

**THE Groton Independent**  
 South Dakota  
 Growing Families & Opportunities  
 Vol. 137 No. 23 ♦ Groton, South Dakota ♦ Wednesday, Feb 05, 2020 ♦ Established in 1889



A fundraiser was held Tuesday during the Langford Area double header. Tshirts, Coins for Cancer and a Bake Sale were held for Camie Heminger. Camie was recently diagnosed with Stage 4 Carcinoid cancer. He son, Douglas, is a junior at GHS. After the game on Tuesday, the team gathered around for a photo op. (Photo by Julianna Kosel)



It's never too late to go over the game plan, again  
 Becky Erickson was going over the game plan on the bus on the way to Northwestern. Erickson is one of the assistant coaches for the girls' basketball team. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



Pictured are Tom Tietz, Groton Fire Chief, Superintendent Joe Schwan and Rescue Squad Training Officer Patti Woods. (Courtesy Photo)

**120 Stop The Bleed Kits delivered to Groton Area**

Groton Firemen and Groton Rescue would like to thank all that contributed to the Stop The Bleed Kits. We delivered 120 kits to the Groton Area School with the hopes that they will never have to be used. Preparedness, however, is always important. If the unthinkable would occur they will now have these kits in each room throughout each of the buildings. Each Stop the Bleed kit has a tourniquet, trauma dressing, compressed gauze, trauma scissors, gloves, surgical tape, marker and instructional booklet. In 2018 The South Dakota Healthcare Coalition donated (1) 5 pack Stop the Bleed Kits to each school in the state. They are hoping there will be funds in the future to add more kits to each school but it is not promised. All teachers in Groton Area Schools have been trained in the Stop the Bleed program, along with Fire, rescue and law enforcement. With the right training, YOU can help save lives!



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**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

ATTENTION HIGH School Students! 2020 Better Business Bureau Video Contest. Cash Prizes. Begins 2-3-20 & Ends 2-28-20. bbb.org/south-dakota, 800-649-6814 #8550.

**EMPLOYMENT**

COMMERCIAL APPLICATORS. Competitive wage and benefits, meal allowance, paid lodging. Traveling position for railroad vegetation control, 60-80 hours/week. RAW (Cooperstown, ND). 888.700.0292 | www.rawapplicators.com | info@rawapplicators.com

MCLAUGHLIN SCHOOL DISTRICT #15-2 SUPERINTENDENT- Closing date 2/16/20. Interviews to be conducted the week of 2/17/20. Full family benefits, medical, dental, and vision. Salary negotiable. Position start date 7/1/20. Applications may be obtained on the school website or by contacting Anne Larson, Human Resources, McLaughlin School District 15-2 at 605-823-4484 ext. 201

**MISCELLANEOUS**

FARMERS, LANDSCAPERS OR GARDENERS, did you or a loved one use Roundup Weed Killer and were diagnosed with non-hodgkins lymphoma (Cancer)? You may be entitled to compensation. Call Attorney Charles Johnson 1-800-535-5727

**NOTICES**

ADVERTISE IN NEWSPAPERS statewide for only \$150. Put the South Dakota Statewide Classifieds Network to work for you today! (25 words for \$150. Each additional word \$5.) Call the Groton Independent at 605/397-7460 for details.

**FULL TIME PUBLIC WORKS**  
 The City of Harrisburg, "an equal opportunity employer," is currently accepting applications for a Full Time Public Works Employee.  
 Duties will include streets, parks, water, and wastewater departments. The following certifications/licenses must be possessed within 2 years of hire: Class I Water Distribution, Class I Wastewater Treatment and Wastewater Collection. South Dakota commercial pesticide applicators license (G, 4, 9) must be obtained within 90 days. Successful applicants must possess a high school diploma or GED Certificate; a safe valid driver's license and a current CDL or ability to obtain one and be insurable. **Excellent benefit package!**  
 Salary is negotiable on experience and qualifications. Position description, information and applications are available at www.harrisburgsd.gov and the Harrisburg City Office, 301 E Willow Street, Harrisburg SD 57032. **Application deadline is February 21, 2020.**  
 For more information contact Toby Huizenga, Public Works Director at 605-231-6168 or toby.huizenga@harrisburgsd.gov or Andrew Pietrus, City Administrator at (605)767-5068 or andrew.pietrus@harrisburgsd.gov

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## Brown County Jan. 28, 2020 Meeting Minutes

January 28, 2020 – GENERAL MEETING

Meeting called to order by Commission Chair Kippely at 8:45 A.M. in the Commissioner's Chambers, Courthouse Annex, Brown County, SD. Present were Commissioners Feickert, Sutton, and Fjeldheim. Commissioner Wiese was absent. Commissioner Fjeldheim led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**MINUTES:**  
Moved by Fjeldheim seconded by Feickert to approve the County Commission January 28, 2020 Minutes. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

**CLAIMS:**  
Moved by Sutton seconded by Feickert to approve the following claims and payroll:

**CLAIMS:** Insurance: Financial Services of Aberdeen \$1,583.24; SD Public Assurance Alliance \$649.78.

Professional Fees: AMG Emergency \$172.57; Avera St. Lukes \$2,833.18; Cogley Law Office \$6,250.00; Ryan S. Dell LLC \$6,250.00; Dependable Sanitation Inc \$20,686.34; Dohrer Law Office \$6,250.00; ESRI \$15,000.00; GBR Interpreting & Translation \$60.00; Christopher A. Haar \$6,250.00; Mark Katterhagen \$15.00; Kuck Law Office \$6,250.00; Lucy Lewno \$160.00; Darcy Lockwood \$15.00; Jerald M. McNeary \$6,250.00; Minnehaha County Auditor \$237.50; NE Mental Health Center \$75.00; Matthew Payne \$200.00; SD Department of Health \$190.00; Christy Griffin-Serr Law Office \$6,250.00; Kristi Spitzer \$600.00; Taliaferro Law Firm \$6,250.00; Yankton County Sheriff Office \$150.00; Yankton County Treasurer \$480.00. Publishing: Aberdeen American News \$169.42; Repairs & Maintenance: Hoven Auto Repair Inc \$591.04; I-State Truck Inc \$23.80; Leidholt Electric LLC \$1,198.26; Lein Transportation Company \$1,365.00; Newman Signs Inc \$6.18; Smart Choice Solutions \$2,913.00; Spillman Technologies Inc \$433.13; Steven Lust Automotive \$54.46; Thee Glass Doctor \$176.50. Supplies: American Business Solutions \$715.36; Bob Barker Co. \$410.03; MB LLC \$562.20; Glacial Lakes & Prairie Tourism \$125.00; Govconnection Inc \$5,260.80; Heartland Paper \$425.22; I-State Truck Inc \$187.55; Leidholt Electric LLC \$48.41; Lucy Lewno \$6.50; Dave Lunzman \$25.00; Teresa Mann \$78.35; Marco Inc \$180.81; McKesson Medical-Surgical \$13.45; Menards \$189.52; Newman Signs Inc \$402.48; Pitney Bowes Inc \$15,000.00; CNH Industrial America LLC \$274.85; Thee Glass Doctor \$245.87. Travel & Conference: City of Groton \$123.66. Utilities: Qwest Corporation \$2,313.21; Montana Dakota Utilities \$53.24; Northwestern Energy & Communication \$68.56; Northern Valley Communications \$242.78. Other: Glacial Lakes & Prairie Tourism \$750.00; Pizza Ranch \$61.46. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

### HR REPORT:

Moved by Sutton, seconded by Fjeldheim to approve the following amended HR Office Report, which includes the following personnel changes: Acknowledge resignation of Bailey Sipple, Brown County Sheriff's Department, JDC Correctional Officer Part-Time, effective January 31, 2020; Approve hiring of Leanne Shutt as part-time Brown County Museum Front Desk/Volunteer Coordinator, at \$13.59 per hour, tentatively effective February 4, 2020; Moved by Feickert, seconded by Sutton to approve the amendment to the HR Report: Approve Nancy Clark-North, Brown County Planning and Zoning Assistant pay increase to \$13.93 per hour effective January 26, 2020; Approve the following employee step increase wages for 2020 effective January 26, 2020: Aaron Gasser @ \$18.98, Adelaide Mouna @ \$20.1, Alexus Storm @ \$17.34, Amanda Aragon @ \$16.18, Amy Lake Harmon @ \$16.85, Anne Dohman @ \$15.91, Anthony Sorensen @ \$23.52, Barry Kusler @ \$23.03, Becky Densens @ \$16.66, Bill Rohrbach @ \$16.37, Brad Nehlich @ \$20.01, Brandon Black @ \$24.57, Brandon Mills @ \$19.43, Brandon Wiest @ \$17.7, Breanne Bjerke @ \$17.7, Brenda Hammrich @ \$22.26, Brian Koens @ \$26.76, Bryan Gordon @ \$16.99, Bryan Owens @ \$20.18, Cameron Refsland

@ \$18.38, Candace Rohrbach @ \$17.28, Casey Jensen @ \$20.13, Charles Gruenstein @ \$19.7, Christeen Krahl @ \$20.62, Cindy Epard @ \$17.58, Cindy Mitchell @ \$20.65, Cindy Woodford @ \$17.72, Claudia Rosales @ \$16.99, Cory Erhardt @ \$19.33, Damin Bahr @ \$18.84, Dan Schlosser @ \$17.95, Dana Breske @ \$19.91, Danica Hillestad @ \$20.27, Daniel Bray @ \$23.52, Daryl Lloyd @ \$21.89, David Bruckner @ \$21.68, David Engraf @ \$16.86, Dawn Allam @ \$18.98, Dean Zumbach @ \$19.44, Dennis VanHeerde @ \$19.54, Elise Westfall @ \$18.38, Erin Ackerman @ \$17.28, Ermalinda Marcuson @ \$23.87, Eugene Pence Jr. @ \$21.57, Fadia Champplain @ \$16.99, Gavin Wright @ \$23.87, Gerald Lehrkamp @ \$19.97, Heather Kulwicki @ \$17.7, Jaclyn Nagel @ \$18.38, Jacob Carrillo @ \$16.99, Samuel Hoppock @ \$17.7, Sandra Woytassek @ \$18.22, Shawn Schnabel @ \$22.55, Sheldon Neess @ \$16.39, Sherri Rastern @ \$18.67, Sonje Oban @ \$17.67, Stacie Wasem @ \$20.1, Tanner Podoll @ \$18.02, Teresa Mann @ \$19.29, Terence Evans @ \$26.81, Terry Lout @ \$19.68, Tonya Walsh @ \$20.54, Tracy Engquist @ \$17.72, Tracy Madsen @ \$19.64, Tray Mercer @ \$19.44, Troy Grote @ \$19.14, Wes Graff @ \$25.52, Wesley Warning @ \$17.28, James Ingram @ \$17.62, Jeannette McClain @ \$16.45, Jeff Kirnan @ \$20.65, Jennifer White @ \$20.15, Jeremiah Vega @ \$17.34, Jeremy Batista @ \$19.57, Jessica Geditz @ \$16.99, Jill Crosby @ \$17.28, Jo Forsting @ \$18.42, JoAnn Sheffield @ \$17.87, John Clark @ \$19.43, John Florey @ \$19.14, John Weig @ \$20.09, Jonathan (Waller) Sorenson @ \$19.33, Jonathan Lemke @ \$27.23, Joseph Embury @ \$20.25, Joshua Ulmer @ \$18.84, Julie Thelen @ \$17.28, Justin Yablonski @ \$18.38, Kathy Fischer @ \$23.53, Kathy Neitzel @ \$22.57, Kayla Reinert @ \$18.33, Keith Baker @ \$24.92, Kristal Koens @ \$20.6, Kristin Barstad @ \$19.29, Kurt Pigors @ \$21.68, Kyle Kost @ \$19.44, Linn Kamin @ \$27.23, Logan Flack @ \$17.62, Lora Shauman @ \$18.17, Lucas Champplain @ \$17.7, Mariann Malsom @ \$17.87, Matthew Heupel @ \$18.84, Michael Ernst @ \$20.3, Michelle Dannen @ \$16.18, Mickey Schulz @ \$18.79, Mike Hill @ \$23.87, Mike Janes @ \$16.85, Mike Rohrbach @ \$19.14, Miranda Snell @ \$16.99, Monte Podoll @ \$17.93, Nathan Smith @ \$26.51, Nicholas Juenger @ \$20.08, Pamela McBride @ \$17.1, Paul Wipf @ \$21.99, Rachel Wilson @ \$17.54, Ronald Keller @ \$20.77, Russ Och-sner @ \$20.6, Ryan McClain @ \$19.43, Samiulela Mouna @ \$20.35. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

### ABATEMENTS:

Moved by Feickert, seconded by Sutton to approve the following abatements: Frederick Area Schools @ \$2,283.06 (Clerical Error); Solid Waste Sales Tax Exemptions for Tax Exempt Properties @ \$337.06; Stonewine Properties @ \$601.32; Mina Lake Sanitary @ \$54.04 (Exempt); A. Mitchell @ \$86.74 (solid waste removal); A. Mitchell @ \$86.74 (solid waste removal); American Legion Post #58 @ \$86.74 (solid waste removal); Dan Kimball @ \$86.74 (solid waste removal). All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

### PLAT: Resolution R6-2020

Commissioner Sutton offered the following Resolution: Be it resolved by the County Commission of Brown County, South Dakota, that the plat showing "Kornmann-Ulmer Subdivision in Block 2, Prairiewood Village in SE1/4 Sec 33-T124N-63W of 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota", having been examined, is hereby approved in accordance with the provisions of SDCL of 1967, Chapter 11-3, and any amendments thereof. Seconded by Commissioner Feickert. Roll call vote: Commissioner Feickert – aye, Sutton – aye, Wiese – absent, Fjeldheim – aye. Resolution adopted.

### AMEND MINUTES JANUARY 14TH, 2020:

Moved by Feickert, seconded by Sutton to amend the minutes from February 14th, 2020 regarding the Emergency Management Quarterly Report: Minutes should reflect approval of 1st quarter report, not 4th quarter report as stated in the minutes. All members present voting aye.

Motion carried.

### SET HEARING DATE- REZONE ORDINANCES:

Moved by Feickert, seconded by Fjeldheim to approve advertising and set hearing date of the following proposed rezone ordinances 156, 157, 158:

**Ordinance 156:** Application has been made by James Whitman to the Brown County Board of Commissioners for a change of zoning. Hearing to be held in the Commissioner's Chambers, Courthouse Annex, Brown County, South Dakota on February 18, 2020 at 8:45 A.M. for the purpose of rezoning the following property from Chapter 4.06 Agricultural Preservation District (AG-P) to Chapter 4.07 Mini-Ag District (M-AG): "Geist Subdivision" in the N1/2NE1/4 of Section 29-T123N-R62W of the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota

**Ordinance 157:** Application has been made by Wayne Culter to the Brown County Board of Commissioners for a change of zoning. Hearing to be held in the Commissioner's Chambers, Courthouse Annex, Brown County, South Dakota on February 18, 2020 at 8:45 A.M. for the purpose of rezoning the following property from Chapter 4.06 Agricultural Preservation District (AG-P) to Chapter 4.07 Mini-Ag District (M-AG): "Wayne Cutler Subdivision" in the NE1/4 of Section 9-T125N-R60W of the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota. (11901 409th Ave). Ordinance 158: Application has been made by Roger Gray to the Brown County Board of Commissioners for a change of zoning. Hearing to be held in the Commissioner's Chambers, Courthouse Annex, Brown County, South Dakota on February 18, 2020 at 8:45 A.M. for the purpose of rezoning the following property from Chapter 4.06 Agricultural Preservation District (AG-P) to Chapter 4.10 Lake Front Residential (R-3): Lot 2A of Lot 2 "Schaeffer Richmond Lake Subdivision" in the NW1/4 of Section 25-T124N-R65W of the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota (379357 South Shore Drive). All member present voting aye. Motion Carried.

### LEASES:

Moved by Sutton, seconded by Feickert to approve the following lease agreements: Lievelts RV for lease of Expo Building March 9-22, 2020; Dakota Broadcasting for lease of Expo Building March 3-4, 2020; Monte and Brenda Hanson for lease of Club House September 12-13, 2020 with alcohol use permission form. All member present voting aye. Motion Carried.

### CLAIM ASSIGNMENT:

Moved by Fjeldheim seconded by Feickert to authorize chair sign documentation to assign claim against an individual to Credit Collection Bureau for the purpose of collecting liens. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

### ORD 154- ADOPTION:

Moved by Sutton, seconded by Feickert to approve second reading and adoption of ordinance 154, an Ordinance to amend Title 4- Zoning, Second Revision Brown County Ordinances, to rezone the following described property from its present zoning designation as Chapter 4.06 Agricultural Preservation District (AG-P) to Chapter 4.07 Mini-Ag District (M-AG): Lots 1&2, "Marzenell Subdivision" in the SE1/4SW1/4 of Section 25-T123N-R65W of the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota . All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

### ORD 155- ADOPTION:

Moved by Feickert, seconded by Fjeldheim to approve second reading and adoption of Ordinance 155, an Ordinance to amend Title 4- Zoning, Second Revision Brown County Ordinances, to rezone the following described property from its present zoning designation as Chapter 4.06 Agricultural Preservation District (AG-P) to Chapter 4.07 Mini-Ag District (M-AG) Lots 1&2 "1st Subdivision Larson Outlot 1: in the SW1/4 of Section 24-T122N-R64W of the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota . All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

### BID DEFERRED – RENTAL EQUIPMENT:

Moved by Fjeldheim, seconded by Sutton to defer award of Rental Equipment for the Highway shop until February 4th, 2020 at 8:50a.m., Brown County Commission Chambers, Courthouse Annex. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

### BIDS – GRAVEL:

Time and place as advertised to open, read and consider sealed bids for furnishing Gravel

Material. Bids were received from Behnke Sand & Gravel, Hanlon Brothers, HF Jacobs & Son Construction, Jensen Rock and Sand, and L.G. Everist. Moved by Feickert, seconded by Sutton to award all bids on Gravel Material based on location and availability, as per tabulation sheet on file in the Auditor's Office (available for public inspection Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.). All members present voting aye. Motion Carried.

### BID AWARD – HIGHWAY ROAD OIL:

Time and place as advertised to open, read and consider sealed bids for furnishing highway road oil. Moved by Sutton, seconded by Fjeldheim to award road oil bid submitted by Jebro as follows: Road Oil MC070 \$797.61 per ton; Road Oil MC-3000 \$617.61 per ton; Road Oil CSS1H \$483.85 per ton. Jebro was sole bidder. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

### BID AWARD – HIGHWAY ASPHALT CONCRETE PLANT MIX MATERIALS:

Time and place as advertised to open, read and consider sealed bids for furnishing Asphalt Concrete Plant Mix Materials. Bids were received from Jensen Rock & Sand, Lien Transportation, and Bitumious Paving. Moved by Feickert, seconded by Sutton to award all bids on Asphalt Concrete Plant Mix Materials, as per tabulation sheet on file in the Auditor's Office (available for public inspection Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.). All members present voting aye. Motion Carried.

### EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Moved by Sutton, seconded by Fjeldheim to go into executive session to discuss contract and legal per SDCL 1-25-2(3,4). All members present voting aye. Motion carried. The Chair declared the executive session closed with no action taken.

### ADJOURNMENT:

Moved by Sutton, seconded by Fjeldheim to adjourn the Brown County Commission at 10:30 a.m. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

Cathy McNickle, Brown County Auditor  
Published once at the total approximate cost of \$142.52. 18598

## Brown County Ord. 154 Nerland Rezoning

ORDINANCE #154  
AN ORDINANCE AMENDING TITLE 4, SECOND REVISION BROWN COUNTY ORDINANCES, AS AMENDED TO REZONE CERTAIN DESCRIBED PROPERTY

BE IT ORDAINED by the Brown County Commission, Brown County, South Dakota, that the Petition to Amend Title 4, Second Revision Brown County Ordinances, as amended, to rezone the following described property filed by Debbie Nerland is hereby granted and Title 4, Second Revision Brown County Ordinances is hereby amended to change the zoning on the following described property from Chapter 4.06 Agricultural Preservation District (AG-P) to Chapter 4.07 Mini-Ag District (M-AG), said property described as follows:

Lots 1&2, "Marzenell Subdivision" in the SE1/4SW1/4 of Section 25-T123N-R65W of the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED by the Brown County Commission, Brown County, South Dakota that the zoning official for the County of Brown is hereby authorized to change the official zoning map for Brown County to reflect this Ordinance.

Notice of Hearing: January 8 and 15, 2020

Passed First Reading: January 21, 2020

Passed Second Reading: January 28, 2020

Adopted: January 28, 2020

Published: February 5, 2020

Effective Date: February 25, 2020

Rachel Kippely, Chair  
Brown County Commission

ATTEST:

Cathy McNickle, Brown County Auditor

Published once at the total approximate cost of \$18.61. 18599

## Frederick School Notice of Audit

Notice of Audit of the Fiscal Affairs of Frederick Area School District No.6-2

Notice is hereby given that the records and books of account of Frederick Area School District No. 6-2 of Brown County, South

Dakota, have been audited by Eide Bailey LLP for the fiscal year ended June 30,2019, and that a detailed report thereon is filed with the governing board, the Business Manager , and the Department of Legislative of Legislative Audit, 427 South Chapelle, South Dakota, for public inspection.

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

### Current Audit Findings and Recommendations

Finding 2019-001- Lack of Segregation of Duties

Criteria: A good system of internal controls contemplates an adequate segregation of duties so that no one individual handles a transaction from its inception to its completion.

Condition:Frederick Area School District No. 6-2 has a limited number of office personnel and, accordingly, does not have adequate internal accounting controls in revenue, expenditures, and payroll functions due to a lack of segregation of duties.

Cause: The school District has an insufficient number of staff members to adequately separate duties.

Effect: This condition increases the risk that fraud or errors might occur and not be detected in the financial reporting process.

Recommendation: Although it is recognized that the number of office staff may not be large enough to permit an adequate segregation of duties in all respects, it is important that management and those charged with governance be aware of this condition. We recommend that the School Board exercise adequate oversight of the accounting function.

Views of Responsible Officials: Management agrees with the finding.

Finding 2019-002- Preparation of Financial Statements and Footnotes and Material Proposed Adjustment to the Financial Statements

Criteria: An organization's internal control structure should provide for the recording of all necessary material adjustments and the preparation of financial statements and footnotes in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

Condition: Frederick Area School District No.6-2 does not have an internal control system designed to provide for the preparation of the financial statements being audited, including required footnotes and disclosures and all necessary material audit adjustments, in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

Cause: The School District does not have adequate staff trained to prepare the financial statements and footnotes.

Effect: This condition may affect the School District's ability to record, process, summarize, and report financial data consistent with the assertions of management in the financial statements

Recommendations: This circumstance is not unusual in an organization of this size. It is the responsibility of management and those charged with governance to make the decision whether to accept the degree risk associated with this condition because of cost or other considerations.

Views of Responsible Officials: Management agrees with the finding.

(0129.0205)

Published twice at the total approximate cost of \$67.59. 18575

## Brown County Ord. 155 Reder Rezoning

ORDINANCE #155  
AN ORDINANCE AMENDING TITLE 4, SECOND REVISION BROWN COUNTY ORDINANCES, AS AMENDED TO REZONE CERTAIN DESCRIBED PROPERTY

BE IT ORDAINED by the Brown County Commission, Brown County, South Dakota, that the Petition to Amend Title 4, Second Revision Brown County Ordinances, as amended, to rezone the following described property filed by David Reder is hereby granted and Title 4, Second Revision Brown County Ordinances is hereby amended to change the zoning on the following described property from Chapter 4.06 Agricultural Preservation District (AG-P) to Chapter 4.07 Mini-Ag District (M-AG), said property described as follows:

Lots 1&2 "1st Subdivision Larson Outlot 1: in the SW1/4 of

Groton Independent ♦ Wed., Feb. 5, 2020 ♦ 3

Section 24-T122N-R64W of the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED by the Brown County Commission, Brown County, South Dakota that the zoning official for the County of Brown is hereby authorized to change the official zoning map for Brown County to reflect this Ordinance.

Notice of Hearing: January 8 and 15, 2020

Passed First Reading: January 21, 2020

Passed Second Reading: January 28, 2020

Adopted: January 28, 2020

Published: February 5, 2020

Effective Date: February 25, 2020

Rachel Kippely, Chair  
Brown County Commission

ATTEST:

Cathy McNickle, Brown County Auditor

Published once at the total approximate cost of \$18.61. 18600

## Brown County Whitman Rezoning Notice

NOTICE

Application has been made by James Whitman to the Brown County Board of Commissioners for a change of zoning. Hearing to be held in the Commissioner's Chambers, Courthouse Annex, Brown County, South Dakota on February 18, 2020 at 8:45 A.M. for the purpose of rezoning the following property from Chapter 4.06 Agricultural Preservation District (AG-P) to Chapter 4.07 Mini-Ag District (M-AG):

"Geist Subdivision" in the N1/2NE1/4 of Section 29-T123N-R62W of the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota

The public is invited to attend the hearing and to present comments and testimony regarding the amendment to Second Revision Brown County Ordinances pertaining to rezoning the described property. At the conclusion of the hearing, the Brown County Commission may adopt first reading of Ordinance No. 156.

ATTEST:

Cathy McNickle, Brown County Auditor

(0205.0212)

Published twice at the total approximate cost of \$22.34. 18601

## Brown County Culter Rezoning Notice

NOTICE

Application has been made by Wayne Culter to the Brown County Board of Commissioners for a change of zoning. Hearing to be held in the Commissioner's Chambers, Courthouse Annex, Brown County, South Dakota on February 18, 2020 at 8:45 A.M. for the purpose of rezoning the following property from Chapter 4.06 Agricultural Preservation District (AG-P) to Chapter 4.07 Mini-Ag District (M-AG):

"Wayne Cutler Subdivision" in the NE1/4 of Section 9-T125N-R60W of the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota. (11901 409th Ave)

The public is invited to attend the hearing and to present comments and testimony regarding the amendment to Second Revision Brown County Ordinances pertaining to rezoning the described property. At the conclusion of the hearing, the Brown County Commission may adopt first reading of Ordinance No. 157

ATTEST:

Cathy McNickle, Brown County Auditor

(0205.0212)

Published twice at the total approximate cost of \$23.51. 18602

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**Brown County Gray Rezoning Notice**

Application has been made by Roger Gray to the Brown County Board of Commissioners for a change of zoning. Hearing to be held in the Commissioner's Chambers, Courthouse Annex, Brown County, South Dakota on February 18, 2020 at 8:45 A.M. for the purpose of rezoning the following property from Chapter 4.06 Agricultural Preservation District (AG-P) to Chapter 4.10 Lake Front Residential (R-3):  
 Lot 2A of Lot 2 "Schaeffer Richmond Lake Subdivision" in the NW1/4 of Section 25-T124N-R65W of the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota (379357 South Shore Drive)

The public is invited to attend the hearing and to present comments and testimony regarding the amendment to Second Revision Brown County Ordinances pertaining to rezoning the described property. At the conclusion of the hearing, the Brown County Commission may adopt first reading of Ordinance No. 158

ATTEST:  
 Cathy McNickle, Brown County Auditor  
 (605.0212)  
 Published twice at the total approximate cost of \$24.68. 18603

**Groton City Jan. 21, 2020 Meeting Minutes**

January 21, 2020  
 The Groton City Council met on the above date at 7:00pm at the Community Center for their second monthly meeting with the following members present: Wells, Blackmun, Cutler, Glover and Mayor Hanlon presiding. Also present were: Attorney Drew Johnson, Finance Officer Hope Block, and Officer Anthony Garcia.

Public comments were welcomed pursuant to SDCL 1-25-1, but none were received.

The minutes from the previous meeting were approved on a motion by Blackmun and seconded by Wells. All members voted aye.

Moved by Wells and seconded by Glover to authorize the following bills for payment. All members voted aye.

Payroll, \$20,517.33, Employee salaries; Administrative, \$3,119.99; ; Public Safety, \$7,723.15; ; Public Works, \$8,906.07; Culture & Recreation, \$768.12; First State Bank, \$6,860.68, SS and WH ; First

State Bank, \$1,216.66, HSA contributions; Dakotaland FCU, \$1,050.00, Employee savings; City of Groton, \$300.00, Utility deposit refunds; Groton Chamber, \$650.00, Employee chamber bucks; Ilse Cameron, \$50.00, Utility deposit refund; US Postal Service, \$198.59, Utility billing postage; Chase Visa, \$805.00, Postage, library books, training registration, sewer sensor, lodging for safety meeting, agendas; SD State Treasurer, \$10,002.06, Sales tax 12/19; Heartland Waste, \$8,275.95, Garbage hauling 12/19; WAPA, \$21,969.51, Power 12/19; Heartland Consumer Power, \$74,592.41, Power 12/19; BNSF Railway Co, \$4,032.00, Contract fees and railroad protective policy; James Valley, \$169.18, Utilities; MJs, \$1,553.10, Red pickup tire repair, gas, dsl, car washes, power steering fluid; Groton Ford, \$832.92, 17 explorer new battery, replace sensor and turbo duct; SD Supplemental Retirement, \$285.00, Employee retirement; Dwight Zerr, \$86.98, Med flex; Crawford Trucks & Equipment, 367.29, Transmission leak repair on plow truck; Banyon Data Systems, \$2,385.00, Annual support fees for accounting programs; SD One Call, \$18.90, Message fees; Farmers Union, \$1,389.96, Fuel; Colonial Research, \$315.09, Salt; Pressure Washer Central, \$182.48, Flow switch, fuel filter, nozzle; Riteway, \$173.29, Checks; Runnings, \$59.99, Mittens; Groton Independent, \$85.15, Publishing; Ameripride, \$47.14, Rug rent; Locators & Supplies, \$16.09, Safety glasses SD Dept of Health, \$124.00, Water testing

The group was reminded of deadlines for petition circulation.

Moved by Glover and seconded by Cutler to approve the December finance report. All members voted aye.

Moved by Blackmun and seconded by Glover to adjourn into executive session for personnel and legal items 1-25-2 (1) & (3) at 7:09pm. All members voted aye. Council reconvened into regular session at 7:22pm.

Moved by Blackmun and seconded by Wells to accept (Ward 3 Board Member), Burt Glover's resignation. All members voted aye. Mayor Hanlon thanked Glover for his years of dedication to the City.

Moved by Blackmun and seconded by Wells to adjourn the meeting at 7:24pm. All members voted aye.

Scott Hanlon, Mayo Hope Block, Finance Officer  
 Published once at the total approximate cost of \$29.52. 18604

**Columbia City Feb. 4, 2020 Meeting Minutes**

City of Columbia Council Meeting – February 4, 2020  
 CALL MEETING TO ORDER – 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL – Cara Dennert, Trevor Meints, Cole Kampa, Ellen Harr, Dana Mohr

Community –Jeremy Dosch  
 Ellen Harr called the meeting to order. Minutes were passed out from the January meeting. Trevor Meints made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. Cole Kampa seconded the motion. All in favor – motion carried.

Warrant Vouchers: Northwestern Energy – 808.25; JVT – 121.54; SD Unemployment Insurance – 1.13; US Treasury – 2059.48; 881.55; 15.70; Great Western Bank – 304.54; GDI – 39.96; Jeremy Dosch – 419.99; Kelsie Ehresmann – 321.99; Cara Dennert – 823.50; Corey Mitchell – 331.49; Fred Pryor Seminars – 128.00; SD Assoc. of Towns & Townships – 199.00; Productivity Plus – 289.04; Runnings – 5.98; John Deere Financial – 56.47

Dana Mohr made a motion to accept the vouchers as presented. Cole Kampa seconded the motion. All in favor – motion carried.

COMMUNITY COMMENTS / CORESPONDENCE – Safety Benefits; 2020 US Census Info.; NECOG map update; DOT – small community transportation planning program

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – none

Nuisances – none

Streets – Trevor mentioned that a couple culverts are getting bad – they might need replacing or moving them up a size. Trevor made a motion to put the city's plow truck on surplus. Cole seconded the motion. All were in favor – motion carried. Jeremy and Corey will get the details on the truck and it will be posted in an e-mail in the South Dakota Municipal League and published next month in the paper. Dana drove around town and noted all the city lamp/lights that are out. He called Northwestern Energy and gave them the information. Jeremy and Corey are looking into possibly leasing a track bobcat for next winter. More information on that in the fall.

Parks – see new business below

Lagoon/sewer – Ellen has been getting Cole set up with the testing system.

Rubble Site – The site needs to be burned.

NEW BUSINESS – Dana presented the idea of starting to

replace some of the trees in the tennis courts park. There are many Ash trees, and sooner or later they will have to be taken down. He discussed tree types with Cindy Schnabel at the Extension Office. He had a lot of information for the council to look over on the various types of trees. Cole asked about the cost of the trees. Dana said that bare root trees – 5-7 ft. trees will probably run about \$50 - \$100 apiece. He has been looking at a Stark Brothers online supply. Cole made a motion for Dana to put together an order for our next meetings approval. Trevor seconded the motion. All were in favor – motion carried.

FINANCIAL REPORT – Cara attended an annual report meeting in Aberdeen on Jan. 22nd.; She is attending Excel classes in Aberdeen at the end of February. Bank balances were presented. She explained the reason for 3 checks to the US Treasury. One was for an omission of Andrew Davis's 1st quarter 2019 wages, and the second was for a mix up of when wages were paid (paid in June of 2019 – for July's meeting). That 2nd/3rd quarter mistake should balance out. The third check was for the 2019 4th quarter taxes.

January 31, 2019 balances: SF - \$148,473.77; GF - \$151,082.81; FIT - \$13,947.49; Cash on Hand – \$6.85

Dana Mohr made a motion to accept the financial report as presented. Cole Kampa seconded the motion. All were in favor – motion carried.

Trevor Meints made a motion to adjourn. Cole Kampa seconded the motion. All were in favor – meeting adjourned.

Next City Meeting – Tuesday, March 3, 2020 7:00 p.m.

Submitted by Cara Dennert, Finance Officer

Published once at the total approximate cost of \$39.96. 18605

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**S.F. Christian stops Groton Area in NEC-DAK12 Clash**

Groton Area faced a tough Sioux Falls Christian team in the finale of the NEC-DAK12 Clash held Saturday in Madison. The Chargers rallied in the fourth quarter to pull away from the Tigers, 62-47.

Sioux Falls Christian jumped out to a 16-6 lead at the end of the first quarter. Brodyn DeHoet had a great and a bad second quarter, scoring 13 points as the Tigers took the lead, 22-20. DeHoet collected three fouls in the second quarter as well. After that, Sioux Falls Christian went on a 13-point run to take a 33-22 lead. The Chargers led at half time, 29-22, and at the end of the third quarter, 47-36. Groton Area closed to within nine early in the fourth quarter, 49-40. The Chargers would quickly explode with fast breaks layups and would go on for the win.

DeHoet was awarded the player of the game away with 28 points and 12 rebounds and two blocks. Kaden Kurtz had 10 points while Jonathan Doeden had four, Jayden Zak three and Cade Guthmiller two.

Groton Area made seven of 20 three-pointers for 35 percent, 10 of 32 two-pointers for 31 percent and was six of 10 in free throws for 60 percent off of the Chargers' 13 team fouls. Groton Area had seven steals, seven blocks, 23 rebounds, 10 assists and 11 turnovers.

Coach Brian Dolan said he was very happy that DeHoet won the Player of the Game award. He also mentioned that Doeden also had a great game. Doeden's main assignment was to contain Xavier Van Beek. Van Beek only had seven points, just two in the second half.

Leading the way for the Chargers were Noah Van Donkersgoed with 19 points followed by Tyler Prins with 17, Zach Witte with 13, Carson Van Beek had four and Brooks Nelson two.

Sioux Falls Christian was limited to just one three-pointer in the game while the Tigers made seven. In the Chargers win over Madison, they had nine three-pointers. Sioux Falls Christian was 11 of 11 from the free throw line off of Groton Area's 15 team fouls and they had 10 turnovers. Sioux Falls Christian made 25 of 44 field goals for 57 percent and Groton Area made 17 of 51 for 33 percent.

The Tigers are 9-2 on the season and will host Langford Area on Tuesday as part of a double header. Sioux Falls Christian is 11-2.

And a side note, there was an hour long power outage in the afternoon so Groton's game, which was suppose to start at 6:30 p.m., did not start until 8:15 p.m.



**Brodyn DeHoet was selected as the Player of the Game.** (Photo by Paul Kosel)



# GT Robotics Hosts VEX Robotics Tournament

GT Robotics teams did not have a good day at their own tournament on Saturday January 25th. None of our teams finished the qualifying matches ranked in the top half. Gear Heads (Ethan Clark, Jack Dinger, Axel Warrington) with their alliance partner from Box Elder was the only Groton team that made it to the semi-finals.

All of Groton's robotists will need to do some serious study about their robot design, function quality, match play strategy and driver skills before the next two tournaments.

Three GT Robotics teams end the qualifying matches with a record of four wins and five losses. Geek Squad (Nick Morris, Charlie Frost, James Brooks), Gear Heads and Galaxy (River Pardick, Jace Kroll, Isaac Higgins). G.A.T. Wrenches (Noah Tullis, Corbin Reich, Adrian Knutson) ended qualifying with a record of three wins and six losses. G-Force (Travis Townsend, Tannor McGannon, Dan Feist, Garrett Schultz) had a record of two wins and seven losses.

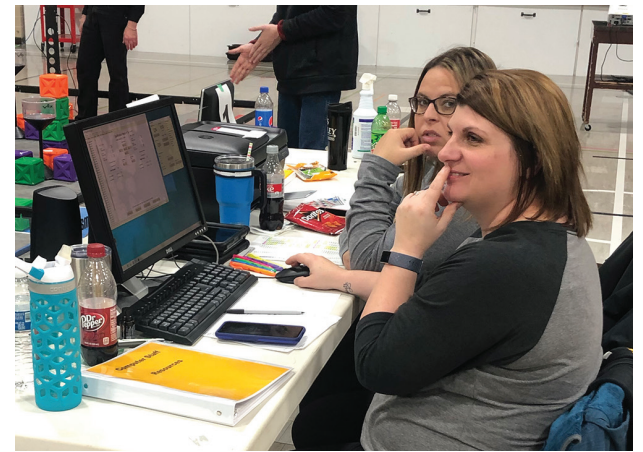
GT Robotics' next competition will be February 8th in Harrisburg.

Jim Lane, GT Robotics



**At one point in the tournament, four Groton Teams were competing at the same time. On the left side are Corbin Reich, Noah Tullis, Jace Kroll, River Pardick. On the right side are Axel Warrington, Ethan Clark, Jack Dinger, Danny Feist, Tanner McGannon and Travis Townsend.**

(Photo by Paul Kosel)



**Becky Kotzer and Emily Dinger were making sure the tournament ran smoothly.** (Photo by Paul Kosel)

Rankings of GT Robotics teams at the end of qualifying rounds for the tournaments

Tournament Location	Groton	Mitchell	Box Elder	Ramsey	Canton	Groton
Number of teams in Tourney and date	18 Oct 19	21 Nov 9	20 Nov 19	32 Dec 14	24 Jan 11	18 Jan 25
9050A G-Force	8	13	6	10	9	17
9050B Gear Heads	2	9	2	30	5	10
9050C G.A.T. Wrenches	4	12	13	6	19	16
9050D Geek Squad	10	14	3	17	22	9
9050E Galaxy	15	20	18	11	14	13

How far did GT Robotics team get in elimination rounds (playoffs)?

Tournament	Groton	Mitchell	Box Elder	Ramsey	Canton	Groton
9050A G-Force	Semi-F	Semi-F	Semi-F	1st rd	Semi F	Qtr-Finals
9050B Gear Heads	Finals	Semi-F	Qtr-F		Qtr-F	Semi Finals
9050C G.A.T. Wrenches	Qtr-F	Qtr-F	Qtr-F	Qtr-F	Semi-F	1st round
9050D Geek Squad	Semi-F	Qtr-F	Finals	1st rd	1st rd	Qtr-Finals
9050E Galaxy		Qtr-F	Finals	1st rd	Qtr-F	1st round

## Second Quarter GHS Honor Roll

### Seniors

4.0 GPA: Kaycie Hawkins, Kayla Jensen, Nicole Marzahn, Indigo Rogers, KaSandra Pappas, Kaylin Kucker, Payton Colestock, Madeline Schuelke

3.99-3.50: Kya Jandel, Tadyn Glover, Caitlynn Barse,

3.49-3.00: Jamesen Stange, Ashley Flihs, Eliza Warner, Cole Johnson, Kimberly Kohrs, Grady O'Neill, Noah Poor, Austin Jones

### Juniors

4.0 GPA: Isaac Smith, Erin Unzen, Alexis Hanten, Alexa Herr, Tanae Lipp, Sage Mortenson, Grace Wambach, Samantha Pappas

3.99-3.50: Hailey Monson, Dragr Monson, Regan Leicht, Kannon Coats, Tessa Erdmann, Brooklyn Gilbert, Trey Gengerke, Grace Wiedrick, Alex Morris, Jasmine Gengerke

3.49-3.00: Alyssa Fordham, Steven Paulson, Chandler Larson, Connor Lehman, Kale Pharis, Kaden Carda, Eh Tha You Say

### Sophomores

4.0 GPA: Seth Johnson, Stella Meier

3.99-3.50: Allyssa Locke, Travis Townsend, Jordan Bjerke, Madeline Flihs, Trista Keith, Kansas Kroll, Hannah Gustafson, Pierce Kettering, Madisen Bjerke, Julianna Kosel, Jace Kroll, Kennedy Anderson

3.49-3.00: Lane Krueger, Megan Flihs, Alyssa Thaler, Kaden Kurtz, Cassandra Schultz, Evin Nehls, River Pardick, Torrence Wiseman, Ryder Daly, Trinity Smith, Jayden Zak

### Freshmen

4.0 GPA: Jacob Lewandowski

3.99-3.50: Andrew Marzahn, Jackson Dinger, Cole Simon, Ethan Clark, Caleb Hanten, Kaleb Antonsen, Jacelynne Gleason, Cole Bisbee, Aspen Johnson, Porter Johnson, Sierra Ehresmann, Gracie Traphagen, Elliana Weismantel, KayLynn Overacker, Cadance Tullis

3.49-3.00: Brooke Gengerke, Isaac Higgins, Michael Aalseth, James Brooks, Tyson Parrow, Carter Barse, Brenna Carda, Shaylee Peterson, Kamryn Flihs, Shallyn Foertsch, Jackson Bahr



**Laura Clark, Amy Warrington and Jim Lane helped to set up the cubes after each event.** (Photo by Paul Kosel)



**Weston Dinger uses a tablet to keep score of each match.** (Photo by Paul Kosel)

### Eighth Graders

4.0 GPA: None

3.99-3.50: Claire Heinrich, Hannah Monson, Emily Clark, Camryn Kurtz, Lydia Meier, Holden Sippel, Ashlyn Sperry, Abigail Jensen, Jaycie Lier, Lexi Osterman, Karsyn Jangula, Sydney Leicht, Kyleigh Englund

3.49-3.00: Cadence Feist, Anna Bisbee, Lane Tietz, Anna Fjeldheim, Dillon Abeln, Sara Menzia, Bradin Althoff, Faith Flihs, Emma Schinkel, Bryson Wambach, Ava Wienk

### Seventh Graders

4.0 GPA: Gretchen Dinger, Axel Warrington

3.99-3.50: Payton Mitchell, Elizabeth Flihs, Blake Pauli, Faith Traphagen

3.49-3.00: Ashlyn Feser, Jeslyn Kosel, Aiden Heathcote, Carter Simon, Easten Ekern, Emily Overacker, Kaden Kampa, Tuner Thompson

### Sixth Graders

4.0 GPA: None

3.99-3.50: Nathan Unzen, Carly Gilbert, Jaedyn Penning, Benjamin Hoeft, Talli Wright, Mia Crank, Jerica Locke, Natalia Warrington, Lucas Carda, Logan Warrington

3.49-3.00: De Eh Tha Say, Karter Moody, Ryder Johnson, Gage Sippel, Karsten Flihs, Cali Tollifson, Rylee Dunker, Olivia Stiegelmeier, Keegen Tracy, Garrett Schultz, Raelee Lilly, Paisley Mitchell, Landon Smith, Lincoln Krause



# Seven wrestlers place at Groton Invite

Seven Groton Area grapplers placed at the Groton Invitational Wrestling Tournament held Saturday.

Christian Ehremsnn placed first 106 pounds, Dragr Monson placed first at 113 pounds, Brevin Flihs placed third at 120 pounds, Cole Bisbee placed second at 145 pounds, Lane Krueger placed second at 182 pounds, Caleb Furney placed fourth at 195 pounds, Grady O'Neill placed third at 285 pounds.

**106 B: Porter Johnson (10-6) scored 4.0 team points.**

Quarterfinal - Porter Johnson (Groton Area) 10-6 won by fall over Aidan Cass (Watertown JV) 0-2 (Fall 3:04)

Semifinal - Leo Stroup (Watertown JV) 2-1 won by fall over Porter Johnson (Groton Area) 10-6 (Fall 1:19)

Cons. Semi - Isaac Dean (Milbank JV) 3-7 won by fall over Porter Johnson (Groton Area) 10-6 (Fall 2:38)

**106: Christian Ehresmann (21-11) placed 1st and scored 22.5 team points.**

Champ. Round 1 - Christian Ehresmann (Groton Area) 21-11 received a bye () (Bye)

Quarterfinal - Christian Ehresmann (Groton Area) 21-11 won by tech fall over Charlie Dulany (Warner/Northwestern) 7-11 (TF-1.5 4:44 (17-2))

Semifinal - Christian Ehresmann (Groton Area) 21-11 won by decision over Joshua Kanegijeter (Clark/Willow Lake JV) 17-15 (Dec 7-0)

1st Place Match - Christian Ehresmann (Groton Area) 21-11 won by major decision over Jacob Johnson (Milbank JV) 12-16 (MD 14-5)

**113: Jacob Craig (6-7)**

Champ. Round 1 - Jacob Craig (Groton Area) 6-7 received a bye () (Bye)

Quarterfinal - Brayden Christensen (Milbank JV) 14-12 won by fall over Jacob Craig (Groton Area) 6-7 (Fall 1:50)

Cons. Round 2 - Jacob Craig (Groton Area) 6-7 won by fall over Nicholus Giese (Sioux Falls O'Gorman JV) 0-2 (Fall 2:06)

Cons. Round 3 - Gage Skjonsberg (Viborg/Hurley) 3-3 won by fall over Jacob Craig (Groton Area) 6-7 (Fall 2:22)

**113: Dragr Monson (26-6) placed 1st**



**Quarterfinal - Cole Bisbee (Groton Area) 11-7 won by fall over Tyler Frick (Canton JV) 1-2 (Fall 2:30).** (Photo by Paul Kosel)



**Quarterfinal - Jayden Johnson (Milbank JV) 7-4 won by fall over Korbin Kucker (Groton Area) 8-7 (Fall 0:53).** (Photo by Paul Kosel)

**and scored 23.5 team points.**

Champ. Round 1 - Dragr Monson (Groton Area) 26-6 received a bye () (Bye)

Quarterfinal - Dragr Monson (Groton Area) 26-6 won by tech fall over Parker Gill (Ipswich/Leola/Bowdle) 2-18 (TF-1.5 2:26 (16-1))

Semifinal - Dragr Monson (Groton Area) 26-6 won by fall over Mason Krause (Watertown JV) 5-6 (Fall 0:18)

1st Place Match - Dragr Monson (Groton Area) 26-6 won by decision over Brayden Christensen (Milbank JV) 14-12 (Dec 9-4)

**120: Brevin Flihs (15-8) placed 3rd and scored 16.0 team points.**

Champ. Round 1 - Brevin Flihs (Groton Area) 15-8 received a bye () (Bye)

Quarterfinal - Brevin Flihs (Groton Area) 15-8 won by fall over Sergio Nunez (Wessington Springs/Woonsocket/Wolsey-Wessington) 2-9 (Fall 3:04)

Semifinal - Evan Dorsett (Milbank JV) 6-2 won by decision over Brevin Flihs (Groton Area) 15-8 (Dec 6-5)

Cons. Semi - Brevin Flihs (Groton Area) 15-8 won by fall over Tate Schlueter (Milbank JV) 2-6 (Fall 4:55)

3rd Place Match - Brevin Flihs (Groton Area) 15-8 won by decision over Derek Hanson (Watertown JV) 3-2 (Dec 9-6)

**120: Aiden Heathcote (9-7)**

Champ. Round 1 - Aiden Heathcote (Groton Area) 9-7 received a bye () (Bye)

Quarterfinal - Derek Hanson (Watertown JV) 3-2 won by fall over Aiden Heathcote (Groton Area) 9-7 (Fall 1:56)

Cons. Round 2 - Aiden Heathcote (Groton Area) 9-7 won by decision over Gavin Witt (Webster Area JV) 2-9 (Dec 4-0)

Cons. Round 3 - Tate Schlueter (Milbank JV) 2-6 won by fall over Aiden Heathcote (Groton Area) 9-7 (Fall 0:18)

**126: Korbin Kucker (8-7) scored 2.0 team points.**

Champ. Round 1 - Korbin Kucker (Groton Area) 8-7 received a bye () (Bye)

Quarterfinal - Jayden Johnson (Milbank JV) 7-4 won by fall over Korbin Kucker (Groton Area) 8-7 (Fall 0:53)

Cons. Round 2 - Korbin Kucker (Groton Area) 8-7 won by major decision over Paul VanDover (Milbank JV) 1-4 (MD 13-0)

Cons. Round 3 - Troy Randall Jr (Watertown JV) 6-8 won by fall over Korbin Kucker (Groton Area) 8-7 (Fall 0:25)



**Quarterfinal - Grady O'Neill (Groton Area) 20-13 won by fall over Will Peterson (Sioux Falls O'Gorman JV) 1-4 (Fall 1:54).** (Photo by Paul Kosel)



**Quarterfinal - Brevin Flihs (Groton Area) 15-8 won by fall over Sergio Nunez (Wessington Springs/Woonsocket/Wolsey-Wessington) 2-9 (Fall 3:04).** (Photo by Paul Kosel)

**145: Cole Bisbee (11-7) placed 2nd and scored 18.0 team points.**

Champ. Round 1 - Cole Bisbee (Groton Area) 11-7 received a bye () (Bye)

Quarterfinal - Cole Bisbee (Groton Area) 11-7 won by fall over Tyler Frick (Canton JV) 1-2



**Julianna Kosel sang the National Anthem at the start of the wrestling tournament on Saturday in Groton.** (Photo by Paul Kosel)



**Quarterfinal - Porter Johnson (Groton Area) 10-6 won by fall over Aidan Cass (Watertown JV) 0-2 (Fall 3:04)** (Photo by Paul Kosel)



**Quarterfinal - Christian Ehresmann (Groton Area) 21-11 won by tech fall over Charlie Dulany (Warner/Northwestern) 7-11 (TF-1.5 4:44 (17-2)).** (Photo by Paul Kosel)



**Quarterfinal - Dragr Monson (Groton Area) 26-6 won by tech fall over Parker Gill (Ipswich/Leola/Bowdle) 2-18 (TF-1.5 2:26 (16-1)).** (Photo by Paul Kosel)



# Five grapplers place at NEC Tourney

(Fall 2:30)

Semifinal - Cole Bisbee (Groton Area) 11-7 won by decision over Darrel Yost (Ipswich/Leola/Bowdle) 2-17 (Dec 5-2)

1st Place Match - Braydin Leboe (Wessington Springs/Woonsocket/Wolsey-Wessington) 9-5 won by fall over Cole Bisbee (Groton Area) 11-7 (Fall 3:07)

**182: Lane Krueger (17-13) placed 2nd and scored 16.0 team points.**

Quarterfinal - Lane Krueger (Groton Area) 17-13 received a bye () (Bye)

Semifinal - Lane Krueger (Groton Area) 17-13 won by fall over Matthew McCloud (Ipswich/Leola/Bowdle) 2-12 (Fall 0:28)

1st Place Match - Tanner Meyers (Canton JV) 4-0 won by tech fall over Lane Krueger (Groton Area) 17-13 (TF-1.5 4:29 (18-1))

**195: Caleb Furney (3-4) placed 4th and scored 4.0 team points.**

Quarterfinal - Caleb Furney (Groton Area) 3-4 received a bye () (Bye)

Semifinal - Elijah Isais (Canton JV) 11-12 won by fall over Caleb Furney (Groton Area) 3-4 (Fall 2:50)

Cons. Semi - Caleb Furney (Groton Area) 3-4 received a bye () (Bye)

3rd Place Match - Logan Meyer (Milbank JV) 3-12 won by fall over Caleb Furney (Groton Area) 3-4 (Fall 3:24)

**285: Grady O'Neill (20-13) placed 3rd and scored 16.0 team points.**

Quarterfinal - Grady O'Neill (Groton Area) 20-13 won by fall over Will Peterson (Sioux Falls O'Gorman JV) 1-4 (Fall 1:54)

Semifinal - Avery Nichols (Clark/Willow Lake JV) 14-15 won by fall over Grady O'Neill (Groton Area) 20-13 (Fall 5:16)

Cons. Semi - Grady O'Neill (Groton Area) 20-13 won by fall over Landon Novy (Milbank JV) 3-4 (Fall 1:56)

3rd Place Match - Grady O'Neill (Groton Area) 20-13 won by fall over Ben Lasley (Canton JV) 8-9 (Fall 1:57)



**Quarterfinal - Derek Hanson (Watertown JV) 3-2 won by fall over Aiden Heathcote (Groton Area) 9-7 (Fall 1:56).**

(Photo by Paul Kosel)



**Quarterfinal - Brayden Christensen (Milbank JV) 14-12 won by fall over Jacob Craig (Groton Area) 6-7 (Fall 1:50).**

(Photo by Paul Kosel)

The Northeast Conference Wrestling Tournament was held Thursday in Britton with five Groton Area wrestlers placing.

Dragr Monson placed second at 113 pounds, Christian Ehresmann placed third at 106 pounds, Grady O'Neill placed third at 285 pounds, Caleb Furney placed fourth at 195 pounds and Lane Krueger placed fourth at 182 pounds,

**106: Christian Ehresman (18-11) placed 3rd and scored 14.0 team points.**

Champ. Round 1 - Christian Ehresman (Groton Area) 18-11 received a bye () (Bye)

Quarterfinal - Christian Ehresman (Groton Area) 18-11 won by fall over Riley Steen (Sisseton) 3-18 (Fall 0:45)

Semifinal - Gannon Gilligan (Kingsbury County) 18-11 won by decision over Christian Ehresman (Groton Area) 18-11 (Dec 2-1)

Cons. Semi - Christian Ehresman (Groton Area) 18-11 won by decision over Jacob Johnson (Milbank) 10-17 (Dec 10-9)

3rd Place Match - Christian Ehresman (Groton Area) 18-11 won by decision over Jaxon Quail (Deuel) 14-12 (Dec 6-5)

**113: Dragr Monson (23-6) placed 2nd and scored 20.0 team points.**

Champ. Round 1 - Dragr Monson (Groton Area) 23-6 received a bye () (Bye)

Quarterfinal - Dragr Monson (Groton Area) 23-6 won by fall over Tyan Johnson (Sisseton) 14-19 (Fall 4:44)

Semifinal - Dragr Monson (Groton Area) 23-6 won by fall over Joshua Kannegieter (Clark/Willow Lake) 15-12 (Fall 0:47)

1st Place Match - Riley Whitley (Redfield Area) 4-0 won by decision over Dragr Monson (Groton Area) 23-6 (Dec 8-4)

**120: Aiden Heathcote (5-10) scored 1.0 team points.**

Quarterfinal - Elliot Bratland (Clark/Willow Lake) 9-13 won by fall over Aiden Heathcote (Groton Area) 5-10 (Fall 1:12)

Cons. Round 1 - Aiden Heathcote (Groton Area) 5-10 won by decision over Gavin Witt (Webster Area) 2-9 (Dec 6-3)

Cons. Semi - Brayden Christensen (Milbank) 15-12 won by fall over Aiden Heathcote (Groton Area) 5-10 (Fall 0:13)

**126: Brevin Fliehs (2-8) .**

Quarterfinal - Brock Gisselbeck (Hamlin) 13-16 won by fall over Brevin Fliehs (Groton Area) 2-8 (Fall 5:18)

Cons. Round 1 - Matt Mork (Webster Area) 6-15 won by fall over Brevin Fliehs (Groton Area) 2-8 (Fall 1:47)

**145: Cole Bisbee (3-16) .**

Champ. Round 1 - Cole Bisbee (Groton Area) 3-16 received a bye () (Bye)

Quarterfinal - Mason Fey (Redfield Area) 29-2 won by fall over Cole Bisbee (Groton Area) 3-16 (Fall 0:47)

Cons. Round 2 - Cole Bisbee (Groton Area) 3-16 received a bye () (Bye)

Cons. Round 3 - Tucker Anderson (Kingsbury County) 14-15 won by fall over Cole Bisbee (Groton Area) 3-16 (Fall 2:32)

**182: Lane Krueger (14-12) placed 4th and scored 7.0 team points.**

Quarterfinal - Lane Krueger (Groton Area) 14-12 received a bye () (Bye)

Semifinal - Sean Domke (Redfield Area) 23-9 won by fall over Lane Krueger (Groton Area) 14-12 (Fall 1:14)

Cons. Semi - Lane Krueger (Groton Area) 14-12 won by fall over Miles Wyman (Deuel) 0-2 (Fall 0:34)

3rd Place Match - Sam Grantham (Hamlin) 13-11 won by decision over Lane Krueger (Groton Area) 14-12 (Dec 5-1)

**195: Caleb Furney (2-2) placed 4th and scored 8.0 team points.**

Quarterfinal - Caleb Furney (Groton Area) 2-2 won by fall over Mason Gray (Sisseton) 2-16 (Fall 1:26)

Semifinal - Brodie Holtquist (Milbank) 16-3 won by fall over Caleb Furney (Groton Area) 2-2 (Fall 1:41)

Cons. Semi - Caleb Furney (Groton Area) 2-2 received a bye () (Bye)

3rd Place Match - Connor Appel (Redfield Area) 12-10 won by fall over Caleb Furney (Groton Area) 2-2 (Fall 3:34)

**285: Grady O'Neill (17-12) placed 3rd and scored 16.0 team points.**

Quarterfinal - Grady O'Neill (Groton Area) 17-12 won by fall over James Mickey (Hamlin) 5-15 (Fall 1:04)

Semifinal - Avery Nichols (Clark/Willow Lake) 12-12 won by fall over Grady O'Neill (Groton Area) 17-12 (Fall 2:45)

Cons. Semi - Grady O'Neill (Groton Area) 17-12 won by fall over Landon Novy (Milbank) 3-4 (Fall 0:47)

3rd Place Match - Grady O'Neill (Groton Area) 17-12 won by fall over Gavin Nichols (Redfield Area) 16-11 (Fall 2:50)



**Pictured are some of the workers at the head table - Tom Woods, Scott Thorson and Joe Schwan.** (Photo by Paul Kosel)



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# Tigers split with Langford Area

Groton Area hosted Langford Area in a double header with the boys winning their game and the girls losing by only 10 to the Lions.

The varsity games were broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM, sponsored by Allied Climate Professionals, Blocker Construction, Groton Dairy Queen, Jark Real Estate, John Sieh Agency, Milbrandt Enterprises and Tyson DeHoet Trucking

The Lady Tigers suffered a 44-34 loss to Langford Area in the varsity game. The game was tied twice in the first quarter, ending at a seven tie at the first quarter. The Lions scored 10 unanswered points to take a 17-7 lead and led it at half time, 22-15. The Lions held a 38-26 lead at the end of the third quarter.

Alyssa Thaler led the Tigers with 11 points, four rebounds, one assist and two steals. Gracie Traphagen had 10 points, six rebounds, one assist and three steals. Brooke Gengerke had six points, three rebounds and one assist. Allyssa Locke had five points, seven rebounds and four assists. Maddie Bjerke had two points, one rebound and one assist. Madeline Flihs had four rebounds. Kaycie Hawkins had four rebounds.

Alyssa Thaler led the Tigers with 11 points while Gracie Traphagen had 10, Brooke Gengerke six, Allyssa Locke and Maddie Bjerke each had two points. Mallory Miller led Langford Area with 17 points followed by Ady Dwight with 16, Hanna Miller had eight, Chesney Olson two and Ashley Gustafson had one point.

The Tigers were nine of 48 in shooting for 18 percent while Langford Area was 17 of 52 for 32 percent. Groton Area made six of 10 free throws for 60 percent off of Langford Area's eight team fouls. Langford Area was eight of 13 for 62 percent off of Groton Area's 11 team fouls.

Groton Area had seven turnovers and Langford Area had six.

The boys varsity team won the final game, 52-36. The first half had two equal rallies by both sides. Langford Area had a seven-point rally then Groton Area had a seven-point rally. Later, Langford Area had a six-point rally then Groton Area had a six-point rally. The first half was tied four times with the score being tied at half time at 21.

The lead changed hands three times early in the third quarter before the Tigers started to pull away, leading 38-31 at the end of the third quarter. Groton Area scored the last eight points of the game for the final score of 52-36.

Brodyn DeHoet led the Tigers with 22 points, had four rebounds, one assist and two steals. Kaden Kurtz had 11 points, eight rebounds, four assists and one steal. Jonathan Doeden finished with 10 points, seven rebounds, four assists, one steal and one block. Tristan Traphagen had eight points, four rebounds, one steal and two blocks. Jayden Zak had one point, one rebound, one assist and one steal. Austin Jones had five rebounds, one assist and two blocks. Isaac Smith one rebound and one assist. Wyatt Hearnen had a rebound, an assist and a steal. Lane Tietz had two rebounds, two assists and two steals. Lucas Simon had one block.

Groton Area controlled the boards, 33-19. Langford Area had 16 turnovers, with eight of them being steals. Groton Area had 14 turnovers with eight of them being steals.

Groton Area missed a couple of shots in the final seconds as Langford Area hung on to win the girls junior varsity game, 33-23. Brooke Gengerke led the Tigers with nine points followed by Trista Keith with four, Allyssa Locke had three and Alyssa Thayler and Shallyn Foertsch each had two points.

Olyvia Dwight led the Lions with 15 points while Jenna Nelson had four, Megan Gustafson had three and Alyssa Keough added one point.

Groton Area's boys defense held Langford

Area to one field goal in the second half as the Tigers cruised to a 39-17 win in the junior varsity game. The game was broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM, sponsored by the Jesse Zak family.

Langford held a 9-6 lead at the end of the first quarter and it was tied at halftime. The Tigers took a 24-16 lead into the fourth quarter.

Lane Tietz made three three-pointers and led the Tigers with 13 points while Tristan Traphagen had seven, Jayden Zak and Jacob Zak each had five, Chandler Larson had three and Wyatt Hearnen, Kannon Coats and Tate Larson each had two points.

Ben Gustafon led the Lions with nine points while Brayden Peterson had five and Tayson Aadland had three.

- Paul Kosel

## 11-point 4th quarter rally gives Lady Tigers win over Northwestern

Groton Area had an 11-point rally in the fourth to help push them to a 41-38 non-conference win over Northwestern Area. The game was played Monday in Mellette and was broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM, sponsored by the South Dakota Army National Guard and by Locke Electric of Groton.

The Tigers jumped out to a 6-0 lead and took an 11-7 lead at the end of the first quarter. The Tigers shot four of 17 for 23 percent and the Wildcats shot three of 16 for 18 percent.

Northwestern took the lead in the second quarter at 15-13 and the Tigers tied the game at 15 and 17 before Northwestern Area took a 22-19 lead at half time. In the second quarter, Groton Area made four of 12 shots for 33 percent and the Wildcats were six of 13 for 46 percent.

Only one field goal and four free throws were scored in the entire eight-minute third quarter with Northwestern holding on to the lead, 24-23. The Tigers were one of 10 in shooting and Northwestern missed 12 attempts.

The Wildcats gained a five-point advantage at 31-26 before Groton Area scored 11 straight points to take a 37-31 lead. Northwestern Area closed to within one, 39-38, but perfect shooting from the free throw line for the Tigers provided the win. In the fourth quarter, Groton Area was five of 15 for 33 percent and Northwestern Area was five of 18 in shooting.

Groton Area was seven of seven from the line off of Northwestern's 11 team fouls. Northwestern was eight of 16 for 50 percent off of Groton Area's 18 team fouls.

For the game, Groton Area made eight of 37 two-pointers for 22 percent and six of 18 three-pointers for 33 percent.

Six players scored for the Tigers with Gracie Traphagen leading the way with 14 points followed by Brooke Gengerke with 11, Allyssa Locke had six, Alyssa Thaler and Kaycie Hawkins each had four and Madeline Flihs had two points.

Seven players scored for the Wildcats with Hannah Schentzel leading the way with 14 points followed by Chrissy Stoltenberg with eight, Madalyn Groft and Miranda Thorson each had five, Hailey Boekelheide had three, Sydney Schell two and Jessica Boekelheide added a free throw.

Traphagen and Locke each had seven of the team's 32 rebounds. Hawkins and Thayler each had three of the team's 10 assists. Thayler had three of the team's eight steals and Traphagen had two blocks.

Groton Area is now 4-7 on the season and Northwestern is 3-12.

Groton Area won the junior varsity game, 34-20. Brooke Gengerke had six points, Trista Keith had four, Madeline Flihs had five, Maddie Bjerke had two points, Aspen Johnson had nine points, Shallyn Foertsch had three points, Emma Schinkel had four points and Sydney Leicht had two points.

Groton Area made it a clean sweep with a C game win. Carly Guthmiller and Sydney Leicht each had nine points, Anna Fjeldheim

had eight, Emma Schinkel six, Lydia Meier two and Karsyn Jangula and Cadence Feist each had two points.

- Paul Kosel

## An iceberg freezes winning streak at nine

Cold shooting and being outrebounded provided to be too big of a hill to overcome Friday night as Clark/Willow Lake handed the boys their first loss of the season, 54-43.

The lead changed hands 11 times and the game was tied twice in the first half as the Cyclone held a 30-27 lead at half time. In the first half, the Tigers made 10 of 24 shots for 42 percent and the Cyclones were 12 of 16 in shooting for 75 percent.

Then came the second half. In the third quarter, Groton Area made one of 12 field goals for eight percent and the Cyclones were five of 11 for 45 percent. Clark/Willow Lake took a 41-34 lead into the fourth quarter.

The Tigers closed to within seven, 48-41. Tyler O'Neill made eight of eight free throws that helped the Cyclones to pull away for the win.

Groton Area made 15 of 49 shots for 31 percent. The Tigers were 12 of 23 in two-pointers for 52 percent and four of 27 in three-pointers for 15 percent. The Cyclones were 20 of 40 for 50 percent. Clark/Willow Lake outrebounded the Tigers, 33-24.

Brodyn DeHoet had his fifth straight game of double-doubles with 16 points and 10 rebounds. He also had one assist and three steals and was six of eight from the line. Jonathan Doeden had 14 points, four rebounds, two assists and two steals. Kaden Kurtz had 10 points, two rebounds and two assists. Jayden Zak made a three-pointer, had two rebounds, one assist and one steal. Autsin Jones had one rebound, Cade Guthmiller had five rebounds, two assists, one steal and one block. Isaac Smith had two assists.

Tyler O'Neill led the Cyclones with 17 points which included his eight fourth quarter free throws. Stone Bruke had a double-double night for the Cyclones with 16 points and 17 rebounds. Brady Jordan had 10 points while Renner Uecker had seven and Trey Huber four.

Groton Area was nine of 15 from the line for 60 percent off of Clark/Willow Lake's 11 team fouls while the Cyclones were 10 of 16 for 63 percent off of Groton Area's 18 team fouls. Groton Area only had three turnovers while the Cyclones had 11.

Groton Area is now 9-1 on the season and will play Sioux Falls Christian at 6:30 p.m. today at Madison. Clark/Willow Lake is 6-4 and they will play Dakota Valley at 2 p.m. today in Madison.

Groton Area won the junior varsity game, 33-29. The Tigers led at the quarterstops at 9-7, 19-15 and 27-21. Isaac Smith led the Tigers with nine points followed by Chandler Larson with six, Jayden Zak, Tate Larson and Tristan Traphagen each had four points, Lane Tietz had three, Wyatt Hearnen two and Lucas Simon added one point. Kaplan Felberg led the Cyclones with nine points.

The varsity game was broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM, sponsored by Allied Climate Professionals, Blocker Construction, Groton Dairy Queen, Jark Real Estate, John Sieh Agency, Milbrandt Enterprises and Tyson DeHoet Trucking. The junior varsity game was also broadcast live on GDLIVE.COM, sponsored by the Groton Vet Clinic.

- Paul Kosel



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## SERENITY DENNARD DISAPPEARANCE: One year later, girl's fate unknown despite extensive search and investigation

**By: Bart Pfankuch**

Despite a search by more than 1,200 people covering 4,500 miles of woodlands, and an investigation tracking down more than 220 leads and involving 465 interviews, Serenity Dennard remains missing and her fate remains a mystery.

Serenity was 9 on Feb. 3, 2019, when she ran away on a cold Sunday morning from the Black Hills Children's Home, a residential youth treatment facility located near Rockerville in Pennington County, amid some of the most rugged and remote terrain in all of South Dakota.

Though witnesses saw her run off, and a search began almost immediately, Serenity has never been seen again and no evidence of her death has been discovered.

Over the past year, the Pennington County Sheriff's Office has led an aggressive, two-pronged attempt to find Serenity — an investigative track that has sought to rule out foul play and search nationwide for Serenity; and the search track that has engaged 1,200 trained personnel from more than 65 agencies using scent and cadaver dogs, aircraft and thermal devices to look for Serenity's body or any evidence.

Pennington County authorities have not ruled anything out, but their working theory is that Serenity ran into the woods, got lost and froze to death or died of hypothermia.

Yet until Serenity or any evidence is found, her disappearance will remain a mystery that has captivated, saddened and in some cases angered people in South Dakota and beyond.

As the one-year anniversary of Serenity's disappearance approaches, South Dakota News Watch interviewed several people close to Serenity or her case. The reporting has led to several discoveries, including:

— Serenity was known to run away frequently from her family home in Sturgis. Runaway prevention was part of the reason for her placement and part of her treatment plan at Black Hills Children's Home. Serenity tried to run away one week before her final escape and was placed on a protocol of "arm's length only" monitoring. But for reasons unexplained, the strict runaway-prevention effort was ended a day or two before her fateful Feb. 3 escape, according to Serenity's adoptive father and his wife, who are her primary caretakers.



**Serenity Dennard is shown in one of her last known photos. A year after she ran away, Serenity's disappearance remains a heartbreaking mystery for many people in western South Dakota and beyond. Anyone with information about Serenity is asked to call 605-394-6115.**

Photo: Courtesy Pennington County Sheriff's Office

— The children's home, run by the non-profit Children's Home Society, was cited by state and federal regulators after Serenity's disappearance for waiting 80 minutes to call 911, for having radios that were on different channels and for lacking planning and training in runaway prevention.

— Two people with direct physical oversight of Serenity at the time of her disappearance were fired after she ran away, according to Children's Home Society Executive Director Michelle Lavalley. But the on-call supervisor who advised employees on the scene to search longer on their own before calling 911 remains employed, as does the director of the home, who refused an interview request from News Watch.

— Although the home society has engaged new protocols to heighten runaway prevention and training for employees at the Black Hills home, those same methods have not been fully implemented at the society's residential treatment home in Sioux Falls. Also, as of late January 2020, security cameras and doors with security alarms were planned but not yet installed at the Black Hills home, nearly a year after Serenity's disappearance. Similar security mechanisms are proposed for the Sioux Falls home but won't be purchased or installed until the society receives a funding grant it has applied for, Lavalley said.

— Serenity's adoptive parents, now divorced, and their loved ones have had their sorrow and stress worsened by criticisms and outrageous false statements on social media and a website created about the case. Serenity's adoptive mother has been accused of involvement in her disappearance, even though she was at work when the girl went missing and investigators do not suspect any of the parents. Serenity's adoptive father has had strangers take pictures of his other children playing outside his home and has been accused of giving his daughter a phone in a plot to help her escape.

— Sheriff's officials say Serenity had only a 3-minute to 5-minute head start on the first searchers. Two eyewitnesses who saw Serenity run away reported it and then searched for her. The eyewitnesses lost sight of Serenity for only 3 to 5 minutes before trying to follow Serenity's path.

Deputy Jamin Hartland, the Pennington

County Sheriff's Office lead detective on the case, said the investigation is the most extensive in Pennington County history, and so far has shown no evidence of an abduction or other form of foul play.

"In this investigation, as in any investigation, obviously we can't rule out any possibility until we know exactly what happened to Serenity," Hartland told News Watch. "We just have no solid evidence thus far to suggest that this was an abduction or anything other than a girl who ran away from a facility and has yet to be found."

Hartland and Sheriff Kevin Thom say it is highly unlikely that Serenity was taken by a stranger or someone driving by.

They base that view on the short period of time Serenity was out of sight; the fact that she was walking in snow boots on a rural stretch of a road trafficked almost exclusively by locals during winter; and the fact that it was late morning on a chilly Super Bowl Sunday.

"I can't even begin to calculate the odds that someone who would be willing to violently abduct a child happened by on a rural western South Dakota road within the few minutes they had to do that and successfully abducted her," Hartland said.

Cadaver dogs searching for her have picked up scents, but it is unknown if the odors emanated from Serenity.



**This portrait of Serenity Dennard hangs with other precious family photos in the living room at the home of Chad and KaSandra Dennard in Sturgis. The Dennards are heartbroken over the loss of their daughter and disappointed that she was able to run away from the Black Hills Children's Home.** Photo: Bart Pfankuch, South Dakota News Watch

Serenity's adoptive father, Chad Dennard, said Serenity had become adept at planning and executing runaway attempts, but also seemed to enjoy watching people search for her. Dennard said his theory is that the girl stayed just ahead of searchers and got lost before succumbing to the freezing temperatures and snowfall that arrived the evening of her running away.

"As far as what I think happened, it changes every day," Dennard said. "But I think she's out there; I truly don't think somebody picked her up. I think she liked to run and she wouldn't run very far, but she liked to see people looking for her. I think she watched people look for her and I think she went too far and got lost. That's just Serenity, and she had done that before."

Dennard, his wife, KaSandra Dennard, and Serenity's adoptive mother, Darcie Gentry, all expressed shock that such an intense, sustained and expansive search has not found

**Continued on next page**

**Groton Independent ♦ Wed., Feb. 5, 2020 ♦ 9**



**Gail Schmidt is the chief of the Rockerville Volunteer Fire Department and has been one of the most prolific searchers in the hunt to find Serenity Dennard. In the video, Schmidt discusses the challenges of searching in the area around the Black Hills Children's Home and shares her unique motivation for searching so hard.** Photo/video: Bart Pfankuch, South Dakota

News Watch





**These two photos show the type of terrain where authorities believe Serenity Dennard may have gotten lost after running away from the Black Hills Children's Home on Feb. 3, 2019. The top photo is of a wooded area very close to the spot of the last known sighting of Serenity; the lower image is of a landscape off Rockerville Road about a mile north of the children's home.** Photos: Bart Pfankuch, South Dakota News Watch

Serenity. The anguish of not knowing what happened or where she is has led them all to hope that someday, somehow, Serenity might return to them.

"We'd take any news at this point," Gentry said in an interview at her home east of Rapid City. "Her bedroom is all set up for her, waiting for her to come home. Sometimes I just go in there and I cry. I lay down, I hold her unicorn, and I cuddle up in the blankets. It just completely rips your heart out."

After being given up by her birth parents who were unstable, and moving through more than a dozen foster homes, Serenity had been diagnosed with reactive detachment disorder, a condition in which children do not feel secure with familial relationships and can act out as a result. She was also diagnosed with disruptive mood dysregulation disorder, a condition marked by mood swings.

Chad and KaSandra Dennard said Serenity was referred to the children's home after a period of worsening behaviors that included running away multiple times, instability in relationships with other children and the potential for self-harm. She began residing at the home in July 2018 for what is typically a 14-month admission.



**The Black Hills Children's Home is located in a remote area of Pennington County about 20 miles southwest of Rapid City. This photo shows the path witnesses say Serenity ran down prior to entering the parking lot and venturing out to Rockerville Road, where she was last seen heading north.** Photo: Bart Pfankuch, South Dakota News Watch

South Dakota News Watch

## A quick plan, then a quick escape

According to Deputy Hartland, Serenity was playing in the gymnasium at the children's home just before 11 a.m. on Sunday, Feb. 3, 2019, with two staff members and six children present.

Serenity and another girl made an impromptu plan that the girl would distract staff members so Serenity could run away, Hartland said. When the girl ran out of the gym and back into the main building, one staff member chased her while the other stayed and supervised the remaining children.

Serenity used the distraction to open the outside door and run away (for security and safe-exit purposes, doors in the children's home are locked from the outside but not from the inside.) No one from the children's home gave immediate chase.

Serenity, dressed in jeans, a long-sleeve shirt and snow boots, ran north across a campus path and into the main parking lot of the complex.

Authorities know this because after Serenity left the gym, a woman and her granddaughter saw her, Hartland said. The pair had dropped off a child at the northernmost building on the campus and were driving on a campus path when they saw Serenity run through the parking lot and stumble on the cattle guard just short of the exit onto Rockerville Road.

While watching, the grandmother reversed the vehicle back to the main building, got out and rang a doorbell to alert a cook inside that a child was running away. The cook was equipped with a radio to alert other employees, but the radio was on a different channel, which slowed the initial staff response, Lavalley said.

The granddaughter remained in the car and



**Pennington County Sheriff's detective Jamin Hartland is the lead investigator into the disappearance of Serenity Dennard, and he keeps the red case file at the ready in case new information arises. In the video, Hartland shares his latest views on the case and talks of how the as yet unsuccessful yearlong effort has affected him.** Photo/video: Bart Pfankuch, South Dakota News Watch

News Watch

watched as Serenity, now walking, headed north on Rockerville Road.

After walking about 50 yards north of the complex entrance, Serenity went out of sight of the granddaughter, whose view was blocked by trees and topography.

When the grandmother returned to the car, the pair drove out of the children's home complex and followed Serenity's path north on Rockerville Road.

They drove a while and returned to the home, then retraced their route more than once, but they never saw Serenity again, and they never saw anyone or any vehicles, Hartland said.

The witnesses said about three to five minutes elapsed from when they watched Serenity running to when they first notified the cook. Then, another three or four minutes went by from when they lost sight of Serenity to when they drove onto Rockerville Road to begin searching.

At the time of the runaway, 15 staff and 37 children were at the facility, Lavalley said. Four



**Pennington County Sheriff Kevin Thom reviews the map that indicates areas around the Black Hills Children's Home that have been searched in the effort to find Serenity Dennard or evidence of her in the woods. In the video, Thom discusses the extent of his department's search, challenges that have arisen, and what it's like to be looking for a missing child.** Photo/video: Bart Pfankuch, South Dakota News Watch

staff members began searching for Serenity as soon as they were notified; one more joined in later. Lavalley said that the on-call supervisor was contacted at home and advised staff to continue searching for 15 minutes more before calling 911.

When that supervisor arrived on scene about 80 minutes later, 911 still had not been called, so the supervisor then called authorities to report the runaway, Lavalley said.

The emergency call kicked off an aggressive search and investigative effort that evening, including the arrival of a portable command post, searchers with dogs and eventually the arrival of detectives, including Hartland, who was notified of the case around 6 p.m.

## The hunt begins, and drags on

The first night, Hartland and other deputies went door-to-door to all the homes in the area, about 40 in all, trying to see if anyone had seen Serenity, but also getting a feel for any unusual responses, Hartland said.

The department also gave immediate national attention to the case by reporting Serenity as a missing person with the National Crime Information Center, and the next day issuing a national Missing and Endangered Person alert, which is one step above the NCIC notification, Sheriff Thom said.

In the days after, detectives interviewed children's home employees and residents who were at the home the day Serenity left. Eventually, Hartland said, his team interviewed all employees or former employees of the home who had had any contact with Serenity, about 100 people in all.

Investigators also interviewed both sets of Serenity's adoptive parents and her birth parents, and none are considered suspects, Hartland said.

"We've been criticized for not investigating the children's home staff and the families, when in fact those are two of the first things we did," Hartland said.

Another key component of the investigation, he said, was determining whether Serenity could have contacted anyone outside the home before her escape, either by phone or computer. Investigators found nothing to indicate she had done either, Hartland said.

Through the year, Hartland and investigators from a wide range of agencies have followed up on 224 leads from across the country, mostly reported sightings of Serenity. With the help of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and numerous other local agencies across 36 states and Canada, every lead has been checked without positive results, he said. The department has also looked into claims of sightings in Pakistan and Nigeria that turned out to be scam attempts.

Continued on next page



## Continued from previous page **Searching, searching, and not finding**

While most of the investigative effort has been done quietly, the numerous and extensive searches for Serenity have been well publicized.

In all, more than 1,200 people from nearly 70 agencies, including more than 100 dog teams, have logged more than 4,500 miles of walking, Thom said. The agency often alerts local media that a search has taken place or is about to, and pictures and videos are often posted on the department's Facebook page and Twitter account.

To monitor the search and try to rule some areas out, Thom maintains a tabletop-size map of the area with lines demarcating where GPS devices show people and dogs have searched so far. Almost the entire region is nearly covered with blue and red lines where searching has taken place.

Thom pointed out that his agency has conducted numerous searches for lost people in the Black Hills during his nine years in office, and mostly with success. But he also cautioned that searching in the Hills is never an easy task.

The weather turned bad the day Serenity ran away, with temperatures below freezing and snow that fell and stayed for several weeks, hampering the search and reducing the chances Serenity could survive outside for more than a few hours, Thom said.

"In terms of Serenity specifically, she's very small, she's 4-foot-9, roughly 90-some pounds, so if she's in the woods and got lost, at the point you're becoming hypothermic, there's the potential that you find a spot to curl up to get warm, under a rock ledge or next to a log," Thom said. "Experienced searchers will tell you that it's not uncommon to walk past people multiple times in an area once they get hidden and you can be a few feet from someone and walk right past them."

Thom said cadaver dogs have alerted to scent, but it is unknown if the scent originated with Serenity, and so far nothing has been found.

"We've got two tracks; the investigative track and the search track, and we've never stopped doing either of them," Thom said. "I think there is a point we stop, but we haven't reached that point yet."

The sheriff's office consulted a pediatrician who said that given Serenity's age, size and the weather, she possibly could have walked three to four miles from the children's home, presenting searchers with a giant area to search.

Thom noted that his department has an ongoing case in which a man remains lost in the Black Hills. Experienced elk hunter Larry Genzlinger, 66, of Howard, was hunting near Deerfield Lake in the Black Hills on Oct. 1 and has not been found despite an aggressive search.

Gail Schmidt, chief of the Rockerville Volunteer Fire Department, has helped lead numerous searches for Serenity and is believed to have spent more time in the woods looking than anyone else. As of early January 2020, she had personally logged 63 days of searching and had covered an estimated 375 miles on foot.

Schmidt said searching is difficult in the region around the children's home owing to the sheer variety of terrain and topography — from open forest roads and trails to granite outcroppings to caves to draws and drainages to ponds and lakes. The region is also home to numerous downed, blackened trees that remain piled up from the Battle Creek Fire that scarred 13,000 acres around the children's home in 2002.

"I've found myself seeing something black and square and thinking, 'Could that be her boot?'" Schmidt said.

The wide variety of low and high points not only creates myriad places where a pre-teen girl could hide or seek shelter, but also creates

challenges for dogs and handlers trying to track a scent, Schmidt said. Wind, temperature and humidity all affect how scent travels, making it tricky to determine the source of smells that have been occasionally picked up and noted by cadaver dogs.

Schmidt, like others, is bothered and surprised that such an extensive search has not turned up Serenity or even any of her clothing.

"My explanation for how we could have covered so many miles and haven't found her is that we just haven't gotten to her yet," she said. "We're in the process of eliminating areas and following any scents ... but there's lots of rock outcrops, so if she tucked herself into a rock or a cave somewhere, we just try to check those areas as best we can."

Schmidt said she has been amazed and touched by the incredible efforts of local first-responders, community members and outside experts who have participated in or supported the search for Serenity. Thom said the value of the volunteer hours devoted to the case, added to the actual costs incurred by his department, are likely over \$500,000.

## **Safety improved at Black Hills Children's Home**

Lavallee became executive director of the Children's Home Society in late September, replacing longtime director Bill Colson, who retired in 2019 after a decade leading the agency. Lavallee is a former candidate for lieutenant governor who has served as an executive at Raven Industries, Avera Hospital and the University of South Dakota.

The Children's Home Society has two residential treatment centers; one with 60 children in Sioux Falls and the Rockerville facility, which houses 36 inpatient children. The society receives about \$8 million a year in Medicaid funding; it costs about \$275 per day to house a child, depending on the treatment plan, Lavallee said.

Lavallee said improving safety for children at the Children's Home Society residential facilities became a top priority after Serenity's disappearance and a scathing review of policies by the state Department of Social Services and the federal Center for Medicaid Services in April.

The society has complied with all the directives put forward by the state and federal regulators, Lavallee said.

Several policies have been updated, including that 911 will be called anytime a staff member loses "line of sight" on a child and that all radios are now programmed to the same channel.

A new phone system has a button to alert employees inside and outside the home that an emergency exists, and a designated supervisor must be on campus at all times and would serve as the search coordinator in an emergency.

Beyond that, runaway drills are conducted monthly in Rockerville and more frequently than before in Sioux Falls. New employees undergo runaway training at the time of hiring, Lavallee said.

The society plans to install cameras outside the Rockerville facility in early February, and at that time new doors will be installed that can be opened only from the inside with a key card or else an alarm will sound and a 15-second delay will engage to prevent unauthorized departures.

"You won't see this happen again today," Lavallee said, adding that the U.S. Department of Homeland Security visited the children's home in October to make further suggestions on security and will make a similar visit to the Sioux Falls home in March.

Lavallee said the state DSS recommended the termination of the two children's home employees; she would not discuss other personnel decisions or anything related to Serenity's treatment, including if or why the "arm's length" monitoring ended.

Lavallee said she and other society employees are deeply saddened over Serenity's disappearance and that, "Serenity remains in our hearts every day."

KaSandra Dennard said that given Serenity's history of running away — and her high intelligence and ability to manipulate others — she doesn't directly blame the children's home for losing Serenity.

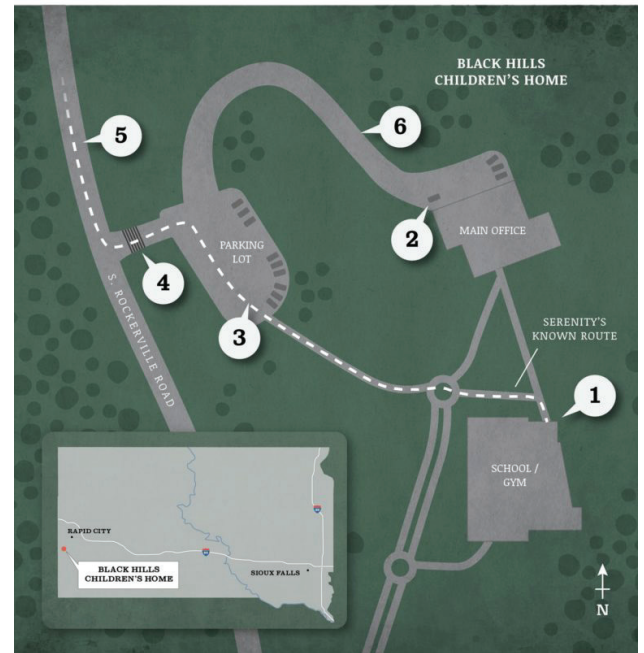
But she does acknowledge she is disappointed that a girl with Serenity's behavior pattern and treatment plan was not kept safe by professionals she and her husband entrusted with the care of their daughter.

"We were literally, 24/7, keeping an eye on her to make sure nothing happened to her or to any other kids, and that she didn't leave," KaSandra said, noting the family has a security system to alert them if Serenity left the home at night or unattended. "They're trained for that and they have people there all the time for that."

KaSandra and Chad said they don't understand why Serenity was taken off the "arm's length" monitoring policy so soon after her previous runaway attempt.

"Her safety was the number-one reason we went the route we did" in placing Serenity at the home, KaSandra said. "Here's a child who just tried running, and they took her off that plan? I just don't know..."

### **Serenity's Last Known Movements**



1. Serenity Dennard, 9, exits the gym building at the children's home unattended around 11 a.m. on Sunday, Feb. 3, 2019 after staff members inside are distracted by another child. Dressed in a long-sleeved shirt, jeans and snow boots, Serenity is believed to head north on paths within the complex.

2. At the same time, a woman and her granddaughter drop off a child at the northern entrance to the main office.

3. As they begin to drive away, they both see Serenity running alone across the parking lot, and they recognize that she is a resident who is likely running away.

4. They continue to watch as Serenity stumbles and falls at the cattle guard just short of Rockerville Road. The grandmother reverses the car back to the main building, gets out and rings a doorbell to alert staff inside of the runaway.

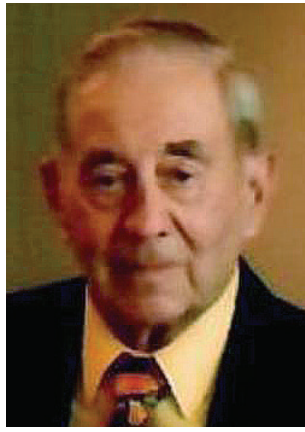
5. The granddaughter stays in the car, watching Serenity. Now at a walking pace, Serenity heads north on Rockerville Road. At a spot about 50 yards north of the main entrance, the granddaughter loses sight of Serenity due to trees and topography. It was the last known sighting of Serenity, who has been missing ever since.

6. Within three to four minutes of losing sight of Serenity, the grandmother and granddaughter drive down the children's home path and turn onto Rockerville Road to look for Serenity. Heading north, they drive up the road and return to the children's home more than once and do not see Serenity or any other vehicles or people. Meanwhile, children's home staff begin to search on foot and in vehicles and do not see Serenity. After 1 hour and 20 minutes since being alerted to the runaway, children's home staff place the first call to 911, kicking off a year-long search and investigation that have turned up nothing.



# The Life of Robert Schuring

Robert Ignatius (Bob) Schuring, 92, passed away on Saturday, February 1, 2020 at Sun Dial Manor in Bristol, South Dakota. He was born on June 17, 1927 to Joseph (J.W.) and Veronica (Peoples) Schuring in Andover, South Dakota. The youngest of seven children, Bob was raised on a farm just south of town at the same location where he raised his family, and where 3rd and 4th generations of the Schuring family continue to operate a dairy today. After a tornado destroyed the family farm, and killed his mother and a sister in 1938, Bob and his father reconstructed a home using part of the Andover Catholic Church rectory that remained standing after the tornado and they delivered milk from their dairy to the residents of Andover while he was growing up. He attended Andover elementary and high school, and as a youth enjoyed playing basketball during the winter and baseball during the summer. Following high school, he continued to play baseball on Andover's amateur baseball team and basketball on the amateur town team that won six state championships in the 1950's. For more than 60 years, as his children and grandchildren grew, he and Trea were among the fans at many activities and sporting events in the area. Bob also loved having horses on the farm and taught each of his children to ride and appreciate them as well. In later years, he enjoyed having teams of horses to pull his Budweiser replica wagon in local parades and, when the weather was nice, would often take his family for rides around Andover in the wagons that he built.



Bob married the love of his life, Theresa (Trea) Lynch in Lily, South Dakota on June 20, 1949. To date, their union has been blessed with eight children, 30 grandchildren, and 36 great-grandchildren. Throughout his life, Bob was active in the Andover community, serving on planning committees for the Andover Centennial and numerous All-School Reunions. He also served on the Groton School District Board

of Education, the South Dakota Wheat Growers Board, and the Sun Dial Manor Board when that was constructed in 1963. He was a life-long member of All Saints Catholic Church in Andover and St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church in Groton after the Andover church was closed. He was also a member of the Catholic Order of Foresters.

Mourning his passing are his wife of 70 years, Trea of Andover; sons Randy (Enriqueta) of Andover, Scott (Lois) of Andover, and Brian (Andrea) of Webster; daughters Lana (Royce) Huber of Custer, Deb Lesnar of Andover, Sandy (Larry) Jebens of Rawlins, WY, and Joy (Tom) Poloncic of Rapid City, and daughter-in-law Sara Schuring of Dell Rapids along with his grandchildren Laura and Justin Huber, Travis (Joleen) Schuring, Sommer VanderWater, Tyler Schuring, Victor (Melissa) Schuring, Racine (Anthony) Guarini, Alexa Sophia DeLeora Schuring, Casey (Kelsey) Lesnar, Lindsey (Tracy) Lambert, Mike (Amber) Lesnar, Nick (Codi) Lesnar, Brady (Michelle) Lesnar, Jacqueline Nemmers, Jacob Schuring, Joseph Schuring, Abbie (Joshua) Cribbs, Thomas Schuring, Trevor (Apryl) Jebens, Trent (Ally) Jebens, Trey Jebens, Matt (Morgan) Poloncic, Theresa Poloncic, Cory (Nik) Schuring, Kayla (Kyle) Grimslid, Morgan, Alexa, and Sean Schuring, and Drake and Dylan Halbkat; his great-grandchildren; two sisters-in-law, Alice Lynch and Marilyn Lynch; one brother-in-law, Jerry Lynch; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Bob was preceded in death by his parents, siblings, and son, Barry. Visitation will be at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church in Groton, South Dakota from 4 – 7:00 p.m. on Friday, February 7, 2020, followed by wake services at 7:00 p.m. Mass of the Christian Burial will be celebrated on Saturday, February 8, 2020 at 10:30 A.M. at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church with burial at All Saints Catholic Cemetery in Andover. Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel, Groton, South Dakota is in charge of arrangements.

# The Life of Curtis Sombke

Services for Curtis Dale Sombke, 84, of Groton will be 11:00 a.m., Saturday, February 8th at St. John's Lutheran Church, Groton. Rev. Andrew Wolfgram will officiate. Burial with military honors will follow in St. Paul's Cemetery, Ferney under the direction of Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel, Groton.



Visitation will be held at the church Friday, February 7th from 5-7 p.m. with a prayer service at 7:00 p.m.

Curtis passed away Saturday, January 25, 2020 at Mountain Vista Memorial Hospital in Mesa, Arizona.

Curtis Dale was born on May 16, 1935 in Bates Township to Alvin and Adeline (Breitkruetz) Sombke. He attended country school in Verdon for two years before he finished grade school in Ferney. Curtis graduated in 1953 from Groton High School and enlisted in the US Army serving in Japan. Following his honorable discharge in September of 1955, he returned home. Curtis was united in marriage with Janice Krege on November 29, 1957 in Columbia and together they made their home in Groton. Curtis owned and operated Curtis Sombke Construction for many years before his retirement.

In his later years, he enjoyed fishing and golfing. He also enjoyed watching his grandchildren's sporting, theatrical and musical events.

Together, he and Janice spent winters in Arizona with many good friends. Curtis was a member of St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Ferney as a child and later transferred to St. John's Lutheran in Groton. He also belonged to the Groton American Legion Post #39.

Celebrating his life is his wife of 62 years, Janice of Groton, four children, Steven (Denise) Sombke of Kansas City, MO, Darren (Jung-ah) Sombke of Dassel, MN, Chad (Donna) Sombke of Meridian, ID and Jill (Myron) Isakson of Aberdeen. 11 grandchildren, Paul (Britini) Sombke, Joshua (Kaley) Sombke, Benaiah Sombke, Krystal (Conrad) Ratschan, Rose Sombke, Isaac Sombke, Karissa Coffey, Sean Coffey, Casey Sombke, Jackson Isakson, Alexis Isakson. Curtis is also survived by his siblings, Darlis Hamilton of Long Prairie, MN, Larry (Sharon) Sombke

of Groton, Gary (Lori) Sombke of Conde and his sister-in-law, Bev Sombke of Groton.

Preceding him in death were his parents, two brothers, Dallas Sombke, Darrel Sombke, one sister-in-law, one brother-in-law and three infant children, Baby Sombke, Craig Allen Sombke, and LeAnn Sombke.

Honorary Casketbearers will be his granddaughters. Casketbearers will be his grandsons.

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