the current success, Nagy said.

Nagy admitted to being a tough interview after gut-wrenching losses.

“Steve had to work hard to get something out of me sometimes. When you had to go out (for an interview) right after a game, there were so many raw emotions,” the coach said. “I think I made life difficult for him, but he took the best he could get from me. He knew what I was going to say even before I said it, which helped him frame the questions. The college game was his life, and he prepared great.”

Imming helped contribute to SDSU’s growth as a university, Nagy said.

“My mom said, when people heard Steve’s voice, they thought of South Dakota State University. He helped advance athletics at SDSU, but he also advanced the whole brand of SDSU,” the coach said. “When I started, we had 8,000 students and now we’re up to 13,000. It’s because Steve helped us get that kind of exposure.”

Imming remains tied to SDSU sports through his morning show on WNAX. He also provided the voice-over for a “Jackrabbit Notebook” segment that looks back at SDSU football highlights through the years.

“It’s a great way to stay connected,” he said. “I’ll always be a Jackrabbit fan.”

You can follow Randy Dockendorf on Twitter at twitter.com/RDockendorf

McGovern

From Page 1A

took all of that beating.”

A larger funeral service for McGovern, who died Sunday at age 90, is set for Friday.

The Thursday evening ceremony featured heartfelt tributes by McGovern family members, longtime friends and political loyalists. The crowd of hundreds sat hushed as snippets of McGovern’s acceptance speech from the 1972 Democratic National Convention crackled on a church loudspeaker.

“We are entering a new period of important and hopeful change in America,” came the echo from the past.

Mourners from near and far spent the afternoon filing past a flag-draped coffin, many drawing attention to his lifelong efforts to fight global hunger.

Biden, who served in the Senate with McGovern in the 1970s, led a cast of dignitaries. But many of those who showed up early at the First United Methodist Church were friends, neighbors, constituents or admirers of McGovern.

Among them was Burton Barnard, a 68-year-old from western Wisconsin. After driving 300 miles, he was toward the front of the line when the church opened for a four-hour viewing period.

“There’s not that many people I would drive that far for,” Barnard said. “McGovern was a deeply moral and principled leader for us

in the 60s and 70s.”

Francis and Nancy McGowan of Sioux Falls, both retired, said they attended the viewing because they held McGovern in high esteem because he cared for people.

“We’re thankful for his service,” Nancy McGowan said. “The world is a better place because he was here, not only for his wisdom as a politician but also for his caring and feeding of the hungry.”

Some mourners sat down in the pews after filing past McGovern’s coffin, and reflected as photos of McGovern flashed on screens. Some showed him during his 1972 campaign, others in his World War II Army uniform and others with his wife Eleanor, who died five years ago. One showed him hunched in a field with the words “Prairie Populist” in a corner.

Outside the church, a couple dozen members of the Patriot Guard stood on freshly fallen snow next to U.S. flags flapping in a cold wind. They were there to honor McGovern’s World War II-era military service even though he was defined more by his anti-war stances later in life.

Jim Lentsch, a retired sheriff from Salem, S.D., referred to the senator simply as “George,” a testament to the personal connection the small-state politician had with his former constituents.

“I grew up in South Dakota, I guess I’ve known him for years,” Lentsch said, applauding McGovern’s commitment to society’s most needy and dedication to the college in his native Mitchell, S.D.

Thelma Moberly began to cry as she walked past the casket.

Moberly, 85, and her husband Richard were good friends with the McGovern family. When Richard Moberly died in 1995, George McGovern called her from Washington to express his condolences.

“I just thought that was a beautiful gesture of kindness and caring. But that was George,” Thelma Moberly said. “He was such a kind man to us. We’re better because of him.”

The two days of remembrance for the liberal lion will include some of South Dakota’s highest ranking officials from both sides of the political spectrum. Sen. John Thune, Rep. Kristi Noem and South Dakota Gov. Dennis Daugaard, all Republicans, have confirmed they plan to attend. Democratic Sen. Tim Johnson was scheduled to speak at the Thursday evening prayer service that Biden was attending.

A larger memorial service was set for Friday, also in Sioux Falls. McGovern is to be buried at a later date at Rock Creek Cemetery in Washington.

After his 1972 White House run ended in defeat, McGovern was re-elected once more to the Senate. South Dakota voters turned against him in 1980.

But McGovern, once a global ambassador in the fight against hunger, continued that cause well into his 80s. In 2008, he was awarded the World Food Prize along with former Republican Sen. Bob Dole, who like his compatriot faced defeat in a presidential race. It was not known if Dole would attend any of the services.

Microsoft Enters Hardware Business With Surface

NEW YORK (AP) — Microsoft will be releasing its own tablet computer for the first time when the new version of Windows comes out Friday, as the software company tries to challenge Apple Inc. and its dominant iPad.

The initial version of Surface will run a modified version of Windows 8 called RT. That means Surface won’t run standard Windows programs, only apps designed for it and obtained through Microsoft’s new online store.

The device will start at \$499, the same as the most recent, full-sized iPads. The display is 10.6 inches di-

agonally, slightly larger than the iPad’s.

The Surface goes on sale Friday. The only place to get them is at Microsoft’s retail stores and its website. The earliest shipment for new online orders is now one to two weeks away.

A Surface with Windows 8 Pro and the ability to run regular Windows programs will come a few months later. Microsoft hasn’t disclosed the price.

At the launch event Thursday, Microsoft described Surface as an extension of Windows, though the company noted that it’s about ex-

tending other Microsoft products, too. Panos Panay, general manager of the Surface team, demonstrated watching movies and listening to music on the Surface. He also streamed audio and video from the Surface to a nearby Xbox.

In a gimmick to demonstrate the tablet’s durability, Panay dropped the device from shoulder height to the stage to show how tough its glass and magnesium case was. He also displayed a photo of Windows chief Steven Sinofsky standing on a Surface outfitted with wheels to make a skateboard.

Ban

From Page 1A

But with the arrival of moisture, Vavruska said he believed the dry conditions have eased enough to warrant ending the ban.

“The snowfall was the big reason for going ahead with lifting the ban,” he said. “But if the harvest wasn’t (nearly) completed, we weren’t going to lift the ban because of the risk of dry corn and beans.”

The three-month burn ban has created a backlog of debris for rural residents, Vavruska said.

“Hopefully, the ground stays moist enough so people get their stuff burned. A lot of people have trash piled up for months,” he said. “Hopefully, we get through the weekend. The temperature doesn’t look like it will get too high, and things won’t dry out too fast.”

Technically, the burn ban remains on the books, the emergency manager said.

“I took this action by myself, but I called a few of the (county) commissioners and spoke to them. I also spoke to a fire chief in the county,” he said. “They all agreed it was OK (to lift the ban).”

The Bon Homme County commissioners passed the burn ban resolution at its July 17 meeting. Vavruska anticipates the board will take up rescinding the measure at its Nov. 6 meeting.

To the northeast, Hutchinson County has kept its burn ban on the books, at least for now, said Auditor Jeannie Simonsen.

The Hutchinson County commissioners passed their resolution at their July 3 meeting. The resolution took effect July 5, allowing for fireworks and other activity on the July 4 holiday.

“We haven’t lifted our burn ban, but people can contact our emergency manager, Dave Hoffman. He has the authority to give permission to burn,” Simonsen said. “We will address the issue at our Nov. 8 county commission meeting.”

Hoffman can be reached at (605) 770-7927, she said.

Other neighboring counties are also taking a slow approach toward allowing widespread burning, Vavruska said. He spoke Thursday with Yankton County and Charles Mix County officials.

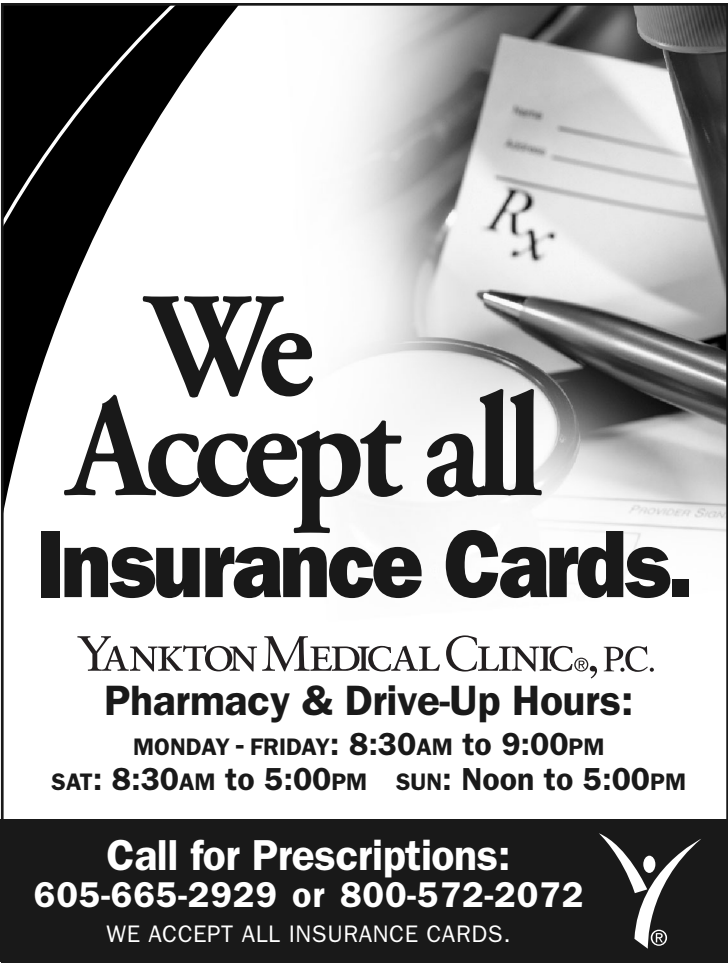
Across the region, residents are urged to use caution when burning, Vavruska said. He looks for conditions to remain drier than normal in the coming months.

“We hope (Thursday’s) snow helped, but they are not predicting a lot of moisture (in the long-term forecast),” he said. “They are talking about 31 inches of snow this winter, which is way below what we would get most years. That has people concerned.”

An open winter would, in effect, create a second year of a historic drought cycle, Vavruska said.

“If there isn’t a lot of snow this winter, it’s possible we may bring back the burn ban,” he said. “We’ll play it by ear.”

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