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FOOTBALL FRIDAY:

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'No Place For Bullies'



At Yankton Middle School, a sign is displayed in the hallway that encourages students to make smart choices when it comes to how they treat others. Administrators make it a priority to make all students feel safe and prevent the harmful acts of bullying. (Alissa Woockman/P&D)

YSD Administrators Take Measures Against Bullying, Encourage Students To Speak Up

BY ALISSA WOOCKMAN
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Bullying has been an issue of concern for many educators as well as the students they teach. It can begin with younger students learning how to behave around one another, and then progress into the psychological impact of teenage years. Yankton School District administrators and teachers know this movement all too well, seeing hundreds of kids pass through their classrooms every year. They are aware of the patterns and work hard to make sure that, if bullying occurs, it is all part of how students grasp the definition and the consequences that encompass it.

"I think the first thing that you have to do is define bullying," said Middle School principal Todd Dvoracek. "What is it? That is something that is not always understood by everybody."

According to StopBullying.gov, 64 percent of American adults believe bullying to be more prevalent among people today than it was during their own childhood.

Bullying is an imbalance of power or strength, or intentional, repeated or aggressive behavior that is unwanted and results in negative actions, said Dvoracek.

"I think the big word there is repeated," said high school principal Dr. Jennifer Johnke. "That is not to say one-time incidents aren't dealt with, but it doesn't fall underneath the definition of bullying. We deal with every situation to make sure that students are focused on academics when they come into school."

Teachers make sure that students learn the differences between what is known as bullying and what could be conflict. Each person can be subject to a difference of opinion, but if they are unsure how to resolve it in a positive way, the outcome could advance into bullying behaviors.

"Kids make poor choices sometimes," said Beadle Elementary principal.

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County To Reassess Its Road Projects

BY ROB NIELSEN
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With this week's failure of a referendum on a levy for road and bridge repairs, the 2016 budget is on the agenda for Tuesday's meeting of the Yankton County Commission.

Commission chairman Todd Woods expects some road projects to be cut.

"There's projects that were approved preliminarily in the budget that, in my opinion, we're going to have to take out of the budget because the money's not there," Woods said. "We've got to find a long-term solution to our road problem."

He added those projects include bridges and maintenance.

"We had approved three bridges to be replaced," he said. "One was a cost-share with Clay County. Those projects were to the tune of half a million (dollars). We're going to have to evaluate that. We're going to have to evaluate some other maintenance issues because the budget's still short about \$1.5 million, which we would have to take out of (unassigned) cash. ... I don't know if that's a pertinent move at this point."

Woods said there will be a number of other options that may have to be brought to the table such as grinding paved roads into gravel.

"We're going to have to make some tough decisions now in figuring out what the next step is," he said. "The thing is, even if we do ground pavement to gravel, that still costs money," he said. "There's still going to be an expense to that; there's still going to be maintenance to that. What happens when that road goes from asphalt to gravel? Does it go to the county or the township? There's a lot of questions that need to be answered"



Woods

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Cedar Co. Group On Kansas Mission

BY LINDA WUEBBEN
P&D Correspondent

Mission trips may conjure up visions of jungles, mosquitos and cooking over open fires for some but for a mixed group of adults and youth from Cedar County, their trip was just a jaunt south to Kansas.

"I have taken a group on a mission trip for thirteen years, since I became a priest," said the Rev. Jim Keiter of St. John the Baptist parish in Fordyce.

When Keiter began his first year as a priest at Sacred Heart parish in Norfolk, he did some research about mission work and hooked up with the Catholic Heart Work Camp group based in Florida. He is a chaplain and director for the heart work camp and this past year was

on the road five weeks out of the summer but that is only a fraction of what the work camp accomplishes in a year. They have a presence in 50 cities across the nation every summer with anywhere from 250 to 450 youth volunteers every week.

This summer Keiter took a small group of 10 adults and youth to Wichita and broke a barrier for rural northeast Nebraska. It was a new concept for Catholics in Cedar County.

"There seems to be a mindset that rural parishes cannot do what big city parishes do," said Keiter. But he has seen great things come from these week-long experiences and is anxious to see rural participation grow. Some people believe you



COURTESY PHOTO
Pictured are, front from left: Allison Loecker, Sydney Christensen, Emma Wiebelhaus, Lauren Steffen, Amber Leise, Jackson Eickhoff and Jason Becker; back row: The Rev. Jim Keiter, Rod Wiebelhaus and Jody Paulsen.

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Official: Use Caution At Vehicle Accident Sites

BY REILLY BIEL
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Everyone has come across accident scenes along rural roads and highways. But does everyone slow down?

Not according to Yankton Deputy Chief/Fire Marshal Larry Nickles.

"Cars get dangerously close," Nickles told the *Press & Dakotan*. "We have a real problem with that, especially on the highway."

Traffic safety around accident scenes has gotten considerably more dangerous the last five years, said Nickles. He blames this on increased highway speeds, people being distracted by gadgets like cell phones and being in a rush to get to their destinations.

In the county, the most dangerous places for accident sites are on highways 50 and 81.

"They don't have much regard for what's going on there," Nickles said. "We can have trucks sitting all over the road and firefighters out working the scene, and some people will drive in the ditch to go around us."

"We sometimes have to jump out of the way," he added.

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