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The Groton Independent

Vol. 143 No. 31 ♦ Groton, SD ♦ Wednesday, April 15, 2026 ♦ Established in 1889



Fifth grade Elementary Picture: back row left to right: Wendy Cooper, Janel Lone, Hailey Erickson (1st place Columbia and region), Aschar Warrington (2nd place Groton essay), Mehetsi Renata Garcia (1st place Groton and region essay), Cora Kotzer (1st place Groton and region poem), Jerrie Vedei, and Carrie Cole. In front left to right is Jozie Lord (2nd place Columbia), Anna Oswald (2nd place Columbia essay), Bless Moo (1st place Columbia essay), and Aryanna Cutler (2nd place Groton poem). (Photo by Tina Kosel)



Fourth Grade Winner: In back, left to right, are Wendy Cooper, Nolan Rose (2nd place Groton essay), Freddy Cole (1st place Groton and region essay), Lincoln Heilman (1st place Columbia essay), Baylin Taylor (2nd place Columbia poem), Laken Kurth (1st place Groton and region essay); Jerrie Vedvei and Susan Fjeldheim; in front, left to right, are Samuel Fliehs (2nd place Columbia essay), Piper Heilman (1st place Columbia and region poem), Katerina Simunek (2nd place Groton essay). (Photo by Tina Kosel)

Groton, Columbia Auxiliary Units Announce 2026 Essay, Poetry Winners

The 2026 American Legion Auxiliary essay and poetry contest winners have been announced by the Groton and Columbia Auxiliary units, recognizing the work of local students across multiple grade levels.

This year's contests centered on patriotic themes tied to the nation's upcoming milestone anniversary. The Americanism Essay Contest carried the theme "Celebrate America's 250th Birthday and Veterans Who Fought for Our Freedom," while the Americanism Poetry Contest invited entries under the theme "Happy 250th Birthday, America."

Students from the Groton area took part in both competitions, with participation spanning elementary through high school levels. Fourth- and fifth-grade students from Groton Area Elementary submitted entries, along with students from Groton Area High School, showcasing their reflections on American history, freedom, and the sacrifices made by veterans. The first and second place winners locally advanced to the regional competition.

Through essays and poetry, students explored the meaning of patriotism and honored those who have served the country. The contests, sponsored annually by the American Legion Auxiliary, are designed to promote Americanism and encourage young people to develop a deeper appreciation for the nation's heritage.

Local Auxiliary representatives noted that the contests continue to provide an opportunity for students to express their thoughts creatively while learning about the importance of service, freedom, and national pride.

First-place winners from the region will advance to the state competition, where their work will be judged against top entries from across South Dakota.

Winners from both communities were recognized for their efforts, continuing a long-standing tradition of celebrating student achievement through writing and poetry.



High School Picture back row: Left to right Scott Thorson, Jerrie Vedvei, Ivan Schwan (seventh grade second place Groton essay), Asher Zimmerman (eighth grade 2nd place Columbia essay), Kamryn McKane (eighth grade first place Groton essay), Ryder Schwan (seventh grade second place Groton essay), Ilyanna Dallaire (eighth grade 1st place Columbia essay), Wendy Cooper and Mary Johnson, in front left to right is Hayden Hubbart (sixth grade 2nd place Groton and 1st place region essay), Amara El Salany (7th grade 1st Groton essay), Ryan Hanson (sixth grade 1st Place Groton essay) and Brooke Torrence; not pictured is Amara Freeland (seventh grade first place region essay); and Emily Suelztz (9th-10th grade 1st place region essay). (Photo by Tina Kosel)

Groton school board approves retirement of long-serving industrial tech teacher, discusses facilities master plan

By Elizabeth Varin

The Groton Area School Board reviewed progress on its long-range facilities planning efforts and took action on several personnel matters during its meeting Monday night.

Among the almost dozen hiring and resignation decisions, the board approved the retirement of district's industrial technology teacher Don Donley, who concludes a remarkable 55-year career—believed to be the longest tenure in Career and Technical Education in South Dakota.

Donley's retirement request came in characteristically understated fashion, with a brief letter to the board that read, "To the Groton School Board: I'm done."

The moment drew some lighthearted reaction from board members, including Marty Weismantel who noted he "regrettably" moved to accept Donley's retirement.

Board members reminisced about their experiences with the teacher who has been a mainstay at the high school.

"I don't know if everyone is going to understand the effect it's going to have, with him not being around, just all the little things that he does, the check ins he does with everybody on staff," said Superintendent Joe Schwan. "He has a way that he treats people that changes their day from average or bad to good."

In addition to honoring Donley, board members heard an update on the district's ongoing facilities master planning process and made several personnel changes.

The board received an update from officials at Co-Op Architecture about a phased master plan update.

Continues on Back Page



Don Donley

gofundme

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"Local News Matters! Stand with The Groton Independent"

Groton Area track teams shine at Eureka and Gettysburg meets

The Groton Area track and field teams turned in an impressive stretch of performances this week, highlighted by a relay-dominated showing at the Bob Billotto Invitational in Eureka and a team championship by the boys squad at the Gettysburg Battler Invitational.

At Eureka, the Tigers relied heavily on their relay strength. The Groton boys placed sixth overall with 61 points in a tightly packed field, but made their mark by winning three relay events. The 4x100 team of Lincoln Krause, Jordan Schwan, JJ Muller and Keegen Tracy captured first in 45.33 seconds, followed by a victory in the 4x200 relay (1:34.13) with Krause, Muller, Schwan and Ethan Kroll. The sprint medley relay team of Krause, Schwan, Tracy and Jayden Schwan added another gold in 3:45.79.

Groton also finished second in the 4x800 relay, where Jayden Schwan, Jace Johnson, Riley Shellenberger and Kroll posted an 8:45.71. Individually, Tracy claimed the 200-meter title in 23.40, while Shellenberger and Johnson provided depth in the distance races.

The Groton girls were equally dominant in Eureka, finishing fourth with 72 points while sweeping all four relay events. The 4x100 (McKenna Tietz, Taryn Traphagen, Kella Tracy, Makenna Krause), 4x200 (Rylee Dunker, Traphagen, Krause, Tracy), 4x400 (Tietz, Traphagen, Tracy, Ashlynn Warrington), and sprint medley (Tietz, Traphagen, Tracy, Rylee Gilbert) teams all earned first-place finishes.

Individually, Krause placed third in the 100 meters, Tietz finished third in the 100 hurdles, and Emerlee Jones added strong efforts in both the hurdles and high jump.

Groton carried that momentum into Gettysburg, where the boys edged Ipswich 85-83 to capture the team title. Tracy led the charge with a dominant sweep of the sprints, winning the 100 (10.99), 200 (23.05) and 400 (53.95).

Jayden Schwan added two more individual titles in the distance races, taking first in the 1600 (4:50.95) and 3200 (10:22.65). The Tigers also picked up key relay points, including a second-place finish in the 4x200 and a third-place effort in the 4x800.

Other contributors included Krause, who placed sixth in the 100, and Kroll, who took fifth in the long jump.

In the girls division at Gettysburg, Groton finished in a tie for third place with 67 points. The Tigers continued their relay dominance, winning the 4x100, 4x200 and sprint medley events. Tietz added an individual victory in the 300 hurdles, while the Tigers placed multiple athletes in the 100 hurdles.

Gilbert led the distance runners with a fourth-place finish in the 1600, and Krause added a fifth-place finish in the 100 meters. Groton also earned a third-place finish in the 4x400 relay.

Across both meets, Groton Area's depth and especially its strength in the relays proved to be the difference, with multiple event wins and strong team finishes highlighting a successful week on the track.

Gettysburg Battler Invitational

Boy's Division

Team Scores: 1. Groton Area 85, 2. Ipswich 83, 3. Timber Lake 78, 4. Aberdeen Christian 69, 5. Frederick Area 67, 6. Faulkton Area 47, 7. South Border (Wishek/Ashley) 40, 8. Leola 38, 9. Mobridge-Pollock 35, 9. Stanley County 35, 11. Bison 32, 12. Herreid/Selby Area 31, 13. Redfield 26, 14. Gettysburg 25, 15. Sully Buttes 16, 15. Highmore-Harrold 16, 17. Hoven 11, 18. Faith 8, 18. McIntosh 8, 20. Zeeland 5

100 Meters: 1. Keegen Tracy, 10.99; 6. Lincoln Krause, 11.57; 56. Sam Crank, 14.22.

200 Meters: 1. Keegen Tracy, 23.05; 53. Sam Crank, 30.25.

400 Meters: 1. Keegen Tracy, 53.95.

800 Meters: 7. Riley Shellenberger, 2:23.86.

1600 Meters: 1. Jayden Schwan, 4:50.95; 7. Riley Shellenberger, 5:08.83.

3200 Meters: 1. Jayden Schwan, 10:22.65.

4x100 Relay: 4. Groton, (Lincoln Krause, Ethan Kroll, Jordan Schwan, JJ Muller), 47.23.

4x200 Relay: 2. Groton, (Lincoln Krause, Ethan Kroll, JJ Muller, Keegen Tracy), 1:34.57.

4x800 Relay: 3. Groton, (Jayden Schwan, Jace Johnson, Riley Shellenberger, Briggs Conn), 9:26.14.

SMR 1600m - [200-200-400-800]: 4. (Groton), Lincoln Krause, JJ Muller, Jordan Schwan, Jace Johnson), 4:08.87.

Discus - 1.6kg: 42. Jordan Schwan, 70' 2".

Long Jump: 5. Ethan Kroll, 19' 6.5".

Girl's Division

Team Scores: 1. Ipswich 155.5, 2. Timber Lake 75, 3. Groton Area 67, 3. South Border (Wishek/Ashley) 67, 5. Herreid/Selby Area 51, 6. Mobridge-Pollock 48, 7. Highmore-Harrold 46, 8. Gettysburg 45, 9. Faulkton Area 44.5, 10. Bison 34.5, 11. Hoven 29.5, 12. Redfield 25, 12. Aberdeen Christian 25, 14. Stanley County 19, 15. Faith 12, 16. McIntosh 7, 17. Leola 1

100 Meters: 5. Makenna Krause, 13.30; 47. Suri Jetto, 16.41.

200 Meters: 39. Suri Jetto, 35.59.

400 Meters: 30. Suri Jetto, 1:25.40.

1600 Meters: 4. Rylee Gilbert, 5:53.51; 8. Ashlynn Warrington, 6:13.48.

100m Hurdles - 33" / 0.838m: 6. Ella Kettner, 19.02; 8. Tevan Hanson, 19.52; 10. Emerlee Jones, 19.92; 13. Teagan Hanten, 20.47.

300m Hurdles - 30" / 0.762m: 1. McKenna Tietz, 49.21; 9. Ella Kettner, 57.58; 15. Teagan Hanten, 1:01.68.

4x100 Relay: 1. Groton, (McKenna Tietz, Taryn Traphagen, Kella Tracy, Makenna Krause), 52.38.

4x200 Relay: 1. Groton, (McKenna Tietz, Taryn Traphagen, Kella Tracy, Rylee Dunker), 1:50.46.

4x400 Relay: 3. Groton, (McKenna Tietz, Taryn Traphagen, Rylee Dunker, Kella Tracy), 4:29.84.

SMR 1600m - [200-200-400-800]: 1. Groton, (Makenna Krause, Taryn Traphagen, Kella Tracy, Rylee Gilbert), 4:42.52.

Discus - 1kg: 5. Avery Crank, 85' 2".

Javelin - 600g: 17. Avery Crank, 65' 6".

High Jump: 6. Emerlee Jones, 4' 0".

Long Jump: 19. Teagan Hanten, 12' 5.5".

Eureka Results

Boy's Division:

100 Meters: 10. Lincoln Krause, 12.09; 44. Tate Johnson, 13.91; 45. Briggs Conn, 14.30; 47. Sam Crank, 14.37.

200 Meters: 1. Keegen Tracy, 23.40; 12. Jordan Schwan, 25.14; 13. JJ Muller, 25.31; 42. Tate Johnson, 28.83; 45. Sam Crank, 29.88.

400 Meters: 18. Briggs Conn, 1:08.71.

800 Meters: 4. Riley Shellenberger, 2:15.36; 5. Jace Johnson, 2:15.42; 15. Briggs Conn, 2:45.30.

1600 Meters: 5. Riley Shellenberger, 5:02.97; 11. Jace Johnson, 5:22.52.

4x100 Relay: 1. Groton: (Lincoln Krause, Jordan Schwan, JJ Muller, Keegen Tracy), 45.33.

4x200 Relay: 1. Groton: (Lincoln Krause, JJ Muller, Jordan Schwan, Ethan Kroll), 1:34.13.

4x800 Relay: 2. Groton: (Jayden Schwan, Jace Johnson, Riley Shellenberger, Ethan Kroll), 8:45.71.

SMR 1600m - [200-200-400-800]: 1. Groton: (Lincoln Krause, Jordan Schwan, Keegen Tracy, Jayden Schwan), 3:45.79.

Girl's Division:

100 Meters: 3. Makenna Krause, 13.43; 14. Rylee Dunker, 13.92; 15. Raquel Tracy, 13.94; 45. Suri Jetto, 16.72.

200 Meters: 7. Raquel Tracy, 29.04; 9. Rylee Dunker, 29.43; 44. Suri Jetto, 35.59.

10 Makenna Krause, DNS

400 Meters: 4. Ashlynn Warrington, 1:06.80; 19. Suri Jetto, 1:20.60.

100m Hurdles - 33" / 0.838m: 3. McKenna Tietz, 16.85; 9. Ella Kettner, 19.44; 10. Emerlee Jones, 19.93; 12. Tevan Hanson, 20.02; 13. Teagan Hanten, 20.22.

300m Hurdles - 30" / 0.762m: 5. Emerlee Jones, 55.48; 6. Ella Kettner, 56.58; 8. Teagan Hanten, 59.01.

4x100 Relay: 1. Groton: (McKenna Tietz, Taryn Traphagen, Kella Tracy, Makenna Krause), 52.67.

4x200 Relay:

1. Groton: (Rylee Dunker, Taryn Traphagen, Makenna Krause, Kella Tracy), 1:51.78.

4x400 Relay:

1. Groton: (McKenna Tietz, Taryn Traphagen, Kella Tracy, Ashlynn Warrington), 4:21.56.

SMR 1600m - [200-200-400-800]:

1. Groton: (McKenna Tietz, Taryn Traphagen, Kella Tracy, Rylee Gilbert), 4:29.89.

Shot Put - 4kg: 26. Avery Crank, 25' 4.5"

Discus - 1kg: 21. Avery Crank, 72' 9"

Javelin - 600g: 20. Avery Crank, 74' 6"

High Jump: 4. Emerlee Jones, 4' 6"

Triple Jump: 12. Teagan Hanten, 26' 8"

Groton Prairie Mixed Bowling League Week #21 Results

Team Standings: Jackelopes 22, Foxes 18, Chipmunks 13, Coyotes 13, Cheetahs 10, Shihtzus 8

Men's High Games: Tony Waage 195 and 187, Brad Waage 189 and 180, John Sippel 183

Women's High Games: Suzie Easthouse 172, Dar Larson and Alexa Sperry 161, Michelle Johnson 157

Men's High Series: Tony Waage 530, Brad Waage 527, Brad Larson 503

Women's High Series: Suzie Easthouse 453, Michelle Johnson 452, Vicki Walter 398

Jackelopes are the winners of the 3rd third!

The Coyotes (1st third winners), The Cheetahs (2nd third winners), and The Jackelopes (3rd third winners) will be bowling off on Monday (4/13) at 7:00pm to determine the 2025-26 Groton Prairie Mixed League Champions.

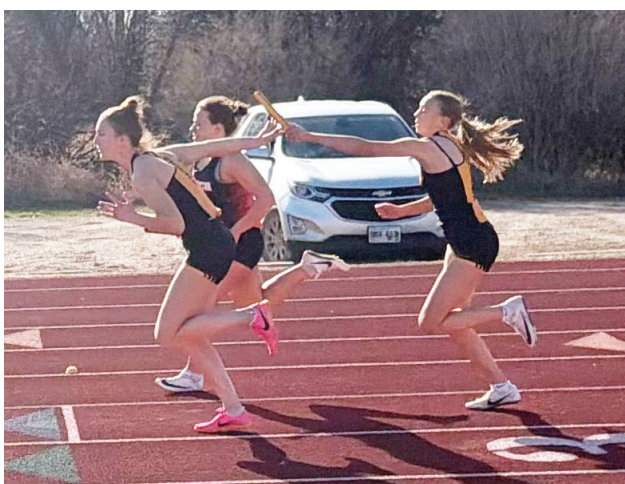
Wednesday night (4/15) will be the end of the year party! Bowlers are asked to bring a dish, snack, appetizer, dessert, etc. to share. Season awards will be handed out and there will be playing 9-pin no tap.



Brother Sam Crank hands off to his sister Avery Crank during the popular "banana" field event relay.



Jace Johnson competes in the the 4x800m relay team.



Makenna Krause hands off to Taryn Traphagen in first leg on winning SMR 1600m.



Jordan Schwan hands off to JJ Muller on the anchor leg of the 4x100m relay.



Taryn Traphagen hands off to Kella Tracy in the 4x200m relay.

Groton Area rallies past Mobridge-Pollock

ABERDEEN — Groton Area used timely hitting, aggressive baserunning, and capitalized on Mobridge-Pollock miscues to earn a 14-10 girls softball win, improving to 2-2 on the season in a game played at Northern State University.

After a scoreless first inning, Mobridge-Pollock struck first in the top of the second, plating three runs on three hits to take a 3-0 lead. Groton answered with a run in the bottom half, then took control in the third inning.

Groton capitalized on four Mobridge-Pollock errors, along with four walks and a hit batter, to score four runs despite recording just one hit in the inning. That surge gave Groton a lead it would not relinquish.

The Tigers added two more runs in the fourth and broke things open in the fifth with a four-run frame on two hits. Mobridge-Pollock continued to battle, scoring two runs in the fifth and three more in the sixth, but Groton matched the effort with three runs of its own in the sixth to maintain control.

Mobridge-Pollock added two runs in the seventh, aided by Groton's only two errors of the game, but the comeback fell short.

For the game, Mobridge-Pollock finished with 10 runs on seven hits and left five runners on base. Groton Area scored 14 runs on six hits, took advantage of seven Tiger errors, and stranded 10 runners.

Kinsley Rowen earned the win in the circle for Groton, recording four strikeouts while allowing seven hits and six walks.

Mobridge-Pollock pitcher Rue Knudson struck out six batters — all in the first three innings — but was hurt by control issues, issuing nine walks and hitting four batters.

Offensively for Groton Area:

Libby Cole led the way with a double, a single, and two RBIs

Jayden Penning added a single and two RBIs

Kinsley Rowen helped her own cause with a double and two RBIs

Abby Fjeldheim had a single, was hit by a pitch, and drove in a run

Rylen Eckern recorded a single and drew two walks

Hannah Sandness reached base three times via walks

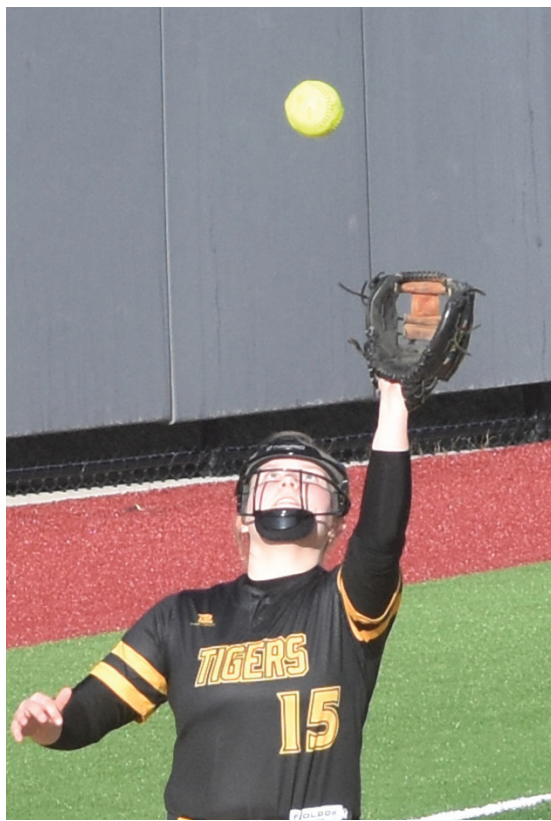
For Mobridge-Pollock:

Jacey Netterville had two doubles and two RBIs

Rue Knudson added a two-RBI triple

Brooke Merkel doubled and drove in a run

Sophie Keller, Faith Heil, and Mystic Erickson each



Third Baseman Jaedyn Penning
(Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)



First baseman Rylen Eckern
(Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)

contributed hits

Groton Area head coach Amanda Bisbee said the team showed improvement in several areas. "We did a few more things this game," Bisbee said. "We worked on our baserunning a lot this week, and it showed. Our bats kind of came alive after the first couple innings once we adjusted to the pitching speed."

Bisbee also credited her coaching staff.

"I've got to give credit to Sue," she said of assistant coach Sue Fjeldheim. "She's my right-hand person, and we work really well together. That's a big part of the improvement we're seeing."

Athletic director Alexa Sperry said the game itself was nearly in jeopardy earlier in the day due to weather conditions in Groton.

"We got the call this morning that we couldn't play in Groton," Sperry said. "We reached out, made a few calls, and were able to get this field lined up at Northern. Everybody just wanted to play."

Bisbee echoed that sentiment.

"This was a great softball day," she said. "We've played at the Dome, now here at Northern — it's been a fun experience for the girls."

Groton Area head coach Amanda Bisbee said the team will face an unusual pause in the schedule due to school activities, including the HOSA conference. "We've got a big break coming up, and a lot of that is because of HOSA," Bisbee said. "We're going to be missing a big portion of our team next week with students attending state, plus we've got prom right after that. It's a busy stretch for the girls, so we'll just keep taking it one day at a time and make the most of our practice opportunities when we can."

A junior varsity game was also played, though due to fading daylight, both teams agreed to allow all remaining Mobridge-Pollock hitters to bat in the fourth inning to ensure participation for all players.

Groton Area is next scheduled to travel to Arlington on April 20 and Hanson on April 21. The game was broadcast on GDILIVE.COM and sponsored by Dacotah Bank.

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The Minnesota Vikings just can't seem to get the center position figured out. Despite being a first-round pick, Garrett Bradbury was a liability, so the Vikings released him (he immediately signed with New England, then was traded to Chicago this offseason). To fill the void, the Vikings signed Ryan Kelly, a solid veteran who could step in and bring stability to the offensive line. Unfortunately, multiple concussions later, Kelly has decided to retire from the NFL, leaving the Vikings once again looking for a reliable center.

So what are their options?

Free agency is not a realistic possibility at this point. None of the remaining free agents are better than what the Vikings already have in-house.

The Vikings may give Blake Brandel another year to learn the position. The 29-year-old played every position along the offensive line and filled in at center last season when Kelly went down. He was one of the worst centers in the NFL last season, however, based on his 61.4 overall grade by PFF, ranking him 27th.

It's also possible that one of the young offensive linemen, like Michael Jurgens or Joe Huber, will step up and claim the role.

Ultimately, if the Vikings do intend to improve the middle of the offensive line, it'll have to come from the draft. Four prospects will likely be taken in the first three rounds who can come in and play quickly.

Sam Hecht, Kansas State – The top consensus center in the draft, Hecht is sort of a Jack-of-all-trades player. He doesn't have elite athleticism or strength, but his football IQ is high, which allows him to consistently be in position. He didn't give up a single sack in 25 games and only allowed two QB hits.

Logan Jones, Iowa – The Rimington Trophy winner as the best center in college football. Similar to Hecht, Jones' strength is in pass protection. He doesn't have the size or strength to handle defensive tackles in the run game, although he brings more strength on day one than Hecht.

Jake Slaughter, Florida – Yet another center who is good at pass protection but suspect when it comes to the run game. (Are you noticing a theme here?)

Connor Lew, Auburn – One of the most athletic centers in this year's draft, Lew is a boom-or-bust prospect. The biggest question mark surrounding him is his health, because he tore his ACL and is still working his way back from the injury. He's the type of player who would

be a nice addition to the offensive line, as long as the Vikings could get him later in the draft. He'll need a year or two before he's ready to play meaningful snaps, however. He's also the only player on this list who isn't a senior.

Ultimately, I think the Vikings made a mistake by not addressing the center position early in free agency. The center anchors the offensive line, handles the ball on every snap, and is usually responsible for calling out adjustments and identifying potential blitzers.

Looking ahead, we'll do a mock draft next week, which will lead us straight into the 2026 NFL draft. In the meantime, if you're bored and/or want to learn more about the upcoming prospects in this year's draft, I highly recommend heading over to Pro Football Network and doing your own mock drafts. It's a great way to kill a little time.

EARTHTALK

Food Desert Fight: Getting Fruits & Veggies Into Low Income Communities

by Audrey Li

Dear EarthTalk: What are some innovative ways to get more fresh food—fruits and veggies—to low income people?

-- Paul Towner, Boston, MA

Across the U.S., communities are facing a growing problem—a lack of healthy, fresh food. With the price of fruits and veggies shooting up 40 percent since 1980 and the price of processed foods going down 20-30 percent, many families find buying processed foods the only sensible economic decision. Now, with the Centers of Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) reporting that only one in 10 adults eats enough fruits and vegetables, expanding access to low-income communities is more important than ever before.

Voucher incentive programs, which provide coupons, vouchers and financial incentives to low-income individuals, offer a viable solution. The New York City Health Department, for example, introduced the \$2 NYC Health Bucks coupons in 2004, which gave SNAP recipients \$2 to purchase fresh produce for every \$5 they spend at a farmers market. By reducing the financial barrier to purchasing fresh produce, these programs allow consumers to choose healthier food options without sacrificing affordability.

Similarly, Produce Prescription programs expand accessible access to fresh foods through a health care pipeline: Health care workers like physicians and nurse practitioners can prescribe fruits and vegetables to patients with chronic diseases or a lack of access to nutritious food. Fresh Prescription, a Produce Prescription program implemented in Detroit, found significant decreases in hemoglobin H1c for its participants signifying a lower risk of diabetes complications and better heart health.

These programs have proved successful in improving both access to fresh food options and the quality of people's diets. According to Fresh Approach, an organization that provides Veggie Rx service—a Produce Prescription Program—in the San Francisco Bay Area, 89 percent of participants reported eating more vegetables since the program began. "With eight people in our family, I've had to really watch what I spend money on, so I do a lot of coupon clipping, but you don't find coupons for fruits and vegetables," reports Bethany Thompson, a VeggieRx client. "The VeggieRx program has been absolutely great because it helps me to actually afford the healthy food that I want to feed all my kids."

However, America's food and nutrition insecurity crisis is far from over. Organizations still face inconsistent funding, limiting the amount of people they can directly assist. Consumers

can support these programs by donating to partner organizations and telling others how to get involved. Together, the community can help expand access to nutritious food for everyone, by everyone.

EarthTalk® is produced by Roddy Scheer & Doug Moss for the 501(c)3 nonprofit EarthTalk. See more at <https://emagazine.com>. To donate, visit <https://earthtalk.org>. Send questions to: question@earthtalk.org



Getting healthier foods into low income communities is the focus of several new innovative food security initiatives. Credit: Pexels.com.

The Groton Independent

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Deadline to submit items: Noon Monday]

Yearly Subscription Rates are listed below.

The Groton Independent (USPS# 230-440) is published weekly with its periodicals postage paid at Groton, SD.

Postmaster: Send address changes to Groton Independent, PO Box 34, Groton, SD 57445

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Thursday, April 16

Senior Menu: Swedish meatballs, mashed potatoes and gravy, carrots, fruit, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Biscuits.

School Lunch: Burrito bowl, chili lime corn Grades 6-8 ELA & Math Testing

Roncalli Geffdog Track Relays at Warner, 1:30 p.m.

5th Grade Girls Basketball, 4 p.m., elementary gym

JV Baseball hosting Brookings with a double-header starting at 5 p.m.

Pickleball, 6 p.m., Elementary Gym

JVT Practice, 7 p.m., Arena

Friday, April 17

Senior Menu: Lemon baked fish, parsley buttered potatoes, California beld, fruit, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Doughnuts

School Lunch: Cheese pizza, green beans Grades 6-8 ELA & Math Testing

Moved to May 4th: Junior High Track Meet at Sisseton, 3:30 p.m.

Saturday, April 18

Emmanuel Lutheran: WELCA Spring gathering at Emmanuel

St. John's Lutheran: Aberdeen LWML Zone spring meeting at St. Paul's Church, 10:30 a.m. Prom, 7:30 p.m.

Firemen Spring Social, 7 p.m.

Sunday, April 19

Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship, 9 a.m.; Sunday School, 10:15 a.m.; Choir, 6 p.m.

St. John's Lutheran: Worship with communion at St. John's, 9 a.m.; at Zion, 11 a.m.; Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.

United Methodist: Worship at Conde, 8:15 a.m.; at Groton, 9:30 a.m.; at Britton, 11:15 a.m.; Groton Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.; Coffee

Hour, 10:30 a.m.

Catholic: SEAS Confession, 7:45-8:15 a.m.; SEAS Mass, 8:30 a.m.; Turton Confession, 10:30-10:45 a.m.; Turton Mass, 11 a.m.

First Presbyterian Church: Bible Study, 9:30 a.m.; Worship, 11 a.m.

Groton CM&A: Sunday School, 9:15 a.m.; worship (Jordan and Julia (Grenz) Kroll will be the guest speakers), 10:30 a.m.

JVT Practice, 3 p.m., Arena

Princesses Prom, 4:30 p.m.

Monday, April 20

Senior Menu: BBQ chicken breast, au gratin potatoes, coleslaw, fruit, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Egg bake.

School Lunch: Hot dogs, chips.

Senior Citizens meet at Groton Community Center, 1 p.m.

St. John's Lutheran: Christian Literature Circle, 7:30 p.m.

FFA Convention at Brookings

Grades 5 & 8 Science Testing

Girls Golf at Sisseton, 10 a.m.

Middle School Track at Ipswich, 2:30 p.m.

Girls Fast Pitch Softball at Arlington (Varsity) at 4:30 p.m. followed by JV)

Pickleball, 5:30 p.m., Elementary Gym

Tuesday, April 21

Senior Menu: Beef stroganoff with noodles, mixed vegetables, mixed fruit, breadstick.

School Breakfast: Muffins.

School Lunch: Chicken nuggets, fries.

Grades 5 & 8 Science Testing

St. John's Lutheran: Quilting, 9 a.m.

United Methodist: Bible Study, 10 a.m.

High School Track at Britton, 2 p.m.

Biogirls at Elementary Gym, 3:45 p.m.

Girls Fastpitch Softball at Hanson, Double-header starting at 4 p.m.

JVT Practice, 6 p.m., Arena

Groton City Council Meeting, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, April 22

EARTH DAY

Senior Menu: Hot beef combo, mashed potatoes and gravy, carrots, fruit.

School Breakfast: Oatmeal.

School Lunch: Pizza Crunchers, green beans.

Grades 5 & 8 Science Testing

Emmanuel Lutheran: Confirmation, 4 p.m.

United Methodist: Community Coffee Hour, 9:30 a.m.

Groton C&MA: Kid's Club, Youth Group, Adult Bible Study, 7 p.m.

JVT Practice, 6 p.m., Arena

Pickleball, 5:30 p.m., Elementary Gym

Thursday, April 23

Senior Menu: Chicken cordon bleu casserole, broccoli, fruit, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Maple French Toast Bake.

School Lunch: Chicken patty, mashed potatoes.

Grades 5 & 8 Science Testing

Track at Redfield, 10 a.m.

Girls Golf at Milbank, 10 a.m.

5th Grade Girls Basketball, 3 p.m., Elementary Gym

Pickleball, 6 p.m., Elementary Gym

Middle School Spring Concert, 7 p.m.

Friday, April 24

Senior Menu: Stuffed pepper soup, ham salad sandwich, fruit, cookie.

School Breakfast: Eggs.

School Lunch: Beef stir fry, rice.

Grades 5 & 8 Science Testing

MS Track at Groton, 2 p.m.

Saturday, April 25

MS NEC Girls Golf at Clark, 10 a.m.

Track at Ipswich, 10 a.m.

"Death, Taxes, and Aging Eyes"

Benjamin Franklin famously wrote "in this world nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes."

Franklin was a legendary intellect, and it's hard to overstate the impact he had. But I'd suggest an addition to that particular quote, one with which I suspect he'd agree.

Most of us know him as one of the Founding Fathers, as the author of Poor Richard's Almanack, as the guy who flew kites during lightning storms. Perhaps less famously, Franklin was also an inventor. He is credited with the creation of the bifocal lens, reportedly inspired by his frustration with switching between pairs of glasses.

As a woman of a certain age, who has needed corrective lenses since childhood, I can well appreciate that frustration, and in turn, that invention! Our eyes are complex organs. In the very front, there is the clear dome of the cornea. Then we have the iris, the colored part of the eye. This is a muscle, and it controls the size of the pupil, the black central hole through which light is allowed entry. From there, light strikes the lens, which is pulled into different shapes by small muscles around its edge, and focused onto the retina in the very back of the eye. Specialized cells in the retina convert light to electricity, and the optic nerve transmits these messages to the brain.

When I talk to my middle aged patients about symptoms they may be having, they frequently volunteer that they now need glasses for the first time, or that they have "upgraded" to those bifocals. They are usually surprised when I reassure them that this is not only normal, but frankly expected! The cells that create the lens lose the ability to repair or replace themselves over time. The lens becomes less flexible. It doesn't change shape as easily, and as that happens the eye has a harder time focusing up close. Eventually, a person develops presbyopia: age related far-sightedness.

This same process leads to a condition quite familiar to most people: cataracts. As those cells in the lens deteriorate, they become increasingly cloudy. Light has a harder time penetrating, and it may be scattered on the way through, instead of sharply focused. People may notice blurry vision, muted colors, glare around lights. They may need brighter light to read, and find it very difficult see at night. By 80, approximately 50% of people either have cataracts, or have had cataract surgery.

Presbyopia and cataracts may be a normal, readily treated part of aging, but you shouldn't neglect those eye exams. As we get older, other eye conditions become more common. Diseases like macular degeneration and glaucoma can be detected by the eye doctor well before they cause symptoms. Since those symptoms include irreversible vision loss, we should all be motivated to make that appointment!

Medicine is ever changing. Research avenues that seem promising turn into dead ends. Dead ends become detours to unexpected and exciting places. Maybe in the future, we will have drops or supplements or some other way to keep our eyes young. But for now, nothing can be said to be certain, except death, taxes. . . and presbyopia.

Dr. Debra Johnston is a Family Medicine Physician at Avera Medical Group Brookings in Brookings, SD. She serves as one of the Prairie Doc Volunteer Hosts during its 24th Season providing Health Education Based on Science, Built on Trust. Follow The Prairie Doc® at www.prairiedoc.org, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Tik Tok. Prairie Doc Programming includes On Call with the Prairie Doc®, a medical Q&A show (most Thursdays at 7pm on SDPB, YouTube and streaming on Facebook), 2 podcasts, and a Radio program (on SDPB, Sundays at 6am and 1pm).



Debra Johnston, MD





APRIL 7, 2026 – GENERAL MEETING

Meeting called to order by Chairman Sutton at 8:45 A.M. in the Commission Chambers, Courthouse Annex, Brown County, SD. Present were Commissioners Dennert, Dinger, Gage, Sutton and Wiese. Commissioner Wiese led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Dennert to approve the agenda. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Paul Meyers, Ordway Township shared the concerns of the Township regarding the lease agreement that the Commission passed last week with Game, Fish & Parks to allow walk in hunting and possibly fishing. The Township fought for five (5) years to get things cleaned up, so stressed that Law Enforcement will need to be active in this area to avoid the issues they have had in the past.

Julie Johnson, Lobbyist Thanked the Commission for the opportunity to discuss the Richmond Lake Dam project and for Commissioner Brock Greenfield for attending.

UPDATE ON RICHMOND LAKE DAM PROJECT: Brock Greenfield, SD Commissioner of School and Public Lands, met with the Commission to give an update on the Richmond Lake Dam Project. Commissioner Greenfield shared that this was just supposed to be a Spillway Project but discovered that the cut-off wall was in bad shape so needed to expand the project. They had secured two separate appropriations, with what they thought was enough funding but after receiving bids it was determined that they needed more funding. It was pushed back due to the Government shutdown and no response from FEMA until January, at which time they received the go ahead to proceed. There received three bids for the project. Commissioner Greenfield shared there were a number of people that were helpful in wrangling the number of votes needed to approve of the additional funding needed for the project. Joshua Diddé, with Journey Construction DBA: Sioux Falls Contractors, had informed Commissioner Greenfield that they are working on completing the upfront items such as permits, contracts, etc. They have a pre-construction meeting set for April 27th; week of May 6th they will be moving to site at which time the roadway will be closed. The week of May 13th they will draw down the lake and begin prep on the cut-off wall. Phase I is the cut-off wall and projected completion date is April 16, 2027. Total project is to be completed by June of 2028. They have pertinent information on the SD Public Lands website, or the Richmond Lake Association has also posted it on their Facebook page. Commissioner Greenfield shared that he has been in contact and working with Dirk Rogers, Brown County Highway Superintendent and Scott Bader, Director of Planning & Zoning, Richmond Lake Sanitary District and others who have skin in the game per say. Charlie Rea and Todd Campbell shared some concerns they have regarding the lake filling back up and how this is going to be handled. They believe there is a Dam north of Richmond Lake that controls the water levels, so they want someone to reach out to the owner of that property to get water back into Richmond Lake. Last summer fish died due to oxygen level in the lake and not enough fresh water going into the Lake. The County will look into this matter. Dirk Rogers informed the constituents of his plans for the detour on 127th and plans for traffic control at the intersections. Concerns were discussed regarding the speed limit, dust control and if load limits were going to be set on that road due to amount of traffic. Dirk will look into these things and keep everyone informed of the decisions that will be made. Chairman Sutton shared that due to the size and scope of this project which includes the Township, Richmond Lake Association, the County along with SD School and Public Lands Office we plan to be transparent and keep everyone

updated throughout the process and again the County will look into the authority of the Dam north of Richmond. Commissioner Greenfield was asked about installing a walking/bike path but then it was shared that the Richmond Lake Association will be stepping up for this project and will visit with the contractor.

DAVISON COUNTY JAIL CONTRACT FOR SHERIFF'S OFFICE: Sheriff Lunzman presented a contract with Davison County for housing prisoners in the Davison County Jail located in the City of Mitchell. The cost is \$105.00 per prisoner per day. It was noticed that the term dates stated 2025, so asked that be updated to 2026. Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Gage to approve and authorize Chairman Sutton to sign the contract with Davison County once the dates under the terms are updated. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

MODERN DAY HEALTH CARE CONTRACT FOR JAIL: Sheriff Lunzman presented a contract with Modern Day Health Care to provide 24/7 Clinical Triage Services to assist the Jail Staff by phone or video consultation with medical questions, concerns and coordination of care for inmates housed at the Brown County Jail. The cost is \$75.00 per bed per month. Sheriff Lunzman also shared information regarding the Electronic Medication Administration Record (eMAR) system they are using for the medications, also. Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Dennert to approve and authorize Chairman Sutton to sign the contract with Modern Day Health Care for 24/7 Clinical Triage Services. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF COMMISSIONERS & DIRECTOR OF EQUALIZATION: Gene Loeschke, Director of Equalization, met with the Commission, per SDCL 10-3-14 to give his Annual Conference. Equalization Board meetings will start on April 14th; County Equalization Board will meet in the mornings, following Commission meetings and Consolidated Equalization Board will meet at 1:00 P.M.

GRANT AGREEMENT FOR WEED & PEST: Moved by Commissioner Dinger, seconded by Wiese to approve and authorize Chairman Sutton to sign the Grant Agreement with SD Weed & Pest Control Commission for Yellow Toadflax Mapping and Spot Spray Project in Brown County. The Grant is for \$1,000.00. Moved by Commissioner Dinger, seconded by Wiese to approve and authorize Chairman Sutton to sign the Grant Agreement with SD Weed & Pest Control Commission for Yellow Toadflax Project. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

MINUTES: Moved by Commissioner Dennert, seconded by Wiese to approve the General Meeting Minutes of March 31, 2026. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

CLAIMS/PAYROLL: Moved by Commissioner Gage, seconded by Wiese to approve the following Claims/Payroll. Claims: Professional Fees: Convergent Technologies LLC \$510.20; Dohrer Law Office, PC \$688.20; Helms & Associates \$7,985.00; Sanford Health Occupational Medicine \$564.00. Publishing: Groton Daily Independent \$565.59; McQuillen Creative Group, Inc \$518.84. Repairs & Maintenance: Auto Glass Solutions Inc \$449.59; Axon Enterprise, Inc \$19,000.20; Butler Machinery Company \$270.59; Custom Installation Solutions \$20,950.00; EcoLab Pes Elimination Division \$127.56; Graham Tire Inc \$904.72; Heartland Heating and Cooling, LLC \$382.65; House of Glass \$285.49; Hoven Auto Repair, Inc \$88.00; Lawson Products, Inc \$73.74; Leidholt Electric, LLC \$742.34; Matheson Tri-Glas, Inc \$209.96; Olson's Pest Technicians \$455.00; Panorium Cleaners Inc \$32.00; Transource Truck & Equipment, Inc \$18,573.03; Valvoline Inc. \$47.76. Supplies & Materials: Amazon Capital Services, Inc \$2,095.35; Auto Value Aberdeen \$412.10; Central Network Retail Group LLC \$2,105.82; Cole Paper Inc \$1,347.34; Crafcro Inc. \$26,239.50; Crawford Trucks & Equipment \$154.89; Dakota Fluid Power, Inc \$484.55; Dakota Supply Group \$132.96; Duininc \$1,456.00; Fastenal Company \$142.00; Fulcrum Biometrics \$2,065.43; Full Circle Ag \$3,083.10; Graham Tire Inc \$5.05; Heartland Heating and Cooling, LLC \$374.84; High Point

Networks \$15,997.50; Hoven Auto Repair, Inc \$112.00; Interstate Battery System of South Dakota \$498.85; L.G. Everist, Inc \$8,719.49; Lawson Products, Inc \$796.91; Menards \$172.25; Performance Oil \$8,789.36; Transource Truck & Equipment, Inc \$2,258.35; Tri-State Water \$72.60; Valvoline Inc. \$106.99. Travel & Conference: Axon Enterprise, Inc \$209.31; Derek Hoefert \$421.80; Drew Dennert \$469.80; Duane Sutton \$310.45; Kent Karlen \$19.00; Kyler Dinger \$228.38; Michael Wiese \$269.08; Neil Bittner \$19.00; The Lodge at Deadwood \$375.00. Utilities: AT&T Mobility \$43.73; Butler Machinery Company \$1,082.35; Northwestern Energy \$12,666.40; T-Mobile USA Inc \$613.00; Town of Frederick \$77.00. Payroll: Commission \$5,165.81; Elections \$2,063.17; Auditor/Welfare \$12,026.89; Treasurer \$18,430.88; SA \$38,198.15; Public Defender \$14,449.33; Maintenance \$13,472.75; Assessor \$17,506.93; Register of Deeds \$11,511.05; VSO \$5,006.26; GIS \$3,110.76; IT \$10,616.94; HR \$5,721.14; Sheriff \$60,042.24; Jail \$74,159.73; Coroner (Voucher) \$1,750.00; Court Security \$7,582.90; JDC \$31,578.44; MI Board \$80.00; Museum \$14,507.82; Parks/Fairgrounds \$7,370.50; Fair Board \$4,858.36; 4-H \$881.60; Weed \$1,245.44; Planning & Zoning \$8,553.88; Highway \$54,564.94; Dispatch \$35,262.59; Emergency \$5,764.44; 24/7 Sobriety \$3,022.23; Landfill \$17,365.88; Meal Benefits \$38.00; SDRS Pay-out \$150.00; FICA \$28,769.99; Medicare \$6,728.47; HSA \$2,360.72. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

HR REPORT: Moved by Commissioner Gage, seconded by Dennert to approve the following Human Resource Report submitted by Human Resources Director, Allison Tunheim:

o Updates for Museum Curator of Exhibits Job Description.

o Return of Terrance Dosch as Brown County Seasonal Fairgrounds Grounds Worker, PT, starting wage \$14.50/hr.; effective April 7, 2026.

o Hiring Lee Buechler as Brown County Seasonal Fairgrounds Maintenance Worker, FT, starting wage \$14.50/hr.; effective April 7, 2026.

o Return of Jesse Hernandez as Brown County Seasonal Fairgrounds Grounds Worker, PT, starting wage \$14.50/hr.; effective May 4, 2026.

o Hiring Aiden Hernandez as Brown County Seasonal Fairgrounds Grounds Worker, PT, starting wage \$14.00/hr.; effective May 18, 2026.

All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

TRAVEL REQUESTS: Moved by Commissioner Dinger, seconded by Wiese to approve the following Travel Request: Aaron Walberg and Jesse Milbrandt, Veteran's Service Office to attend the SDDVA Mini Conference on April 16, 2026 in Sioux Falls, SD. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

LANDFILL TONNAGE REPORT: Moved by Commissioner Dennert, seconded by Gage to acknowledge the Landfill Tonnage Report for March 2026. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

OTHER BUSINESS: None

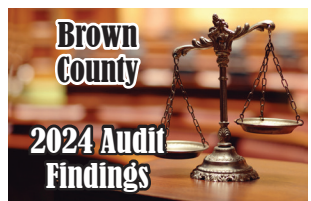
EXECUTIVE SESSION: Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Gage to go into Executive Session per SDCL 1-25-2 for Contracts. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

Chairman Sutton declared the Executive Session closed with No Action taken.

ADJOURNMENT: Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Dennert to adjourn the Brown County Commission at 11:24 a.m. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

Lynn Heupel, Brown County Auditor

Published April 15, 2026 at the total approximate cost of \$109.15 and may be viewed free of charge at www.sdpublicnotices.com. 26740



NOTICE OF AUDIT OF THE FISCAL AFFAIRS OF BROWN COUNTY

Notice is hereby given that the records and books of account of Brown County, South Dakota, have been audited by the Department of Legislative Audit for the year ended December 31,

2024, and that a detailed report thereon, containing additional information, is filed with the county auditor of Brown County and the Department of Legislative Audit in Pierre, South Dakota for public inspection.

The following findings and recommendations referred to in the report are hereby listed in accordance with the provisions of SDCL 4-11-12.

CURRENT AUDIT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Sheriff's Office Cash Internal Control Deficiencies

Finding:

United States General Accounting Office, Government Auditing Standards, 2011 revisions, state:

Internal control serves as a defense in safeguarding assets and in preventing and detecting errors; fraud; noncompliance with provisions of laws, regulations, contracts or grant agreements; or abuse.

We noted the following deficiencies in internal controls in the cash reconciliation process:

• The Sheriff's and the Jail's Office did not complete monthly reconciliations of recorded cash to financial institution balances during 2024. The reconciliation process serves to verify the Sheriff's and Jail's Office's deposits and withdrawals have been properly recorded at the Sheriff's Office and is necessary to detect errors in the Sheriff's and Jail's Office's accounting system or errors made by the financial institutions.

• The Sheriff's office keeps a weekly record of sheriff fees collected. On December 30, 2024, the Sheriff remitted to the County Treasurer, twenty-one sheriff's fee collection reports for the time period of July 14, 2024 through December 30, 2024 accompanied by twenty checks totaling \$311,533.29.

Recommendations:

We recommend that the Sheriff's Office perform monthly reconciliations of the total recorded cash to the financial institutions' balance of the Sheriff's bank accounts.

We recommend that the Sheriff remit fees to the County Treasurer in a timely manner.

We recommend the County Commission establish the timeframe for the Sheriff's remittances to the County Treasurer pursuant to SDCL 7-12-19.1

Views of responsible officials:

Recommendation 1 – In the short amount of time since the meeting with the State Auditor representatives, Brown County Auditor Lynn Heupel and Brown County Commission, current office staff devoted a significant amount of time searching and researching the quick books program. It is important to add that the QuickBooks accounting computer program that the office staff were trained in and used to using also went from a simple desk top version to a web-based program that was unrecognizable during this period of staffing turnover, which also was part of the paperwork issue the State Auditor mentions with the reconciliations. My office staff had to self-train themselves on basically a new computer program with no guidance or training from QuickBooks. They were able to retrieve most of the previous reports used to balance their deposits and moneys to treasurer reports, but the monthly reconciliations paperwork has taken more time to figure out. The staff was able to get that in printed form and said it can easily be produced each month and reviewed and balanced going forward and that will be done each month as recommended by the State Auditor.

Recommendation 2 – Sheriff's fees will be remitted to the County Treasurer on a bi-weekly schedule. Current office staff has been able to "train" with new staff for a good portion of a year and now we have 2 office staff handling the bookkeeping process which has alleviated the burden of one office staff trying to handle all the bookkeeping duties along with regular daily tasks. The addition of having the ability and time to train an additional staff member has made it a more thorough and efficient process than when we were short staffed and went through 4 new hires in the past 2+ years before finding one that was able to stay long enough to be trained properly.

Recommendation 3 – I believe my staffs solutions and answer to the recommendations above and the protocol they have placed on themselves by doing the reconciliation on a monthly time frame and Sheriff's fees being remitted to the County

Treasurer on a bi-weekly schedule should take care of the time line concerns mentioned by the State Auditor's findings.

Internal Control Over Financial Reporting

Finding:

The County's system of internal control designed to provide for accurate preparation of the annual financial report was inadequate resulting in numerous significant reporting errors within the annual report prepared by the County.

Recommendation: We recommend that the County strengthen internal controls over financial reporting.

Views of responsible officials:

Reporting errors affecting cash, equity, revenue and expenditures were noted during the course of the audit. With the turnover of employees in my department, they are learning the financial software, and I would prefer to go back and make corrections when the errors are found so that everything is correct. We did start having an approval process done through the financial software, for journal entries. When a department decides later that they coded a voucher wrong and asks us to shift it, we do that and attach a copy of the e-mail from them for supporting documentation.

Surplus Unassigned Fund Balance

Finding:

The unassigned fund balance of the General Fund exceeded the maximum allowed by SDCL 7-21-18.1 by approximately \$4,177,000.00 as of December 31, 2024. This is the second consecutive audit in which a similar finding was noted.

Recommendation:

We recommend that the County comply with SDCL 7-21-18.1.

Views of responsible officials:

The other written comment on my office is the County's Unassigned Surplus Fund Balance at December 31, 2024 was \$4,177,690.20 in excess of the amount allowed by SDCL 7-21-18. I included the Operating Transfer amount of \$8,538,797.00 because that is taken from the General Fund and disbursed to the Road & Bridge Fund, E-911 Fund, Emergency Management Fund and 24/7 Fund every year. If that amount is included, then we were below the 40%.

RUSSELL A. OLSON, AUDITOR GENERAL

DEPARTMENT OF LEGISLATIVE AUDIT

Published April 8 and 15, 2026 at the total approximate cost of \$128.38 and may be viewed free of charge at www.sdpublicnotices.com. 26721



26001778.00
2026 Brown County Cold In-Place Recycling

ADVERTISEMENT

2026 Brown County Cold In-Place Recycling Project
Brown County, SD

Sealed Bids will be received by the Brown County Auditor, 25 Market Street, Aberdeen, South Dakota, 57401, until 8:46 AM local time on Tuesday, the 28th day of April, 2026, for the above-referenced project. Bids shall be prepared and submitted in accordance with the Bidding Documents. Brown County reserves the right to accept or reject any and/or all Bids as set forth in the Bidding Documents.

Bids will be publicly opened and read aloud at or shortly after the time named above. Bids will be reviewed by the Brown County Commission at a subsequent meeting of the Brown County Commissioners.

The Project includes the following Work:

- Cold In-Place Recycling for 6 miles.
- Additional items as set forth in the Contract Documents.

Each bid shall be accompanied by a Bid Security as described in the Bidding Documents. The Successful Bidder will be required to provide Payment and Performance Bonds as described in the Bidding Documents.

Bidding documents may be viewed and obtained at www.questcdn.com by entering QuestCDN project number 10134070. If you need assistance with the website, please contact QuestCDN Customer Support at 952-233-1632 or info@questcdn.com. Or on the

Brown County website at <https://www.brown.sd.us/brown-county-bids> through Public Purchase.

A pre-bid conference will not be held.

ATTEST: Lynn Heupel, Brown County Auditor

Published April 15 and 22, 2026 at the total approximate cost of \$34.50 and may be viewed free of charge at www.sdpublicnotices.com. 26741



TOWN OF WARNER MINUTES FOR WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8th, 2026

MEMBERS PRESENT: Stewart Nelson, Gaylon Townsend, Terry Evans and Nichol Townsend. Dave Fair was absent.

DECLARATION OF POTENTIAL CONFLICT OF INTEREST: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: A motion was made by Townsend and seconded by Evans to approve the minutes from March 11th, 2026 meeting. Motion carried.

FINANCIAL REPORTS: MSC: Evans/Townsend. Checking: Town \$347,924.95; Water \$88,255.75; Sewer \$214,589.01. CDs: Town \$35,014.25; Water \$52,781.59; Sewer \$29,869.21.

BILLS APPROVED FOR PAYMENT: MSC: Townsend/Evans.

Amazon (supplies) \$62.65, Gas N Goodies (fuel) \$107.90, Norton (antivirus) \$98.98, Office Max (supplies) \$420.88, WEB Water (water usage) \$5973.59, US Bank (loan payment) \$9631.84, USDA (water and sewer loans) \$2083.00, Warner Post Office (supplies) \$89.95, Agtegra (fuel) \$46.25, Badger Meter (March reads) \$24.84, Dakota Pump (annual fees) \$1067.75, Dependable Sanitation (garbage service) \$2816, Groton Independent (advertising) \$225, Lynn Aman (CC Cleaning) \$75, Midcontinent (phone & internet) \$301.68, Northwestern Energy (electric & gas) \$2311.27, SD Dept of Rev/Sales Tax \$198.09, SD Public Health Lab (water test) \$20, SD Workers Comp \$10, SD One Call (locates) \$5.25, Town Water/Sewer \$180.83, PAYROLL: Stewart Nelson (101) \$1813.64 (602) \$906.82 (604) \$906.82, Terry Evans \$55.41, Gaylon Townsend \$55.41, Nichol Townsend \$826.51, SD Retirement Fund \$542.36, Payroll Taxes \$1134.16.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Trustee Vacancy: A petition was received from Gaylon Townsend. There will be no election. Oath of Office was taken by Townsend for a three-year term.

Planning & Zoning Ordinance was discussed. Process of implementing the new Comprehensive Plan and Planning & Zoning Ordinance will begin next month.

NEW BUSINESS:

2025 Drinking Water Report was reviewed. The City of Warner has supplied 24 consecutive years of safe drinking water to the public and has been awarded the Secretary's Award for Drinking Water Excellence by the South Dakota Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

A new digital sign for the community center was discussed. A design from Stein Sign was reviewed but will need to be modified for size. Tabled for future review.

AED was discussed. The current AED will soon expire so will be traded in for a new AED. MSC: Evans/Townsend

Purchase of a new piece of playground equipment was discussed. Will wait until already planned improvements are completed to see if there is enough budget left to purchase this year. MSC: Townsend/Evans

Increased Fire Protection fees to be paid to Warner Township were discussed. Discussion was held regarding implementing a monthly fee to all Warner residents to help cover this expense. Tabled until next month.

Delinquencies: 7 were noted and notices will be posted on doors.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: May 13th, 2026 at 7PM at the Warner Community Center.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00PM.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer. Dave Fair, Chairman; Nichol Townsend, Finance Officer

Published April 15, 2026 at the total approximate cost of \$33.37 and may be viewed free of charge at www.sdpublicnotices.com. 26743



Town of Westport General Meeting

The Town of Westport met on April 6, 2026 at 7:00 p.m., with Mitch Wilson, Shane Storm, Troy Tschappat, Dan Schlosser, and Deb Schlosser present.

The following bills were presented:

City General: NW Energy- utilities (\$733.52), Groton Independent-March meeting minutes and Equalization meeting notice and minutes (34.60), Menards-Hall kitchen paint and supplies (\$42.48), CWF Concrete & Masonry-snow removal (\$1250.00), US Treasury-1st Quarter federal taxes (\$668.21), SD Unemployment-Unemployment Insurance (\$12.15)

Sewer: NW Energy-Lift Station utilities (\$71.71), DANR-Lift Station payment (\$9310.01)

Water: Public Health Laboratory-water testing (\$20.00), WEB-water (\$2050.21), Water Maintenance District-February and March testing (\$1377.56)

Troy Tschappat motioned, seconded by Shane Storm to pay all bills.

The following deposits were presented:

City General: State of SD (\$2183.19), Brown County Collections (\$408.69), Town Hall rental (\$75.00) Interest (\$48.59) Sewer: Resident Payments (\$2183.78)

Water: Resident Payments (\$3275.67)

Public Concerns: Dan Schlosser said the neighbor's dog makes "deposits" in his yard and would like it to stop. The Board will send a letter to that resident.

Old Business: None

New Business: Mitch Wilson was the only person to file a petition for the open Board spot. Mitch will continue for a three year term. The May meeting will be held the second meeting of May instead of the first Monday. May meeting will be held May 11, 2026.

Meeting dismissed at 7:16 p.m.

Deb Schlosser, Finance Officer
Published April 15, 2026 at the total approximate cost of \$18.38 and may be viewed free of charge at www.sdpublicnotices.com. 26742



April 7, 2026

The Groton City Council met on the above date at 7:00pm at 120 N Main Street for their first monthly meeting with the following members present: Bahr, Nehls, Voss-Severson, Shilhanek, Cutler, and Mayor Hanlon presiding. Also present were Attorney Chad Locken, Douglas Heinrich, Darrell Hillestad, Dwight Zerr, Elizabeth Varin, Kelly Oswald, and Collin Jensen.

Moved by Nehls and seconded Cutler to approve the agenda with no additions or changes. All members present voted aye.

Public comments were welcomed pursuant to SDCL 1-25-1. Hillestad provided an update on the airport.

Hillestad exited the meeting. Discussion took place regarding Pumpkin Fest and potential dates for the event.

Oswald exited the meeting. Department reports were reviewed and discussed.

Zerr exited the meeting. Three sealed bids were submitted for the 2026 Street Resurfacing Project - Midwest Coatings Company, Inc. at \$3.66 per sq. yd., Jensen Rock and Sand, Inc. at \$3.38 per sq. yd., and Bituminous Paving, Inc. at \$3.80 per sq. yd. Moved by Cutler and seconded by Bahr to award the project to Jensen Rock and Sand, Inc. All members present voted aye.

Jensen exited the meeting. The special event alcoholic beverage license for a private graduation event hosted at the Groton Community Center by Julie Sandness on May 9, 2026, was approved on a motion by Shilhanek and seconded by Nehls. All members present voted aye.

The special event alcoholic beverage license for a private graduation event hosted at the Groton Community Center

by Jason Warrington and Pat Krause on May 15, 2026, was approved on a motion by Cutler and seconded by Voss-Severson. All members present voted aye.

The estimate of \$9,744.92 from H&M Custom Coating for exterior painting of City Hall was approved on a motion by Bahr and seconded by Cutler. All members present voted aye.

The quote of \$16,976.69 from The Roofers for the shingling of the mansard roof and awnings at City Hall was approved on a motion by Nehls and seconded by Shilhanek. All members present voted aye.

Moved by Shilhanek and seconded by Voss-Severson to table the approval of updated renewable energy certificate designated entity contract and FES amendment with WAPA and Heartland Energy to permit resale of RECs. All members present voted aye.

Moved by Shilhanek and seconded by Nehls to table the funding request from Area IV Senior Nutrition. All members present voted aye.

Discussion took place regarding the implementation of an ordinance addressing motorized scooters.

2026-2027 Malt Beverage License renewals for MJ's Sinclair, Ken's Food Fair, and Dollar General were approved on a motion by Bahr and seconded by Shilhanek. All members present voted aye.

The minutes from the previous Groton City Council meeting were approved on a motion by Nehls and seconded by Cutler. All members present voted aye.

The minutes from the Board of Equalization meeting on March 17th, 2026, were approved on a motion by Shilhanek and seconded by Voss-Severson. All members present voted aye.

Moved by Cutler and seconded by Bahr to authorize the following bills for payment. Bahr, Voss-Severson, Shilhanek, and Cutler voted aye. Nehls abstained from voting.

Payroll, \$32,422.86, Employee salaries; Executive, \$1,300.99; Administrative, \$5,143.39; Public Safety, \$9,417.92; Public Works, \$16,560.56; Kellie Locke, \$384.52, Med flex - Final of 2026; Verizon Wireless, \$40.01, Wireless router - Rubble Site; Dacotah Bank, \$6,380.22, Withholding/SS/Medicare; Dacotah Bank, \$831.23, HSA contributions; Dacotah Bank, \$545.57, Withholding/SS/Medicare; Dacotah Bank, \$3,887.41, Withholding/SS/Medicare; Aflac, \$534.92, Employee insurance; Colonial Life, \$69.40, Employee insurance; Health Pool of South Dakota, \$15,012.40, Employee insurance; Reliance Standard Life Insurance, \$74.80, Employee insurance; Stacy Mayou, \$184.20, Med flex; SD Retirement System, \$11,123.76, Employee retirement; Douglas Heinrich, \$55.47, Med flex; SD Supplemental Retirement, \$590.00, Supplemental retirement; Dakota Pump & Control, \$3,088.41, Upgrade to Secomea manager, mixer rebuild - Water/Sewer Dept.; Irby, Inc., \$8,938.75, Rubber blankets, battery packs, meters for electric ami metering project - Electric Dept.; Geffdog Designs, LLC, \$1,304.10, Uniform purchases, pool banners, baseball banners - Multiple Depts.; J's Superior Cleaning, \$450.00, Commercial cleaning services - City Hall/PD; SD Department of Health, \$184.00, Water/sewer testing; Glenn Bitz, \$160.00, Commercial window cleaning - City Hall; Dakota Applicators, \$5,625.00, Epoxy floor covering - Baseball Concessions Project; Dawn Enterprises, \$3,207.98, Garbage cans for Main Street - Street/Solid Waste Dept.; Kellie Locke, \$58.00, Mileage reimbursement - Aberdeen to pickup supplies for puzzle event and retrieve pool/bb signs; Harry Implement, Inc., \$107.68, Hydraulic hoses & plug for payload - Street Dept.; Michael Todd Industrial Supply, \$43.78, Orange nitrile gloves - Sewer Dept.; Cole Papers Inc., \$175.77, Garbage bags - Parks/Community Center; The Groton Independent, \$300.65, Publishing costs; MOCIC, \$100.00, 2026 membership fee - Police Dept.; Menards, \$378.00, Chest freezers - Baseball Concessions; Dollar General, \$43.75, Bottled water, coffee, garbage bags - Multiple Depts.; Bobcat of Aberdeen, \$237.53, Cutting edges - Street Dept.; RDO Equipment Co., \$336.45, Cutting edges, switch, wiper blades - Street Dept.; NW Energy, \$14.36, Natural gas service - PD; Allied Climate Professionals, LLC, \$56,344.12, Plumbing/HVAC services - Baseball Concessions Project; S&S Lumber Co., \$2,748.38, Stud

finder, battery, cover plate, glue, baseball concessions project materials - Multiple Depts.; The Roofers, \$69,571.26, 2026 city roof repair project final payment; soffit, fascia, attic chutes, and gutters at community center; Darrels LLC, \$27.49, Tire repair - Street Dept.; EcoLab Pest Elimination, \$117.98, Rodent control - Rubble Site; Farmers Union Co-op Assoc., \$2,045.00, Diesel fuel - Street Dept.; WEB Water, \$20,882.24, Water services - March 2026; AutoZone, \$139.56, Diesel exhaust fluid - City Shop;

VESTIS, \$68.84, Rug rent - City Hall; Chad Locken, \$2,030.00, Legal services - 4th qtr of 2025 and 1st qtr of 2026; A&B Business Solutions, \$310.89, Printer/copier lease - City Hall; Ken's Fair Foods, \$293.18, Fuel purchases - Multiple Depts.; Dacotah Bank, \$1,439.96, Changing tables, seat covers, water sample postage, website hosting fee, fuel purchases, copy paper, candy, puzzle event supplies, coffee, garbage bags, batteries, creamer - Multiple Depts.; Thomas Strickland, \$142.98, Employee

mileage/meal reimbursement - DV Training in Watertown, SD on 3/31/2026;

2026 spring cleanup will take place on April 27th through May 1st.

Varin exited the meeting.

Moved by Bahr and seconded by Shilhanek to adjourn into executive session for personnel and legal matters 1-25-2 (1) & (3) at 8:42pm. All members present voted aye. Council reconvened into regular session at 9:25pm.

Varin reentered the meeting. Moved by Shilhanek and seconded by Nehls to hire Carrie Cole as U8 Softball Coach and Riley Shellenberger as Swimming Pool Lifeguard. All members present voted aye.

Moved by Voss-Severson and seconded by Cutler to adjourn the meeting at 9:27pm. All members present voted aye.

Scott Hanlon, Mayor
Douglas Heinrich, Finance Officer

Published April 15, 2026 at the total approximate cost of \$73.24 and may be viewed free of charge at www.sdpublicnotices.com. 26744

Groton Area JV wins in Redfield; varsity splits with shutout at Clark after tough loss to PGDCWL

Groton Area's junior varsity picked up a strong win while the varsity squad experienced both ends of the spectrum, falling to PGDCWL before rebounding with a shutout victory, in a stretch of high school baseball games played Saturday in Redfield and Monday in Clark.

The JV Tigers opened the weekend with a 3-1 victory over Redfield Area behind a dominant outing from Ryder Schelle. The right-hander controlled the game from the mound, recording 12 outs over four innings while allowing just two hits and one run. He struck out eight and walked three.

Groton Area got on the board in the first inning when Braden Flihs drew a bases-loaded walk to force in a run. The Tigers added another in the second as Asher Zimmerman delivered an RBI single down the right field line.

Zimmerman finished 1-for-2 with a run batted in, while Noah Scepaniak and John Bisbee each contributed a hit. Groton Area also showed patience at the plate, drawing six walks in the contest. Redfield Area managed just two hits, with its lone run driven in by #8, who went 1-for-1. The home team played error-free defense.

In varsity action Saturday, Groton Area ran into trouble early in a 14-1 loss to PGDCWL (Platte-Geddes/Dakota Christian/White Lake). The Honkers erupted for eight runs in the first inning, taking advantage of timely hitting and walks.

Keaton Christensen, Isaac Leader, Bentley Veurink and Jye Bailey all contributed in the big inning, with Bailey capping the surge with a two-run single. PGDCWL added five more runs in the second, highlighted by a three-run single from Maddux VanZee.

Gavin Englund took the loss for Groton Area, allowing 11 runs (nine earned) over 1 1/3 innings. Nick Groeblichhoff provided relief, pitching 3 2/3 innings and allowing three unearned runs while striking out two.

Karsten Flihs drove in Groton Area's lone run, while TC Schuster accounted for the team's only hit. Bailey led PGDCWL at the plate, going 4-for-4 with three RBIs, as the Honkers totaled nine hits and drew seven walks.

Groton Area's varsity squad bounced back Monday with a 1-0 shutout victory over Clark Area behind a combined pitching effort from Jarrett Erdmann and Alex Abeln.

Erdmann was sharp, allowing just two hits over 6 2/3 innings while striking out six and walking four. Abeln came on to record the final out, striking out Konrad Frankfurth to earn the save.

The Tigers' lone run came in the sixth inning when Groeblichhoff delivered an RBI single. He finished 1-for-2 at the plate, while Abeln led the team offensively with two hits.

Groton Area backed the pitching with solid defense, committing no errors and turning a double play. Karsten Flihs led the defensive effort with six chances.

In JV action Monday, Groton Area and Clark Area battled to a 2-2 tie.

The Tigers struck first in the opening inning as Case Reints singled in a run during a two-run frame. Clark Area answered in the third inning, tying the game on a double by Behrett Ahrens.

Isaiah Scepaniak started on the mound for Groton Area, allowing one hit and one unearned run over two innings while striking out three. At the plate, Braden Flihs, Scepaniak, Zach Flihs and Reints each collected a hit, with Flihs and Reints driving in runs. Ahrens paced Clark Area, going 2-for-2 with an RBI.

Groton Area returns to action Friday with both the varsity and JV teams scheduled to travel to face WIN.

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King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Soak (up)
- 4 "Nova" channel
- 7 South Pacific nation
- 11 Grouch
- 13 Ump's call
- 14 Tehran's country
- 15 Rights org.
- 16 Peyton's brother
- 17 Dweeb
- 18 Spars
- 20 Boast
- 22 Prom outfit
- 24 TV detective Remington
- 28 Shirt parts
- 32 Flynn of film
- 33 Frankfurt fellow

- 34 Cleaning cloth
- 36 Fine cotton
- 37 "Shake —" (Taylor Swift hit)
- 39 "Be serious!"
- 41 More of a snoop
- 43 Hosp. scan
- 44 Inert gas
- 46 Accord
- 50 Pizzazz
- 53 Bro, maybe
- 55 Half a sextet
- 56 Actress Falco
- 57 — tizzy (worked up)

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59					60					61		

- 58 Lingerie fabric
- 59 Beloved
- 60 A gazillion years
- 61 Park — -joon of "The Marvels"
- 9 Pickle holder
- 10 Hoosier st.
- 12 Crunchy candy bar
- 19 Minivan alternative
- 21 Consumed
- 23 Gen- — (baby boomer's kid)
- 25 One of
- 26 — Linda, Calif.
- 27 Mideast airline
- 28 Tibia's place
- 29 Jared of "Panic Room"
- 30 Cupid's alias
- 31 Droop
- 35 Tiara jewel
- 38 Service charge
- 40 Capote nickname
- 42 Wartime riveter
- 45 Boy, in Barcelona
- 47 Shabby flower
- 48 Scrabble piece
- 49 Singer Ono
- 50 Last letter in London
- 51 Chemical suffix
- 52 Actress Long
- 54 Prohibit

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Groton Area Middle School Athletes Shine at Milbank Meet

MILBANK — The Groton Area middle school track teams turned in a strong overall performance Tuesday at the Milbank Middle School Track Meet, highlighted by a runner-up finish from the seventh-grade girls and a second-place showing by the eighth-grade boys.

Milbank swept both eighth-grade team titles, winning the boys division with 177 points and the girls with 221. Groton Area's eighth-grade boys finished second with 78 points, while Sisseton followed closely with 75. In the girls standings, Groton Area placed 10th.

In the seventh-grade divisions, Sisseton claimed the boys title with 124 points, while Groton Area finished fifth with 39. The Groton Area seventh-grade girls delivered one of the top team performances of the day, placing second with 120 points, trailing only Milbank's 147.5.

Groton Area's boys were led by standout sprint performances from Ryder Schwan, who swept the eighth-grade 100-meter dash (11.43) and 200-meter dash (24.39).

In the seventh-grade division, Ivan Schwan mirrored that effort with victories in both the 100 meters (12.92) and 200 meters (26.31). Quinton Flores added a runner-up finish in the 800 meters (2:38.78) to pace the distance events.

The 400 meters was another strong event for Groton Area's eighth-grade boys, as Kyson Kucker won the race in 58.16, followed by a second-place finish from Trey Tietz (1:02.42). Keegan Kucker added a fourth-place finish.

Trayce Schelle also turned in a strong meet, placing third in the 200 meters and fifth in the 100, while contributing to the Tigers' sprint depth.

In the field events, Liam Johnson led the eighth-grade throwers with a fourth-place finish in the shot put (28-5) and sixth in the discus (71-8). Hank Flihs and Grayson Warrington added seventh- and ninth-place finishes, respectively, in the seventh-grade shot put.

On the girls side, Groton Area's seventh-grade squad showcased impressive depth and balance in earning the team runner-up trophy.

Kinley Sandness led the way with victories in both the 100-meter dash (14.35) and 200-meter dash (30.57), while Libby Johnson finished second in both events to give Groton a dominant one-two finish.

In the middle-distance races, Avery Huber captured the 400 meters (1:12.76), with Taylor Flihs placing second in both the 400 and 800 meters. Andi Iverson added a fourth-place finish in the 400.

The hurdles were another highlight, as Charli Jacobsen swept both the 100-meter and 200-meter hurdles. Addison Steffes followed with a second-place finish in the 200 hurdles and fourth in the 100 hurdles.

Additional contributors to the team effort included Mya Moody, Zoe Olson, Shealee Gilchrist, and Brynlee Dunker, all of whom placed in the top 15 in sprint events, helping pile up valuable team points.

In the eighth-grade girls division, Rowan Patterson led the Tigers with an eighth-place finish in both the 100 and 200 meters, while Andi Gauer contributed in both the shot put and discus.

Boy's Eighth Grade Team Points: 1. Milbank 177, 2. Groton Area 78, 3. Sisseton 75, 4. St Martin's Lutheran 45, 5. Tri-State 40, 6. Tiospa Zina 36, 7. Britton-Hecla 29, 8. Waubay-Summit 24, 9. Hamlin 5

Girl's Eighth Grade Team Points: 1. Milbank 221, 2. Sisseton 117, 3. St Martin's Lutheran 68, 4. Wilmot 46, 5. Langford Area 40, 6. Hamlin 29, 7. Tiospa Zina 13, 8. Waubay-Summit 5, 8. Tri-State 5, 10. Britton-Hecla 3, 10. Groton Area 3

Boy's Seventh Grade Team Points: 1. Sisseton 124, 2. Milbank 109, 3. Hamlin 87, 4. Wilmot 70, 5. Groton Area ms 39, 6. Waubay-Summit 25, 7. Browns Valley 20, 8. Tri-State 6, 9. St Martin's Lutheran 5, 10. Langford Area 2

Girl's Seventh Grade Team Points: 1. Milbank 147.5, 2. Groton Area ms 120, 3. Hamlin 71, 4. Tri-State 54, 5. Sisseton MS 40, 6. Langford Area 38.5, 7. St Martin's Lutheran 33, 8. Browns Valley 23, 9. Wilmot 19, 10. Britton-Hecla 13; 11. Waubay-Summit 9

Boy's Division

100 Meters 8th Grade: 1. Ryder Schwan, 11.43; 4. Trey Tietz, 12.51; 5. Trayce Schelle, 12.83; 10. Liam Lord, 13.45; 20. Bentley Harms, 15.51; 26. Wyatt Morehouse, 17.35

100 Meters 7th Grade: 1. Ivan Schwan, 12.92; 4. Quinton Flores, 13.73; 22. Jack Schuelke, 15.82; 23. Micah Krause, 15.87; 32. Titan Johnson, 18.39

King Crossword

Answers

Solution time: 22 mins.

S	O	P		P	B	S		F	I	J	I		
C	R	A	B		O	U	T		I	R	A	N	
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Answer

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9	8	6	7	1	2	5	3	4
1	4	5	6	3	9	2	7	8
2	3	7	4	8	5	6	9	1

200 Meters 8th Grade: 1. Ryder Schwan, 24.39; 3. Trayce Schelle, 26.58; 16. Wyatt Morehouse, 32.93

200 Meters 7th Grade: 1. Ivan Schwan, 26.31; 21. Micah Krause, 35.03; 25. Hayden Hubbart, 38.85; 26. Titan Johnson, 43.66

400 Meters 8th Grade: 1. Kyson Kucker, 58.16; 2. Trey Tietz, 1:02.42; 4. Keegan Kucker, 1:04.45.; 8. Liam Lord, 1:08.56

800 Meters 7th Grade: 2. Quinton Flores, 2:38.78; 11. Hayden Hubbart, 3:14.16

4x100 Relay 8th Grade: 1. 50.29

4x100 Relay 7th Grade: 5. 1:00.56

Shot Put - 4kg 8th Grade: 4. Liam Johnson, 28-05.00; 17. Bentley Harms, 21-05.00; 18. Gavin Hanten, 21-03.00

Shot Put - 4kg 7th Grade: 7. Hank Flihs, 22-03.00; 9. Grayson Warrington, 20-07.00

Discus - 1kg 8th Grade: 6. Liam Johnson, 71-08; 8. Gavin Hanten, 71-01; 16. Bentley Harms, 54-11

Discus - 1kg 7th Grade: 11. Grayson Warrington, 46-00; 15. Hank Flihs, 42-05

Girl's Division

100 Meters 8th Grade: 8. Rowan Patterson, 14.92; 21. Andi Gauer, 17.40

100 Meters 7th Grade: 1. Kinley Sandness, 14.35; 2. Libby Johnson, 14.56; 6. Mya Moody, 14.84; 8. Zoe Olson, 15.01; 10. Addison Steffes, 15.26; 15. Brynlee Dunker, 15.46; 19. Rowan Hanson, 15.77; 20. Shealee Gilchrist, 15.92; 24. Harley Furman, 16.03; 29. Lillian Davis, 16.37; 37. Hadley Heilman, 16.98; 37. Lennox Locke, 16.98; 45. Gracie Borg, 17.68; 47. Hallie Perkins, 18.19

200 Meters 8th Grade: 8. Rowan Patterson, 30.85SB

200 Meters 7th Grade: 1. Kinley Sandness, 30.57; 2. Libby Johnson, 31.03; 6. Mya Moody, 31.96; 7. Zoe Olson, 32.46; 8. Avery Huber, 33.05; 10. Shealee Gilchrist, 33.50; 15. Harley Furman, 34.13; 22. Rowan Hanson, 35.03; 24. Lennox Locke, 36.21; 28. Gracie Borg, 37.87

400 Meters 7th Grade: 1. Avery Huber, 1:12.76; 2. Taylor Flihs, 1:13.70; 4. Andi Iverson, 1:16.01SB

800 Meters 7th Grade: 2. Taylor Flihs, 3:09.07

100m Hurdles - 30" / 0.762m 7th Grade: 1. Charli Jacobsen, 19.13; 4. Addison Steffes, 22.12; 13. Hallie Perkins, 26.40

200m Hurdles - 30" / 0.762m 7th Grade: 1. Charli Jacobsen, 34.85; 2. Addison Steffes, 37.53

4x100 Relay 7th Grade: 1. 58.20

Shot Put - 6lb 8th Grade: 13. Andi Gauer, 18-00.00SB

Shot Put - 6lb 7th Grade: 17. Lillian Davis, 21-00.00, 22. Hadley Heilman, 17-09.00

Discus - 1kg 8th Grade: 8. Andi Gauer, 40-09SB

Discus - 1kg 7th Grade: 9. Lillian Da-

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49th Annual
Wed.-Fri., April 29-May 1 8:00 AM - 8:00 PM
Sat. May 2 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
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 Kingswood Boundaries: SW Sioux Falls, between I-29 on the East and the Tea-Ellis Road on the West, 12th Street on North and 57th Street on South

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Weekly SUDOKU

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Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging
 ♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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Groton Area Third Quarter Honor Roll

Seniors

4.0 GPA: Nathan Unzen, Natalia Warrington, Karsten Flihs, Carly Gilbert, Jerica Locke, Talli Wright, Jaedyn Penning, Mia Crank, Paisley Mitchell, Becker Bosma, Rylee Dunker, Raelee Lilly, Gage Sippel

3.99-3.50: Hannah Sandness, Cali Tollifson, Drake Peterson, Ryder Johnson, Keegen Tracy, Lincoln Krause, Lucas Carda, London Bahr, Logan Warrington, Nicholas Groeblichhoff, Jayden Schwan, Jarrett Erdmann, Garrett Schultz, Emma Davis, Gavin Englund, Breslyn Jeschke, Karter Moody

3.49-3.00: De Eh Tha Say, Oliva Stiegelmeier, Charlie Frost, Keegan Harry, Benjamin Hoeft, Gentry Pigors, Cambria Bonn

Juniors

4.0 GPA: Carlee Johnson, Liby Althoff, Teagan Hanten, Brody Lord, Kira Clocksene, Ashlynn Warrington, Emerlee Jones, Halee Harder, Colt Williamson

3.99-3.50: Claire Schuelke, Taryn Traphagen, Hailey Pauli, McKenna Tietz, Leah Jones, Addison Hoffman Wipf, Gavin Kroll, Kella Tracy, Blake Lord, Zander Harry, Walker Zoellner, Hayden Zoellner

3.49-3.00: Avery Crank, Aiden Strom, Logan Clocksene

Sophomores

4.0 GPA: Makenna Krause, Chesney Weber

3.99-3.50: Mya Feser, Sydney Locke, Thomas Schuster, Easton Weber, Rylan Ekern, Elizabeth Cole, Jace Johnson, Ethan Kroll, Ryder Schelle, Gracie Pearson, Kyleigh Kroll, Brysen Sandness,

3.49-3.00: Braeden Flihs, Addison Hoeft, Layne Johnson, Kinsley Rowen, Brayden Barrera, Rylie Rose, John Bisbee, Jeremiah Muller, Audrey Davis

Freshmen

4.0 GPA: Neely Althoff, Aspen Beto, Wesley Borg, Abby Fjeldheim, Zachary Flihs, Tevan Hanson, Madison Herrick, Asher Johnson, Brooklyn Spanier, Novalea Warrington

3.99-3.50: Jose Fernando Nava Remigio, Kolton Antonsen, Logan Olson, Jordan Schwan, Lincoln Shilhanek, Tenley Frost

3.49-3.00: Raquel Tracy, Wesley Morehouse, Arianna Dinger, Audrey Smalley, Sydney Holmes, Adeline Kotzer, Connor Kroll, Samuel Crank

Eighth Graders

4.0 GPA: Axel Abeln, Hudson Eichler, Amelia Ewalt, Sophia Flihs, Gavin Hanten, Liam Johnson, Jameson Penning

3.99-3.50: Andi Gauer, Ryder Schwan, Gavin Younger, Asher Zimmerman, Keegan Kucker, Liam Lord, Trey Tietz, Kyson Kucker, Haden Harder, Rowan Patterson, Trayce Schelle, Jace Hofer, Dawson Feist, Elias Heilman

3.49-3.00: Kamryn McKane, Major Dolan, Wyatt Morehouse, Nolan Bahr, Kinzleigh Furman, Peyton Padfield, Chloe Witchey

Seventh Graders

4.0 GPA: Gracie Borg, Lillian Davis, Brynlee Dunker, Libby Johnson, Kendyll Kroll, Kinley Sandness, Victoria Schuster, Rylee Stoltenburg, Taylynn Traphagen, Ayce Warrington

3.99-3.50: Amara El Salahy, Brinley Guthmiller, Hadley Heilman, Easton Larson, Zoe Olson, Addison Steffes, Ambrielle Feist, Rylee Hofer, Andi Iverson, Maycee Moody, Mason Locke, Hank Hill, Charli Jacobsen, Drew Fjeldheim, Mya Moody, Bella Barrera, Parker Zoellner, Knox Mulder

3.49-3.00: Keith Furman, Emmett Zoellner, Grady Rowen, Grayden Zeck, Rylan Blackwood, Ivan Schwan, Quinton Flores

Sixth Graders

4.0 GPA: Arthur Eichler, Evan Locke, Brody Zimmerman

3.99-3.50: Taylor Flihs, Tigh Flihs, Ryan Hanson, Boston Kurth, Kacie McComsey, Jernie Weig, Willow Cowan, Hayden Hubbard, Lennox Locke, Blakely Stiegelmeier, Avery Huber, Titan Johnson, Taylor Thompson, Elise Pharis, Gideon Rix, Micah Krause, Shealee Gilchrist, Deylon Johnson, Rowan Hanson, Kayson Hofer

3.49-3.00: Hudson McGannon, Calvin Locken, Rosalyn Block, Harley Furman, Kaelee Morehouse, Jack Schuelke, Simon Simunek, Tanner Frost, Avery Roettele

Classifieds

and Card of Thanks

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Groton Area April Students of the Month



In back, left to right, are Liam Johnson, Keegen Tracy, Jordan Schwan and Drake Dosch; in front, left to right, are Calvin Locken, McKenna Tietz, Andi Iverson and Mia Tvinnereim. (Courtesy Photo)

Groton Area School works to ensure that all levels of academic instruction also include the necessary life skills teaching, practicing, and modeling that encourages essential personal life habits that are universally understood to facilitate helping our students become good human beings and citizens.

It is learning with our heads, hearts, and hands to be caring and civil, to make healthy decisions, to effectively problem solve, to be respectful and responsible, to be good citizens, and to be empathetic and ethical individuals.

Students are selected based on individual student growth in the areas of: positive behavior, citizenship, good attendance, a thirst for knowledge, and high academic standards.

School Board

Continued from front

The first phase would include building an addition east of the middle/high school office that includes classrooms and special education rooms, and demolition of a portion on the southern side of the high school.

Phase 2 would include restructuring the southern parking lot, the addition of a commons area/cafeteria east of the old gym and a wing on the southern portion of the building for agriculture/FACS classrooms.

Phase 3 includes renovations of the old gym, CTE shop space, tech and science classrooms, a science lab and music/choir room renovations. A re-roofing item is also included in phase 3.

Cost estimates include:

- \$9,664,000 to \$10,570,000 for phase 1 construction
- \$5,088,000 to \$5,565,000 for phase 2 construction
- \$2,266,700 to \$2,505,300 for shop, science and office remodel
- \$2,340,000 to \$2,620,800 for locker rooms, kitchen and band remodel

Total estimates presented to the board range from \$24,498,457 on the low end to \$27,441,255 on the high end.

An open house/community forum will take place later this month to review the proposed school master plan.

Staffing changes approved

The board also approved the resignation of half a dozen district employees.

Middle school/high school special education teacher Chantel Duerre resigned effective at the end of the school year. Paraprofessional Jaimie Mitchell resigned effective May 8.

Ag teacher and FFA adviser Lindsey VanderWal resigned effective at the end of the current school year.

Maintenance director Ryan Scepaniak resigned effective April 10.

The final two teachers resigned from extracurricular involvement but not their main district position. Assistant Business Manager Kristi



Shaun Wanner

Peterson submitted her resignation as yearbook advisor effective at the end of the school year. And social science teacher and head football coach Shaun Wanner submitted his resignation as head football coach.

Wanner, like Donley, has racked up decades as head football coach, steering the Tigers' football team for 25 years, with a total of 39 years as a head coach under his belt.

The board approved Wanner's head coaching resignation pending being able to find a suitable replacement. That caveat has been typical for the Groton school board when accepting the resignation of coaches who are also district employees.

The board also made some hires Monday night.

Madisyn Neiber, who recently served as business manager at the Britton-Hecla School District, was hired as business manager beginning July 1. It comes as current Business Manager Becky Hubsch announced her resignation at a meeting in March.

Maria Martens was hired as opportunity coordinator. Martens, who is pursuing her Master's Degree at Northern State University in counseling specializing in school counseling, was hired as opportunity coordinator for the 2026-2027 school year.

The board also voted to hire Rylen Ekern as a student OST worker.

School year extended due to snow days

The school board voted to extend the 2025-2026 school year to make up for four snow days earlier this year.

The end of the school year was originally scheduled for May 14, with a staff development day scheduled for May 15. However, the board voted to push the last day for student to May 20 with the staff development day rescheduled to May 21.

- Language arts teachers told the board about curriculum changes coming for next year at the middle school and high school. Mary Johnson told the board why she thinks the HMH curriculum would be the best option for the middle school, including clearer introductions for the students and a better selection of stories for the middle school level. Sarah Hanten presented her pick for the high school curriculum, Savvas, citing it as more appropriate and challenging for the older students with good online features.

The board went into executive session toward the end of the meeting to discuss teacher, staff and administrative contracts for the 2026-2027 school year.

Superintendent Schwan presented a wrap up of the state legislative session, including bills signed into law and potential impacts on the district. Some of those discussed include Senate Bill 245 (bill to create a homeowner property tax reduction fund), House Bill 1187 (bill to add coaches of a school activity to the list of mandatory reporters of child abuse or neglect), Senate Bill 46 (changes to government open meeting requirements) and more.

Elementary Principal Brett Schwan expressed concerns about the size of next year's kindergarten and junior kindergarten classes, saying it's the "smallest class we've ever had." After last week's kindergarten roundup, there are 25 kindergarteners and 10 junior kindergarteners for next year, with two students undecided which they will go into. That is compared to:

- o 45 kindergarten students and nine junior kindergarten students in 2025-2026
- o 31 kindergarten students and 13 junior kindergarten students in 2024-2025
- o 53 kindergarten students and 19 junior kindergarten students in 2023-2024
- o 40 kindergarten students and 20 junior kindergarten students in 2022-2023

Middle school/high school Principal Shelby Edwards discussed a new grading scale that the principal advisory group has been working on. The first reading is set to go before the school board at the next board meeting.

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Becky Hubsch

Semitrailer fire

by Elizabeth Varin

Groton Fire & Rescue responded to a reported vehicle fire at 8:48 p.m. Monday along Highway 37 near the northwest edge of the cemetery.

According to Fire Chief Cody Bonn, the call came from a passerby who reported smelling smoke in the area. Upon arrival, firefighters located a semi-trailer with something smoldering in the back. Crews quickly addressed the situation, and no injuries were reported.

Groton Police also responded to assist at the scene.

