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Fall Storm Bashes The Plains

Blizzard Blitzes Black Hills, While Tornadoes Menace Yankton Region

FROM P&D AND AP REPORTS

Blizzards rolled into parts of Wyoming and South Dakota on Friday, bringing the snow-savvy states to an unseasonably early winter standstill and forcing a tourist town to cancel its annual Oktoberfest's polka-dancing bar crawl.

Meanwhile, menaced portions of southeastern South Dakota and northeast Nebraska, with some tornado damage reported near Wayne, Neb.

A tornado struck near Wayne and reportedly caused millions of dollars in damage, but the mayor says no one was killed and the injuries reported have been minor.

Mayor Ken Chamberlain said that officials have accounted for all residents in town. At least 15 people were injured, but Chamberlain says nobody's condition is life-threatening.

Sioux City television station KTIV said the tornado caused millions of dollars in damage. Photos show widespread destruction to businesses and the local airport. Witnesses also reported that the tornado destroyed at least four homes and the city's softball complex.

A Nebraska Emergency Management Agency spokeswoman said people were trapped in a building in Wayne. A hazardous material crew was dispatched to a gas leak at a supply company.

The Yankton area was placed under a tornado watch late Friday afternoon, with Knox and Cedar counties in Nebraska seeing thunderstorm and tornado warnings.

While summertime storms hounded the east, winter menaced the west.

A blizzard dumped 33 inches of snow in a part of South Dakota's scenic Black Hills near Lead, "and it's still coming down," National Weather Service meteorologist Eric Helgeson said Friday afternoon.

Wind gusts reached as high as 68 miles

per hour just outside the weather service office in downtown Rapid City, where 8 inches of snow had accumulated, Helgeson said.

In northwest Nebraska, three people were killed in an accident on snow-slicked U.S. 20 Friday morning, authorities said. The storm system also generated a tornado in Nebraska, blanketed Colorado's northern mountains with snow and was threatening to push strong thunderstorms as far east as Wisconsin. Forecasters said the cold front would eventually combine with others to make for a wild, and probably very wet, weekend for the central U.S. and Southeast.

Julie Lee said she and fellow members of her White Rose Band were accustomed to snow, just "not for the fourth of October." They had barely unloaded their instruments in South Dakota's Old West casino town of Deadwood before the wet, heavy snow started falling and closed part of Interstate 90, the area's only interstate.

"Our car is like an igloo," said Lee, who sings and plays the clarinet and saxophone for her North Dakota-based polka band. "I'm glad we got everything out."

The weather, which even forecasters said was rare, prompted Deadwood officials to postpone their annual Oktoberfest, including Friday night's dancing-and-singing pub crawl and Saturday's Wiener Dog Races and Beer Barrel Games. But Lee said she and her accordion-playing husband, who had planned to set up in a casino bar, would entertain stranded guests because "you can only gamble for so long."

Officials were warning drivers to stay off the roads in the Black Hills and in eastern Wyoming, where reports of 5 to 10 inches of snow were common. Forecasters urged travel-

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A Tale To Tell



South Dakota Lt. Gov. Matt Michels addressed a crowd of manufacturing, political and other business leaders Friday during a luncheon that concluded South Dakota Manufacturing Week activities in Yankton.

KELLY HERTZ/P&D

Michels To Manufacturers: Make Your Stories Known

BY NATHAN JOHNSON
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Manufacturers play an important role in South Dakota, and they need to tell their stories more often, South Dakota Lt. Gov. Matt Michels said Friday.

"(Manufacturing) is one of the major lifebloods of our state," he stated during a luncheon that capped off Yankton's observation of South Dakota Manufacturing Week. "We want to partner with you in any way you wish, whether it's through education, exporting — wherever it is you think we can help you, just ask."

The event was held at The Old Mill, which is the former Excelsior Flour Mill located near the intersection of Capitol and Levee streets. It was built in 1872 and was one of the earliest manufacturing facilities in Yankton.

During the past week, more than 315 members of the public participated in tours of eight Yankton manufacturing plants that opened their doors, according to Yankton Area Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Carmen Schramm. Additionally, more than 475 high school students toured the plants.

Michels said that people may have miscon-

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Gov. Praises Hartington Project



RANDY DOCKENDORF/P&D
Nebraska Gov. Dave Heineman (right) speaks with Hartington Economic Development Corporation officers Dan Kathol (left) and Brandon Baller (center) at Friday's ribbon cutting ceremony for the new Cobblestone Inn and Suites in Hartington, Neb.

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF
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HARTINGTON, Neb. — When it comes to the economy, Nebraska Gov. Dave Heineman believes Hartington has decided not to participate in the national recession.

Heineman spoke Friday at a ribbon cutting for Cobblestone Inn and Suites. The hotel chain selected Hartington, a community of 1,700 residents, as part of its national expansion.

The chain's decision to open the 29-bed hotel in Hartington — one of its smallest markets nationwide

— wasn't by accident, Heineman said. He pointed to the teamwork among Hartington city officials who created a tax-increment financing (TIF) district, local investors, the local economic development group, Cobblestone officials and the Wogernese Hotel Group (WHG) management company.

"This represents a \$2 million investment," the governor said. "Cobblestone is one more example of what you (Hartington residents) are willing and helping to do."

The town showed its continuing support with residents' attendance at Friday's

ribbon cutting, Heineman said. An estimated 70 people attended the ceremony.

"More people are here today than you would get for a grand opening in Omaha," he said. "You know how important this is (to your community). This will make a profit and more jobs. We are creating jobs for your sons and daughters."

Cobblestone Inn and Suites offers new possibilities for Hartington and the surrounding area, Heineman said. "A hotel in a small community can make a big difference," he said.

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Demolition Of HSC Buildings Begins

By Nathan Johnson
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Demolition of buildings on the former campus of the South Dakota Human Services Center began this week.

According to Kristi Honeywell, director of the Office of the State Engineer, Runge Enterprises has begun work on the Haas Building, located north of the old golf shack.

"(All of) the buildings are still on track to be demolished by May 2014," Honeywell said.

The Edmunds Building will be demolished in November, and the Medical Institute should be done by the end of the year.

In addition to those structures, the \$1.87 million base bid for the project includes the demolition of the Show Barn, the Dairy Barn, the Bull Barn, the Butcher Shop, Lee Cottage, the Herreid Building, the Mellette Building, the Ordway Building and part of the underground tunnel system.

Demolition of the root cellar will be done for an extra \$48,000,

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Speaker Seeks To Inspire YHS

BY ROB NIELSEN
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Jessica Cox has never let being born without arms get in the way of learning new talents.

From earning a black belt in karate (the first armless person ever to do so in the American Taekwondo Association) to receiving a pilot's license, Cox brought many of her life's stories of overcoming obstacles to the students of Yankton High School during an assembly program Friday morning.

Cox, who also spoke at Thursday's Wire Me Awake program, told the Press & Dakotan Friday her main objective has been to give others a sense that any goal is within their reach.

"I want them to feel like they want to do anything they want to do," Cox said. "Also (they should realize) the importance of accepting who they are. Often times, we hide from who we are and it's just important to accept and celebrate our differences."

Cox began speaking about her life seven years ago while she

was still in high school.

"I started when I was volunteering to share my story in high school sharing it with junior high students to inspire them," she said. "That's when I got hooked."

Ever since, Cox has taken her presentation across the U.S. and to 20 other countries. She said she normally spends six months on the road speaking.

During the speaking engagement on Friday, Cox talked told students about her experiences

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ROB NIELSEN/P&D
Jessica Cox demonstrates how to open and drink a can of soda without the benefit of arms during a program at Yankton High School Friday morning.