

## Guard

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in Bravo Battery in our line units," Schild said. "Because of that, the state has been remodeling our armory because we weren't set up for that. We've always been a combat unit. They've been adding women's showers, redoing the toilets and redoing the locker rooms so there's room for females and males in there now."

In addition to being able to see equipment, Buechler said open house attendees will also get a chance to see something else rare — a change of command.

"Cpt. Darrin Eichacker will be relinquishing command to 1st Lt. Michael Nei," Buechler said. "The public is welcome to view that ceremony as well. It's kind of a neat ceremony. There's a lot of tradition to it where the battery guidon is transferred from the outgoing commander to the incoming commander. The battalion commander will be there because he's the one who oversees the ceremony."

Eichacker has been with Bravo Battery since 2010 and took over as commander in 2012. The changeover ceremony is set to run from 1-2 p.m. during the open house.

The unit has tried to do open houses every year it has not deployed overseas. The unit's involvement with flood relief in 2011 also forced the cancellation of that year's open house.

Buechler said Saturday's event gives the community a chance to see what happens within the National Guard.

"It's just a way for the battery to invite the public in and get a sense of what we do as a field artillery battery," he said. "They get to view some of the equipment that their taxpayer dollars are paying for. They get answers to their questions like, 'What does this piece of equipment do?' ... It's establishing good rapport and relations with the public, and showing them what we are capable of doing serving the country."

He added that, in addition to the Yankton community getting a peek at the Guard, it also serves as a way of reaching out to the families of Guard members.

"One of the (things we hear) from the family members of our battery members is, 'What does my husband, or son, or cousin or uncle do in the Guard?' This actually gives them a visual example of what we do and then they can ask questions."

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## United

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Thanks" event, during which United Way volunteers will friendly-picket various businesses around town that have been strong supporters of the group.

Thursday will include a free car wash from 4-6 p.m. at the Yankton Boys & Girls Club.

Hanson said Live United Week has been going strong for three years and sprung out of a desire to go beyond a single campaign day.

"In previous years, we'd go to the football game and march on the field as our big kickoff," she said. "We just kind of wanted to spread out the week, incorporate more people and do more things so it wasn't just a one-day thing."

She added that the response to going to a full week has been positive.

"I think people like to see that we're being more visible in the community," she said. "They like to see us celebrating the successes of the community. They like to get involved. ... I think it's just a fun way to get everyone starting to think about United Way and what we're doing. It's brought a lot of awareness."

However, Hanson said one of the most important aspects is highlighting the group's partner agencies.

"It's about celebrating our successes and it's about really being aware of the impact that our partner agencies have on the community," she said. "This year's campaign, we're focusing on imagining what your gift can become. ... Your gift touches a large group of people that are focusing on education, basic needs, financial stability, health initiatives, really combatting poverty in our community and we're working together as partners to make our community a better place. It's really about spreading awareness about what those agencies do, the important work that they do and how many lives they touch."

For more information, visit <http://www.yanktonunit-edway.org/>.

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## Penalty

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lawmakers voted in May to repeal capital punishment over the objection of Ricketts, becoming the first traditionally conservative state to do so since North Dakota in 1973. Although the signatures still must be verified, it's likely the petition sponsors collected enough to keep the law from taking effect before the election.

The repeal vote was helped by an unusual coalition of conservative state senators and more traditional death penalty opponents who have fought for decades to eliminate the practice. Some conservatives said they opposed it for religious and moral reasons, while others cast it as an inefficient government program that wastes tax money.

"It played into this narrative that the death penalty is dying, that it's so disliked that even people in the heartland are turning away from it," said Douglas Berman, an Ohio

State University law professor and death penalty expert. The large number of signatures gathered "tells a different story, and its sets up a very interesting and arguably more pure litmus test."

Despite their advantage, death penalty supporters could face challenges of their own, said Dan Parsons, a Lincoln-based Republican consultant who has worked on past ballot campaigns.

Parsons said death penalty opposition has grown and become more organized since his tenure as a spokesman for former Attorney General Don Stenberg, who pushed successfully for the state's last three executions.

"They had a lot of signatures, but it's still just a fraction of what they're going to need to win this thing," said Parsons, who is not affiliated with either campaign. "The campaign will be really important for both sides."

Some national groups also question whether the number of signatures will translate into enough votes to retain capital punishment. The death penalty likely wouldn't have

made it to the ballot if not for a well-funded signature-gathering push from Ricketts and other big donors, said Robert Dunham, executive director of the Death Penalty Information Center.

"What the financial statements suggest so far is there isn't any broad-based groundswell for repeal," said Dunham, whose group criticizes the way the death penalty is administered.

Nebraska hasn't carried out an execution since 1997, and the state is struggling to obtain two of the three lethal injection drugs required to execute any of the 10 men currently on death row. Ricketts' administration has tried to import the drugs from a broker in India at a cost of \$54,400, but the U.S. Food and Drug Administration has warned the state can't legally bring them into the country.

The legal costs will continue to increase if voters restore capital punishment, and importing the drugs is only a short-term fix because they'll eventually expire, said Eric Berger, a University of Nebraska law professor and

to retain federal contractors and could hinder economic growth.

"Once again President Obama is using the federal procurement system to do something it was never been designed to do: usurp the legislative authority of Congress to determine appropriate workplace policies," said Randy Johnson, senior vice president of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

The White House wouldn't specify the cost to federal contractors to implement the executive order. The Labor Department said any costs would be offset

by savings that contractors would see as a result of lower attrition rates and increased worker loyalty, but produced nothing to back that up.

Vice President Joe Biden echoed Obama's theme in a march with an influential labor leader, AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka, who introduced Biden in Pittsburgh as a "brother" and "a champion of working men and working women." A few along the parade route chanted "run, Biden, run," in a reference to Biden's ongoing deliberations about whether to run for president in 2016.

death penalty expert.

"Obviously the petition signatures are something of a blow for the momentum to repeal the death penalty," Berger said. "But overturn-

ing the repeal doesn't solve the problem of getting those drugs. Even if the death penalty is reinstituted, I think the state will continue to have trouble."

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Saturday Entertainment No Band Regular Menu 5:30-8:00

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