

## Nun

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"Sister Consuelo was always willing to share little hints for learning a specific Spanish concept with me and then to share with my students. She will be greatly missed."

At Sunday's wake service, Sister Jacquelyn Ernster recalled how her fellow nun was part of the Sacred Heart Monastery mission team sent in 1965 to open a school in San Pedro Carcha, Guatemala.

"(Sister Consuelo) had many stories to tell about the language challenges, the difficulties of getting around in the hilly terrain, the bureaucracy imposed on the school by the government, and daily life with her fellow Sisters so isolated from home," Sister Jacquelyn said.

Recently, at her 90th birthday party, Sister Consuelo and two other nuns shared stories from those days, Sister Jacquelyn said. In Guatemala, the nuns arrived at an unfinished convent, realized skills they didn't know they had, and teased each other about language mishaps — such as finding that "Ajax" wasn't scouring powder.

By caring for her elderly mother in later years, Sister Consuelo sharpened her Spanish skills and inherited motherliness to help the local Hispanic population, Sister Jacquelyn said.

After Monday's funeral, about a dozen local Hispanics shared stories of their love for Sister Consuelo with the Press & Dakotan.

When she learned of her termi-

nal illness, Sister Consuelo called together the Hispanic community, Padron said. "Sister said things were set and everything was going to be OK. She was sick, but she pretended not to be sick," she said.

Sister Consuelo quickly developed a reputation as a trustworthy source of assistance for newcomers, Guadalupe Alarcon said. Even after just one meeting, the nun remembered people several years later.

"Sister Consuelo didn't ask if you needed help. She would give it to you," Alarcon said. "If new people came to the Hispanic community, she wouldn't ask if you were Catholic or what your culture was."

Maria Salinas received help when her daughter was born, when her husband was in jail and when she was looking for a job.

Lupillo Morales, who now lives in Gayville, moved to the area in 1995, when the Hispanic community was almost non-existent compared to today's estimated 500 residents.

"When we came here, there were three (Hispanic) families in Yankton," Morales said. "Sister Consuelo looked for a house for us, and she gave us some furniture for free. She was a long-time help with families who came here."

For the Ordaz family, Sister Consuelo traveled with them to Bloomington, Minn., to translate and help them work through U.S. residency paperwork with government officials.

For some area residents, Sister Consuelo's spiritual assistance was life changing.

Doctors believed Padron's daughter, Carmen, was suffering ab-

normalities when she was born 12 years ago. "But Sister Consuelo led a group of nuns who prayed for me, and I turned out with no problems, so now she said I owed her," Carmen said with a smile.

While energetic and compassionate, Sister Consuelo was also strict, strong willed and sharp in the ways of business and the law, Padron said. She helped people make difficult decisions when appearing in court, and she made sure Hispanics were treated fairly in business dealings.

Because Sister Consuelo didn't drive, the person seeking assistance provided transportation to any appointments or meetings.

The nun also detested lateness, particularly lengthy delays, said Dora Dooley, a friend for 20 years. "Sister meant business. If you were going to meet, she always asked, 'Are we meeting on Spanish time or American time?'" Dooley said.

For Socorro Melgoza, the nun's death brought an additional measure of sadness.

"I was in Mexico, and I wasn't here before Sister Consuelo passed away," she said. "I knew Sister Consuelo was ill, but I didn't have time to talk to her. I wanted to say 'thank you' for all that she has done for everyone."

At Monday's funeral, Father Thomas Wordekemper said the nun faced her impending death without fear. She also demanded her eulogy not sound like she was headed for sainthood.

"She summed it up gallantly and rather nonchalantly by saying, 'God gave me an invitation. I have accepted it and now I have to cram,'" the priest said. "She continued, 'I

have been given a passport to heaven, and it is valid.' And that was about all she wanted to say about it. ... She went through those stages of accepting death very gracefully and very grace-filled ..."

In the same way, Sister Consuelo lived a dignified life of prayer, work and hospitality reflecting her Benedictine life, Wordekemper said. By serving the least of her brothers and sisters, the nun was bearing Christian witness, he said.

"For someone who never learned to drive but always knew where to go and how to get there, may you let the angels take you to paradise!" he added.

Gloriz Nelson, one of the mourners, said the Hispanic community has lost a great friend. "There will be no replacement for her," Nelson added.

Looking around the room, Alarcon said she could feel the nun's spirit.

"I feel as if Sister is here right now. We never got this many (Hispanic) people together at one time. The whole community is now together because of her," Alarcon said.

"She is not here for us anymore, so now we have to be together for each other."

A novena, or nine days of prayer, following Sister Consuelo's funeral began Monday night at the Nino family home in Utica. Interested persons can call 668-9309 for more information.

You can follow Randy Dockendorf on Twitter at [twitter.com/RDockendorf](https://twitter.com/RDockendorf)

## Congress

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it would allow more spending than would be permitted under a GOP budget plan that passed the House this spring.

Less certain is whether a badly gridlocked Congress will be able to find a solution on what to do about food aid and farm subsidies set to expire at the end of the month.

The Senate has passed a five-year farm bill to overhaul crop safety net programs while funding food stamps for more than 46 million people. But the food and farm legislation has bedeviled House leaders because many GOP conservatives want deeper cuts to food stamps than Democrats, whose votes are needed to pass the measure, are willing to support.

House Majority Whip Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., said Monday that GOP leaders intend to bring the measure to the floor before the election, though the measure has yet to appear on any floor schedule. Probably more likely is an attempt to temporarily extend the old bill, including drought aid for livestock producers whose assistance programs expired last year.

But it's not certain lawmakers will do even that. Without a formal extension, food stamp and other nutrition programs would con-

tinue to function beyond Sept. 30. Most farmers would not be affected because the current farm bill covers 2012 crops regardless of when they are harvested.

Republicans have, however, slated votes this week in hopes of embarrassing Democrats over an Energy Department scandal and the failure by Senate Democrats to offer a plan to forestall the automatic spending cuts set to strike the Pentagon and domestic agencies as punishment for the failure of last year's deficit "supercommittee" to strike a budget deal.

On Friday, Republicans promise a vote on a bill dubbed the "No More Solyndras Act," which would phase out Energy Department loan guarantees for solar and wind energy companies. It's unlikely to even get a vote in the Senate.

Solyndra Inc. went bankrupt last year after receiving a loan guarantee from the Obama administration, even as some White House aides raised red flags. The California company's failure left taxpayers on the hook for \$500 million.

On Thursday comes a House vote on the ambitiously titled "National Security and Job Protection Act." It's a curiously-drafted 10-page bill that would turn off the automatic spending cuts — conditioned on Congress separately enacting a big package of spending cuts. If Congress were to pass such a bill, of course, lawmakers would use that legislation to block the across-the-board cuts.

## YSD

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Specht said. "The numbers clearly reflect that over the last 15 years, there is a decline in teaching staff at YSD to go along with the lowering student enrollment."

Bietz noted that YSD school district enrollment is up so far in 2012, which could help the budget in future years with the per student allotment. However, the district is still responding to the trend of decreasing enrollment in the school district over the past decade.

"We are constantly monitoring class-size ratios, especially at the elementary levels," he said. "We don't fill positions through attri-

tion whenever we possibly can. For this school year we are in right now, four teaching positions have been eliminated because we didn't need them. We would love to have them because it would bring class ratios down, but we couldn't afford them."

In addition to approving the budget for the 2012-13 school year, the board also continued to overhaul the districts health care plan.

The board took Silverstone's recommendation to drop aggregate stop loss insurance, resulting in about \$15,000 in savings to the plan. Representatives from Silverstone told YSD officials that in their experience, only very rarely do claims incurred for the plan reach the attachment point to file a claim on the aggregate reinsurance. In addition, the individual stop loss insurance amount was

increased from \$125,000 to \$130,000.

The Yankton Boys and Girls club also presented to the board that they would like to continue to partner with the school district, and potentially have a facility at Yankton Middle School at some point in the future.

Other business included approving a request from the Gayville-Volin School District that establishes student pickup points in the Yankton School District's pickup area. Teachers from YSD also presented how they have been using 63-3 Foundation grants to enhance the student learning experience.

The next school board meeting will be held on October 8.

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## City

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"Each step in the process takes some investigation and time to make sure if it's right or wrong," she said. "That's why I'm interested in the (consultant proposals), to see exactly what work is going to be done and whether, in my personal opinion, it's going to get us to the next step of where I think we need to go."

Commissioners Pauline Akland, Dave Carda and Brad Woerner were absent from Monday's meeting.

In other business Monday, the commission:

- voiced no objections to allowing the "Before I Die" wall near the Meridian Bridge to continue for another 30 days. The commission said it wanted to review the project after the first 30 days before allowing it

for another month. The Parks Advisory Board recommended that the interactive art project remain, and Viereck said there has been no negative feedback about it;

- was told by Viereck that sales tax due to the city for July was 4.69 percent above July 2011.

"July was probably one of our lesser increases for the year, and yet it was still 4.69 percent. For the seven months year-to-date compared to the seven months year-to-date of 2011, we're still up over 10 percent," he said.

A discrepancy has arisen between municipal taxes due and those received, according to Viereck. He said that those received are above 9 percent year-to-date. The state is investigating the difference; and

- approved the 2013 budget.

You can follow Nathan Johnson on Twitter at [twitter.com/AnInlandVoyage](https://twitter.com/AnInlandVoyage)

## County

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Added Commissioner Mark Johnson, "I think we run the risk of them doing more damage than good to the trail by coming in and trying to fix it and then claiming they did what they could. I almost think we have to stick with what we said. I think no matter what happens, we're going to end up with a new contractor in the spring to finish on the third year of our one-year contract. (LRC hasn't) followed through with anything they said they'd do yet. Why would we expect a change now?"

Commissioners Garry Moore and Allen Sinclair were absent from the meeting, but after speaking with them Jensen said they, too, wanted to uphold the previous decision unless there was a legal reason to let LRC return.

Jensen asked Klimisch if there had been any legal missteps up to

this point.

"We're two years into a one-year contract," Klimisch said. "They were supposed to be here during May, then June, July, August and now we're in September. Am I concerned that they have fulfilled their end of the contract? No. They know this risk is sitting out there."

If the county were to assess LRC liquidated damages for the days beyond the original contract that the project was not complete, Klimisch acknowledged that little, if any, of the \$76,000 bond money would remain.

"I don't see any reason to have them involved in this project at this point," Commissioner Donna Freng said.

Pete Johnson of Johnson Engineering has been overseeing the project for the county, and he concurred with the commissioners.

The commission took no action during the meeting, leaving their previous decision stand.

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**Dr. Maska** treats arthritis, including rheumatoid, osteoarthritis and complex forms such as gout; certain autoimmune diseases, such as lupus and vasculitis; as well as musculoskeletal pain disorders such as fibromyalgia.

**Dr. Garry** performs general surgery procedures such as laparoscopic hernia, stomach, colon, adrenal and splenectomy surgery; colonoscopies; esophagogastroduodenoscopy (EGDs); "Painless" hemorrhoid surgery; and minimally invasive parathyroidectomy.

**Tim Irwin, M.D. (Top)**  
*Board Certified in Internal Medicine and Board Eligible in Cardiology*

**Leann Maska, M.D. (Center)**  
*Board Certified in Internal Medicine and Board Eligible in Rheumatology*

**Ryan J. Garry, M.D. (Bottom)**  
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