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# Overcoming Obstacles

Schimmel  
Shares  
Stories Of  
Success In  
WNBA

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF  
randy.dockendorf@yankton.net

WAGNER — As a major college and pro basketball player, Shoni Schimmel has been forced to overcome major obstacles — such as 6-foot-8 opponent Brittney Griner.

The challenge becomes especially daunting when you consider Schimmel stands nearly a foot shorter at 5-foot-9.

However, a Wagner audience marveled and cheered at Wednesday's footage showing Schimmel dribble behind her back, cut across court and loop a lay-up over Griner — one of the leading shot blockers in women's basketball.

Schimmel, who comes from both white and American Indian descent, has visited and spoken at 50 reservations. She visited Wagner for the school's Native American Day celebration. American Indians comprise about 70 percent of the Wagner school district's 950 students.

Schimmel grew up on the Umatilla reservation in northeast Oregon.

"It was a pretty cool feeling," she said. "It was comfortable, and your relatives were just across the street and all around you."

She was recruited for basketball by around 125 schools before selecting the University of Louisville. She was chosen eighth in the Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA) draft and now



Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA) star Shoni Schimmel (right) takes a "selfie" photo with a fan during Wednesday's "meet and greet" at the Wagner school. Schimmel, of both white and American Indian descent, and her parents spoke during the Native American Day program at the school. Around 70 percent of Wagner's 950 students are American Indian.

RANDY DOCKENDORF/P&D

## Local Soldier Returns From 8-Month Tour In Afghanistan

BY RANDY TRAMP  
P&D Correspondent

Private First Class Maggie Spak is back home after returning from active duty in Afghanistan after serving a tour with the Sioux Falls-based National Guard 1742 unit. She was a truck driver and logged several missions.

The Yankton native's most memorable mission covered 17 miles — and lasted 36 sleepless hours.

Of the approximate 20 missions Spak undertook over eight months, she said none were as difficult as that first assignment.

The U.S. Forward Operating Bases are closing down. The U.S. military, in cooperation with approved Afghan personnel, transfers materials to Afghanistan locations. On this particular mission, Spak drove a gun truck in a convoy of vehicles. A gun truck consisted of a driver, truck commander, a gunner, an assistant gunner and a dismount.

"We could only go 10 miles per hour," she said.

The journey was difficult because the



PFC Maggie Spak of Yankton recently returned from a deployment to Afghanistan with the Sioux Falls-based National Guard 1742 unit. She served as a truck driver in convoy missions.

COURTESY PHOTO

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## BID Board Weighs Tax Income

BY ROB NIELSEN  
rob.nielsen@yankton.net

The city of Yankton is projected to bring in just under \$125,000 for its occupancy tax collection this year, according to city finance officer Al Viereck.

"To date this year, we've taken in \$79,000," Viereck told the Yankton Business Improvement District No. 1 board of directors during a meeting Wednesday morning. "Projecting no increase for the last four months, we'd take in \$120,000. If we follow the trend for the first eight months, it'll be closer to \$124,000. Cash on hand then, with last year's cash plus what we've taken in this year, we have \$157,303.80."

Viereck added that disbursements include a 2 percent administrative fee to the city and 10 percent to the Yankton Convention and Visitor's Bureau.

"Last year, that amounted to \$8,813.60," he said. "The 10 percent this year will amount to about \$12,000. And if projections hold true, about \$12,400 that they'll get from the 10 percent."

The board will also be seeking to take on a new district member with the opening of the EconoLodge, but a little work will need to be done first to make this possible.

"It's pretty apparent that's going to be open

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Views



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Inside



Relish

## Menno Oktoberfest Celebrates Heritage, 31 Years

BY SHAUNA MARLETTE  
shauna.marlette@yankton.net

MENNO — What began in a small town South Dakota classroom as an opportunity to learn about the German heritage of area residents has, 31 years later, developed into one of the region's most celebrated Oktoberfests.

According to Sodak Stamm Germans from Russia Heritage Society president Gary Jerke, the event annually draws more than 400 people



Hutchinson County

primarily known for the event held in Munich, Germany. Much like their event — on a much smaller scale, of course — it is similar in that we serve food, beer and have good polka music."

to the Hutchinson county community of Menno.

"It is an ethnic celebration of our region's heritage," he said. "Oktoberfest is

Set for Saturday at the Menno School Gymnasium this year's Oktoberfest will feature the music of the Bockfest Boys, from New Ulm, Minnesota.

"I would say the New Ulm Oktoberfest is probably the most well known in the region," Jerke said. "When we were looking for a band for this year, we called the organizers there and asked which band they would recommend. They

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Election 2014

## Loest Hopes To Be A Voice For Rural Yankton County

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is part of a series of profiles on Yankton County candidates running for office in the general election. Today's profile is part of the series on the two candidates for the two-year term on the Yankton County Commission. The election is Nov. 4.

**NAME:** Cheri Loest, PE  
**FAMILY:** My husband Greg and sons Josh (12) and Zach (10) live on farmland near Utica.

**EDUCATION/OCCUPATION:** Professional Engineering License, Bachelor's in Chemical Engineering from SDSM&T, Master's in Curriculum & Design, South Dakota Teaching Certificate. I am a retired engineer and high school chemistry and math teacher. Currently an active mom.



Loest

1. Why are you running?

It is important to have representation for all sections of Yankton County, including rural, and a voice for our farmers and small business owners. Although I do not have political experience, my experience in plant operations and construction, insurance, and safety give me a sound background for asking the right questions and making informed decisions.

2. What experiences do you feel have

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## A Pumpkin Fight



KELLY HERTZ/P&D

Stewart Elementary School third-graders Shae Rumsey (left) and Shaylor Platt tussle over a pumpkin during the annual pumpkin giveaway conducted Wednesday by the South Dakota Department of Corrections Yankton Minimum Unit. More than 1,100 pumpkins are being distributed to third graders in Yankton, as well as students in several area communities and some local daycares. All the pumpkins were harvested from the unit's garden.