

Groton Daily Independent

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Friday, January 29

Debate at Yankton

School Breakfast: Egg and cheese omelet, fruit, juice, milk.

School Lunch: BBQ, tater tots, carrots and dip, fruit.

Senior Menu: Breaded codfish, parsley buttered potatoes, coleslaw, orange sherbet, whole wheat bread.

Birthdays: Dorene Nelson, Glenda LaMee, Loren Wheeler

5:15pm: BBB host Sisseton (C at 5:15, JV at 6:30, Varsity at 8:00)

Saturday, January 30

Debate at Yankton

Birthdays: Mary Kay Houdek, Patty Baule, Trevor Harry

10:00am: Groton Wrestling Tourney

3:00pm: GBB at Gettysburg

4:30pm: St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church Mass

Sunday, January 31

Birthdays: Ann Sheridan, Emma Jo Larson

9:00am: Emmanuel Lutheran School

9:00am: St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church Mass

9:00am: St. John's Lutheran Worship

9:30am: Emmanuel Lutheran Fellowship

10:00am: Heaven Bound Ministries worship at Pierpont Church

10:00am: St. John's Lutheran School

10:15am: Emmanuel Lutheran worship / annual meeting

11:00am: United Methodist Church Worship

2:00pm: Carnival of Silver Skates

3:00pm: JK-8th Open Gym

5:00pm: Open Gym for 6th-8th Grade

6:30pm: Carnival of Silver Skates

Open: Recycling Trailer in Groton
The recycling trailer is located at 10 East Railroad Ave.

The cardboard/paper

recycling trailer at the school is **Open**

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Groton Daily
INDEPENDENT

110 N Washington St., Groton
www.397news.com ~ 397-NEWS (6397) Paul: 397-7460

Follow The Groton
Activities On-Line



Paul Irvin Kosel and Justin Olson
Julianna and Jeslyn Kosel

gdilive.com

Coming up this week at gdilive.com

Thursday, Jan. 28: Girls' Basketball at Sisseton (Varsity only)

Friday, Jan. 29: Boys' Basketball hosting Sisseton (JV and Varsity)

Saturday, Jan. 30: Girls' Basketball at Gettysburg (Varsity only)

Saturday, Jan. 30: Groton Wrestling Tournament

Sunday, Jan. 31: 2 p.m. Performance of the Carnival of Silver Skates

Ready to bring your heart and expertise to a team that feels more like a family? Bring your passion for patient care to the Golden LivingCenter in Groton. The Groton facility is now hiring for CNAs and Nurses. They have new wages with an excellent benefits package. All shifts are open. Join the team today by calling Jessica at 397-2365. The Golden LivingCenter of Groton is looking for you!

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Report from Pierre from Rep. Dennis Feickert, District 1

We've just wrapped up the third week of the 91st Legislative Session. We ended this week on the 12th Legislative Day out of 38 total, so that means 26 more days to get it all done. There are many issues which directly affect District 1 counties which include Brown, Marshall, Roberts, and Day.

As I've mentioned before, I have previously served as a Brown County Commissioner, so I believe I understand better than most the financial challenges facing county government. Each of the eight Legislative Sessions in which I've served, county governments have come to Pierre to approach legislators on funding needs.

Counties have justifiable concerns over the escalating costs of providing law enforcements and judicial services. Counties however are often limited in revenue options, especially compared to municipalities. Last year's attempt to raise revenues for roads and bridges still put counties in the difficult position of having to pass a local wheel tax in order to get more money for county roads and bridges.

A proposal to redistribute state tax collections on alcohol sales, and cut counties in for 25 percent, is an attempt to reverse that trend. It would shift about \$3.8 million from state government to be shared among South Dakota's 66 counties. The bill overwhelmingly passed the state Senate with a 28-5 vote and will now head to the House. The quarter on every dollar of alcohol tax collected, distributed on basis of county population would amount to a new revenue stream for our counties. Here's approximately how much would be distributed to District 1 counties: Brown County (\$150, 200); Marshall (\$31,600); Roberts (\$51,600); and Day (\$34,800). It won't fix all the problems, but it's a start.

Another topic which certainly affects our local communities is providing ambulance services. This is most often the first line of defense for our small towns without a local health care clinic. Local ambulance services are essential to our state, and most are run through volunteers. This is not a small commitment, as even the basic EMT training requires 160 hours of training in addition to continuing education hours.

Some changes in the system of certification for ambulance services were recommended by an EMT Stakeholder's Workgroup which met over the summer. I served on this group and will be closely following several pieces of legislation which came out of this group.

Current law requires two techs on both emergency runs and transfer runs. If an ambulance service doesn't have two EMTs available 24-7, they must apply for a hardship exemption which allows one EMT and a non-EMT driver. Following a public hearing, these exemptions may be granted for one year. (SD has 123 licensed ambulance services with 31 on a hardship exemption). All these communities are struggling to provide EMTs, especially in rural areas. The rule change would eliminate the "hardship exemption" status, and instead allow new standards which would require one EMT and one driver who must now meet a minimum standard of training including CPR certification.

It's one those changes in state law which could literally save someone's life by making it easier for those vital ambulance serves to continue to exist in SD.

Thank you so much for the opportunity to serve you, the residents of District 1. Please feel free to contact me at rep.feickert@state.sd.us or call me at 605-216-3451 with any questions, concerns or comments. If you plan to travel to Pierre during the legislative session, please let me know as I would be honored to meet with everyone from back home in District 1.

Lady Tigers drop close game to Sisseton

Groton Area girls team lost to Sisseton Thursday night in Sisseton, 40-36. The Redmen led at the quarterstops at 13-9, 20-16 and 27-26.

Audrey Wanner led the Tigers with 15 points followed by Carly Wheeting with nine, Katie Koehler and Jessica Bjerke with five each and Harleigh Stange added two points.

Groton was 13 of 37 in field goals for 35 percent, was six of 10 from the line for 60 percent, had 33 rebounds with Koehler having nine, four assists with Koehler having two, four steals with Hanson having two, Bjerke had one block and the Tiges had 23 turnovers and 14 fouls.

Four players did all the scoring for Sisseton with Shayli Toelle and Laci LaFromboise with 12 each, Alyssa Magnuson had 10 and Cami Goodhart added six points.

Sisseton made 16 of 42 field goals for 38 percent, had 11 fouls, 15 steals, nine assists and 19 rebounds with Toelle and Magnonsen each having four.

Sisseton won the C game, 34-26. Eliza Wanner had eight, Madison Sippel six, Sam Menzia five, Portia Kettering and Kaycie Hawkins with three each and Nicole Marzahn added one point.

Kellie Karst led the Redmen with five three-pointers for 15 points.

Sisseton won the junior varsity game, 39-34. Miranda Hanson led Groton with 15 points followed by Payton Maine with seven, Gia Gengerke six and Alex Stange, Taylor Holm and Portia Kettering each having two points. Gena Cornelius led the Redmen with 10 points and Libby Medenwald had eight.

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Today in Weather History

January 29, 2008: Arctic air combined with strong northwest winds of 20 to 40 mph to bring extreme wind chills to much of north central and northeast South Dakota. The extreme wind chills began in the morning hours of January 29th across all of the area. The wind chills improved across north central South Dakota by the evening and improved across northeast South Dakota during the morning hours of January 30th. The extreme wind chills ranged from 35 to 50 degrees below zero across the area. The extreme cold caused school delays and activity cancellations along with much discomfort to people and livestock. On Monday January 28th, the day before the extreme cold, a southerly flow brought very mild temperatures with some record highs set at several locations. Highs were in the 40s to the mid-50s across central and northeast South Dakota. When the Arctic front came through on January 28th, temperatures fell dramatically through the evening and early morning with below zero temperatures by Tuesday morning, January 29th. In fact, most locations across the area had a 40 to 55 degree temperature change from the 28th to the 29th.

1921: A small but intense windstorm resulted in the "Great Olympic Blowdown" in the Pacific Northwest. Hurricane force winds, funneled along the mountains, downed vast expanses of Douglas fir trees, and the storm destroyed eight billion board feet of timber. Winds at North Head WA gusted to 113 mph. On January 31, 1921, the International News Services reported from Aberdeen, Washington, "It is reported that thousands of dollars in damage was done to buildings and storms in Aberdeen and Hoquiam. The wind velocity was estimated at from 125 to 150 miles an hour. Four steel smokestack reaching almost 200 feet into the air were the first to collapse before the terrific onslaught of the gale. The giant chimneys crashed down on dwellings crushing them like houses of cardboard."

1947: On this date through the 30th, a fierce winter storm buried southern Wisconsin under two feet of snow. Strong northeasterly winds piled drifts up to 10 feet high in the Milwaukee area, shutting down the city for two days.



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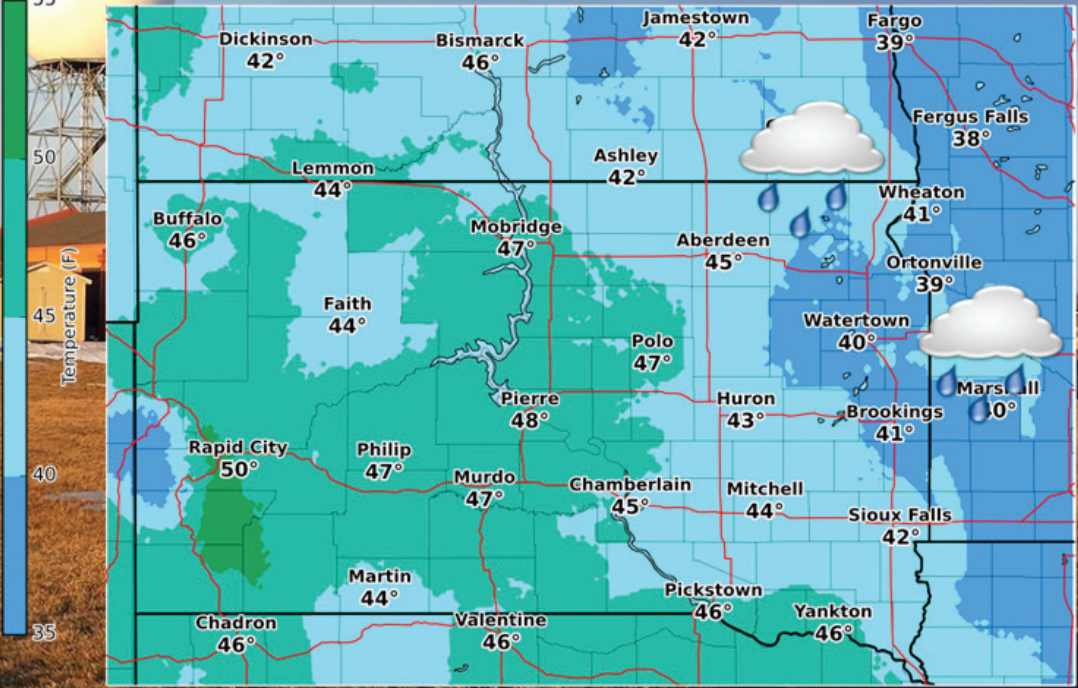
Today	Tonight	Saturday	Saturday Night	Sunday	Sunday Night	Monday
						
Mostly Sunny then Slight Chance Rain	Mostly Cloudy	Mostly Cloudy then Slight Chance Rain	Mostly Cloudy	Mostly Cloudy	Mostly Cloudy	Partly Sunny
High: 45 °F	Low: 29 °F	High: 38 °F	Low: 22 °F	High: 35 °F	Low: 19 °F	High: 29 °F



Warm Today!

- Light rain possible this afternoon
- Warm temperatures persist through the weekend





Dickinson	42°	Bismarck	46°	Jamestown	42°	Fargo	39°
Lemmon	44°	Ashley	42°	Fergus Falls	38°	Wheaton	41°
Buffalo	46°	Mobridge	47°	Aberdeen	45°	Ortonville	39°
Faith	44°	Pierre	48°	Polo	47°	Watertown	40°
Rapid City	50°	Philip	47°	Huron	43°	Brookings	41°
Chadron	46°	Murdo	47°	Chamberlain	45°	Mitchell	44°
Martin	44°	Valentine	46°	Pickstown	46°	Sioux Falls	42°
Yankton	46°					Mars Hill	40°

National Weather Service – Aberdeen, SD

weather.gov/Aberdeen
National Weather Service Aberdeen
@NWSAberdeen
Updated: 1/29/2016 5:20 AM Central

Published on: 01/29/2016 at 5:24AM

A fast moving low pressure system will bring light rain to parts of far northeast SD and west central MN this afternoon. Otherwise, expect temperatures well above normal for this time of the year. The warm trend will continue through the weekend, although another chance for light rain or light snow returns for Sunday.

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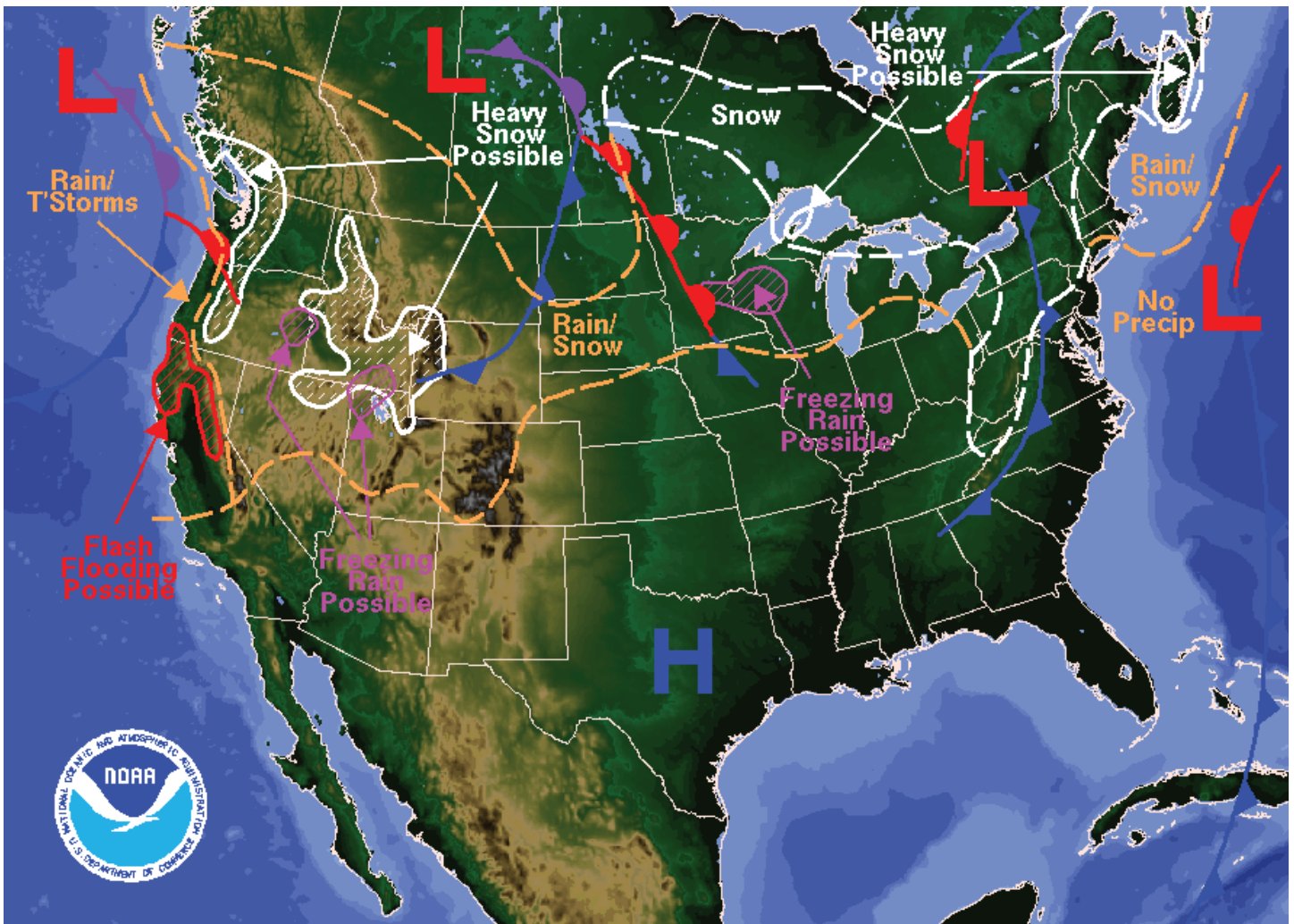
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Yesterday's Weather

High: 34.3
Low: 31.2
High Gust: 21
Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 58° in 1931
Record Low: -32° in 1951
Average High: 24°F
Average Low: 2°F
Average Precip in Jan.: 0.44
Precip to date in Jan.: 0.00
Average Precip to date: 0.434
Precip Year to Date: 0.00
Sunset Tonight: 5:35 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:57 a.m.



Weather Forecast for Fri, Jan 29, 2016, issued 3:02 AM EST
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by McCreynolds based on WPC, SPC and NHC forecasts



FEELING FORSAKEN?

He became seriously ill, felt friendless and had no money. In desperation, George Handel cried out loud: "My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" In the midst of his misery, a friend walked into his home and handed him a text from the Bible. He said to Handel, "The Lord gave me these words."

Handel began to leaf through the text looking for something familiar. Suddenly his eyes focused on the verse, "He was despised and rejected of men." He became inspired by the Lord and began to put the words to music.

Night and day, for twenty-four days, he kept writing. Finally, he finished the script of the Hallelujah Chorus and cried, "I saw all heaven before me, and the great God Himself."

Discouragement is no stranger to the Christian. Neither are fleeting moments of depression. One of our best solutions in times of distress is to turn to the Word of God and claim His promises. The Psalmist said, "Why am I discouraged? Why so sad? I will put my hope in God! I will praise Him again – My Savior and my God." When we place our hope in God and praise Him, life always improves!

Prayer: Help me, Lord, to focus on Your promises in times of doubt, moments of distress, and days of discouragement. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 42:5-6 Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.

News from the Associated Press

City council hampered by resignations back in business

HARTFORD, S.D. (AP) — City government is back in business in Hartford.

The City Council in the town of 2,500 people had been unable to meet or do business in the wake of a succession of resignations after a split vote last summer to remove the city's economic development director.

The remaining three council members and the mayor on Thursday appointed a zoning board member to fill a vacancy, giving the council a quorum. The group can once again pay bills, discuss city projects and vote on contracts.

Two council members quit in November after a contentious vote on recall petitions from the citizen group Growing Hartford. A third councilman resigned earlier this month amid questions about the veracity of an offensive email he said had come from a Growing Hartford member.

State searching for foster families in Black Hills area

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The Department of Social Services is searching for people who want to know more about the need for foster families in the Black Hills area.

The agency says when placing a child with a family member isn't a possibility, the department turns to foster families.

Child Protective Services Director Virgena Wieseler says children who enter foster care may have medical or emotional needs. The agency is looking for families who are able to care for those children.

The department says more families are needed in the Black Hills who are willing to keep siblings together. The agency also says families are needed who can take care of children with medical needs and welcome children between ages 10 and 18.

Regents to consider USD request to allow multi-year contract

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Board of Regents is meeting Friday morning to consider a request by the University of South Dakota to temporarily suspend its policy prohibiting multiyear contracts so the school can officially sign its new head football coach.

School officials announced the hiring of Western Illinois coach Bob Nielson in December, and Nielson has been busy assembling his staff after agreeing to a \$255,000 annual salary. But Nielson is seeking a long-term commitment, and current policy only allows one-year contracts for employees.

Regents Executive Director Michael Rush says he expects the board will approve the one-time suspension during its morning teleconference, and a separate vote would direct staff to develop a policy to deal with the matter on a more permanent basis.

Thursday's Scores

The Associated Press

BOYS' BASKETBALL

Arlington 50, Dell Rapids St. Mary 30

Boyd County, Neb. 66, Burke/South Central 34

Centerville 54, Viborg-Hurley 39

Colman-Egan 77, Lake Preston 60

Custer 77, Douglas 76

Dell Rapids 60, Vermillion 59

Elkton-Lake Benton 40, Deubrook 31

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Ethan 59, Mitchell Christian 49
Faulkton 58, Leola/Frederick 54
Gayville-Volin 53, Bloomfield, Neb. 45
Gregory 73, Avon 49
Hamlin 58, Webster 50
Herreid/Selby Area 80, Timber Lake 39
Hill City 73, Wall 42
Ipswich 56, Aberdeen Christian 40
Irene-Wakonda 83, Freeman Academy 38
Lennox 72, Parkston 60
Philip 57, Dupree 45
Red Cloud 73, Lead-Deadwood 19
Sioux Falls O'Gorman 53, Sioux Falls Roosevelt 46
Sioux Falls Washington 56, Sioux Falls Lincoln 54
Solen JV, N.D. 66, Wakpala 22
St. Thomas More 55, Sturgis Brown 47
Sully Buttes 56, Hitchcock-Tulare 48
Wagner 70, Scotland 50
Waubay/Summit 54, Wilmot 49
Waverly-South Shore 51, Florence/Henry 32
Yankton 60, Harrisburg 53
Dakota Oyate Challenge
First Round
Flandreau Indian 65, Crow Creek 59
Lower Brule 73, Tiospa Zina Tribal 60
Marty Indian 66, Crazy Horse 28
Omaha Nation, Neb. 90, Takini 42
GIRLS' BASKETBALL
Andes Central/Dakota Christian 65, Bon Homme 29
Boyd County, Neb. 43, Burke/South Central 29
Brandon Valley 52, Mitchell 25
Custer 63, Douglas 52
Dell Rapids 54, Vermillion 44
Ethan 58, Mitchell Christian 22
Faith 62, Rapid City Christian 13
Freeman 73, Canistota 38
Gayville-Volin 50, Bloomfield, Neb. 47
Hanson 73, Kimball/White Lake 36
Harrisburg 54, Yankton 44
Herreid/Selby Area 44, Timber Lake 40
Irene-Wakonda 60, Freeman Academy 19
Jones County 74, Kadoka Area 36
Lead-Deadwood 56, Red Cloud 45
Lennox 46, Beresford 40
Leola/Frederick 47, Faulkton 30
Lyman 57, Highmore-Harrold 36
Philip 39, Dupree 23
Pine Ridge 72, Todd County 61
Rosholt 55, Great Plains Lutheran 44
Sanborn Central/Woonsocket 61, Wessington Springs 9

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Sisseton 40, Groton Area 36
St. Thomas More 61, Sturgis Brown 15
Sully Buttes 75, Hitchcock-Tulare 36
Tea Area 50, Madison 42
Viborg-Hurley 73, Centerville 62
Wakpala 48, Solen, N.D. 45
Webster 53, Hamlin 46
Big East Conference Tournament
First Round
Chester 43, Flandreau 38
Howard 43, Parker 36
McCook Central/Montrose 46, Baltic 19
Sioux Valley 64, Garretson 25
Dakota Oyate Challenge
First Round
Crow Creek 47, Flandreau Indian 40
Omaha Nation, Neb. 75, Takini 29
Tiospa Zina Tribal 53, Crazy Horse 11

Denver beats South Dakota 66-52

DENVER (AP) — Freshman Thomas Neff scored a career-high 16 points, draining 4 of 8 3-point shots, and Denver snapped a three-game losing skid with a 66-52 defeat of South Dakota on Thursday night.

Marcus Byrd added 14 points and Joe Rosga 13 for Denver. The Pioneers (11-10, 3-5 Summit) never trailed and led by as many as 19 when Byrd pump-faked and then scored an easy jumper to make the lead 61-42 with 4:41 left to play.

South Dakota's Shy McClelland cut the gap to 32-28 with a basket five minutes into the second half, but Neff responded with a 3-pointer at the other end of the floor and the lead was up to 42-28 after a 10-0 run.

D.J. Davis had 12 points to lead South Dakota (10-12, 2-6), which lost five of its last six games. The Coyotes made two 3-pointers to 10 for Denver.

South Dakota State beats Omaha 87-76

BROOKINGS, S.D. (AP) — George Marshall tied a career high with 28 points on 11-of-15 shooting and South Dakota State beat Omaha 87-76 Thursday night.

South Dakota State tied Omaha and IPFW for first place in the Summit League.

The Jackrabbits (17-5, 6-2) pulled away early in the second half with a 12-0 run to lead 55-43 and Omaha (14-8, 6-2) got no closer than eight the rest of the way.

Marshall scored 16 in the first half when South Dakota State led by as many as 13. The Mavericks had a 17-4 run spanning both halves to tie it at 43, but they missed their next eight field-goal attempts while the Jackrabbits rallied.

Deondre Parks scored 22 and Mike Daum 16 for South Dakota State.

Jake White had 18 points and Tim Smallwood had 15 for Omaha. Devin Patterson added 14 points, Tre'Shawn Thurman scored 13 and Tra-Deon Hollins 11.

Nevada governor seeks change in sage grouse mining rule

SCOTT SONNER, Associated Press

RENO, Nev. (AP) — The governor of gold-rich Nevada is pressing the Obama administration to alter its sage grouse protection plan to free up thousands of mining claims by shrinking the restricted area in

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exchange for making other unprotected areas off limits, restoring burned out rangeland and reining in wild horse herds.

Gov. Brian Sandoval maintains his alternative would exclude only about 6 percent of the federal land the government has temporarily withdrawn from future mineral development in Nevada. Previously unverified mining claims in the state are effectively frozen across 4,200 square miles — a swath nearly as large as Connecticut.

The moderate Republican wants to swap about one-fifth of the withdrawn area, some 555,000 acres, for 394,000 alternative acres he says contain higher quality habitat more critical to the survival of the imperiled bird, according to interviews with his aides and documents obtained by The Associated Press.

Interior Secretary Sally Jewell decided in September the greater sage grouse didn't warrant Endangered Species Act protection across 11 western states, where its numbers once totaling an estimated 16 million have dwindled to as few as 200,000.

But almost simultaneously, the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management adopted new regulations restricting development around grouse habitat that some critics say are just as onerous as endangered species protection for ranchers, miners and others.

Jewell also initiated a 2-year ban on new mining exploration in grouse habitat while the government studies whether tens of thousands of square miles across the West should be withdrawn from potential "mineral entry" for another 10 years.

In a Jan. 15 letter to BLM Director Neil Kornze, Sandoval argued a more effective way to protect the chicken-sized bird is to step up wildfire restoration and reduce "out-of-control" mustang populations. He says there's no scientific basis for the mining withdrawal, but asks that if necessary, it be limited to a maximum of five years. He also urged federal officials to clarify their "confusing" definition of "valid existing claims," which Jewell insists are exempt.

In detailed comments attached to the letter, Sandoval's office outlined the plan he says would protect 49 additional leks — the bird's traditional breeding grounds — while dropping protection of five others in the government blueprint.

Slightly shifting protection boundaries based on new maps would release all but 1 percent of the 3,726 mining claims currently in limbo in the biggest U.S. gold-producing state, he said.

"Nevada has developed maps that propose better boundaries that take into account existing mining operations and exploration activities that are crucial to the economy of Nevada and the nation," Sandoval wrote.

Nevada's mining industry employs about 15,000 people, according to the Nevada Mining Association. It produced an estimated \$6.4 billion in goods and services in 2014, which accounted for about 5 percent of the state's total gross domestic product.

BLM Nevada spokesman Stephen Clutter said the agency appreciates Sandoval's leadership on the issue.

"We will certainly give serious consideration to these ideas as well as the other scoping comments we have received," Clutter said.

Sandoval joined Jewell at her listing announcement in Denver in September, and started lobbying her directly on alternative approaches during a private meeting at a Western Governors' Association meeting in Las Vegas in December.

His refusal to join a lawsuit intended to block implementation of all new grouse protections — backed by his fellow GOP Attorney General Adam Laxalt — has drawn the ire of rural leaders who fear the regulations could put mines and ranches out of business. But last month, U.S. District Judge Miranda Du refused to grant a temporary injunction freezing the rules, which means a trial won't begin in Reno before mid-summer.

Sandoval maintains that offering reasonable, detailed alternatives is the only realistic way to win any relief, especially for mining companies in Nevada with claims at varying stages of development. He believes the government's plan "will not be able to show any measurable results except for the demise of the mineral exploration industry in Nevada."

"This is ultimately the most viable option on the table at this time," said Pam Robinson, his policy director.

Secretary Jewell has assured all "valid existing claims" are exempt from the mining withdrawal. But Nevada officials say the federal government's definition of such claims is vague and doesn't include many

situations where companies have already invested hundreds of thousands of dollars in exploration and paid required claim fees to the federal government.

"Someone in the middle of the exploration process who has been paying their claim fees should be considered an existing right," said Pam Robinson, the governor's policy director.

Obama nominates North Dakota prosecutor for appeals court

FARGO, N.D. (AP) — President Barack Obama has nominated an assistant U.S. Attorney for North Dakota to serve as a federal appellate judge.

The president announced Thursday that he has selected Jennifer Puhl to serve on the Eighth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. She was chosen to succeed Judge Kermit Bye, who announced in 2014 that he would retire to "senior status" on the court.

Puhl must still be confirmed by the full U.S. Senate.

A North Dakota native, Puhl has worked in the U.S. Attorney's office in Fargo since 2002. She currently serves as a criminal supervisor and is also a member of the appellate team.

The 8th Circuit includes Arkansas, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota and South Dakota.

Plan requiring drug tests for welfare fails in committee

JAMES NORD, Associated Press

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A South Dakota measure that would require adult welfare applicants under age 65 to pass drug tests before receiving food stamps or cash assistance failed in a House committee Thursday.

The Health and Human Services committee voted not to send the measure to the House floor. Under the plan, welfare applicants who tested positive would have been barred from receiving such benefits for a year.

Rep. Lynne DiSanto, a Republican from Rapid City who sponsored the bill, said she wanted to create accountability for welfare recipients and that such testing could deter drug users from seeking public assistance or encourage them to get sober.

"If you have a parent that is receiving a subsidy through the state and they're using it to buy drugs, it's not getting to the children," she said. "We need to identify those families."

The measure would have required applicants to pay to be tested and allowed those who tested positive to contest decisions to deny them benefits.

Department of Social Services Secretary Lynne Valenti, who testified against the measure, said states with such requirements incur considerable expense implementing them yet find relatively few people failing the drug tests.

Valenti said federal law prohibits states from imposing extra conditions such as drug testing on recipients of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, which averages about 100,000 South Dakota participants per month.

Republican Gov. Dennis Daugaard has called the measure "somewhat insulting," saying that while he doesn't condone drug use, it would be unfair to require welfare beneficiaries to pass drug tests while not requiring that of people who receive other government benefits.

GOP Rep. Jacqueline Sly cited benefits such as college financial help, farm aid and corporate tax subsidies as other forms of government assistance that don't require drug testing.

"I feel that this is a very narrow focus, and it's focused on some of the people who are struggling to get their lives together," she said.

AP NewsBreak: Reports detail issues at reservation hospitals

REGINA GARCIA CANO, Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Broken sanitation equipment, a baby delivered unattended in a bathroom, doctors operating without credentials and lack of immediate care in the emergency department are among

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the dozens of serious deficiencies federal inspectors found last year during unannounced visits to two federally administered hospitals that provide care to Native Americans.

The Associated Press obtained records of the inspections, which were conducted in October and November by the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare at hospitals on the Pine Ridge and Rosebud Indian Reservations, showing that patients were receiving substandard services — so much so in one emergency room that it put lives at risk.

In turn, tribal leaders and health care policy experts are questioning the federal government's commitment to provide adequate care for tribal members, who by law have guaranteed access to free health care.

"It's a treaty right, but I have too many Oglalas walking around that are physically, ailing sick and nothing at all is being done to treat them, at all," Oglala Sioux Tribe President John Yellow Bird Steele said. "When they go to a doctor at Pine Ridge, he says, 'We don't have the capability of servicing you, I'm sending you to another hospital.'"

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services acknowledged in an email Thursday that the deficiencies cited in the report are "unacceptable."

"HHS, working with the Indian Health Service, has implemented a number of recent measures to ensure safe delivery of care for all patients, and we will take action in the coming days and weeks intended to further improve services at these facilities," the email said.

The inspections at the 45-bed Pine Ridge Hospital and the 35-bed Rosebud Hospital, both operated by the IHS, were conducted in late October and mid-November respectively.

The deficiencies at the Rosebud emergency room were so severe that the surveyors determined the failures constituted an "immediate jeopardy" situation, a term used when a hospital's actions — or lack thereof — have caused or are likely to cause serious injury, harm, impairment or death to a patient.

Of those deficiencies, records for a patient with a history of untreated tuberculosis didn't show that infection control measures were put in place while the person was treated, and when the patient was transferred to a different facility, no documentation was given about the person's infectious disease. And a patient having a heart attack was not seen by a medical provider, placed on telemetry or provided oxygen until 90 minutes after she arrived.

The regional office of the Indian Health Service closed the emergency department two weeks after the inspection. People in need of immediate care must go to hospitals outside of the reservation.

Other findings at Rosebud included:

— A sterilizer for the operating rooms had not been working for more than a year and a disinfecting machine had recently been fixed after six months of being out of order, forcing staff members to wash all surgical instruments by hand.

— A patient who insisted on walking to the bathroom on two occasions did so without nursing staff and ended up delivering a premature baby there. Only after the woman's boyfriend started yelling, "I need a Dr (doctor) the baby is on the floor," did a staff member find out.

Jerilyn Church, the Chief Executive Officer of the Great Plains Tribal Chairmen's Health Board, said the Indian Health Service for years has been grossly underfunded, which has resulted in staffing limitations and infrastructure deficiencies.

"For a while, you can cut corners and then there comes a point where equipment is obsolete, health management systems are out of date, facilities deteriorate, that's the consequence of a lack of funding and attention," said Church, whose board advocates for the health care needs of 18 tribes located in a four-state region.

In Pine Ridge, almost 100 miles from Rosebud, the findings included:

— Records from three of six sampled medical staffers lacked appropriate permission to practice at that hospital.

— A machine used to clean and sanitize dishware had been broken for three years, forcing patients and staff to eat their meals on disposable dishes.

— A patient's emergency room record from September contained information from two different patients. Inspectors were told "it was common knowledge," and "staff including provider would copy and paste

information from old charts in current patient records” resulting in multiple errors in medical records.

CMS spokesman Mike Fierberg said the agency has approved each hospital’s plan to correct the deficiencies and surveyors have conducted follow-up inspections, so they’ll continue to receive Medicare reimbursements.

The hospitals’ deficiencies will be discussed next week at a hearing of the U.S. Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, U.S. Sen. John Thune, a member of the committee, said in a statement.

Steele will be there.

“The whole system, their ineptness, their wastefulness boils down to that individual person on Pine Ridge having to suffer,” he said. “Someone has to care. Somebody has to make them care about that individual patient.”

Opponents challenge plan to cap payday loan interest rates

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Opponents of a ballot measure that would cap payday loan interest rates in South Dakota are challenging signatures turned in to get it on the 2016 ballot.

Secretary of State Shantel Krebs said Thursday that her office will verify the challenge in the coming months.

It objects to more than 7,600 signatures that supporters submitted to Krebs’ office for the interest rate measure.

The office looks at signatures and petition completeness as part of its review.

Officials determined that about 17,200 signatures were valid, which was above the roughly 13,900-signature threshold.

The proposal would limit interest rates from money lenders licensed in South Dakota to 36 percent annually. Supporters say the proposal is aimed at protecting consumers from predatory lending.

Opponents argue short-term lenders would be forced out of business.

2 indicted in death of woman on Pine Ridge Reservation

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A federal grand jury has indicted a man and a woman from Pine Ridge in the death of a woman on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation.

Elizabeth LeBeau, 23, is charged with first-degree murder, and Fred Quiver, 29, is charged with being an accessory. Quiver also goes by the name Fred Brings Plenty, according to U.S. Attorney Randolph Seiler.

The relationship between LeBeau and Quiver isn’t clear. It’s also not clear how they knew Emily Blue Bird, 24. FBI spokesman Kyle Loven referred questions about the case to the U.S. attorney’s office in South Dakota. Office spokeswoman Ace Crawford declined comment, citing the ongoing investigation.

Blue Bird’s body was found Jan. 21 in a creek near Pine Ridge. The mother of two had been missing for nearly three weeks. She had been strangled sometime in the first three days of January, Seiler said.

LeBeau and Quiver are in custody in Pine Ridge. Neil Fulton, federal public defender for the Dakotas, on Thursday said he was not able to comment on their behalf because he’s out of the office and not yet informed about the case.

More than 200 family and community members marched from the Sioux Funeral Home to Billy Mills Hall in Pine Ridge on Wednesday to call for an end to violence against women and justice for Blue Bird, KOTA-TV reported. Blue Bird’s funeral will be held in the hall on Friday afternoon.

“As of today we’re going to remember her as a beautiful angel that is in heaven,” said Arnie Hornbeck, a cousin to Blue Bird. “We are following Emily, taking her home today, where we’re thinking about her, but she left in a very tragic way.”

Drug and alcohol abuse and violence against women are problems on the reservation, said Eileen Janis, who helped organize the march.

“We want the people to stand up and say, ‘No more. I don’t want to see it anymore,’” she said.

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Premier Center posts \$1.9M in net operating income for 2015

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Sioux Falls officials say the city's new events center posted a net operating income of \$1.9 million in 2015.

The Denny Sanford Premier Center's first full calendar year included 11 sold-out events, and the arena hosted nearly 646,000 people over 135 event dates. Those attendees contributed nearly \$1.5 million in sales tax revenue.

Mayor Mike Huether says officials made a commitment to Sioux Falls residents that they would do their best to operate the events center in the black.

Some of the income likely will be used to boost security. The Argus Leader reports that the city is looking to spend up to \$180,000 on walk-through metal detectors.

It's a response to concert promotion companies re-evaluating security in the wake of November's terror attack on a concert hall in Paris.

Japan leads global stocks higher after stimulus move

YOUKYUNG LEE, AP Business Writer

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — Japan led global stock markets higher Friday after its central bank introduced a negative interest rate policy in the latest move to overcome malaise in the third-biggest economy. The yen dived against the dollar and the euro.

KEEPING SCORE: Britain's FTSE 100 rose 1.2 percent to 6,004.94 and France's CAC 40 advanced 1.4 percent to 4,382.73. Germany's DAX climbed 1.3 percent to 9,763.69. Futures indicated that Wall Street was set to extend gains. Dow futures added 1 percent and S&P 500 futures climbed 1.1 percent.

JAPAN RATE: The Bank of Japan said it is imposing a 0.1 percent fee on some deposits left with the central bank, effectively a negative interest rate. It hopes that will encourage commercial banks to lend more, rather than keeping cash at the BOJ, and stimulate investment and growth. Latest data showed Japan's core inflation rate was just 0.5 percent in 2015 on low oil prices while consumer spending fell 4.4 percent in December over a year earlier.

ANALYST'S TAKE: "Concerns had been mounting that the BOJ were increasingly tapped out in their ability to ease monetary policy," Angus Nicholson, a market analyst at IG in Melbourne, Australia, said in a commentary. "The announcement opens the door to sustain further easing by the BOJ throughout the year."

ASIA'S DAY: After gyrating between losses and gains, Japan's Nikkei 225 finished up 2.8 percent at 17,518.30. The policy decision is a possible boost for the economy but viewed by investors as negative for banks. Shares of Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group fell 3.8 percent. Hong Kong's Hang Seng gained 2.5 percent to 19,683.11 and the Shanghai Composite in mainland China rose 3.1 percent to 2,737.60. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 added 0.6 percent to 5,005.50 while South Korea's Kospi closed up 0.3 percent at 1,912.06. Stocks rose in Taiwan, India and Southeast Asia.

ENERGY TALK: The Kremlin said on Thursday it is actively discussing the instability of oil markets with the world's key producers. Even though Russia said there was no concrete plan for a coordinated cut in production, it was enough to push the price of oil higher. Investors hope that talks could lead to production cuts that would begin to alleviate a global supply glut.

OIL PRICE: Benchmark U.S. crude was up 35 cents to \$33.57 a barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. The contract gained 92 cents, or 2.8 percent to close at \$33.22 a barrel on Thursday. Brent crude, a benchmark for international oils, gained 38 cents to \$35.18.

CURRENCIES: The dollar jumped to 120.85 yen from 118.84 yen the previous day. The euro weakened to \$1.0911 from \$1.0932 but against the Japanese currency rose to 131.87 yen from 129.92 yen.