



The Groton Independent

Vol. 138 No. 15 ♦ Groton, South Dakota ♦ Wednesday, Dec. 09, 2020 ♦ Established in 1889



Groton Tower is erected on Tuesday

The pieces of the new water tower were assembled Tuesday. The big crane was brought to town Monday night, was assembled and they started raising the pieces right away Tuesday morning. By midday Tuesday, the crane was packed up and ready to leave town.

That will be basically the extent of the work for this year. A new pump house will be erected next year. The entire new system should become active late next year.

Top left photo features the tank being lifted in the air.

Top right features the two towers side by side.

Bottom left is the main tube being erected.

Bottom middle - if you look

closely, you can see a welder just under the tank doing his work.

Bottom right features more supplies that arrived on Wednesday.

(Photos by Paul Kosel)



Spotlight on Groton Area Staff



Susan Fjeldheim

Name: Susan Fjeldheim
Occupation: 4th Grade Teacher
Length of Employment: 2012-Present

Susan Fjeldheim has been working in Groton Area Elementary School for eight consecutive years. Before the beginning of her tenure at Groton Elementary, she worked at the Langford Kindergarten for ten years. However, Susan Fjeldheim has lived in the town of Groton for fifteen years. Susan studied to acquire her bachelor's degree in Elementary Education at Northern State University before working in Langford.

While Mrs. Fjeldheim has lived in South Dakota for much of her life, she was technically born in North Dakota!

Mrs. Fjeldheim enjoys teaching her students about the solar system, chemistry, and the sciences with hands-on activities. She believes that students generally learn best when seeing the effects of the principles they are studying. When she is not teaching, Susan Fjeldheim can be found playing the piano for her local church or strolling the streets of Groton!

- Benjamin Higgins

GROTON AREA CHRISTMAS PROGRAMS

The modified schedule for the Groton Area School District Christmas programs is listed below:

High School (Grades 9-12)

Thursday, December 10, 2020, 7:00 PM
Groton Area High School Gym
In-Person and Live Stream on GDILive.com

Elementary (Grades JK-5)

Tuesday, December 22, 2020
10:00 AM
Live Stream Only on GDILive.com

The public is welcome to attend the Middle and High School concerts. Individuals at risk for developing complications from COVID-19 should stay home and view the live stream on GDILive.com. We ask those in attendance to please follow the recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control and South Dakota Department of Health:

Stay home if you're ill or exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 or any other infectious illness.

Please wear a mask.

Physically distance from others not in your household.

Wash your hands/use hand sanitizer regularly.

**Brown County
Rainford/Crawford
Rezoning Notice**

NOTICE
Application has been made by Darnell Rainford and Bryan Crawford 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 December 15th, 2020 at 8:46 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):

Lot 1, "B Crawford Addition" in the SW1/4 of Section 2-T127N-R63W of the 5th P.M., Brown County, South Dakota (39206 107th St)

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. 182

ATTEST:
Cathy McNickle, Brown County Auditor (1202.1209)

Published twice at the total approximate cost of \$23.51. 19482

**Groton City
Water Improvement
Project Hearing Notice**

Notice of Public Hearing for the City of Groton Water Improvement Project

The City of Groton is proposing to make improvements to their water system. These improvements include looping water lines in two separate areas of the city and painting the interior and exterior of the ground storage tank. The City of Groton will be submitting a Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Application in an amount up to \$1,266,000 to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. The funding may be awarded in the form of a grant, loan, or a principal forgiveness loan; any portion of the loan that is not forgiven will have a term of up to 30 years at a rate of up to 2.75%. The amount and source of funds will be determined by the Board of Water and Natural Resources when the application is presented at a scheduled board meeting. The purpose of the public hearing is to discuss the proposed project, the proposed financing, and the source of repayment for the loan. The public is invited to attend and comment on the project.

The public hearing will be held at the Groton Community Center @ 7:00pm on December 29th, 2020.

Published twice at the total approximate cost of \$14.69. 19503

**Classifieds
and Card of Thanks**

The following rates are for Classifieds published in both the Groton Daily Independent and the Groton Independent, and posted online at www.grotonsd.net. Cut rate in half if you just want it in the GDI or just the weekly.

1 Week: \$9 for first 30 words, 20¢/word thereafter
2 Wks: \$17 for first 30 words, 38¢/word thereafter
3 Wks: \$24 for first 30 words, 54¢/word thereafter
4th consecutive week is free

605/397-NEWS (6397)
PO Box 34, Groton SD 57445

AUCTIONS

INTERSTATE AUCTION CENTER, December 19 10 am, 3 miles east of Sioux Falls exit 402. We consign tractors, skid loaders, farm ranch construction equipment 605-331-4550 auctionzip.com

BIDS

THE BENNETT COUNTY COMMISSIONERS will receive bids for the Courthouse and Law Department Roof Replacement. Contact the County Auditor at 605-685-6931 for bid specs and more information.

EMPLOYMENT

FULL-TIME DEPUTY SHERIFF, Hyde County, Highmore, SD. Must be certified in law enforcement or willing to be trained and certified within one year of hire date. Experience preferred. Request application at hydeaud@venturecomm.net or 605-852-2519 and submit completed application to Hyde County Auditor's Office, 412 Commercial Ave. SE, Highmore, SD 57345. Open until filled. EOE.

FOR SALE

MATURE ROOSTER PHEASANTS for sale. \$13 plus delivery. Please call 605-680-0071 for more information.

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INSURANCE

SD Health Insurance Marketplace OPEN ENROLLMENT November 1 – December 15. Statewide assistance available. Go to Healthcare.gov or call a Navigator at Western SD Community Action 888-441-0117.

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.) Digital employment ad is \$30. Statewide Full Digital Ad is \$300 for 1 week. Call the Groton Independent at 397-7460 for details.

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SDCUC Seeks Farmers for Open Districts

The South Dakota Corn Utilization Council (SDCUC) is a progressive organization which has visionary and influential producer leadership throughout the state. The 9-member board manages and invests South Dakota's 1-cent per bushel corn checkoff fund.

The SDCUC is announcing director positions that are open in Districts 3, 5 and 7. A SDCUC director's position consists of a three-year term beginning on March 1, 2021. Each director can serve a maximum of two terms, resulting in a six-year director's position.

If interested in seeking a board seat in one of the open districts, you must obtain and file with the corn office a nominating petition. All nominating petitions must contain at least 15 "participating" corn producer signatures from your district. (A "participating" corn producer has not requested a refund of his/her corn assessment since January of 2020). Eligible candidates who wish to seek a director's position cannot have requested a checkoff refund from the SDCUC since January of 2016. Nominating petitions must be returned back to the SDCUC office by 5 p.m. on January 4, 2021.

To request a petition, please contact the SDCUC office by calling 605-334-0100.

If more than one nominating petition is received by the SDCUC office for any district, a special election will be conducted for that district. The elections will be held February 1-5, 2021 at the local extension offices in those counties.

The counties assigned to the districts accepting nominations for director positions are detailed below:

- District 3 – Brookings, Codington, Deuel, Hamlin, Kingsbury
- District 5 – Brown, Campbell, Corson, Harding, McPherson, Perkins, Walworth
- District 7 – Aurora, Beadle, Buffalo, Hand, Hyde, Jerauld, Sanborn

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They needed overtime to do it, but the Minnesota Vikings defeated the Jacksonville Jaguars 27-24 on Sunday. The Vikings are still in the playoff hunt with a 6-6 record, but they have some tough games coming up and will need to play much better than they have been if they want to make it to the postseason.



By Jordan Wright

The Good

The best thing you can say about the game is at least they won. Kirk Cousins had an up-and-down game but threw for 305 yards and three touchdowns. Dalvin Cook ran for 120 yards while also catching six passes for 59 yards. Justin Jefferson caught nine passes for 121 yards and a touchdown and is now over 1,000 yards this season. He is the second rookie in Vikings' history to surpass that mark (Randy Moss), and he trails only Odell Beckham Jr. in receiving yards in a player's first 12 games in NFL history. Adam Thielen also had a solid performance after sitting out last week due to Covid-19, as he caught eight passes for 75 yards and a touchdown.

On defense, Harrison Smith filled up the stat sheet, finishing with six tackles, two pass deflections, a half-sack, and one timely interception in overtime. Eric Kendricks was a surprise scratch in this game, so rookie Troy Dye was called upon – and while he didn't have any splash plays, it was still a good day all things considered. Cameron Dantzler is another rookie who stepped up on Sunday. He had an interception and a forced fumble (which he recovered), and per Next Gen Stats, he was targeted eight times but only gave up two catches for 24 yards.

The Bad

The Vikings might have gotten a win, but it never should have been as close as it was. The Jaguars have one of the worst secondaries in the NFL, but the Vikings refused to exploit the obvious mismatch until the second half of the game. Cousins was sloppy with the ball again, turning it over twice, including a pick-six on the first play of the second half. The offensive line was bad in both pass protection and run blocking – Cousins was under pressure nearly every time he dropped back to pass, and Cook had 120 yards but it took him 32 carries to get there (3.75 yards per carry).

The Unknown

Is this Vikings team better than their record would indicate, or have they simply been lucky? Is this team the one who beat Green Bay then whooped Detroit the following week? Or is this the team who lost to the Dallas Cowboys before barely escaping with wins over Carolina and Jacksonville? The regular season is now 75 percent done, yet we still don't know what to make of this Vikings team.

Looking ahead

The Vikings will face off against former divisional foes when they travel to Tampa Bay to take on the Buccaneers. The biggest storyline this past offseason was Tom Brady leaving New England and going to Tampa Bay, and while the Bucs started the season 6-2, they have gone 1-3 over their last four games and are fighting for a playoff spot. Not only will the Vikings have to contend with an angry Tom Brady, but they'll also have to try and manufacture points against one of the better defenses in the league. This game will tell us who the Minnesota Vikings are – contenders or pretenders. Skol!

Find Purpose and Meaning in Retirement

Success in life and all its phases can be measured in many ways. Some reminisce of their glory days in high school. Maybe they were captain of the football team or homecoming queen or won the state chess championship. Others excelled in college, graduated summa cum laude, were invited to all the parties, or landed the dream job. Some worked their way up the corporate ladder or took on a big loan and built a successful business over years of hard work or taught multiple generations of students. Hopefully, most have worked and saved enough through the years to finally retire.



By Andrew Ellsworth, MD ~ Prairie Doc® Perspectives

After accomplishing the prior phases of one's life, what does a successful retirement look like? Sure, we plan and save for retirement all the time, but when it finally comes, are we ready for the next phase of our lives?

There are many ways to thrive and enjoy retirement. Some savor time on hobbies, travel, play cards, sew, enjoy gardening, get involved in a church, or volunteer. Some make things or fix things or find a part time job and have some enjoyment while also earning a wage. Some surround themselves with family, helping to connect the generations.

Unfortunately, some do not enjoy retirement. Health issues, financial troubles, and relationship problems are just some of the ways that can make it difficult. Some people, despite the best ways of planning and saving for retirement, may have lost identity and have no idea what to do next. As in any situation, to be successful, one must find meaning and purpose.

It must be extremely hard to dedicate one's life to a calling and purpose, only to one day be told to move on. It must also be particularly challenging to have a plan for retirement, only to have those dreams set aside due to changes in health or financial hardships.

Covid-19 has certainly put a wrench in many people's plans for retirement, as well as most everyone else's plans. Certainly, with many things postponed, changed, or cancelled this last year, we have all had a chance to reconsider what we spend our time on and what things may be worth a risk.

As we enter a new year and changes ahead, whether that be retirement, a new job, a new relationship, or a new normal, I would encourage you to find purpose and meaning in what you do. When you get up for the day, set a goal or find some way to make it meaningful. That is how we will all excel in this new chapter of our lives.

Andrew Ellsworth, M.D. is part of The Prairie Doc® team of physicians and currently practices family medicine in Brookings, South Dakota. For free and easy access to the entire Prairie Doc® library, visit www.prairiedoc.org and follow Prairie Doc® on Facebook featuring On Call with the Prairie Doc® a medical Q&A show streaming on Facebook and broadcast on SDPB most Thursdays at 7 p.m. central.

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THINKING ABOUT HEALTH

Misleading Sales Pitches for Medicare Advantage Plans Are Everywhere

By Trudy Lieberman, Community Health News Service

It seems that nothing ever changes when it comes to hawking insurance to fill the gaps in Medicare coverage for seniors. The fervent sales pitches, the misinformation, and the incomplete and deceptive information continue to proliferate.

For the last several weeks I've heard ad after ad, particularly on the TV news shows, urging older viewers to call 800 numbers to learn about the latest and greatest Medicare Advantage (MA) plans. Retired football star Joe Namath says you need to "get everything you're entitled to." Namath rattles off a bunch of extra benefits MA plans offer – dental, vision, hearing, prescription drug coverage – "all at no extra cost." He urges viewers to "call the number on your screen now. It's free."

These are new benefits the government has allowed private insurers to sell in the hope of getting more seniors to leave traditional Medicare in favor of a privatized system. By transferring more costs to seniors, the government saves money.

Another commercial promises "free eyeglasses and free rides," presumably to doctors' offices. Yet another tells viewers they "may qualify" to get \$144 added back to their Social Security benefits. The Medicare Part B premium for 2021 is \$148.50, which is, presumably, what the commercial promises to save those who choose the privatized system.

I suspected those ads were misleading and deceptive come-ons, designed to persuade listeners to make the call. So I made some calls. The 800 numbers lead to an insurance brokerage firm or agency that apparently has a network of licensed agents located around the country. Callers are asked to give their zip code and then are transferred to an agent who can give the "free benefits" review.

I have heard close to 100 Medicare sales pitches over the years and know that those free consultations are meant to result in a sale whether or not the senior needs the insurance or is really getting a better plan.

Seldom is there any talk about making sure people are covered for the huge amounts doctors and hospitals sometimes charge that Medicare doesn't cover. What are the trade-offs, for example, between buying an MA plan, which pays those charges after you satisfy a large annual out of pocket maximum – next year \$6,700 per person – or buying a traditional Medigap insurance supplement Plan G, which covers those charges right away? A couple with Medicare Advantage could pay as much as \$13,400 a year before their plan would pay for anything.

With so many choices, what's a consumer to do? I rang up Bonnie Burns, one of the best Medicare consumer advocates in the country, for advice.

"It's just too complicated," she said. "No wonder people throw up their hands. That's why people sign up for an Advantage plan with little or no premium and find out what the costs really are as they use benefits through the year." She added, "It would be so much easier if Medicare Advantage plans and drug plans were standardized so people could figure this out."

Congress' decision not to standardize Advantage plans or drug plans has resulted in today's chaotic marketplace. Congress wanted to allow every insurer in the universe to throw something out there so the companies could make money and could (<https://harpers.org/archive/2016/11/dont-touch-my-medicare/2/>) entice more people to leave the traditional Medicare program. The goal was to reduce the costs to the program, all the while side-stepping any action to control run-away medical costs.

Note that Congress did standardize Medicare supplement policies – known as Medigap policies – in the early 1990s because that market was as chaotic and misleading then as the MA market is today. I like to think of that action as the high-water mark of consumer protection, and I have no illusions that anything like it will happen again anytime soon.

One final bit of crucial advice is missing in today's ads. Even after you enroll in an MA plan, perhaps enticed by a few dollars in savings for a pair of glasses, you can return to traditional Medicare in the future. But in all but four states – New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Maine – state laws prohibit you from buying a Medigap supplement without an insurer scrutinizing your health status.

If you have developed a preexisting condition, you may be ineligible for a Medigap policy. I've met many people over the years who bought an Advantage plan, got sick, and needed to go to out of network for treatment. They learned the hard way they were shut out of the Medigap market for good.

What choices have you made for covering Medicare's gaps? Write to Trudy at trudy.lieberman@gmail.com.

Council meeting date change

The Groton City Council meeting scheduled for Tuesday, Dec. 15, has been moved to Tuesday, Dec. 29, at the Groton Community Center.

GDILIVE.COM

The following events are planned to be livestreamed on GDILIVE.COM:

Thursday, Dec. 10: Lucille Von Wald Service at 10:30 a.m., HS Christmas Concert at 7 p.m.

Friday, Dec. 11: GBB at Britton-Hecla, 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, Dec. 12: BBB hosts Britton-Hecla, 3 p.m.

BBB-GBB Double Header at Hamlin on Dec. 17

GBB hosts Redfield on Dec. 21

Elementary Christmas Concert, Dec. 22 at 10 a.m.

BBB at Redfield on Dec. 22

BBB-GBB double header at Sioux Valley (Volga) on Dec. 29

Happy 60th Birthday to our family's rock!
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Middle School Christmas Concert



Groton Area Middle School held its Christmas Concert Tuesday evening in the GHS Gym. The junior high band, under the direction of Desiree Yeigh, performed, "Holiday Chips and Salsa," "Untitled," and "Bell Carol Rock." (Photo by Paul Kosel)



The sixth grade band, under the direction of Desiree Yeigh, performed, "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree," "Cool as a Cucumber," and "Ancient Hunters." (Photo by Paul Kosel)



The junior high choir, under the direction of Kayla Duncan, performed, "In Winter," and "Deck the Halls and Swing it." (Photo by Paul Kosel)



The sixth grade choir, under the direction of Kayla Duncan, performed, "Born, Born in Bethlehem," and "My Favorite Things." (Photo by Paul Kosel)

The Life of Lucille Von Wald

A private family Mass of Christian Burial for Lucille Von Wald, 96, of Aberdeen, formerly of Groton, will be 10:30 A.M., on Thursday, December 10, 2020, at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church, Groton. Concelebrating will be Father Tom Hartman and Father David Janes. Burial will follow in Union Cemetery under the direction of Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel, Groton, SD. The Mass will be broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM and will also be broadcast on GDIRADIO at 89.3FM within one mile of Groton.



Lucille passed away peacefully on December 6th with family at her side at Avera St. Luke's Hospital in Aberdeen.

Lucille was born January 4, 1924 to John and Ina (Klapperich) Bertsch. She graduated from Conde High School in 1942 and was united in marriage to Lyle Von Wald on December 1, 1942. Lyle died on September 8, 2012 after almost 70 years of marriage.

Lucille was extremely outgoing and took a genuine interest in everyone she met. She had a soft spot in her heart for anyone in need. Lucille enjoyed dancing immensely. One of the high points of her life was when she and other audience members, tap danced on a Broadway theater stage in New York City. Lucille's faith in God was very strong. It was her wish to be buried in a simple wooden casket that she designed and her husband, Lyle, made by hand. She was quite proud of that as it represented the distillation of her view about the relative importance of the material vs the spiritual in life, which was one of her tantamount concerns. She was an inspiration to her entire family whom she loved dearly. She will be sorely missed.

Surviving her are her sons, Jack (Diann) Von Wald of Aberdeen, Dave (Sheila) Von Wald of Hoven, Greg (Nancy) Von Wald of Rapid

City, and Jeff Von Wald and Michael Levy of Mt. Kisco, New York. She is also survived by her grandchildren John (Lisa) Von Wald of Selby, Monica (Scott) Kuck of Aberdeen, Tiffany Von Wald (Jason Knudtson) of Sioux Falls, TJ (Jane) Von Wald of Sioux Falls, Jacqueline (Joe) Beadle of Mobridge, Amy (Bill) Hohenecker of Plymouth, Minnesota, Stephanie (Pete) Schwartzbauer of Edina, Minnesota, Heather (Zach) Baymiller of Sioux Falls, Sarah Von Wald of Aberdeen, and Ryan Von Wald of Rapid City, along with 29 great grandchildren. Also surviving her are her brothers, Jerry (Mavis) Bertsch, Tom (Edith) Bertsch, and brother-in-law Jim Rentz.

Preceding her in death was her husband, her parents, her brothers, Leo, Floyd, Lyle, and Jim Bertsch and her sisters, Genevieve Hoops, Dorothy Schley, Alice Rentz and Veronica Bertsch.

The Life of Mary Walter

Services for Mary Walter, 65, of Groton and formerly of Pierre was held Friday, December 4, 2020 at St. John's Lutheran Church, Groton. The Rev. Andrew Wolfgram officiated. Burial followed in Union Cemetery under the direction of Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel, Groton. Services were broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM and was also broadcasted on GDIRADIO at 89.3 FM, available within 1 mile of Groton.



Visitation was held for one hour prior to services at the church.

Mary Jane Erdmann was born to Gerhardt & Orlean Erdmann on April 2, 1955. She was their fourth daughter. She grew up at the family farm located on the Brown County line near Verdon, SD. She was baptized May 15, 1955 at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Ferney, SD. Her childhood Sunday mornings were spent with her family of 7 heading to church in a car that seated 5. She was confirmed in the Lutheran faith on April 17, 1969 at St. Paul's. Her confirmation verse was John 3:16. Her schooling started at the Garden Prairie Verdon school, continued at Groton until graduating from GHS in 1973, and she attended USD, Vermillion for one year.

On August 22, 1974, she married Terry Walter. To this union, two sons were born: Tate Austin Walter and Paul Vernon Walter.

Mary started her employment with South Dakota Highway Patrol in Pierre in February 1976, as a data encoder. She had many promotions with responsibilities added until she became their Business Manager in 1993. She worked under 8 Superintendents. There is no one that loved the SDHP more than Mary. She retired on 6/30/2020 after 44 years of service. Her final message to the South Dakota Highway Patrol upon her retirement was "Be Smart—Be Safe—Be Somebody". They were her family.

She battled esophageal cancer for 3 years spending her last 1-1/2 years at the home of Bill & Eileen Schuelke. Mary passed on November 30, 2020.

Survivors are: sons, Tate (Olivia) Walter, and granddaughters, Emma, and Sophie, Peoria, AZ; Paul (Nichole Galbavy) Walter & Chantalle Galbavy, Groton, SD; sisters, Eileen (Bill) Schuelke, Groton, SD; Charlotte Erdmann, West Lafayette, IN; Barbara Whicker, West Lafayette, IN; and Helen (David) Gerhard, Green Bay, WI; special friend, Jean Walter, Groton, SD and many nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents and brother, Jan Gary Erdmann.

Pallbearers were Members of the South Dakota Highway Patrol.

Sincere thankfulness goes to Avera Hospice who provided loving care for Mary so faithfully two separate times. Her family and she appreciated their listening ear to her needs, as well as their devotion and kindness.



Members of the South Dakota Highway Patrol were present Friday to serve as pallbearers and to pay their final respect to Mary Walter. Walter's funeral was held at St. John's Lutheran Church in Groton. (Photo lifted from GDILIVE.COM)

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