



COURTESY IMAGE

Each department in Yankton County government can individual the new county logo for its own purposes. Here is the logo adopted for the Department of Planning and Zoning.

Logo

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He said from there he was given the task to start looking into the creation of a county seal.

"The commission gave us approval last spring to form a committee and return with a recommendation," he said. "We met several times and worked on different concepts before presenting this design. The commissioners adopted our recommendation in August."

Bodenstedt told the *Press & Dakotan* the idea was to help the county stand out.

"It was sort of an identity item," she said. "I've attended meetings where the counties had seals. You go to their websites and there's always a seal. When I asked the question, 'Does Yankton County have a seal?' the answer was, 'No.' We decided to put together a committee of citizens and brainstorm and come up with an idea. ... I think it'll be something that when we see it, it'll become known and we'll be able to show it throughout the state."

The seal has a number of elements associated with it — each with a different meaning according to Hunhoff.

LAND AND WATER

"The central image, which is a bit abstract, is a sweep of land and water," Hunhoff said. "The water, of course, pays tribute to our two rivers and four lakes. ... Up close, it appears to be rows in a cornfield. From a bit farther away, it could be Mount Pisgah near the State Lake, or any of the rolling rural hills near Lake Marindahl, the James River valley or the Lewis and Clark Lake area. Personally, I see the central land/water image as a symbol of three things: Yankton County agriculture, our rural lifestyle and the beauty and recreational opportunities of our lakes and rivers."

FLYING HIGH

"Another element in the seal is an eagle gliding over that sweep of land and water," Hunhoff said. "Eagles are often used as government symbols, but we thought it was especially appropriate here in Yankton County with so many eagles in our skies and trees along the Missouri."

HERITAGE

"We have prominently displayed 1862 as the year our county was founded back in the days of Dakota Territory, and the lower portion of the seal shows a straight arrow pointing right," Hunhoff said. "This is included as recognition of the Native American



Hunhoff



Bodenstedt

tribes living here long before white people came to the Yankton area. Of course, arrows are also part of our present with the success of the national archery center and tournaments held here." Hunhoff added that the logo has already been starting to pop up. "It's been what you might call a soft open in the business world," he said. "We have not made a big announcement, but we have started to use it. In my office, we have created new letterheads with it. I believe some other offices have done that as well. Commissioner Bodenstedt has ordered name tags that feature it. Just this week, my deputy, Mallory Wriedt, used it when she developed new building directory signs for the first floor corridor in the Yankton County Government Center."

He said other uses and applications will come with time. "I believe Commissioner Bodenstedt has several ideas about how to use it, including name tags, letterheads, envelopes, our website, shirt embroidery and some other things," he said. "I believe the commission intends to hire a sign company to create a large emblem for the commission room. I would like to see it added to the entrances or glass doors of our five county buildings. Someday you may see it on some of our county vehicles, although that won't happen soon."

Bodenstedt said she's even planning on taking it on the road this week.

"I plan on having a name tag that I'll wear at my next Pierre meeting," she said.

Hunhoff added that its application will not be a major financial headache.

"As far as additional costs, they will be minimal if we transition into it within our normal schedule of replacing or reordering items that would need it," he said.

Bodenstedt said the symbol ultimately helps connect the departments that make up the county's governing structure.

"I think this is a unifying effort," she said. "It was sent out to all the department heads and as it's implemented, I think we'll see a unifying effect on the county employees."

Follow @RobNielsenPandD on Twitter.

Teachers

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position at the middle school. That position only received three applications, as did the physical science opening at the high school.

These recent numbers don't discriminate, as applications are down across all subjects and grade levels.

The district even got an earlier start on advertising those open positions this year. In the past, the district could not start advertising its open positions until March 1 due to the teacher master contract, set in place by the district. Written applications to enter an early retirement program had to be submitted to the school board prior to March 1.

In this year's new master contract, those applications have to be submitted as early as Feb. 1.

Regardless of getting the jump on hiring compared with other school districts, the applications submitted still fell short.

"The limited number of applicants has been a growing trend for the last several years," Kindle said. "We believe there are less applicants for a variety of reasons: fewer students getting a degree in education; teaching and administration are not easy professions; testing and curriculum

demands; society changes have created many more challenges for those in the education profession; and the education profession, at times, appears to not be as respected as it once was in this country."

Another contributing factor — and perhaps the most crucial one — for the low application numbers may be due to South Dakota ranking dead last nationally in teaching salaries.

According to the National Education Association's Ranking and Estimates research, the average salary for a public school teacher in South Dakota was \$39,018 from 2012 to 2013. From 2013 to 2014, that average salary was increased to \$40,023, yet South Dakota still at the bottom of the list.

Surrounding states like Iowa and Nebraska rank much higher on the salary list. Nebraska is ranked 32nd with \$49,539 and Iowa is ranked 25th with \$52,032. "We know there will be more vacancies in the future," Kindle said. "This will be a challenge not only for Yankton, but for schools across the state."

Due to salary constraints, prospective teachers may be choosing to visit other

states for teaching positions. Of the total applications that YSD received this year, two out-of-state applicants were offered the job but did not accept: one from Iowa and one from Nebraska.

However, according to the Associated School Boards of South Dakota, YSD is ranked third in the highest paying average teacher salary of the 151 school districts in South Dakota at \$44,188.

the lack of applicants.

"If we don't get the ideal candidate to hire through the hiring process, we can choose to open the position up again," Kindle said. "We can also decide to hire a candidate that we could certainly mentor, which has happened in some instances."

YSD's hiring process involves several hiring committees that use an online service software application called Talent Ed, which offers tools to help the district match the right teachers with the right jobs. An important part of the hiring process also involves reference and background checks.

As superintendent, Kindle oversees the steps of the hiring process, including reviewing all applications for the district's open positions, consulting with administrators prior to a final selection and being part of the phone call when making an offer to a candidate.

Regardless of the number of applications, YSD's hiring process remains standard and the district is confident in the candidates accepted into those positions for the new year.

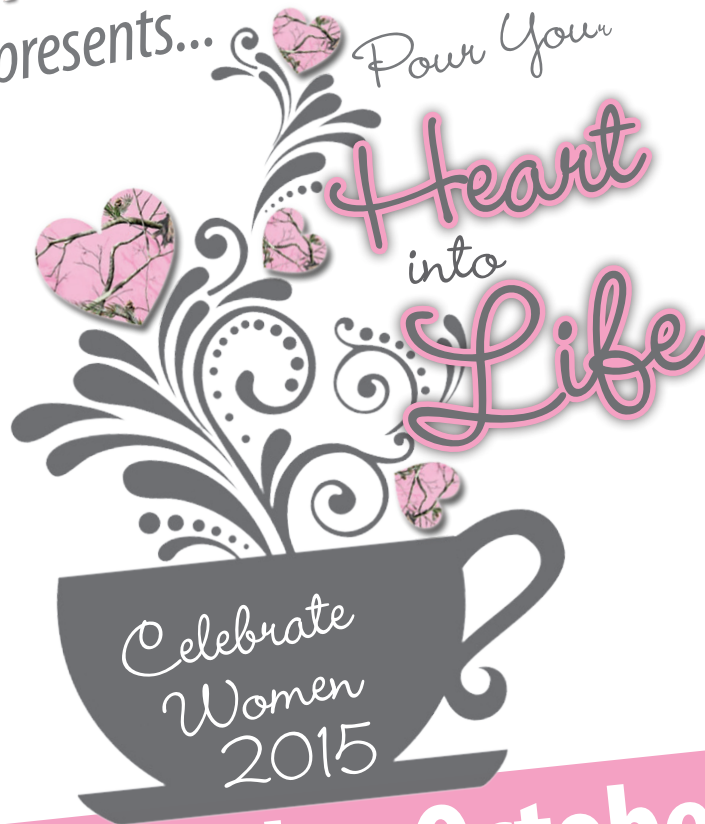
"It was tough but the teachers we did hire, we are so fortunate to get some young new teachers," Kindle said.

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"We know there will be more vacancies in the future. This will be a challenge not only for Yankton, but for schools across the state."

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