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The Groton Independent

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Superintendent Joe Schwan presents Sue Wattier with the 2025-26 Support Staff of the Year Award. (Photo from Groton Area Facebook Page)

Steady Leadership Behind the Scenes: Sue Wattier Honored for Years of Service to Groton Area Schools

For more than two decades, Sue Wattier has been a steady and familiar presence at the Groton Area School District, serving as the middle/high school secretary since the start of the 2004-2005 school year.

Before coming to Groton, Wattier spent 13 years in the same role at the Bristol School District, bringing years of experience and dedication with her when she joined the Tigers.

Known as one of the first faces students see each day, Wattier has become an essential part of daily life at the school. Whether it's answering questions from students, helping staff members, assisting parents, or keeping the building running smoothly, she handles countless responsibilities with professionalism and a smile.

If a student or staff member needs information, they often turn to Sue first. Parents do the same. And even when she may not immediately have an answer, she is always willing to find one.

Beyond her official duties, Wattier is widely recognized for the care, organization, and leadership she brings to the position every day. Staff members say the school simply would not operate as efficiently without her dedication and commitment behind the scenes.

In recognition of her years of outstanding service and dedication to students, staff, and families, Wattier was named the 2025-26 Support Staff of the Year for the Groton Area School District.

The Groton Area School District expressed deep appreciation for Wattier's years of service, noting how fortunate the school community is to have her as part of their lives.



This is the second time the beams had to be lengthened since the beams were installed. They had to be lengthened when the first scoreboard was installed and now had to be raised up for the new scoreboard. Schwan Welding was on hand to do the welding being assisted by Branden Abeln.



In the 8th Grade Boys Division, Ryder Schwan captured the 200m Dash School 8th Grade Record and the 8th Grade NEC Meet Record by clocking a time of 23.80! The record was previously held by Lucas Hinman with a time of 24.24. (Courtesy Photo)



Kinley Sandness snagged the 7th Grade 200m Dash School Record by over a second by clocking a time of 28.20. It was previously held by McKenzie Menzia in 2012, with a time of 29.26! (Courtesy Photo)

Groton junior high tracksters set records



It was a Record-Breaking Day for the Tigers in Groton for the Junior High Northeast Conference Track Meet! The 8th Grade 4 x 200m Relay Team of Ivan Schwan, Trey Tietz, Trayce Schelle and Ryder Schwan not only broke the 8th Grade School Record, but also broke the 8th Grade NEC Meet Record with a time of 1:43.10. The record was previously held by Ryder Schwan, Keegan Kucker, Kyson Kucker, and Anthony Tracy in 2025 at 1:44.44. (Courtesy Photo)



The JH Girls also had a Record-Breaking Day at the Junior High NEC Meet today in Groton! The 8th Grade 4 x 100m Relay Team of Libby Johnson, Andi Iverson, Rowan Patterson, and Kinley Sandness ran a time of 56.58, to claim the 8th grade school record! The record was previously held by Katie Koehler, Audrey Wanner, Heather Lone, and McKenzie Menzia in 2013, with a time of 57.64! (Courtesy Photo)



It was a record-breaking day at the Middle School Track Meet in Hamlin! The eighth grade team of Kyson Kucker, Keegan Kucker, Liam Lord, and Trey Tietz clocked a time of 3:53.5 in the 4x400m Relay, breaking the eighth Grade School Record of 3:54.74. The record was previously held by Lee Williams, Johnny Doeden, Thomas Cranford, and Austin Jones in 2016. (Photo from Groton Area Facebook Page)

Record-Setting Performances Highlight Groton Area’s Strong Showing at NEC Junior High Meet

The Groton Area middle school track teams turned in a memorable performance Monday during the Northeast Conference Meet at Doney Field, highlighted by relay championships, individual conference titles, and several record-breaking efforts by the Tiger boys and girls.

Milbank captured the eighth-grade boys team championship with 158.67 points, while Groton Area finished a strong second with 111 points. The Tigers also placed eighth in the seventh-grade boys standings with 31 points.

The highlight of the day came in the eighth-grade boys 4x200-meter relay where the Groton quartet of Trey Tietz, Trayce Schelle, Ivan Schwan, and Ryder Schwan delivered a record-setting performance. The Tigers not only broke the Groton Area eighth-grade school record, but also shattered the Northeast Conference Meet record with a winning time of 1:43.10.

The previous school and NEC Meet record of 1:44.44 was set in 2025 by Ryder Schwan, Keegan Kucker, Kyson Kucker, and Anthony Tracy.

Ryder Schwan also etched his name into the record books individually during the eighth-grade boys 200-meter dash. Schwan broke both the Groton Area eighth-grade school record and the NEC Meet record after clocking a winning time of 23.80 seconds. The previous mark of 24.24 had been held by Lucas Hinman.

Schwan added another conference championship in the eighth-grade 100-meter dash with a winning time of 11.5 seconds.

Groton’s eighth-grade boys dominated the relay events throughout the meet, collecting conference titles in the 4x100 relay, 4x200 relay, 4x400 relay, and sprint medley relay.

The 4x100 relay team of Keegan Kucker, Kyson Kucker, Trey Tietz, and Ryder Schwan claimed first place in 49.9 seconds.

In the 4x400 relay, Trey Tietz, Liam Lord, Keegan Kucker, and Kyson Kucker crossed the finish line first in 3:57.7. Groton completed the relay sweep in the sprint medley relay as Keegan Kucker, Trayce Schelle, Liam Johnson, and Trey Tietz posted a winning time of 1:54.5.

Groton also collected several additional individual conference championships in the boys division.

Ivan Schwan captured titles in both the seventh-grade 100-meter dash in 12.5 seconds and the 200-meter dash in 25.8.

Kyson Kucker had a standout performance in the distance races, winning the eighth-grade 400-meter dash in 55.8 seconds and the 800-meter run in 2:12.1. Keegan Kucker added a third-place finish in the 400 at 59.9, while Liam Lord placed fifth in 1:02.1.

Trayce Schelle earned another conference title for the Tigers after clearing 5-foot-2 to win the eighth-grade high jump.

Additional strong finishes for Groton included Quinton Flores taking second in the seventh-grade 800 meters in 2:35.3, Trayce Schelle placing sixth in the eighth-grade 100 meters, and Liam Johnson finishing sixth in the discus.

In the girls division, Groton Area placed seventh in the seventh-grade team standings with 55 points and fourth in the eighth-grade standings with 54 points.

The Tiger girls also enjoyed a record-setting day on their home track.

Groton’s eighth-grade 4x100 relay team of Libby Johnson, Andi Iverson, Rowan Patterson, and Kinley Sandness broke the eighth-grade school record while winning the conference title in 56.58 seconds. The previous school record of 57.64 had stood since 2013 and was set by Katie Koehler, Audrey Wanner, Heather Lone, and McKenzie Menzia.

Kinley Sandness also rewrote the record book in the 200-meter dash. Sandness clocked a time of 28.20 to break the seventh-grade school record by more than a second. The previous mark of 29.26 was set by McKenzie Menzia in 2012.

The Tiger girls collected three conference relay championships during the meet.

The seventh-grade 4x200 relay team of Charli Jacobsen, Zoe Olson, Addison Steffes, and Gracie Borg claimed first place in 2:06.5.

Groton also won the

eighth-grade sprint medley relay as Rowan Patterson, Libby Johnson, Andi Iverson, and Kinley Sandness combined for a first-place time of 2:09.9.

Individually, Charli Jacobsen paced the seventh-grade girls by winning the 100-meter hurdles in 18.5 seconds while also placing second in the 200-meter hurdles in 33.3. Addison Steffes added fourth in the 100 hurdles and fifth in the 200 hurdles.

Rowan Patterson finished second in the eighth-grade 100 meters in 13.5 seconds, while Sandness earned runner-up honors in the eighth-grade 200 meters. Libby Johnson added a sixth-place finish in the 100 meters.

Mya Moody turned in a pair of top-six finishes in the seventh-grade sprints, placing fourth in the 100 meters and sixth in the 200 meters.

Groton also received solid field-event performances from Andi Gauer, who placed fifth in the eighth-grade discus at 60 feet, 3 inches, and Lillian Davis, who finished seventh in the seventh-grade discus.

Boy’s Division
Boys 7th Grade Team Scores: 1. Sisseton 142, 2. Webster Area 106, 3. Milbank 105, 4. Clark/Willow Lake 86, 5. Roncalli 53, 6. Hamlin 45, 7. Deuel 33, 8. Groton Area 31.
Boys 8th Grade Team Scores: 1. Milbank 158.67, 2. Groton Area 111, 3. Roncalli 82, 4. Redfield 60.5, 5. Sisseton 51, 6. Webster Area 46, 7. Clark/Willow Lake 32.33, 8. Tiospa Zina 32, 9. Deuel 31.5, 10. Britton-Hecla 17, 11. Hamlin 2.

100 Meters 7th: 1. Ivan Schwan, 12.5; 8. Quinton Flores, J 13.6.
100 Meters 8th: 1. Ryder Schwan, 11.5; 6. Trayce Schelle, 12.7; 19. Wyatt Morehouse, 14.7.
200 Meters 7th: 1. Ivan Schwan, 25.8; 7. Quinton Flores, 28.6.
200 Meters 8th: 1. Ryder Schwan, 23.9; 17. Wyatt Morehouse, 31.2; 20. Gavin Hanten, 32.8.
400 Meters 8th: 1. Kyson Kucker, 55.8; 3. Keegan Kucker, 59.9; 5. Liam Lord, 1:02.1.
800 Meters 7th: 2. Quinton Flores, 2:35.3.
800 Meters 8th: 1. Kyson Kucker, 2:12.1.
4x100 Relay 8th: 1. Groton: (Keegan Kucker, Kyson Kucker, Trey Tietz, Ryder Schwan), 49.9.
4x200 Relay 8th: 1. Groton: (Trey Tietz, Trayce Schelle, Ivan Schwan, Ryder Schwan), 1:42.2.
4x400 Relay 8th: 1. Groton: (Trey Tietz, Liam Lord, Keegan Kucker, Kyson Kucker, 3:57.7.

SMR 800m - [100-100-200-400] 8th: 1. Groton: (Keegan Kucker, Trayce Schelle, Liam Johnson, Trey Tietz). 1:54.5.
Shot Put - 8lb 8th: 4. Liam Johnson, 32’ 5”; 13. Bentley Harms, 26’ 5”; 7. Gavin Hanten, 23’ 2”.
Discus - 1kg 8th: 6. Liam Johnson, 91’ 5”; 12. Bentley Harms, 77’ 10”; 19. Gavin Hanten, 63’ 5”.
High Jump 8th: 1. Trayce Schelle, 5’ 2”.

Girl’s Division
Girl’s 7th Grade Team Scores: 1. Milbank 90, 2. Webster Area 82.5, 3. Sisseton 78.5, 4. Roncalli 77, 5. Redfield 75, 6. Hamlin 59, 7. Groton Area 55, 8. Clark/Willow Lake 26, 9. Britton-Hecla 21, 10. Deuel 6.
Girl’s 8th Grade Team Scores: 1. Milbank 176, 2. Sisseton 154, 3. Clark/Willow Lake 64, 4. Groton Area 54, 5. Webster Area 53, 6. Redfield 27, 7. Hamlin 26, 8. Roncalli 20, 9. Deuel 13, 10. Tiospa Zina 11, 11. Britton-Hecla 1.

100 Meters 7th: 4. Mya Moody, 14.4; 8. Zoe Olson, J 14.7; 21. Gracie Borg, 16.1.
100 Meters 8th: 2. Rowan Patterson, 13.5; 6. Libby Johnson, J 13.9.
200 Meters 7th: 6. Mya Moody, 30.6; 8. Zoe Olson, 31.3.
200 Meters 8th: 2. Kinley Sandness, J 28.2.
400 Meters 8th: 6. Andi Iverson, 1:14.2.
100m Hurdles - 30” / 0.762m 7th: 1. Charli Jacobsen, 18.5; 4. Addison Steffes, 19.8; 12. Hallie Perkins, 23.1.
200m Hurdles - 30” / 0.762m 7th: 2. Charli Jacobsen, 33.3; 5. Addison Steffes, 36.0.
4x100 Relay 7th: 3. Groton: (Charli Jacobsen, Mya Moody, Zoe Olson, Gracie Borg), 1:01.8.
4x100 Relay 8th: 1. Groton: (Rowan Patterson, Andi Iverson, Libby Johnson, Kinley Sandness), 57.7.
4x200 Relay 7th: 1. Groton: (Charli Jacobsen, Zoe Olson, Addison Steffes, Gracie Borg), 2:06.5.
4x200 Relay 8th: 2. Groton: (Andi Iverson, Libby Johnson, Kinley Sandnes, Rowan Patterson), 2:00.4.
SMR 800m - [100-100-200-400] 8th: 1. Groton: (Rowan Patterson, Libby Johnson, Andi Iverson, Kinley Sandness), 2:09.9.
Shot Put - 6lb 7th: 13. Lillian Davis, 20’ 8”; 14. Hadley Heilman, 20’ 5”.
Shot Put - 6lb 8th: 13. Andi Gauer, 20’ 7”.
Discus - 1kg 7th: 7. Lillian Davis, 49’ 7”; 14. Hadley Heilman, 40’ 8”.
Discus - 1kg 8th: 5. Andi Gauer, 60’ 3”.

King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Cry
- 4 Vault
- 8 Daly and Allen
- 12 Common title start
- 13 Killer whale
- 14 Web addresses
- 15 Pithy joke
- 17 Legume
- 18 Suggests
- 19 TV guide abbr.
- 21 Wager
- 22 Expulsion
- 26 Errand runner
- 29 Whatever number
- 30 Hwy.
- 31 Caspian Sea feeder
- 32 Keats creation
- 33 Go caroling
- 34 Capitol VIP
- 35 Year in Madrid
- 36 Epic narratives
- 37 On/off switch
- 39 "You've got mail" co.
- 40 Documentarian Burns
- 41 Obligations
- 45 Beige
- 48 The whole crowd

1	2	3		4	5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12				13					14			
15			16						17			
18							19	20				
			21				22			23	24	25
26	27	28				29				30		
31					32				33			
34				35				36				
37			38				39					
			40				41			42	43	44
45	46	47			48	49						
50					51					52		
53					54					55		

- | | | | | | |
|----|---------------------|----|--------------------------|----|-------------------------|
| 50 | Ache | 9 | Rage | 33 | Like seawater |
| 51 | Aswan's river | 10 | Org. with a style manual | 35 | Boxing leg-end |
| 52 | Victory | | | | |
| 53 | Abbr. on a schedule | 11 | Nine-digit ID | 36 | Turned bad |
| 54 | Ticked (off) | 16 | Slander in print | 38 | Hog's "hello" |
| 55 | Annex | 20 | Purchase | 39 | "Hello" singer |
| | | 23 | Advanced math | 42 | Illinois neighbor |
| | | | | 43 | Wife of Geraint |
| | | 24 | Sicilian peak | 44 | Fax |
| | | 25 | Bylaws, briefly | 45 | Clean air org. |
| | | 26 | Sudden wind | 46 | Baseball fan's headwear |
| | | 27 | Disc-shaped cookie | 47 | Tear |
| | | 28 | Sharp tooth | 49 | Compete |
| | | 29 | Commotion | | |
| | | 32 | Penny | | |

Weekly SUDOKU

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

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!

Groton Places Third at Home Invitational

The Groton Area girls golf team turned in a solid performance on their home course Monday, placing third at the Groton Invitational held at Olive Grove Golf Course.

Groton Tigers finished with a team score of 398, trailing only champion Aberdeen Roncalli Cavaliers (351) and runner-up Sisseton Redmen (364). Also at the meet were Madison Redfield and Milbank.

Groton was led by Carlee Johnson, who tied for fifth overall with an 18-over-par 90. Claire Schuelke also cracked the top 10 for the Tigers, carding a 93 to place eighth individually.

Halee Harder added a 107 for Groton, while Rylie Rose finished with a 108 as the Tigers had four golfers place among the top 13 individuals at the meet.

Aberdeen Roncalli’s Mackenzie Wegehaupt and Claire Crawford shared medalist honors after each shot an 85. Sisseton’s Kinsley Heath was third with an 88, while Roncalli’s Ava Danielson followed in fourth at 89.



Groton Area golfers at the Groton golf meet were Claire Schuelke, Rylie Rose, Halee Harder and Carlee Johnson. (Courtesy Photo)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Out	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	In	Total
Strokes																					
GOLD - Ladies Tee / SLOPE®: 120 / Course Rating™: 70.4 / Olive Grove Golf Course																					
Yardage	310	309	418	132	334	285	305	175	405	2673	310	309	418	132	334	285	305	175	405	2673	5346
Par	4	4	5	3	4	4	4	3	5	36	4	4	5	3	4	4	4	3	5	36	72
Carlee Johnson	8	5	6	4	3	6	4	4	5	45	4	5	6	6	5	4	5	4	6	45	90
Claire Schuelke	7	5	5	3	5	6	6	3	5	45	7	5	6	3	5	7	5	4	6	48	93
Halee Harder	5	5	7	5	6	5	4	5	10	52	5	7	5	6	7	7	5	4	9	55	107
Rylie Rose	8	6	6	4	4	6	5	3	7	49	7	6	7	4	5	9	5	7	9	59	108
Starting Hole Eagle or Better Birdie Par Bogey Double Bogey or Worse																					

Groton Girls Place Third at Roncalli Invitational

The Groton Area Tigers placed third Thursday at the Aberdeen Roncalli Invitational held at Lee Park Golf Course in Aberdeen, finishing with a team score of 404 in the four-team field.

The Aberdeen Roncalli Cavaliers claimed the team title with a 315. Sisseton Redmen finished second at 371, followed by the Tigers at 404 and Milbank Bulldogs at 442.

Groton was led by Rylie Rose, who carded a 23-over-par 94 to place ninth individually in the tournament standings. Claire Schuelke and Carlee Johnson each shot 99 to tie for 12th place overall, giving the Tigers three golfers inside the top 13.

Halee Harder rounded out the Groton scoring with a 112, good for 19th place. Aberdeen Roncalli’s Claire Crawford earned medalist honors after shooting a one-over-par 72. Sisseton’s Kenzley Heath was runner-up with a 74, while Roncalli’s Mackenzie Wegehaupt placed third at 78.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Out	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	In	Total
Strokes																					
Orange - Ladies Tee / SLOPE®: 113 / Course Rating™: 65.4 / Lee Park Golf Course																					
Yardage	270	371	363	230	85	294	320	155	335	2423	273	286	91	230	284	120	308	265	236	2093	4516
Par	4	5	5	4	3	4	4	3	4	36	4	4	3	4	4	3	5	4	4	35	71
Rylie Rose	12	5	6	5	3	5	5	3	4	48	5	5	3	5	6	5	5	6	6	46	94
Carlee Johnson	4	5	7	5	3	6	5	5	4	44	5	6	3	4	6	14	6	5	6	55	99
Claire Schuelke	12	8	3	4	4	5	6	4	6	52	6	5	4	4	6	6	5	5	6	47	99
Halee Harder	5	8	7	6	5	5	7	4	5	52	10	6	5	4	8	5	6	6	10	60	112
Starting Hole Eagle or Better Birdie Par Bogey Double Bogey or Worse																					

Bulldogs Sweep Tigers in Saturday Baseball Action

The Groton Area Tigers dropped a pair of games to the Madison Bulldogs on Saturday at Milroy, falling 9-3 in the opener before suffering a 4-0 setback in the second contest.

Madison used a big third inning to pull away in the first game, scoring five runs to build control of the contest. The Bulldogs had already taken a 2-0 lead in the second inning when Casyn Crabtree walked and Braylon Oftedal singled to center field, each driving in a run.

The Bulldogs then broke things open in the third. Crabtree and Ryland Johnson each drew bases-loaded walks to force in runs before Tregg McGillivray delivered the big blow with a three-run double.

Groton managed to battle back offensively behind TC Schuster, who drove in two runs while going 1-for-4 at the plate. Lincoln Krause, Karsten Fliehs, Braeden Fliehs, Schuster, Gavin Englund and Nick Groeblichhoff each recorded hits for the Tigers, who also turned a double play defensively.

Alex Abeln took the loss for Groton, allowing seven runs on four hits over two and two-thirds innings while striking out six. Madison pitcher JD Prorok earned the win after striking out 15 batters over six innings.

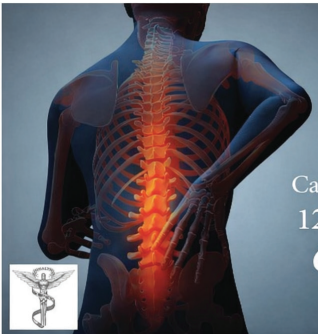
McGillivray led Madison with three RBIs, while Quincy Kurtz collected two hits. The Bulldogs also showed patience at the plate, drawing 10 walks in the game.

The second game featured a strong pitching duel early before Madison broke through with four runs in the fourth inning. McGillivray started the rally with an RBI double, followed by run-scoring doubles and singles from Cohen Hahn, Casyn Crabtree and Ethan Sims.

Despite the loss, Groton received an impressive effort on the mound from Jarrett Erdmann. The Tigers senior struck out 11 batters over six and two-thirds innings while allowing seven hits and four runs.

Lincoln Krause paced the Groton offense with three hits in four at-bats, but the Tigers were unable to capitalize against Madison pitcher Braylon Oftedal, who tossed a complete-game shutout with nine strikeouts and no walks.

Quincy Kurtz and Sims each had two hits for Madison in the second game, while Sims, Hahn and Crabtree each drove in runs.



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Tigers Earn Varsity Win, JV Battles To Scoreless Tie Against W.I.N.

Groton Tigers picked up a varsity victory and a hard-fought junior varsity tie Monday night against W.I.N. Baseball in Groton.

The Groton varsity squad earned a 6-2 victory behind a strong pitching performance from Gavin Englund and an early spark from Karsten Fliehs.

The Tigers opened the scoring in the second inning when Fliehs blasted a solo home run to left field. Groton continued to build its lead throughout the contest while Englund kept W.I.N. in check on the mound.

Englund earned the win after allowing two runs on five hits over 6 2/3 innings. The right-hander struck out seven and walked three before TC Schuster came on in relief to finish the game.

Braeden Fliehs and Schuster each collected two hits for the Tigers offensively. Karsten Fliehs, Braeden Fliehs and Nick Groeblichhoff each drove in a run during the win.

W.I.N. Baseball was led by Quinn Huetl, who recorded two hits in two at-bats, while Brevan Pitz and Braydon Kroll each drove in a run. W.I.N. also turned a pair of double plays defensively.

In the junior varsity matchup, Groton Area and W.I.N. battled to a scoreless tie in a pitcher’s duel highlighted by Braden Fliehs’ dominant outing on the mound.

Fliehs struck out 11 batters while allowing just one hit over five shutout innings. He also walked three in the impressive performance.

Asher Zimmerman accounted for Groton’s lone hit, finishing 1-for-1 at the plate. Zimmerman also stole three bases as the Tigers totaled four stolen bases in the game.

W.I.N.’s lone hit came from its No. 16 hitter during the scoreless contest.

King Crossword — Answers

Solution time: 26 mins.

S	O	B		L	E	A	P		T	I	M	S
T	H	E		O	R	C	A		U	R	L	S
O	N	E	L	I	N	E	R		B	E	A	N
P	O	S	I	T	S		T	B	A			
			B	E	T		O	U	S	T	E	R
G	O	F	E	R		A	N	Y		R	T	E
U	R	A	L		O	D	E		S	I	N	G
S	E	N		A	N	O		S	A	G	A	S
T	O	G	G	L	E		A	O	L			
			R	I	C		D	U	T	I	E	S
E	C	R	U		E	V	E	R	Y	O	N	E
P	A	I	N		N	I	L	E		W	I	N
A	P	P	T		T	E	E	D		A	D	D

Weekly SUDOKU — Answer

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



The last article focused on Caleb Banks, the Vikings’ first-round draft pick, and the trade that sent Jonathan Greenard to the Philadelphia Eagles. This week we cover the selections the Vikings made on day two of the draft.

With the 51st pick in the 2026 NFL Draft, the Minnesota Vikings select Jake Golday, linebacker, Cincinnati. Golday is a player who has a ton of potential. A zero-star recruit out of high school, Golday began his college career as a pass rusher at Central Arkansas before transferring to Cincinnati and switching to linebacker in 2024. At 6’4” and 240 pounds, he has good size, and running a 4.6 40-yard dash means he has adequate speed. Golday also has position flexibility, able to play off-ball linebacker, edge defender, and in the nickel spot. The biggest knock on him is his inexperience. With only two years of experience at the LB position, Golday will need some time before he’s ready to play meaningful snaps in the NFL. I’m also a little surprised he was

chosen ahead of C.J. Allen, who was widely regarded as the 3rd best linebacker in this class and a potential first-round pick. With the 82nd pick in the 2026 NFL Draft, the Minnesota Vikings select Domonique Orange, defensive tackle, Iowa State. The 6’2”, 322-pound Orange, better known by his nickname Big Citrus, is a true nose tackle. Unlike most of the players on the Vikings’ defense, Orange really only plays one position: nose tackle. His big body and enormous strength will allow him to anchor the Vikings’ defensive line and control the middle. The Vikings haven't had a true nose tackle in many years, and I’m glad to see them finally addressing that issue. Just don’t expect Big Citrus to put up big numbers or regularly pressure the quarterback. He’s not a pass rusher. He won’t collapse the pocket. And in the 3-4 defense, he won’t need to. That’s what Caleb Banks and Jalen Redmond are there for. With the 97th pick in the 2026 NFL Draft, the Minnesota Vikings select Caleb Tiernan, offensive tackle, Northwestern. It will be interesting to see what the Vikings do with Tiernan, who was an offensive tackle at Northwestern but might be better at guard in the NFL. He’s a massive player at 6’8” and 323 pounds, and his calling card is pass protection. His run blocking, on the other hand, leaves much to be desired.

Did the Vikings draft him to be the backup/swing tackle behind Christian Darrisaw and Brian O’Neill? Or do they plan to move him inside? Is he going to compete with Donovan Jackson and Will Fries for a guard spot? Or did the Vikings just spend a premium draft pick on a backup?

With the 98th pick in the 2026 NFL Draft, the Minnesota Vikings select Jakobe Thomas, safety, Miami.

I was surprised when the Vikings passed on Dillon Thieneman in the first round, who went seven picks later to Chicago. Instead, the Vikings waited until the 3rd round to pick a safety, which was a gamble.

Jakobe Thomas is 6’1”, 211 pounds, so he checks the “size” box for a safety. The more time I spend scouting Thomas, the more I think he’ll be a great fit for Brian Flores’ defense. His biggest strength is in coverage, and he’s a versatile player, able to defend the back end of the defense or come up and play closer to the line of scrimmage. The biggest cause of concern is his tackling. Thomas is a willing tackler, often looking to blow up the play, but his recklessness leads to a lot of missed tackles. If Flores can straighten that out, Thomas has the potential to be a solid starter in the NFL.

“Pump Handles and Public Health”

Health care is often thought of as something that happens one patient at a time in a clinic or hospital. Public health takes a broader view and is focused on improving the health of entire populations. In 1854, a London physician helped stop a deadly cholera outbreak by removing a simple pump handle. That moment would become one of the earliest and most powerful examples of public health in action. Back then no one understood how cholera spread. Many believed it was caused by “bad air” or mysterious environmental forces. They did not know that it was actually caused by a bacterium that was spread through contaminated water sources.

Dr. John Snow noticed a pattern. In London’s Soho neighborhood, a cluster of cholera cases seemed concentrated around a single public water source, the Broad Street pump. When he mapped where people lived, most of the infections pointed back to that pump. Even those who lived farther away, but became ill reported getting their water from the same source. Meanwhile, workers at a nearby brewery, who drank beer instead of water, were largely spared. The brewing process, alcohol and acidity of the beer made it difficult for the cholera bacteria or other pathogens to survive.

Armed with this evidence, Dr. Snow convinced local officials to remove the pump handle. This cut off public access to the contaminated water. After this happened, the number of new infections quickly declined. That simple act marked the beginning of modern public health; using data, observation, and intervention to stop disease at its source.

Today, public health has evolved from reacting to outbreaks to preventing illness before it starts. Public health professionals work behind the scenes to protect and improve the health of communities. They do this through providing education, guiding policy, and conducting research. They are the unsung heroes of healthcare. When Public Health works well, it can be almost invisible or easy to ignore. However, when there is a breakdown in Public Health services, the results can be devastating to a community and the effects are obvious.

Federal, state and local health departments prepare for emergencies, monitor for disease outbreaks, ensure food safety, and safeguard water quality. They also advocate for health screenings in underserved or high-risk populations. Public health officials work to reduce barriers to care and promote healthier lifestyles for everyone. They may not be removing pump handles anymore, but they are still working every day to protect our water, our food, and our communities. They are helping us all, as we say on the show, to stay healthy out there people.

Dr. Jill Kruse is a hospitalist at the Brookings Health System 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).



Jill Kruse, DO

The Groton Independent

21 N Main, Groton 605/397-NEWS (6397)
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The Groton Independent

Printed & Mailed Weekly Edition

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From Geddes, SD: 4 miles West on 285th St. then 1 mile South on 370th Ave. to the NW Corner of the property. From Platte, SD: 9 miles South on 367th Ave., then 3 miles East on 285th St. then 1 mile South on 370th Ave. to the NW Corner of the property.

REGISTER TODAY FOR THIS AUCTION!!

Bidding Start Date: Friday, June 26, 2026 at 1:00 pm (CDT)
Bidding Close Date: Tuesday, June 30, 2026 at 1:00 pm (CDT)

Check out our Website for more information!!

TRAVIS DOUGHERTY, Broker
Mobile (402) 336-7612

Land Marketers Realty **www.LandMarketers.com**



Thursday, May 14
NEC Track Meet at Milbank, 2 p.m.
Fifth grade GBB, 4 p.m., elementary gym
Middle School Track Meet at Warner, 4 p.m.
Pickleball, 6 p.m., elementary gym
Groton Lions Club meeting, 6 p.m., 104 N Main

Friday, May 15

Saturday, May 16
Pickleball, 9:30 a.m., elementary gym
Graduation, 2 p.m., Arena

Sunday, May 17
Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship, 9 a.m.
St. John's Lutheran: Worship with communion at St. John's, 9 a.m., at Zion, 11 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, 10:30 a.m.
Sign up for swimming lessons at the pool, 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
North Super Region High School Baseball Tournament

Monday, May 18
Senior Menu: Spanish Rice with hamburger, broccoli, fruit, vanilla pudding, whole wheat bread.
School Breakfast: Cook's choice.
School Lunch: Chicken strips, potato squares.
Track at Warner, 9:30 a.m.
NEC Girls Golf at Groton, 10 a.m.
Softball at Redfield (JV at 4:30 p.m. followed by varsity)
Pickleball at Elementary Gym, 5:30 p.m.
JVT Practice at Arena, 7 p.m.
Senior Citizens meet at Community Center, potluck at noon.
Sign up for swimming lessons and pass pre-sale at the pool, 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.
Emmanuel Lutheran Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.
St. John's Lutheran: Christian Literature Circle, 7:30 p.m.
North Super Region High School Baseball Tournament

Tuesday, May 19
Senior Menu: Bratwurst on bun, tri tater, sauerkraut, fruit.
School Breakfast: Cook's choice.
School Lunch: Mac and cheese, peas.
5th DARE Graduation, 2 p.m., GHS Gym
Biogrils, 3:45 p.m., Elementary Gym
Softball at Deuel, Varsity at 4 p.m. followed by JV
JVT Practice at Arena, 7 p.m.
City Council meeting, 7 p.m.
St. John's Lutheran: Quilting, 9 a.m.
North Super Region High School Baseball Tournament



Town of Westport General Meeting
The Town of Westport met on May 11, 2026 at 7:00 p.m., with Mitch Wilson, Shane Storm, Troy Tschappat, Doreen Hertel, Jennifer Bender, Alex Jones, and Deb Schlosser present.
The following bills were presented:
City General: NW Energy- utilities (\$752.67), Groton Independent-April meeting minutes and Annual Report (151.14), Bobcat of Aberdeen-mower supplies (\$245.39), SD Association of Rural Water Systems-annual dues (\$275.00)
Sewer: NW Energy-Lift Station utilities (\$78.86)
Water: WEB-water (\$1983.95)
Shane Storm motioned, second by Troy Tschappat to pay all bills.
The following deposits were presented:
City General: State of SD (\$3133.73), Brown County Collections (\$1375.07), Interest (\$46.64)
Sewer: Resident Payments (\$2544.32)
Water: Resident Payments (\$3816.47)
Public Concerns: Doreen Hertel suggested flash drive that Finance Officer has be given to someone if Officer is out of town. Jennifer Bender and Alex Jones had questions regarding item under New Business.
Old Business: None
New Business: Jennifer Bender asked about liability insurance and when or if it is needed for an event on city property. City Ordinances will be checked to see if the use of city property has been addressed. Alex Jones asked about city access to private property for an event that will be happening in June. Mitch Wilson and Shane Storm will work with Alex on this. Dakota Pump & Control did an inspection of the lift station. Impellers are showing signs of wear, DPC is suggesting they be replaced and the current ones be refurbished and used as spares. After lengthy discussion, Mitch Wilson motioned, second by Troy Tschappat to have DPC proceed.
Meeting dismissed at 7:36 p.m.
Deb Schlosser, Finance Officer
Published May 13, 2026, at the total approximate cost of \$20.8 and may be viewed free of charge at www.sdpublicnotices.com. 26819

Tigers Capture Three Relay Titles at Al Sahli Invitational

Groton Area turned in several standout performances Friday at the Al Sahli Invitational held at Swisher Field in Aberdeen, highlighted by a pair of relay championships and another dominant hurdle performance from junior McKenna Tietz.

The Tigers claimed titles in both the boys and girls sprint medley relays, while the Groton boys also added a first-place finish in the 4x200-meter relay. Individually, Keegen Tracy continued his strong sprint season with a third-place finish in the boys 100 meters, while Jayden Schwan delivered top-five finishes in both distance races.

Tracy crossed the line in 11.11 seconds in the 100-meter dash to place third overall in a loaded field. Ryder Schwan added a 19th-place finish in 11.71, followed closely by Lincoln Krause in 21st at 11.74 and J.J. Muller in 23rd at 11.79.

Groton's relay teams again proved to be one of the strengths of the boys squad. The Tigers captured the 4x200-meter relay title as Lincoln Krause, Jordan Schwan, Ethan Kroll and Tracy combined for a winning time of 1:35.74. Groton also won the sprint medley relay with Ryder Schwan, Muller, Jace Johnson and Riley Shellenberger posting a first-place time of 4:00.73.

The Tigers added a sixth-place finish in the 4x100 relay as Krause, Jordan Schwan, Ryder Schwan and Tracy finished in 46.26.

Jayden Schwan paced Groton in the distance events, taking fifth in the 800 meters with a time of 2:09.02 before placing second in the 1600 meters in 4:51.18. Riley Shellenberger also cracked the top 15 in the 1600, finishing 14th in 5:06.77.

Other Groton performances in the boys division included Wesley Borg taking 30th in the 400 meters in 1:04.84, while Jordan Schwan placed 39th in the discus with a throw of 91 feet. Fernando Nava added a mark of 11 feet, 4.5 inches in the long jump.

On the girls side, Tietz once again led the way for Groton. The standout hurdler captured the 300-meter hurdles title with a winning time of 46.44 seconds. Emerlee Jones followed with a seventh-place finish in 54.31, while Teagan Hanten was eighth in 57.78 and Ella Kettner ninth in 57.97, giving Groton four placers in the event.

Groton also had three athletes place in the top 11 of the 100-meter hurdles as Kettner finished eighth in 18.90, Jones was ninth in 19.14 and Hanten took 11th in 19.75.

The Lady Tigers' sprint medley relay team of Makenna

Krause, Taryn Traphagen, Kella Tracy and Ryelle Gilbert earned first place in 4:31.64. Groton also turned in strong finishes in the sprint relays, placing third in the 4x200 relay at 1:49.60 and fourth in the 4x100 relay in 52.76 with the same quartet of Tietz, Traphagen, Kella Tracy and Krause.

Gilbert added an individual third-place finish in the 1600 meters with a time of 5:40.94. Krause narrowly missed the finals in the 100 meters, placing ninth in 13.00 seconds, while Raquel Tracy finished 29th in the 100 and added a 21st-place finish in the 200.

Ashlynn Warrington led Groton in the 400 meters with a 14th-place finish in 1:05.68, while Suri Jetto competed in both the 400 and 800 meters.

In the field events, Rylee Dunker recorded a sixth-place finish in the javelin with a throw of 99 feet, 9 inches. Avery Crank placed 11th in the javelin and 18th in the discus. Emerlee Jones cleared 4 feet, 5 inches in the high jump, while Hanten competed in both the long jump and triple jump for the Tigers.

Boy's Division
100 Meters: 3. Keegen Tracy, 11.11; 19. Ryder Schwan, 11.71; 21. Lincoln Krause, 11.74; 23. JJ Muller, 11.79; 59. Tate Johnson, 13.22; 63. Wesley Borg, 13.52; 64. Sam Crank, 13.56; 67. Fernando Nava, 14.48.
200 Meters: 25. JJ Muller, 25.06; 60. Tate Johnson, 27.79; 65. Wesley Borg, 28.32; 67. Sam Crank, 28.85.
400 Meters: 30. Wesley Borg, 1:04.84.
800 Meters: 5. Jayden Schwan, 2:09.02.
1600 Meters: 2. Jayden Schwan, 4:51.18; 14. Riley Shellenberger, 5:06.77.
4x100 Relay: 6. Groton: (Lincoln Krause, Jordan Schwan, Ryder Schwan, Keegen Tracy), 46.26.
4x200 Relay: 1. Groton: (Lincoln Krause, Jordan Schwan, Ethan Kroll, Keegen Tracy), 1:35.74.
SMR 1600m - [200-200-400-800]: 1. Groton: (Ryder Schwan, JJ Muller, Jace Johnson, Riley Shellenberger), 4:00.73.
Discus - 1.6kg 39. Jordan Schwan, 91' 0".
Long Jump 35. Fernando Nava, 11' 4.5".

Girl's Division
100 Meters: 9. Makenna Krause, 13.00; 29. Raquel Tracy, 13.84.
200 Meters: 21. Raquel Tracy, 28.76.
400 Meters: 14. Ashlynn Warrington, 1:05.68; 25. Suri Jetto, 1:18.37.
800 Meters: 22. Suri Jetto, 3:08.90.
1600 Meters: 3. Ryelle Gilbert, 5:40.94.
100m Hurdles - 33" / 0.838m: 8. Ella Kettner, 18.90; 9. Emerlee Jones, 19.14; 11. Teagan Hanten, 19.75.
300m Hurdles - 30" / 0.762m: 1. McKenna Tietz, 46.44; 7. Emerlee Jones, 54.31; 8. Teagan Hanten, 57.78; 9. Ella Kettner, 57.97.
4x100 Relay: 4. Groton: (McKenna Tietz, Taryn Traphagen, Kella Tracy, Makenna Krause), 52.76.
4x200 Relay: 3. Groton: (McKenna Tietz, Taryn Traphagen, Kella Tracy, Makenna Krause), 1:49.60.
SMR 1600m - [200-200-400-800]: 1. Groton: (Makenna Krause, Taryn Traphagen, Kella Tracy, Ryelle Gilbert), 4:31.64.
Discus - 1kg 18. Avery Crank, 92' 5".
Javelin - 600g 6. Rylee Dunker, 99' 9"; 11. Avery Crank, 85' 1".
High Jump 12. Emerlee Jones, 4' 5".
Long Jump 37. Teagan Hanten, 12' 8".
Triple Jump 23. Teagan Hanten, 27' 2".

19879

FROM ANNUAL STATEMENT
YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2025

SECURITY NATIONAL INSURANCE COMPANY

HOME OFFICE ADDRESS:
BRANDYME PLAZA, 1621 CONCORD PIKE, SUITE 201
WILMINGTON, DE 19083
MAIL ADDRESS:
80 SUPERIOR AVENUE E., 21ST FLOOR
CLEVELAND, OH 44114

ASSETS:

Bonds.....	\$741,179,653.00
Stocks.....	\$77,276,361.00
Mortgage Loans on.....	
Real Estate.....	\$0.00
Real Estate Owned.....	\$0.00
Cash and Bank Deposits.....	\$5,950,433.00
Agents Balances or.....	
Uncollected Premiums.....	\$240,354,683.00
Interest, Dividends and Real Estate Income.....	
Due and Accrued.....	\$3,788,566.00
Other Assets.....	\$138,058,405.00
TOTAL ASSETS.....	\$1,206,608,101.00

LIABILITIES, SURPLUS & OTHER FUNDS

Reserve for Losses.....	\$524,760,210.00
Reserve for Loss.....	
Adjustment Expenses.....	\$96,939,773.00
Other Expenses (excluding taxes, licenses and fees).....	
Taxes, Licenses and Fees.....	\$329,037.00
(excluding Federal and Foreign Income taxes).....	
Federal and Foreign.....	\$4,939,013.00
Income Taxes.....	\$1,647,264.00
Unearned Premiums.....	\$192,126,525.00
All Other Liabilities.....	\$70,859,038.00
TOTAL LIABILITIES.....	\$891,600,860.00
Special Surplus Funds.....	\$31,954,080.00
Capital Paid Up or Statutory Deposit.....	\$4,000,000.00
Gross Paid In and Contributed Surplus.....	\$224,495,310.00
Unassigned Surplus.....	\$54,557,851.00
Surplus as Regards Policyholders.....	\$315,007,241.00
TOTAL.....	\$1,206,608,101.00

BUSINESS IN SOUTH DAKOTA 2025

Direct Premiums Written.....	\$745,798.92
Direct Premiums Earned.....	\$984,751.37
Direct Losses Paid.....	\$614,382.07
Direct Losses Incurred.....	\$707,704.77

STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA

DIVISION OF INSURANCE, STATE CAPITOL, PIERRE

COMPANY'S CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORITY

WHEREAS, the Security National Insurance Company, a Corporation organized under the Laws of Delaware, has complied with all requirements of the Insurance Laws of the State of South Dakota;

NOW, THEREFORE, the undersigned, Director of Insurance of the State of South Dakota, pursuant to the provisions of said laws, do hereby certify that the above named Company is fully empowered through its authorized agents to transact the numbered lines of business listed below:

2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18, 26, 27
1) Life; 2) Health; 3) Fire & Allied Lines; 4) Inland & Ocean Marine; 5) Workmen's Compensation; 6) Bodily Injury Liability (Other than Auto); 7) Property Damage (Other than Auto); 8) Auto Bodily Injury; 9) Auto Property Damage; 10) Auto Physical Damage; 11) Fidelity & Surety; 12) Glass; 13) Burglary & Theft; 14) Boiler & Machinery; 15) Aircraft; 16) Credit; 17) Crop-Hail; 18) Livestock; 19) Title; 20) Variable Annuities; 21) Variable Life; 22) Reinsurance; 23A) Travel Accident Baggage; 23B) Pre-Paid Legal; 23C) Bail Bonds Surety; 26) Commercial; 27) Personal

In this State according to the Laws thereof, unless this Certificate of Authority is otherwise revoked, suspended or withdrawn.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and official seal at Pierre, S.D., this 1st day of May, A.D., 2026.

LARRY DEITER
Director of Insurance

20303

FROM ANNUAL STATEMENT
YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2025

GREAT NORTHERN INSURANCE COMPANY

HOME OFFICE ADDRESS:
ONE AMERICAN SQUARE, 202 N. ILLINOIS ST., SUITE 2600
INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46282
MAIL ADDRESS:
436 WALNUT STREET
PHILADELPHIA, SD 19106

ASSETS:

Bonds.....	\$419,858,129.00
Stocks.....	\$0.00
Mortgage Loans on.....	
Real Estate.....	\$0.00
Real Estate Owned.....	\$0.00
Cash and Bank Deposits.....	\$31,892,271.00
Agents Balances or.....	
Uncollected Premiums.....	\$0.00
Interest, Dividends and Real Estate Income.....	
Due and Accrued.....	\$2,706,904.00
Other Assets.....	\$82,026,271.00
TOTAL ASSETS.....	\$636,483,455.00

LIABILITIES, SURPLUS & OTHER FUNDS

Reserve for Losses.....	\$0.00
Reserve for Loss.....	
Adjustment Expenses.....	\$0.00
Other Expenses (excluding taxes, licenses and fees).....	
Taxes, Licenses and Fees.....	\$0.00
(excluding Federal and Foreign Income taxes).....	
Federal and Foreign.....	\$0.00
Income Taxes.....	\$987,029.00
Unearned Premiums.....	\$0.00
All Other Liabilities.....	\$177,040,047.00
TOTAL LIABILITIES.....	\$178,027,076.00
Special Surplus Funds.....	\$0.00
Capital Paid Up or Statutory Deposit.....	\$4,166,675.00
Gross Paid In and Contributed Surplus.....	\$83,700,350.00
Unassigned Surplus.....	\$370,589,354.00
Surplus as Regards Policyholders.....	\$458,456,379.00
TOTAL.....	\$636,483,455.00

BUSINESS IN SOUTH DAKOTA 2025

Direct Premiums Written.....	\$3,006,079.00
Direct Premiums Earned.....	\$3,004,176.00
Direct Losses Paid.....	\$875,367.00
Direct Losses Incurred.....	\$1,128,606.00

STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA

DIVISION OF INSURANCE, STATE CAPITOL, PIERRE

COMPANY'S CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORITY

WHEREAS, the GREAT NORTHERN INSURANCE COMPANY, a Corporation organized under the Laws of Indiana, has complied with all requirements of the Insurance Laws of the State of South Dakota;

NOW, THEREFORE, the undersigned, Director of Insurance of the State of South Dakota, pursuant to the provisions of said laws, do hereby certify that the above named Company is fully empowered through its authorized agents to transact the numbered lines of business listed below:

2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14
1) Life; 2) Health; 3) Fire & Allied Lines; 4) Inland & Ocean Marine; 5) Workmen's Compensation; 6) Bodily Injury Liability (Other than Auto); 7) Property Damage (Other than Auto); 8) Auto Bodily Injury; 9) Auto Property Damage; 10) Auto Physical Damage; 11) Fidelity & Surety; 12) Glass; 13) Burglary & Theft; 14) Boiler & Machinery; 15) Aircraft; 16) Credit; 17) Crop-Hail; 18) Livestock; 19) Title; 20) Variable Annuities; 21) Variable Life; 22) Reinsurance; 23A) Travel Accident Baggage; 23B) Pre-Paid Legal; 23C) Bail Bonds Surety; 26) Commercial; 27) Personal

In this State according to the Laws thereof, unless this Certificate of Authority is otherwise revoked, suspended or withdrawn.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and official seal at Pierre, S.D., this 1st day of May, A.D., 2026.

LARRY DEITER
Director of Insurance

20338

FROM ANNUAL STATEMENT
YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2025

PALOMAS SPECIALTY INSURANCE COMPANY

HOME OFFICE ADDRESS:
1050 SW 6TH AVENUE, SUITE 1100
PORTLAND, OR 97204
MAIL ADDRESS:
7799 IMAHOE AVENUE, SUITE 500
LA JOLLA, CA 92037

ASSETS:

Bonds.....	\$948,069,642.00
Stocks.....	\$156,485,301.00
Mortgage Loans on.....	
Real Estate.....	\$0.00
Real Estate Owned.....	\$0.00
Cash and Bank Deposits.....	\$70,361,908.00
Agents Balances or.....	
Uncollected Premiums.....	\$284,004,496.00
Interest, Dividends and Real Estate Income.....	
Due and Accrued.....	\$8,633,520.00
Other Assets.....	\$8,673,990.00
TOTAL ASSETS.....	\$1,659,404,396.00

LIABILITIES, SURPLUS & OTHER FUNDS

Reserve for Losses.....	\$194,509,438.00
Reserve for Loss.....	
Adjustment Expenses.....	\$13,400,546.00
Other Expenses (excluding taxes, licenses and fees).....	
Taxes, Licenses and Fees.....	\$38,866,202.00
(excluding Federal and Foreign Income taxes).....	
Federal and Foreign.....	\$3,629,708.00
Income Taxes.....	\$0.00
Unearned Premiums.....	\$604,547,529.00
All Other Liabilities.....	\$270,363,526.00
TOTAL LIABILITIES.....	\$1,082,820,839.00
Special Surplus Funds.....	\$0.00
Capital Paid Up or Statutory Deposit.....	\$5,000,000.00
Gross Paid In and Contributed Surplus.....	\$232,552,888.00
Unassigned Surplus.....	\$266,006,707.00
Surplus as Regards Policyholders.....	\$533,559,395.00
TOTAL.....	\$1,616,380,234.00

BUSINESS IN SOUTH DAKOTA 2025

Direct Premiums Written.....	\$4,352,128.00
Direct Premiums Earned.....	\$3,154,675.00
Direct Losses Paid.....	\$794,982.00
Direct Losses Incurred.....	\$1,327,354.00

STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA

DIVISION OF INSURANCE, STATE CAPITOL, PIERRE

COMPANY'S CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORITY

WHEREAS, the Palomas Specialty Insurance Company, a Corporation organized under the Laws of Oregon, has complied with all requirements of the Insurance Laws of the State of South Dakota;

NOW, THEREFORE, the undersigned, Director of Insurance of the State of South Dakota, pursuant to the provisions of said laws, do hereby certify that the above named Company is fully empowered through its authorized agents to transact the numbered lines of business listed below:

2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 18
1) Life; 2) Health; 3) Fire & Allied Lines; 4) Inland & Ocean Marine; 5) Workmen's Compensation; 6) Bodily Injury Liability (Other than Auto); 7) Property Damage (Other than Auto); 8) Auto Bodily Injury; 9) Auto Property Damage; 10) Auto Physical Damage; 11) Fidelity & Surety; 12) Glass; 13) Burglary & Theft; 14) Boiler & Machinery; 15) Aircraft; 16) Credit; 17) Crop-Hail; 18) Livestock; 19) Title; 20) Variable Annuities; 21) Variable Life; 22) Reinsurance; 23A) Travel Accident Baggage; 23B) Pre-Paid Legal; 23C) Bail Bonds Surety; 26) Commercial; 27) Personal

In this State according to the Laws thereof, unless this Certificate of Authority is otherwise revoked, suspended or withdrawn.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and official seal at Pierre, S.D., this 1st day of May, A.D., 2026.

LARRY DEITER
Director of Insurance

20346

FROM ANNUAL STATEMENT
YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2025

PACIFIC INDEMNITY COMPANY

HOME OFFICE ADDRESS:
2028 HALLS MILL ROAD
PORTLAND, OR 97204
MAIL ADDRESS:
7799 IMAHOE AVENUE, SUITE 500
LA JOLLA, CA 92037

ASSETS:

Bonds.....	\$12,012,597,890.00
Stocks.....	\$8,884,088.00
Mortgage Loans on.....	
Real Estate.....	\$0.00
Real Estate Owned.....	\$0.00
Cash and Bank Deposits.....	\$305,636,690.00
Agents Balances or.....	
Uncollected Premiums.....	\$564,593,026.00
Interest, Dividends and Real Estate Income.....	
Due and Accrued.....	\$107,148,611.00
Other Assets.....	\$4,415,664,596.00
TOTAL ASSETS.....	\$17,414,524,901.00

LIABILITIES, SURPLUS & OTHER FUNDS

Reserve for Losses.....	\$1,095,931,717.00
Reserve for Loss.....	
Adjustment Expenses.....	\$1,774,664,510.00
Other Expenses (excluding taxes, licenses and fees).....	
Taxes, Licenses and Fees.....	\$0.00
(excluding Federal and Foreign Income taxes).....	
Federal and Foreign.....	\$25,917,096.00
Income Taxes.....	\$41,087,072.00
Unearned Premiums.....	\$2,715,147,723.00
All Other Liabilities.....	\$1,297,359,931.00
TOTAL LIABILITIES.....	\$12,950,208,049.00
Special Surplus Funds.....	\$0.00
Capital Paid Up or Statutory Deposit.....	\$5,535,000.00
Gross Paid In and Contributed Surplus.....	\$520,079,566.00
Unassigned Surplus.....	\$3,938,762,286.00
Surplus as Regards Policyholders.....	\$4,464,376,882.00
TOTAL.....	\$17,414,524,901.00

BUSINESS IN SOUTH DAKOTA 2025

Direct Premiums Written.....	\$371,424.00
Direct Premiums Earned.....	\$261,995.00
Direct Losses Paid.....	\$88,903.00
Direct Losses Incurred.....	(\$121,284.00)

STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA

DIVISION OF INSURANCE, STATE CAPITOL, PIERRE

COMPANY'S CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORITY

WHEREAS, the Pacific Indemnity Company, a Corporation organized under the Laws of Delaware, has complied with all requirements of the Insurance Laws of the State of South Dakota;

NOW, THEREFORE, the undersigned, Director of Insurance of the State of South Dakota, pursuant to the provisions of said laws, do hereby certify that the above named Company is fully empowered through its authorized agents to transact the numbered lines of business listed below:

2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14
1) Life; 2) Health; 3) Fire & Allied Lines; 4) Inland & Ocean Marine; 5) Workmen's Compensation; 6) Bodily Injury Liability (Other than Auto); 7) Property Damage (Other than Auto); 8) Auto Bodily Injury; 9) Auto Property Damage; 10) Auto Physical Damage; 11) Fidelity & Surety; 12) Glass; 13) Burglary & Theft; 14) Boiler & Machinery; 15) Aircraft; 16) Credit; 17) Crop-Hail; 18) Livestock; 19) Title; 20) Variable Annuities; 21) Variable Life; 22) Reinsurance; 23A) Travel Accident Baggage; 23B) Pre-Paid Legal; 23C) Bail Bonds Surety; 26) Commercial; 27) Personal

In this State according to the Laws thereof, unless this Certificate of Authority is otherwise revoked, suspended or withdrawn.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and official seal at Pierre, S.D., this 1st day of May, A.D., 2026.

LARRY DEITER
Director of Insurance

20397

FROM ANNUAL STATEMENT
YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2025

VIGILANT INSURANCE COMPANY

HOME OFFICE ADDRESS:
1133 AVENUE OF THE AMERICAS, 41ST FLOOR
NEW YORK, NY 10036
MAIL ADDRESS:
436 WALNUT STREET
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19106

ASSETS:

Bonds.....	\$308,821,445.00
Stocks.....	\$0.00
Mortgage Loans on.....	
Real Estate.....	\$0.00
Real Estate Owned.....	\$0.00
Cash and Bank Deposits.....	\$9,811,273.00
Agents Balances or.....	
Uncollected Premiums.....	\$31,137,482.00
Interest, Dividends and Real Estate Income.....	
Due and Accrued.....	\$2,039,681.00
Other Assets.....	\$174,606,356.00
TOTAL ASSETS.....	\$526,416,237.00

LIABILITIES, SURPLUS & OTHER FUNDS

Reserve for Losses.....	\$0.00
Reserve for Loss.....	
Adjustment Expenses.....	\$0.00
Other Expenses (excluding taxes, licenses and fees).....	
Taxes, Licenses and Fees.....	\$0.00
(excluding Federal and Foreign Income taxes).....	
Federal and Foreign.....	\$0.00
Income Taxes.....	\$994,665.00
Unearned Premiums.....	\$0.00
All Other Liabilities.....	\$118,956,343.00
TOTAL LIABILITIES.....	\$119,941,008.00
Special Surplus Funds.....	\$0.00
Capital Paid Up or Statutory Deposit.....	\$4,500,000.00
Gross Paid In and Contributed Surplus.....	\$25,168,845.00
Unassigned Surplus.....	\$376,806,384.00
Surplus as Regards Policyholders.....	\$406,475,229.00
TOTAL.....	\$526,416,237.00

BUSINESS IN SOUTH DAKOTA 2025

Direct Premiums Written.....	\$62,958.00
Direct Premiums Earned.....	\$130,422.00
Direct Losses Paid.....	\$588.00
Direct Losses Incurred.....	(\$81,376.00)

STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA

DIVISION OF INSURANCE, STATE CAPITOL, PIERRE

COMPANY'S CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORITY

WHEREAS, the Vigilant Insurance Company, a Corporation organized under the Laws of New York, has complied with all requirements of the Insurance Laws of the State of South Dakota;

NOW, THEREFORE, the undersigned, Director of Insurance of the State of South Dakota, pursuant to the provisions of said laws, do hereby certify that the above named Company is fully empowered through its authorized agents to transact the numbered lines of business listed below:

2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14
1) Life; 2) Health; 3) Fire & Allied Lines; 4) Inland & Ocean Marine; 5) Workmen's Compensation; 6) Bodily Injury Liability (Other than Auto); 7) Property Damage (Other than Auto); 8) Auto Bodily Injury; 9) Auto Property Damage; 10) Auto Physical Damage; 11) Fidelity & Surety; 12) Glass; 13) Burglary & Theft; 14) Boiler & Machinery; 15) Aircraft; 16) Credit; 17) Crop-Hail; 18) Livestock; 19) Title; 20) Variable Annuities; 21) Variable Life; 22) Reinsurance; 23A) Travel Accident Baggage; 23B) Pre-Paid Legal; 23C) Bail Bonds Surety; 26) Commercial; 27) Personal

In this State according to the Laws thereof, unless this Certificate of Authority is otherwise revoked, suspended or withdrawn.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and official seal at Pierre, S.D., this 1st day of May, A.D., 2026.

LARRY DEITER
Director of Insurance

20427

FROM ANNUAL STATEMENT
YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2025

AMERICAN CASUALTY COMPANY OF READING, PENNSYLVANIA

HOME OFFICE ADDRESS:
THREE RADNOR CORPORATE CENTER, 100 MATSONFORD RD
RADNOR, PA 19087
MAIL ADDRESS:
151 N FRANKLIN ST
CHICAGO, IL 60606

ASSETS:

Bonds.....	\$27,147,925.00
Stocks.....	\$49,125,738.00
Mortgage Loans on.....	
Real Estate.....	\$0.00
Real Estate Owned.....	\$0.00
Cash and Bank Deposits.....	\$12,765,025.00
Agents Balances or.....	
Uncollected Premiums.....	\$0.00
Interest, Dividends and Real Estate Income.....	
Due and Accrued.....	\$325,879.00
Other Assets.....	\$29,242.00
TOTAL ASSETS.....	\$89,393,809.00

LIABILITIES, SURPLUS & OTHER FUNDS

Reserve for Losses.....	\$0.00
Reserve for Loss.....	
Adjustment Expenses.....	\$0.00
Other Expenses (excluding taxes, licenses and fees).....	
Taxes, Licenses and Fees.....	\$0.00
(excluding Federal and Foreign Income taxes).....	
Federal and Foreign.....	\$0.00
Income Taxes.....	\$25,335.00
Unearned Premiums.....	\$0.00
All Other Liabilities.....	\$0.00
TOTAL LIABILITIES.....	\$25,335.00
Special Surplus Funds.....	\$0.00
Capital Paid Up or Statutory Deposit.....	\$4,200,000.00
Gross Paid In and Contributed Surplus.....	\$62,242,834.00
Unassigned Surplus.....	\$20,925,640.00
Surplus as Regards Policyholders.....	\$89,368,474.00
TOTAL.....	\$89,393,809.00

BUSINESS IN SOUTH DAKOTA 2025

Direct Premiums Written.....	\$2,261,939.00
Direct Premiums Earned.....	\$2,135,498.00
Direct Losses Paid.....	\$367,810.00
Direct Losses Incurred.....	\$623,136.00

STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA

DIVISION OF INSURANCE, STATE CAPITOL, PIERRE

COMPANY'S CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORITY

WHEREAS, the American Casualty Company of Reading, Pennsylvania, a Corporation organized under the Laws of Pennsylvania, has complied with all requirements of the Insurance Laws of the State of South Dakota;

NOW, THEREFORE, the undersigned, Director of Insurance of the State of South Dakota, pursuant to the provisions of said laws, do hereby certify that the above named Company is fully empowered through its authorized agents to transact the

FROM ANNUAL STATEMENT
YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2025
PRIMERICA LIFE INSURANCE CO
HOME OFFICE ADDRESS:
21 PLATONUM WAY SOUTH, SUITE 3500
NASHVILLE, TN 37203
MAIL ADDRESS:
1 PRIMERICA PARKWAY
DULUTH, GA 30099

ASSETS:

Bonds.....	\$1,896,906,328.00
Stocks.....	\$526,224,202.00
Mortgage loans on	
Real Estate.....	\$0.00
Real Estate Owned.....	\$0.00
Policy Loans.....	\$721,257.00
Cash and Bank Deposits.....	\$43,056,188.00
Deferred and	
Uncollected Premiums.....	(\$274,005,467.00)
Investment Income	
Due and Accrued.....	\$16,869,745.00
Other Assets.....	\$32,697,515.00
TOTAL ASSETS.....	\$2,599,469,778.00

LIABILITIES, SURPLUS & OTHER FUNDS

Reserve for Life	
Policies & Contracts	
Reserve for Accident	
Policy and Contract Claims	
Life.....	\$1,935,799.00
Accident & Health	
General Expenses	
Due or Accrued.....	\$39,180,643.00
Taxes, Licenses & Fees	
Due or Accrued.....	\$16,758,531.00
Federal Income Taxes	
Due or Accrued.....	\$45,523,234.00
All Other Liabilities.....	\$1,041,48,407.00
TOTAL LIABILITIES.....	\$1,791,479,377.00
Special Surplus Funds.....	\$0.00
Capital Paid Up.....	\$2,500,000.00
Gross Paid in and	
Contributed Surplus.....	\$495,216,498.00
Unassigned Surplus.....	\$310,288,803.00
Surplus as Regards	
Policyholders.....	\$0.00
TOTAL.....	\$807,990,401.00

BUSINESS IN SOUTH DAKOTA 2025

Direct Premiums Received.....	\$5,195,584.00
Direct Losses Paid.....	\$3,310,411.00
Losses Incurred.....	\$3,753,565.00
Life Insurance in Force.....	\$1,543,580,641.00

DIVISION OF INSURANCE/ STATE CAPITOL, PIERRE
COMPANY'S CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORITY

WHEREAS, the Primerica Life Insurance Co, a Corporation organized under the Laws of Tennessee has complied with all requirements of the Insurance Laws of the State of South Dakota;

NOW THEREFORE, the undersigned, Director of Insurance of the State of South Dakota, pursuant to the provisions of said laws, do hereby certify that the above named Company is fully empowered through its authorized agents to transact the numbered lines of business listed below:

- 1, 2, 21
1) Life; 2) Health; 3) Fire & Allied Lines; 4) Inland & Ocean Marine; 5) Workmen's Compensation; 6) Bodily Injury Liability (Other than Auto); 7) Property Damage (Other than Auto); 8) Auto Bodily Injury; 9) Auto Property Damage; 10) Auto Physical Damage; 11) Fidelity & Surety; 12) Glass; 13) Burglary & Theft; 14) Boiler & Machinery; 15) Aircraft; 16) Credit; 17) Crop-Hail; 18) Livestock; 19) Title; 20) Variable Annuities; 21) Variable Life; 22) Reinsurance; 23A) Travel Accident Baggage; 23B) Pre-Paid Legal; 23C) Bail Bonds Surety; 26) Commercial; 27) Personal
- In this State according to the Laws thereof, unless this Certificate of Authority is otherwise revoked, suspended or withdrawn.
- IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and official seal at Pierre, S.D., this 1st day of May, A.D., 2026.
- LARRY DEITER
Director of Insurance

FROM ANNUAL STATEMENT
YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2025
MASSACHUSETTS MUTUAL LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY
HOME OFFICE ADDRESS:
1295 STATE STREET
SPRINGFIELD, MA 01111
MAIL ADDRESS:
1295 STATE STREET
SPRINGFIELD, MA 01111

ASSETS:

Bonds.....	\$171,236,143,130.00
Stocks.....	\$28,005,997,737.00
Mortgage loans on	
Real Estate.....	\$24,697,582,955.00
Real Estate Owned.....	\$327,046,494.00
Policy Loans.....	\$19,042,284,616.00
Cash and Bank Deposits.....	\$8,126,015,207.00
Deferred and	
Uncollected Premiums.....	\$1,341,842,770.00
Investment Income	
Due and Accrued.....	\$4,977,690,625.00
Other Assets.....	\$98,374,811,098.00
TOTAL ASSETS.....	\$356,729,414,032.00

LIABILITIES, SURPLUS & OTHER FUNDS

Reserve for Life	
Policies & Contracts	
Reserve for Accident	
Policy and Contract Claims	
Life.....	\$3,277,347,564.00
Accident & Health	
General Expenses	
Due or Accrued.....	\$25,877,367.00
Taxes, Licenses & Fees	
Due or Accrued.....	\$1,477,937,283.00
Federal Income Taxes	
Due or Accrued.....	\$161,315,875.00
All Other Liabilities.....	\$137,075,298,927.00
TOTAL LIABILITIES.....	\$326,902,342,437.00
Special Surplus Funds.....	\$6,224,674,057.00
Capital Paid Up.....	\$0.00
Gross Paid in and	
Contributed Surplus.....	\$0.00
Unassigned Surplus.....	\$22,992,397,544.00
Surplus as Regards	
Policyholders.....	\$29,227,071,601.00
TOTAL.....	\$356,129,414,032.00

BUSINESS IN SOUTH DAKOTA 2025

Direct Premiums Received.....	\$30,416,711.00
Direct Losses Paid.....	\$3,410,411.00
Losses Incurred.....	\$90,923,540.00
Life Insurance in Force.....	\$1,394,409,371.00

DIVISION OF INSURANCE/ STATE CAPITOL, PIERRE
COMPANY'S CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORITY

WHEREAS, the Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Company, a Corporation organized under the Laws of Massachusetts has complied with all requirements of the Insurance Laws of the State of South Dakota;

NOW THEREFORE, the undersigned, Director of Insurance of the State of South Dakota, pursuant to the provisions of said laws, do hereby certify that the above named Company is fully empowered through its authorized agents to transact the numbered lines of business listed below:

- 1, 2, 20, 21
1) Life; 2) Health; 3) Fire & Allied Lines; 4) Inland & Ocean Marine; 5) Workmen's Compensation; 6) Bodily Injury Liability (Other than Auto); 7) Property Damage (Other than Auto); 8) Auto Bodily Injury; 9) Auto Property Damage; 10) Auto Physical Damage; 11) Fidelity & Surety; 12) Glass; 13) Burglary & Theft; 14) Boiler & Machinery; 15) Aircraft; 16) Credit; 17) Crop-Hail; 18) Livestock; 19) Title; 20) Variable Annuities; 21) Variable Life; 22) Reinsurance; 23A) Travel Accident Baggage; 23B) Pre-Paid Legal; 23C) Bail Bonds Surety; 26) Commercial; 27) Personal
- In this State according to the Laws thereof, unless this Certificate of Authority is otherwise revoked, suspended or withdrawn.
- IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and official seal at Pierre, S.D., this 1st day of May, A.D., 2026.
- LARRY DEITER
Director of Insurance

FROM ANNUAL STATEMENT
YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2025
METROPOLITAN LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY
HOME OFFICE ADDRESS:
18270 CRANE NEST DRIVE, 3RD FLOOR
TAMPA, FL 33647
MAIL ADDRESS:
18270 CRANE NEST DRIVE, 3RD FLOOR
TAMPA, FL 33647

ASSETS:

Bonds.....	\$134,485,465,303.00
Stocks.....	\$1,348,282,918.00
Mortgage loans on	
Real Estate.....	\$46,883,747,466.00
Real Estate Owned.....	\$1,166,062,875.00
Policy Loans.....	\$5,163,209,845.00
Cash and Bank Deposits.....	\$8,783,578,629.00
Deferred and	
Uncollected Premiums.....	\$4,224,248,419.00
Investment Income	
Due and Accrued.....	\$3,957,007,397.00
Other Assets.....	\$138,986,541,534.00
TOTAL ASSETS.....	\$344,971,544,386.00

LIABILITIES, SURPLUS & OTHER FUNDS

Reserve for Life	
Policies & Contracts	
Reserve for Accident	
Policy and Contract Claims	
Life.....	\$28,746,203,379.00
Accident & Health	
General Expenses	
Due or Accrued.....	\$89,924,958.00
Taxes, Licenses & Fees	
Due or Accrued.....	\$7,633,350.00
Federal Income Taxes	
Due or Accrued.....	\$121,849,618.00
All Other Liabilities.....	\$219,575,555,718.00
TOTAL LIABILITIES.....	\$336,348,738,688.00
Special Surplus Funds.....	\$700,000,000.00
Capital Paid Up.....	\$4,944,667.00
Gross Paid in and	
Contributed Surplus.....	\$5,795,506,716.00
Unassigned Surplus.....	\$2,121,954,915.00
Surplus as Regards	
Policyholders.....	\$8,622,805,698.00
TOTAL.....	\$344,971,544,386.00

BUSINESS IN SOUTH DAKOTA 2025

Direct Premiums Received.....	\$40,758,543.00
Direct Losses Paid.....	\$33,824,963.00
Losses Incurred.....	\$48,602,022.00
Life Insurance in Force.....	\$11,072,096,560.00

DIVISION OF INSURANCE/ STATE CAPITOL, PIERRE
COMPANY'S CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORITY

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, a Corporation organized under the Laws of New York has complied with all requirements of the Insurance Laws of the State of South Dakota;

NOW THEREFORE, the undersigned, Director of Insurance of the State of South Dakota, pursuant to the provisions of said laws, do hereby certify that the above named Company is fully empowered through its authorized agents to transact the numbered lines of business listed below:

- 1, 2, 16, 20, 21
1) Life; 2) Health; 3) Fire & Allied Lines; 4) Inland & Ocean Marine; 5) Workmen's Compensation; 6) Bodily Injury Liability (Other than Auto); 7) Property Damage (Other than Auto); 8) Auto Bodily Injury; 9) Auto Property Damage; 10) Auto Physical Damage; 11) Fidelity & Surety; 12) Glass; 13) Burglary & Theft; 14) Boiler & Machinery; 15) Aircraft; 16) Credit; 17) Crop-Hail; 18) Livestock; 19) Title; 20) Variable Annuities; 21) Variable Life; 22) Reinsurance; 23A) Travel Accident Baggage; 23B) Pre-Paid Legal; 23C) Bail Bonds Surety; 26) Commercial; 27) Personal
- In this State according to the Laws thereof, unless this Certificate of Authority is otherwise revoked, suspended or withdrawn.
- IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and official seal at Pierre, S.D., this 1st day of May, A.D., 2026.
- LARRY DEITER
Director of Insurance

FROM ANNUAL STATEMENT
YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2025
MIDLAND NATIONAL LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY
HOME OFFICE ADDRESS:
8300 WILKS CIVIC PARKWAY
WEST DES MOINES, IA 50266
MAIL ADDRESS:
8300 WILKS CIVIC PARKWAY
WEST DES MOINES, IA 50266

ASSETS:

Bonds.....	\$57,892,649,757.99
Stocks.....	\$4,393,104,665.85
Mortgage loans on	
Real Estate.....	\$3,910,917,351.46
Real Estate Owned.....	\$94,447,700.86
Policy Loans.....	\$665,442,931.91
Cash and Bank Deposits.....	\$1,419,028,240.20
Deferred and	
Uncollected Premiums.....	\$729,497,072.83
Investment Income	
Due and Accrued.....	\$588,576,797.49
Other Assets.....	\$19,145,043,865.99
TOTAL ASSETS.....	\$88,238,408,384.58

LIABILITIES, SURPLUS & OTHER FUNDS

Reserve for Life	
Policies & Contracts	
Reserve for Accident	
Policy and Contract Claims	
Life.....	\$293,578,434.11
Accident & Health	
General Expenses	
Due or Accrued.....	\$62,197.38
Taxes, Licenses & Fees	
Due or Accrued.....	\$157,805,071.37
Federal Income Taxes	
Due or Accrued.....	\$6,452,559.67
All Other Liabilities.....	\$39,561,187,801.86
TOTAL LIABILITIES.....	\$83,098,494,987.97
Special Surplus Funds.....	\$1,575,620,189.51
Capital Paid Up.....	\$2,549,439.00
Gross Paid in and	
Contributed Surplus.....	\$993,927,235.39
Unassigned Surplus.....	\$2,667,816,532.71
Surplus as Regards	
Policyholders.....	\$5,339,913,396.59
TOTAL.....	\$88,238,408,384.58

BUSINESS IN SOUTH DAKOTA 2025

Direct Premiums Received.....	\$18,362,739.00
Direct Losses Paid.....	\$13,068,611.00
Losses Incurred.....	\$14,666,498.87
Life Insurance in Force.....	\$3,574,396,243.26

DIVISION OF INSURANCE/ STATE CAPITOL, PIERRE
COMPANY'S CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORITY

WHEREAS, the Midland National Life Insurance Company, a Corporation organized under the Laws of Iowa has complied with all requirements of the Insurance Laws of the State of South Dakota;

NOW THEREFORE, the undersigned, Director of Insurance of the State of South Dakota, pursuant to the provisions of said laws, do hereby certify that the above named Company is fully empowered through its authorized agents to transact the numbered lines of business listed below:

- 1, 2, 20, 21
1) Life; 2) Health; 3) Fire & Allied Lines; 4) Inland & Ocean Marine; 5) Workmen's Compensation; 6) Bodily Injury Liability (Other than Auto); 7) Property Damage (Other than Auto); 8) Auto Bodily Injury; 9) Auto Property Damage; 10) Auto Physical Damage; 11) Fidelity & Surety; 12) Glass; 13) Burglary & Theft; 14) Boiler & Machinery; 15) Aircraft; 16) Credit; 17) Crop-Hail; 18) Livestock; 19) Title; 20) Variable Annuities; 21) Variable Life; 22) Reinsurance; 23A) Travel Accident Baggage; 23B) Pre-Paid Legal; 23C) Bail Bonds Surety; 26) Commercial; 27) Personal
- In this State according to the Laws thereof, unless this Certificate of Authority is otherwise revoked, suspended or withdrawn.
- IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and official seal at Pierre, S.D., this 1st day of May, A.D., 2026.
- LARRY DEITER
Director of Insurance

Executive Session closed with No Action taken.

ADJOURNMENT: Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Dennert to adjourn the Brown County Commission at 9:54 A.M. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

Lynn Heupel, Brown County Auditor

Published May 13, 2026 at the total approximate cost of \$77.20 and may be viewed free of charge at www.sdpublicnotices.com. 26824

for a wedding; New Hope Fellowship to lease the Portable Stage on June 26-29, 2026; Tri-County Fair to lease 2 (two) People Movers on July 6-15, 2026. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

OTHER BUSINESS: None
EXECUTIVE SESSION: Moved by Commissioner Wiese, seconded by Dinger to go into Executive Session per SDCL 1-25-2 for Contracts. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.
Chairman Sutton declared the



NOTICE OF VARIANCE HEARING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT The Groton Planning & Zoning Commission will be holding a public hearing on May 26, 2026, at 6:00pm CDT at City Hall, 120 N Main Street, Groton, SD for a variance of Chapter 9, Section 9.0106 of the Groton Zoning Ordinance. This application was made by Carl Schwab of JDC Real Estate LLC to build a garage within 5 feet of the west lot line in a Residential (R-1) District located at 1112 N 1st Street, Groton, SD, legally described as Lot 1-2, Block 8, Randalls Addition, Groton, SD.

Any person wishing to present testimony for or against this variance may appear in person or by representative at the above time and place.

Doug Heinrich
Zoning Administrator
Published May 13, 2026, at the total approximate cost of \$9.74 and may be viewed free of charge at www.sdpublicnotices.com. 26825

NOTICE OF 69th ANNUAL MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that the 69th Annual Meeting of the members of James Valley Cooperative Telephone Company will be held at the Groton High School Arena in Groton, South Dakota on Thursday, May 28, 2026, at 12:30pm, with registration and lunch beginning at 11:30am.

The meeting is called pursuant to the cooperative's bylaws for the following purposes:

1. To receive and act upon reports of the officers and management of the cooperative for the previous year's operations.
2. To elect three directors for a term of three years.
3. To act upon any other business that may properly come before the meeting.

By order of the Board of Directors.

Dated: 2/26/2026
Mark Wattier, Secretary
Published May 13, 2026, at the total approximate cost of \$10.37 and may be viewed free of charge at www.sdpublicnotices.com. 26826



MAY 5, 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 Dinger led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

PUBLIC COMMENT: None
SURPLUS FOR SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT: Moved by Commissioner Dinger, seconded by Dennert to approve the Sheriff's Department to declare twenty-two Glock 45 Pistols as surplus and transferred to Walberg Precision Firearms to receive a credit of \$300/ea. for the Brown County Sheriff's Office. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

SURPLUS FOR AUDITOR'S OFFICE: Moved by Commissioner Dennert, seconded by Gage to approve the Auditor's Office surplus list of phones, scanners and mail conveyor belt system for disposal at the Brown County Landfill. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

MINUTES: Moved by Commissioner Dennert, seconded by Dinger to approve the General Meeting Minutes of April 28, 2026. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

Moved by Commissioner Gage, seconded by Dinger to approve the Consolidated Board of Equalization Minutes of April 28, 2026. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

CLAIMS/PAYROLL: Moved by Commissioner Gage, seconded by Dennert to approve the following Claims/Payroll. Claims:

Inc \$461.38; Auto Zone, Inc \$24.73; Bob Barker Company Inc \$419.33; Brown County Fair Foundation \$6,182.93; Cartney Bearing \$47.98; Central Network Retail Group LLC \$5.34; Century Business Products \$401.80; Charm-Tex, Inc \$837.84; Crawford M S & F Inc \$105.04; Dave Lunzman \$21.22; Election Systems & Software \$422.36; Fastenal Company \$1,165.85; Great Western Tire \$851.60; GT Brothers LLC \$400.00; Hillyard Sioux Falls \$48.92; House of Glass \$86.85; John Noyes – Bantz, Gosch, & Cremer \$68.98; Kuck Law Office \$29.22; L. G. Everist, Inc \$2,605.05; Lawson Products, Inc \$273.77; Leidholdt Tool Sales, LLC \$36.64; Lucy Lewno \$6.74; Menards \$310.90; Midstates Group \$185.00; Performance Oil \$622.04; Pierson Ford Lincoln, Inc \$405.95; Pro-Line, Inc. – Watertown \$334.20; Rinse & Go Car Wash \$11.50; Runnings \$145.95; Safety Service \$395.99; Sander's Sew-N-Vac \$9.75; Schwan Welding \$44.30; Valvoline Inc. \$106.99. Travel & Conference: Allison Tunheim \$340.55; CGI, LLC \$35.51; Jason Erickson \$164.00; Jessica Johnson \$110.00; Kristin Barstad \$164.00; Lenling Law Office, Prof. LLC \$40.00; Lexipol, LLC \$1,753.92; Michael Wiese \$721.15; Neil Bittner \$19.00; Scott Kolb \$19.00. Utilities: AT&T Mobility \$184.89; CenturyLink \$296.42; Northwestern Energy \$11,626.32.

Payroll: Commission \$5,165.81; Elections \$2,386.33; Auditor/Welfare \$12,026.85; Treasurer \$19,094.03; SA \$38,039.85; Public Defender \$14,449.33; Maintenance \$13,591.10; Assessor \$17,530.30; Register of Deeds \$11,511.06; VSO \$5,006.26; GIS \$3,110.76; IT \$10,766.94; HR \$5,722.14; Sheriff \$59,595.04; Jail \$72,691.04; Coroner (Voucher) \$1,050.00; Court Security \$8,054.82; JDC \$31,460.50; Museum \$14,271.55; Parks/Fairgrounds \$8,210.17; Fair Board \$4,858.37; 4-H \$881.59; Weed \$3,502.24; Planning & Zoning \$8,510.51; Highway \$51,095.96; Dispatch \$35,740.49; Emer-

Insurance: SD Public Assurance Alliance \$184.30. Professional Fees: Aberdeen ED \$66.74; Aberdeen Imaging \$90.79; Aberdeen OB/GYN \$70.83; Acute Care Aberdeen \$362.68; AMG Cardiovascular Aberdeen \$7.56; Avera Aberdeen Family Physicians \$115.84; Avera Medical Group Radiology \$62.85; Bernel Lee \$43.00; Carrels & Bain Family Dental Care, LLC \$786.71; CenturyLink-Lumen \$244.31; CGI, LLC \$2,512.50; Cogley Law Office, Prof LLC \$2,062.60; Election Systems & Software \$1,331.50; Jerry Lehrkamp \$43.00; John Noyes – Bantz, Gosch & Cremer \$3,212.20; Kuck Law Office \$1,386.00; Lenling Law Office, Prof. LLC \$1,098.00; Lucy Lewno \$192.00; Mark Katterhagen \$20.00; Modern Day Health Care Prof LLC \$1,323.37; North Star Solutions, LLC \$1,848.00; Northeastern Mental Health Center \$75.00; Sanford Health Occupational Medicine \$432.00; Sanford Health \$1,269.10; Schneider Geospatial, LLC \$3,237.60; SD-JPS \$400.00; SHI International Corp \$30,858.11; Taliaferro Law Firm, PC \$4,986.50; Tammy Stolle Court Reporting \$29.10; Valerie Larson \$20.00; Women's Health MFM PBB \$60.52; Yankton County Treasurer \$516.15. Publishing: Groton Daily Independent \$155.80; Hub City Radio \$350.00; KJRV FM/KOKK AM/KIJV AM \$1,545.00; McQuillen Creative Group, Inc \$2,329.10. Rentals: Eugene A Mitchell \$50.00; Hart Angus Farms \$1,500.00. Repairs & Maintenance: Aberdeen Asphalt, Inc \$490.00; Crawford M S & F Inc \$450.00; Dennis Hahnemann \$1,079.92; Don Schlosser \$350.00; House of Glass \$13,702.05; Lawson Products, Inc \$24.85; Olson's Pest Technicians \$260.00; Pantorium Cleaners Inc \$32.00; Pierson Ford Lincoln, Inc \$1,111.95; Precision Kiosk Technologies \$3,000.00; Safety Service \$600.00; Schwan Welding \$674.00; Superior Jetting, Inc \$4,915.00; Valvoline Inc. \$18.07; Vosika Fencing \$1,449.91. Supplies & Materials: Amazon Capital Services,

Marty Weisman
605/396-7341
weisag@nyc.net

Tigers Show Growth and Fight in Doubleheader Against Florence/Henry

The Groton Area Tigers may have come up short on the scoreboard Thursday night at Nelson Field, but head coach Anna Bisbee walked away proud of the progress her young squad showed in a varsity doubleheader against the Florence/Henry Falcons.

"It was a beautiful night for softball," Bisbee said following the games. "Not just beautiful weather, but beautiful playing. I'm so proud of these girls. They looked like a softball team tonight. They played hard. Things came together tonight."

Groton battled throughout both contests, dropping the opener 5-1 before falling 11-4 in the nightcap. Despite the losses, Bisbee said the Tigers showed how much they have improved throughout the season.

"We still had those mental errors, but we didn't let it beat us this time," Bisbee said. "We came out of our mental error, got the outs and got out of the innings."

In the opener, Florence/Henry broke a scoreless tie in the third inning before Groton answered right back in the bottom half. Jaedyn Penning delivered an RBI single down the left field line to tie the game at 1-1.

The Falcons responded with a four-run fourth inning to pull away for the win. Penning paced the Tigers offensively by going 2-for-3 with an RBI, while Rylen Ekern also collected two hits. Jerica Locke added two walks as Groton showed patience at the plate.

Neely Althoff worked five innings in the circle for Groton, striking out four.

The second game featured much more offense from both teams. Florence/Henry built a 2-0 lead before the Tigers erupted in the bottom of the second inning to briefly move in front 4-2.

Groton's rally included an RBI hit-by-pitch from Talli Wright, an RBI walk from Kinsley Rowen, and a two-run single by Locke.

The Falcons answered with a seven-run third inning to regain control and eventually secured the 11-4 victory.

Penning, Hannah Sandness, Rylie Rose, and Locke each recorded hits for the Tigers in the second game. Wright, Rowen, and Locke each drove in runs. Rowen pitched all five innings for Groton.

Bisbee said the night was another sign the Tigers are beginning to understand how to compete consistently.

"They've learned to pick their level up on these tougher teams," Bisbee said. "If they play the rest of the season like they played tonight, I think we're going to have some good games."

The atmosphere around Nelson Field also stood out to the Tigers' coach, especially with young fans lining the fence and cheering throughout the evening.

"Look at the crowd here tonight. Look at these little kids, future Little Tiger softball and baseball players," Bisbee said. "I'm having a blast. I think everybody else is, too."

Groton Area returns to action Monday when the Tigers host Sioux Valley Cossacks. The game was broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM, sponsored by Dacotah Bank.

Tigers Continue To Show Growth Against Class A Sioux Valley

Groton Tigers continued to show improvement Monday night despite falling to the Sioux Valley Cossacks in a non-conference fastpitch softball matchup in Groton.

Facing one of the top Class A teams in the state, the Tigers battled throughout the contest and showed flashes of strong defensive play and aggressive at-bats against tough pitching.

Groton coach Amanda Bisbee said the Tigers elevated their level of play against quality competition.

"They're a tough team every day," Bisbee said of Sioux Valley. "Last time I checked, they were ranked fourth in Class A, so they're a good team. But I think our girls brought their level up again. They played good."

Bisbee pointed to one difficult inning as the difference in the game, but was encouraged with how the Tigers responded afterward.

"Everybody's got one bad inning. It's all right," she said. "They're playing aggressive ball. They're making good plays. They're doing things we haven't done. They were on the pitches, and they're getting better at making contact with these faster pitchers."

The Tigers also continued to make strides defensively, something Bisbee said has improved significantly as the season has progressed.

"Our team is still just beginning and learning how to get out of those innings," Bisbee said. "That's the thing — we are getting out of those innings. We're figuring it out. We're not letting our errors kill us the entire game anymore."

One of the highlight defensive plays came from Kinsley, who made a diving catch that Bisbee called an "ESPN moment."

Behind the plate, Jaedyn also drew praise from her coach for her aggressive play at catcher. "Jaedyn killed it back there tonight as a catcher," Bisbee said. "She was ready to engage that runner at first. Super good and aggressive."

Groton will now turn its attention to a matchup at Milbank, where Bisbee said the Tigers must continue playing at the same intensity level they showed Monday night.

"The big key is forgetting about the last time we played them and overcoming errors and just playing at this level," Bisbee said. "They're bringing themselves up to play these tougher teams at a tougher level, and that's what we've just got to keep doing."

The games were broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM, sponsored by Locke Electric.



The Groton Softball Team held fan appreciation night Thursday. The following were recognized for their hard work to the organization and support of the first year of Groton Softball: Alexa Sperry, Jackie Iverson, Jordan Kampa and Shelby Edwards. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

Girls Fastpitch JV team picks up win over Milbank, Bulldogs win varsity game

Groton Area picked up a junior varsity victory before falling in the varsity contest during girls fastpitch softball action Tuesday at Milbank.

The Groton Area JV squad earned a 7-3 win after jumping out to an early lead and maintaining control throughout the game. Groton took a 2-0 advantage after the opening inning behind RBI singles from Libby Cole, who continued her strong night with another RBI single in the second inning.

Groton extended its lead to 5-2 after two innings. Rylan Eckern highlighted the second inning with an RBI triple as the Tigers continued to apply pressure offensively. Groton added two more runs in the third inning while Milbank scored once in the bottom half of the inning.

Riley Rose, Arianna Dinger, and Addison Hoffman each contributed singles for Groton in the win.

In the varsity contest, Milbank used a fast start to defeat Groton Area 15-2 in five innings.

Milbank built momentum early, scoring five runs in the first inning, four more in the second, three in the third, and three in the fourth. Paisle Ericsson led Milbank with a two RBI home run and an RBI triple. Groton's best offensive inning came in the second when the Tigers plated two runs on three hits.

Hannah Sandness provided the big hit for Groton with a two-run double. Makenna Krause, Neely Althoff, and Jerica Locke each added singles for the Tigers.

After the game, Groton Area Coach Amanda Bisbee felt the score did not fully reflect how competitive the game was at times.

"It was more competitive than the last time we played them for sure," Bisbee said. "We killed ourselves on errors tonight. We just get in our heads. Milbank is just our mental error team right now, and every softball team has one."

Bisbee said the Tigers will focus on improving confidence and correcting mistakes as they prepare for the final stretch of the regular season.

"We've got three good practices before we go out there and play again," Bisbee said. "We're going to work on a few things we did here tonight, work on getting our confidence back up, and come out ready to play."

The coach also praised the increased energy and communication coming from the dugout during the game.

"There was a lot more chatter tonight," Bisbee said. "You've still got to be up and chattering. It gets in the other team's heads and it helps get your teammates up."

Groton Area will close out the regular season Monday with games at Redfield and Tuesday at Deuel.

The Milbank games were broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM, sponsored by Poet of Groton.

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ANNUAL REPORT FOR CITY OF GROTON AS OF AND FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2025				
GOVERNMENTAL FUNDS--MODIFIED CASH BASIS				
	Debt Service Fund	Other Governmental Funds	Total Governmental Funds	
Beginning Balance	120,422.00	243,984.00	1,174,156.00	
Revenues and Other Sources:				
Taxes:				
Property Taxes			800,409.00	
Airflight Property Tax				
General Sales and Use Taxes		27,535.00	702,829.00	
Excise Tax			107.00	
Penalties and Interest on				
Delinquent Taxes			1,602.00	
Licenses and Permits			20,856.00	
Intergovernmental Revenues:				
State Grants			13,461.00	
State Shared Revenue			104,486.00	
County Shared Revenue:			13,448.00	
Charges for Goods and Services:				
General Government			2,341.00	
Public Safety			559.00	
Highways and Streets			8,209.00	
Culture and Recreation			147,712.00	
Cemetery			2,761.00	
Fines and Forfeits				
Animal Control Fines			85.00	
Miscellaneous Revenue and Other Sources:				
Investment Earnings			149,204.00	
Rentals		23,950.00	23,950.00	
Special Assessments	1,623.00		1,623.00	
Contributions and Donations				
from Private Sources			89,939.00	
Liquor Operating				
Agreement Income			17,377.00	
Other Revenues			98,522.00	
Total Revenue and Other Sources	1,623.00	51,485.00	2,199,480.00	
Expenditures and Other Uses:				
Legislative			23,247.00	
Executive			8,334.00	
Elections			17.00	
Financial Administration			411,881.00	
Other General Government			75,535.00	
Police			478,006.00	
Fire				
Protective Inspection			8,542.00	
Corrections				
Other Protection			492.00	
Highways and Streets			519,612.00	
Sanitation			1,355.00	
Airport		45,702.00	45,702.00	
Cemeteries			12,980.00	
Transit			2,500.00	
Health			9,480.00	
Recreation			351,673.00	
Parks			45,217.00	
Libraries			9,166.00	
Auditorium			8,517.00	
Economic Development and				
Assistance (Industrial Development)			23,533.00	
Debt Service	205,975.00		205,975.00	
Total Expenditures and Other Uses	205,975.00	45,702.00	2,241,764.00	
Transfers In (Out)	250,000.00		250,000.00	
Increase/Decrease in Fund Balance	45,648.00	5,783.00	207,716.00	
Ending Fund Balance:				
Unassigned	166,070.00	249,767.00	1,381,872.00	
Total Ending Fund Balance	166,070.00	249,767.00	1,381,872.00	
Governmental Long-term Debt			1,650,000.00	
PROPRIETARY FUNDS--MODIFIED CASH BASIS				
Beginning Balance	Sewer Fund	Garbage Fund	Electric Fund	
Water Fund	200,896.00	84,440.00	2,990,631.00	
Revenues	312,521.00	153,039.00	1,856,541.00	
Expenses	263,575.00	146,178.00	1,522,445.00	
Transfers In (Out)	-	-	(250,000.00)	
Ending Balance:				
Restricted for Equipment Repair				
Restricted for Other Purposes				
Unrestricted	249,842.00	91,301.00	3,074,727.00	
Long-term Debt				
The preceding financial data does not include fiduciary funds or component units. Information pertaining to those activities may be obtained by contacting the municipal finance officer at 397-8422.				
Municipal funds are deposited as follows:				
Depository	Amount			
Dacotah Bank	\$4,323,412.66			
SD FIT	\$1,799,630.40			
Published May 13, 2026, at the total approximate cost of \$193.23 and may be viewed free of charge at www.sdpublicnotices.com. 26823				

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Tigers JV Dropped Pair of Games to SBW JV

The Groton Area Tigers junior varsity baseball team battled Sisseton-Britton-Waubay in a pair of games Wednesday in Groton, dropping a tight pitcher’s duel 1-0 before falling 12-3 in the second contest.

In the opener, strong pitching highlighted the low-scoring affair as the Mallards managed the game’s only run in the fifth inning to edge the Tigers.

Jordan Schwan turned in a solid performance on the mound for Groton Area, working five innings while allowing just four hits and one unearned run. He struck out eight batters and walked two. SBW pitcher Drew Heitmann earned the win after tossing five scoreless innings, giving up three hits while striking out six.

Braden Fliehs, Sam Crank and Case Reints each recorded a hit for the Tigers in the loss. Lincoln Kilker led SBW offensively by going 2-for-3 with the game’s lone RBI.

The second game saw SBW jump out quickly with four runs in the opening inning, taking advantage of an error along with RBI hits from Max Suther, Emmett Symens and Nate Schuller.

The Mallards added another run in the second inning before breaking the game open with five more runs in the third. Symens delivered an RBI double during the inning while Jackson Stickland, Kilker, Carter Grobe and Heitmann also drove in runs.

Groton Area collected three hits in the contest from Kolton Antonsen, John Bisbee and Sam Crank. Asher Zimmerman drove in a run for the Tigers, while Zach Fliehs drew two walks as Groton showed patience at the plate with seven total walks. The Tigers also swiped five bases during the game.

Wesley Borg took the loss on the mound for Groton Area, allowing 12 runs, eight earned, over five innings of work.

SBW finished with 12 hits in the game, led by Symens, who went 3-for-3 at the plate. Kilker drove in four runs, while Stickland and Suther each added multiple hits.



Jordan Schwan pitches with 2nd baseman Wesley Borg looking on in Mondays Groton vs SBW (Sisseton, Britton, and Waubay). (Photo by Bruce Babcock)

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Hufton at 7:30 a.m.
James at 8:15 a.m.
Verdon at 8:45 a.m.
Bates-Scotland at 9:15 a.m.
Ferney at 10 a.m.
Andover Catholic at 11 a.m.

Groton at Noon
Guest speaker at Groton is Aaron Walberg, the Brown County Veterans Service Officer.
Lunch to follow at the Groton Post #39 home served by the Legion Auxiliary.

In the event of inclement weather, the ceremony will be held at the Post home.



By David Adler

Supreme Court Usurps Congressional Power, Destroys Voting Rights Act, Ignores 15th Amendment

The Supreme Court last week delivered in *Callais v. Louisiana* a ruling that demolished the landmark 1965 Voting Rights Act, widely characterized as the crown jewel of the civil rights movement for its essential role as the statutory enforcement mechanism for breathing life into the 15th Amendment guarantee of Black voting rights, and its pursuit of racially equal electoral opportunity, a fair chance for representation and democracy. The 15th Amendment declares that a citizen's right to vote "shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude." The Amendment vests in Congress sweeping authority to pass "appropriate legislation" to enforce it, which it exercised in enacting the historic Voting Rights Act. The Court's ruling gutted a core part of the statute and will have the effect of excluding people of color from the political process.

Justice Samuel Alito's 6-3 opinion for the Court in *Callais*, striking down Louisiana's congressional map on grounds that the creation of a majority-minority district--designed to provide representation for Black voters--represents an unconstitutional racial gerrymander, and is a striking exercise in judicial usurpation of the lawmaking power of Congress for its rewriting of the text of the Voting Rights Act. Section 2 of the VRA prohibited states from passing laws to "deny or abridge" the right to vote, "on account of race or color." In 1982, Congress, with the support of President Ronald Reagan, amended the statute, and strengthened its anti-discrimination purpose, after the Supreme Court upheld in a 1980 case that involved the City of Mobile, Alabama's at-large election system for choosing members of a commission, when it articulated a narrow holding that section 2 of the VRA is not violated unless governmental action is "motivated by a discriminatory purpose." Unhappy with the judicial creation of proof of discrimination as a standard that would facilitate circumvention of Section 2, Congress overruled the decision by changing the statutory language so that states may not impose any electoral rule that "results in a denial or abridgement" of voting rights on account of race. By replacing "intent" with "results," Congress provided a standard that could be readily recognized and remedied.

In *Callais*, however, Justice Alito wholly ignored the fact that Congress had amended the Act as a direct repudiation of the Court's test and defiantly resurrected the standard that Congress had rejected. In a blistering dissent, Justice Elena Kagan wrote that the ruling leaves the Voting rights Act as "all but a dead letter," and called out Alito's offense with a reminder of constitutional fundamentals: Congress writes the laws and the Court's job is to interpret the law, not rewrite a statute that the Justices do not like. In a nutshell, the Court's ruling represents a grave blow to racial equality, particularly in the South. Elections scholar, Rick Hasen, has warned: "This decision will bleach the halls of Congress, state legislatures, and local bodies like city councils." Scholars rightly fear the fastest, and largest, rollback in congressional representation since the end of Reconstruction.

The "intentionality" test will prove nearly impossible to satisfy. Justice Alito seems to have been unable to resist a rather smug prescription for defeating efforts that challenge district drawings on grounds of racial discrimination. Since partisan gerrymandering was upheld by the Court in *Rucho v. Common Cause*, in 2019, Alito declared in *Callais* that states are free to gerrymander for partisan advantage. He said, "litigants cannot circumvent *Rucho* by dressing their political gerrymandering claims in racial garb." Alito's cynical advice to legislators eager to maximize their power at the expense of political participation for Black voters, does not easily fit the portrait of Supreme Court Justices who simply call balls and strikes.

The denial of representation to Black voters, for that is what racial gerrymandering amounts to, is an offense to the goals of racial equality and democracy. To be clear, the VRA has never required racial proportionality in drawing voting districts, but just the chance to participate in the shaping of laws and the selection of our representatives. Voting is a right, after all, but racial gerrymandering, engineered to dilute the voting power of people of color, hollows out the right of political citizenship, a right that most Americans believe is central to representative government.

Next steps for facilities master plan discussed, handful of personnel items approved at Groton School Board meeting

by Elizabeth Varin

Members of the Groton Area School District Board on Tuesday morning continued discussions on the district's long-range facilities master plan, weighing possible paths forward for addressing future building and infrastructure needs.

Since October, district officials have been working with Co-Op Architects to examine the use and condition of the district's current facilities and create a plan moving forward.

The overall master plan presented to the board in April includes three phases

The first phase would include building a two-story addition east of the middle/high school office that includes core academic classrooms. A section on the southern side of the high school known as the 1934 addition would then be demolished.

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.

During Tuesday's meeting, Superintendent Joe Schwan told the board they would now have to decide how they want to move forward. The three phases are estimated to cost \$27 million, and, if the board wants to move forward with something, that price tag would not be able to be covered out of the capital outlay fund.

The board discussed financing options, including bringing a bond issue before voters and combining a bond with capital outlay certificates.

Board member Tigh Fliehs, who sits on the Buildings, Grounds and Transportation Committee for the district, expressed hesitation about strapping down the capital outlay fund with a project like this.

The district's capital outlay is used for expenses like text books, technology equipment and facility maintenance. However, since a 2016 state aid calculation change, the district had supplemented the general fund by transferring money from the capital outlay fund into the general fund for operational expenses. That changed after the district proposed and voters approved an opt-out of tax levy limitations in 2024, allowing the district to impose the excess tax -- a maximum of \$1.25 million per year.

If capital outlay certificates were included in the funding proposal, Superintendent Schwan said it could bring the district back to a situation where a good amount of capital outlay funds would have to go toward repaying those certificates.

Board members expressed agreement that the construction will have to get done eventually.

"I think it would be ideal to get going because nothing gets cheaper," said Board Vice President Nick Strom. "If we pass it (a bond), it's still going to be a process to get it done."

Board members asked about timelines to put a bond measure up for vote. However, no formal action was taken.

Schwan told the board he would get in touch with Co-Op Architects to determine the next steps, look into the timeline for public meetings and bring more information back about capital outlay certificates vs. a bond.

In other business, the board reviewed a preliminary budget for the upcoming fiscal year and approved several personnel items.

The board approved two retirements -- paraprofessional Barb Hoops and high school social studies teacher Scott Thorson -- effective at the end of the school year. The board also approved middle school math teacher Eric Swenson's resignation, though soon after they approved hiring him as the new high school industrial technology teacher for the 2026-2027 school year.

The board also approved hiring Jordan Carson as head football coach for the 2026-2027 school year. The position opened up in April when Shaun Wanner submitted his resignation as head football coach, though he will still be a social science teacher at the high school.

The board also approved hiring Shane Macomber as a maintenance team member effective April 29, as well as hiring Landon Brown as a summer OST worker.

The board accepted the resignation of Lance Hawkins as junior high football coach pending being able to find a suitable replacement. That does not include Hawkins other role at the school, middle school math/science teacher.

The board also approved summer employment agreements for maintenance help, Connect 4Ed Summer School and Special Education Extended School Year.

Business Manager Becky Hubsch presented an overview of the preliminary 2027 fiscal year district budget. A larger presentation is expected at the district's June meeting.

Other notable finishes for the girls included third place from Hallie Perkins in the 1600 meters and fourth place from Lillian Davis in the

Boy's Division
Boy's Seventh Grade Team Points: 1. Milbank 166, 2. Sisseton 123, 2. Milbank 104, 3. Clark/Willow Lake 78, 4. Webster Area 57, 5. Hamlin 48, 6. Groton Area 13.
Boy's Eighth Grade Team Points: 1. Milbank 166, 2. Groton Area 85, 3. Webster Area 65, 4. Sisseton 49, 5. Clark/Willow Lake 45, 6. Hamlin 4.
100 Meters 7th Grade: 6. Quinton Flores, 13.6; 23. Jack Schuelke, 15.5; 26. Micah Krause, 15.9; 32. Hank Fliehs, 17.0; 33. Weston Kettner, 17.7.
100 Meters 8th Grade: 2. Trey Tietz, 12.6; 3. Ivan Schwan, 12.8; 6. Trayce Schelle, 12.9; 6. Liam Lord, 12.9; 12. Wyatt Morehouse, 15.2.
200 Meters 7th Grade: 13. Jack Schuelke, 33.2; 16. Micah Krause, 35.4; 17. Weston Kettner, 42.5; 18. Hayden Hubbart, 42.7.
200 Meters 8th Grade: 2. Ivan Schwan, 26.5; 8. Wyatt Morehouse, 31.6; 11. Gavin Hanten, 33.4.
400 Meters 8th Grade: 1. Kyson Kucker, 55.6; 2. Keegan Kucker, 59.6; 4. Liam Lord, 1:02.9.
800 Meters 7th Grade: 3. Quinton Flores, 2:40.2; 10. Hayden Hubbart, 3:30.4.
4x100 Relay 7th Grade:
 3. Groton: (Quinton Flores, Jack Schuelke, Micah Krause, Ivan Schwan), 56.4.
4x100 Relay 8th Grade: 1. Groton: (Keegan Kucker, Kyson Kucker, Trayce Schelle, Trey Tietz), 50.0; 4. Groton: (Bentley Harms, Gavin Hanten, Liam Johnson, Wyatt Morehouse), 58.1.
4x400 Relay 8th Grade: 1. Groton: (Trey Tietz, Keegan Kucker, Liam Lord, Kyson Kucker), 3:53.5.
Shot Put - 8lb 7th Grade: 14. Hank Fliehs, 21' 5.5"; 16. Grayson Warrington, 19' 7".
Shot Put - 8lb 8th Grade:
 2. Liam Johnson, 35' 6.5"; 12. Bentley Harms, 25' 1"; 13. Gavin Hanten, 24' 4".
Discus - 1kg 7th Grade: 14. Grayson Warrington, 49' 10"; 16. Hank Fliehs, 40' 3".
Discus - 1kg 8th Grade: 7. Liam Johnson, 83' 8"; 8. Bentley Harms, 71' 9"; 11. Gavin Hanten, 69' 4".
High Jump 8th Grade: 1. Trayce Schelle, 5' 0".
Long Jump 7th Grade: 14. Jack Schuelke, 10' 10.5"; 18. Weston Kettner, 9' 0.5".

Girl's Division
Girl's Seventh Grade Team Points: 1. Groton Area 115.25, 2. Milbank 93.5, 3. Hamlin 82, 4. Webster Area 70.25, 5. Sisseton 56, 6. Clark/Willow Lake 28.
Girl's Eighth Grade Team Points: 1. Sisseton 145, 2. Milbank 107, 3. Webster Area 59, 4. Hamlin 37, 5. Clark/Willow Lake 36, 6. Groton Area 30.
100 Meters 7th Grade: 1. Libby Johnson, 14.0; 3. Mya Moody, 14.5; 5. Shealee Gilchrist, 15.0; 6. Zoe Olson, 15.0; 5. Addison Steffes, 15.0; 16. Hadley Heilman, 16.15B; 16. Gracie Borg, 16.1; 20. Harley Furman, 16.2; 24. Lennox Locke, 17.0; 26. Hallie Perkins, 17.6.
200 Meters 7th Grade: 1. Kinley Sandness, 29.8; 3. Libby Johnson, 30.0; 5. Addison Steffes, 31.7; 6. Zoe Olson, 32.0; 9. Shealee Gilchrist, 32.4; 13. Lillian Davis, 33.6; 14. Harley Furman, 33.8; 15. Gracie Borg, 34.1; 15. Rowan Hanson, 34.1; 17. Hadley Heilman, 34.4; 19. Lennox Locke, 35.3.
400 Meters 7th Grade: 1. Avery Huber, 1:10.9; 2. Taylor Fliehs, 1:11.5; 8. Rowan Hanson, 1:16.3.
400 Meters 8th Grade: 4. Rowan Patterson, 1:11.7.
800 Meters 7th Grade: 1. Taylor Fliehs, 2:56.3.
1600 Meters 7th Grade: 3. Hallie Perkins, 7:43.2.
100m Hurdles - 30" / 0.762m 7th Grade: 1. Charli Jacobsen, 18.6; 4. Addison Steffes, 20.7; 12. Hallie Perkins, 23.6.
4x100 Relay 7th Grade: 2. Groton: (Mya Moody, Zoe Olson, Charli Jacobsen, Shealee Gilchrist), 59.3.
4x100 Relay 8th Grade: 1. Groton: (Andi Iverson, Kinley Sandness, Rowan Patterson, Avery Huber), 57.7.
4x200 Relay 7th Grade: 1. Groton: (Shealee Gilchrist, Charli Jacobsen, Mya Moody, Zoe Olson), 2:05.1.
4x200 Relay 8th Grade: 1. Groton: Libby Johnson, Kinley Sandness, Rowan Patterson, Andi Iverson), 1:59.9.
4x400 Relay 7th Grade: 1. Groton: (Taylor Fliehs, Avery Huber, Andi Iverson, Brynlee Dunker), 4:59.4.
SMR 800m - [100-100-200-400] 8th Grade: 3. Groton: (Rowan Patterson, Kinley Sandness, Avery Huber, Andi Iverson), 2:12.7.
Shot Put - 6lb 7th Grade: 7. Lillian Davis, 24' 2.5"; 10. Hadley Heilman, 20' 6".
Shot Put - 6lb 8th Grade: 9. Andi Gauer, 22' 0.5".
Discus - 1kg 7th Grade: 4. Lillian Davis, 47' 8".
Discus - 1kg 8th Grade: 13. Andi Gauer, 43' 5".

A prayer for peace was said, and the meeting adjourned.
The next meeting will be on Tuesday, September 8, at 6 pm. Deb and Tami will serve lunch.

WE RESERVE THE RIGHT TO LIMIT QUANTITIES AND CORRECT TYPOGRAPHICAL AND PICTORIAL ERRORS. NONE SOLD TO DEALERS. SOME ITEMS MAY NOT BE AVAILABLE AT ALL STORES.
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