



The Groton Independent

Vol. 138 No. 28 ♦ Groton, South Dakota ♦ Wednesday, March 17, 2021 ♦ Established in 1889

Two vying for Ward 1 spot

Groton City Ward 1 will have an election between incumbent Jon Cutler and challenger Mitchell Locke. The position is for a 2-year term. Here are their profiles as compiled by Dorene Nelson.

Jon Cutler

Jon Cutler is a graduate of Groton High School and the Universal Technical Institute in Phoenix, AZ, with Associate's Degrees in automotive and industrial diesel mechanics. He is currently defending his position on the Groton City Council.

He has worked as a diesel mechanic at DMI Inc. in Aberdeen and as a fertilizer spreader and sprayer for South Dakota Wheat Growers. Currently he owns Cutler Precision Application, spraying fields throughout the spring and summer.

"I believe that good city council members need critical thinking skills," Cutler explained. "I've been on the city council for a year and a half and now have a better understanding of what is needed for everything to run smoothly."

"I believe that the biggest challenge for the city of Groton is economic development," he added. "We need to find ways to bring more businesses and industry to our town as well as more housing and more developments for new homes."

"In my opinion, the next major city project should be to fully loop water through the Olson development," Cutler explained. "This improvement will ensure adequate water throughout the community as well as provide for potential economic growth and new residential developments."

"The purchase of the Wells Fargo bank building has been a hot topic, and I've been approached by individuals on both sides of the issue, mostly positive," he said. "Since the money used to purchase the building is surplus from a COVID relief grant that the city received, taxes will not be raised."

"Our city offices and library will be moved there along with our police department," Cutler stated. "The move will be followed by only neces-



sary renovations, such as giving the police department its own space and entrance."

"The police department has a very small area where four police officers currently share one desk and use the same entrance as the rest of city hall," he explained. "By moving the police to the new building and giving them their own area, everyone will be safer in the event of someone being detained."

"Other plans and improvements, such as expanding the library and providing more space for computer use by the public, are being planned for the future," Cutler added.

Mitchell Locke

Mitchell Locke, a graduate of Groton High School and Northern State University with a Bachelor's Degree in Business Management, is running for a seat on Groton City Council.

He has worked at James Valley Telecommunications in the IT department for the past three years. His wife Heidi works at Dacotah Bank in Groton. Mitchell and Heidi have three children, Devan (7), Landon (4), and Blake (2).

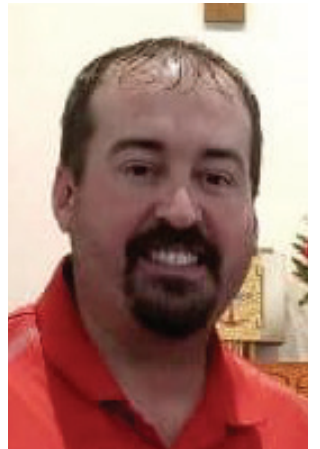
"I am open-minded and look at both sides of an issue before making a decision," Mitchell stated. "I am a progressive thinker and want what is best for this city's future."

"I am seeking a position on the Groton City Council because I want to serve the community and make it better for all residents," he explained. "I personally believe that road improvements should be the next major project for the city."

"The City of Groton is facing several challenges now, including road improvements, budget, and affordable housing," Mitchell listed. "My decision to run for City Council is mainly due to my frustration with some decisions that have been made recently and how some situations have been handled."

"I want to help ensure our community is reputable and represented in a professional manner," he said. "One of the decisions that I most recently disagreed with is the purchase of the Wells Fargo building."

"Before making such a large commitment of public money, I would have had to see the reasons for this purchase and be able to provide an answer to those questioning it," Mitchell admitted. "I feel that it was not in our community's best interest at this time."



Spotlight on Groton Area Staff

Name: Sarah Hanten

Occupation: High School English Instructor

Length of Employment: 2005-Present

Despite the ever-changing nature of the English language, there is still a necessity for trained educators to teach students about proper usage of English in both written and spoken forms. While some students may debate the necessity of formal English, there is still a place in society for those with knowledge of proper etiquette and grammar. As such, the role of the English instructor is to ensure that students can learn how to speak and write English in the proper manner. In Groton, this duty is placed upon the shoulders of Mrs. Sarah Hanten, Groton Area High School's resident English and Speech teacher.

Sarah Hanten graduated from Northern State University in 1998 with a major in English Education and a minor in Business Education. She declared her minor in Business Education because of her skill in math and accounting. Before beginning her tenure in Groton in 2005, Mrs. Hanten taught in Redfield for two years and spent five years teaching high school students in Roncalli.

As a teacher, Mrs. Hanten prefers to tailor assignments to her students based on their interests and aptitudes. Before the advent of precautionary measures for the prevention of COVID-19 in the classroom, Mrs. Hanten often gave students group assignments and discussion-based activities. However, group activities are understandably sparse in order to prevent close contact.

Sarah Hanten is a member of the Carnival of Silver Skates board, a 4-H Club Leader, and dedicates a majority of her free time to assisting her four children with their various extracurricular activities. As such, she can often be found ferrying her kids from one activity to another. Mrs. Hanten and her family are also active participants at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church in Groton.

Editor's Note: This is a continuing series compiled by Benjamin Higgins. Higgins who is working for the Groton Independent through the Project Skills program.



Sandblasting of the new water tower was done last week as the tower was being prepped for painting. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

**Brown County
March 9, 2021
Meeting Minutes**

MARCH 9, 2021 –GENERAL MEETING

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

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

MINUTES:Moved by Sutton, seconded by Wiese to approve the general meeting minutes of March 2, 2021. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

CLAIMS:Moved by Feickert, seconded by Kippley to approve the following claims:

Improvements: Baranko Brothers \$421,527.94; Machinery & Equipment: Diesel Machinery \$164,850.00 Other: Bernice Solheim \$160.00; SD Dept. of

Environment \$3,890.00; Professional Fees: Aberdeen Fire & Rescue \$183.00; Bantz, Gosch & Cremer \$2,727.35; Qwest Corporation \$304.25; Charlevoix County \$30.00; Clark Engineering \$3,000.00; Dakota Counseling \$5,400.00; GBR Interpreting \$120.00; Helms & Associates Inc. \$14,838.10; Kuck Law Office \$11,501.50; Microfilm Imaging \$1,020.00; SD State 4-H Office \$30.00; SD Teen Court Association \$750.00; Tammy Stolle Court Reporting \$116.80;

Publishing: Aberdeen American News \$216.90; Blade Empire Publishing \$93.98; Hub City Radio \$300.00;

Rentals: Aramark \$345.75; Roland Moerke \$1,762.84; Repairs & Maintenance: Biegler's \$285.79; Roland Moerke \$2,050.25; Dakota Fluid Power \$1,087.36; Diesel Machinery \$13,462.59; Randall Weber \$28.00; EPG Companies \$1,358.79; MB LLC \$25.00; House of Glass \$83.76; Hoven Auto Repair \$568.99; Kirk Karlen \$60.88; Lang's Audio TV \$135.00; Lawson Products \$71.57; Leidholt Electric \$115.59; RDO Equipment \$15,971.76; Steven Lust Automotive \$94.92; Tran-

source \$6,183.35; Trinity Services Group \$100.00; Supplies: Agtegra \$9,384.27; American Business Forms \$157.11; Butler Machinery \$2,610.33; Carlsen Funeral Home \$300.00; Cartney Bearing \$56.55; Cash-Wa \$246.91; Century Business Products \$29.33; Simon Solutions \$162.00; Cole Papers \$45.42; Crawford Trucks \$918.76; Crescent Electric \$32.46; D & L Diesel \$30.40; Roland Moerke \$521.85; Dakota Fluid Power \$950.97; Diesel Machinery \$6,162.96; Earthgrains \$900.50; Full Circle Ag \$2,014.93; GovConnection \$597.74; Great Western Tires \$25,687.80; APH Stores \$18.99; Terry Larson \$179.99; House of Glass \$541.53; Jame Strautmeyer \$414.19; Interior Design Concepts \$311.66; J Gross Equipment \$91.15; Lawson Products \$963.33; MS Martin Enterprises \$2,097.00; Mac's \$142.43; McKesson Medical \$888.20; Midstates Printing \$776.75; Minn-Kota Communications \$11,177.00; Cindy Mitchell \$64.98; Northern Truck \$1,625.10; Plumbing & Heating \$889.41; Precision Kiosk \$2,700.00; RDO Equipment \$76,945.90; Runnings \$1,473.84; Sander's Sew-N-Vac \$53.98; Satellite Tracking \$630.50; SD Law Review \$35.00; SHI International \$6,070.00; Transource \$9,616.79; US Foods \$6,291.32; Web Water Bottling \$26.00; Zastrow's Sales \$68.97. Travel & Conference: Mark Milbrandt \$328.00. Utilities: AT & T \$197.21; Qwest Corporation \$238.10; Midcontinent \$373.61; Northern Electric \$674.37; Northwestern Energy \$9,943.13; Town of Frederick \$68.00; Web Water Development \$127.58. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

HR REPORT: Moved by Sutton, seconded by Wiese to approve the HR Office Report, which includes the following: Acknowledge resignation of Christeen Krahl, full-time Brown County Jail Correctional Officer effective March 22, 2021. Request to fill. Acknowledge employment end date for Jazilynn Risetter, full-time Brown County Jail Correctional Officer effective February 26, 2021. Request to fill. Approve hiring of Christeen Krahl as Brown County Sheriff's Department Transport Driver as needed, effective March 23, 2021. Approve hiring of Grant Duvall as part-time Brown County JDC Correctional Officer effective March 15, 2021; starting wage @ \$14.33/hr. Approve hiring of Makayla Jennigesl as part-time Brown County JDC Correctional Officer effective March 16, 2021; starting wage @ \$14.33/hr. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

QUIT CLAIM DEED:Moved by Feickert, seconded by Wiese to approve and authorize the chair to sign Quit Claim Deed on the following property sold by tax

deed on March 2, 2020: Mark Glanzer- Lots Three (3), except the South 87 1/2 feet thereof, in Block Thee (3) North Aberdeen, Brown County, South Dakota @ \$100; All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

2020 FINANCIAL REPORT:Moved by Sutton, seconded by Wiese, to accept the 2020 Financial Reports as presented March 9, 2021, and approve not preparing the optional M, D & A (Manager's Discussion and Analysis) supplement to the report. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

SVAWA GRANT APPLICATION: Moved by Wiese, seconded by Kippley to approve and authorize the Chair sign the Stop Violence Against Women Grant Application for 2021 – 2022. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

ABATEMENT: Moved by Feickert, seconded by Sutton to approve the following abatement: Corey Bunke (changed classification to Owner-Occupied) \$318.26. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

APPLICATION FOR OCCUPANCY:Moved by Kippley, seconded by Feickert to approve the application for occupancy submitted by BDM Rural Water Systems Inc. for occupancy of Brown County Highway Number 9, in section 6, Township 125, Range 60, Brown County, South Dakota for a potable water line. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

APPLICATION FOR OCCUPANCY:Moved by Sutton, seconded by Kippley to approve the application for occupancy submitted by Northern Valley Communications for occupancy of Brown County Highway Number 6, in section 1,12,13,24 Township 121, Range 65, Brown County, South Dakota for boring to provide telecommunication service. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

APPLICATION FOR OCCUPANCY:Moved by Feickert, seconded by Sutton to approve the application for occupancy submitted by Northern Valley Communications for occupancy of Brown County Highway Number 6, in section 18,7,12,1 Township 122, Range 64,65, Brown County, South Dakota for boring to provide telecommunication service. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

APPLICATION FOR OCCUPANCY:Moved by Feickert, seconded by Sutton to approve the application for occupancy submitted by Northern Valley Communications for occupancy of Brown County Highway Number 23, in section 34,33,31,36,35, 4,5,6,1,2,3, Township 122, 121, Range 64,65, Brown County, South Dakota for boring to provide telecommunication service. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

COUNTY BURN BAN:Commissioner Feickert offered the following Resolution: RESOLUTION NO. 13-21 WHEREAS, Brown County having received very little snowfall, or spring rain across the

entire county, and WHEREAS, Brown County has been listed in abnormally dry and part of the county listed in moderate drought by the United State Drought Monitor, and WHEREAS, the Brown County Commission is dedicated in taking steps to protect the health and safety of all residents of the County and all property within the County, and WHEREAS the Brown County Commission has consulted with local fire officials and law enforcement officials in regard to the severity of this issue. NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Brown County Commission enact this resolution on an emergency basis and impose a ban to prohibit or restrict all types of open burning with the exceptions of commercially purchased barbecue grills in order to protect the public health and safety; and RESOLVE that the ban will be in place until March 30th, 2021 County Commission meeting when it will be re-evaluated by the Brown County Commission; and FURTHER RESOLVE that criminal and civil penalties per County Ordinance 18.0703 be imposed if found in violation of this Resolution. Dated this 09th day of March 2021. Seconded by Commissioner Sutton. Roll call vote: Commissioners Feickert-aye, Sutton-aye, Wiese-aye, Kippley-aye, Fjeldheim-aye. Resolution adopted.

PUBLIC COMMENT:Kevin Braun met with the commissioner to discuss about an easement on his property. No actions taken.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:Moved by Kippley, seconded by Sutton to go into executive session to discuss personnel per SDCL 1-25-2(1). All members present voting aye. Motion carried. The chair declared executive session closed with no action taken.

ADJOURNMENT: Moved by Sutton, seconded by Wiese to adjourn the Brown County Commission at 10:31a.m. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

Jeannette McClain, Brown County Deputy Auditor
Published once at the total approximate cost of \$90.80. 19847

**Bates Township
Road Right of Way
Notice**

Bates Township Board of Supervisors reminds all landowners and tenants that the road right-of-way extends 33 feet from the center of the township road. This ditch is to be maintained and mowed. Any crops planted in the road right-of-way will be mowed and expenses charged to the landowner.

Landowner is responsible for spraying all noxious weeds.

Bates Township Board of Supervisors
Betty Geist
Township Clerk
Published twice at the total approximate cost of \$12.93. 19835

**Groton School
Voter Registration
Notice**

NOTICE OF DEADLINE FOR VOTER REGISTRATION
GROTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 06-6

Voter registration for the Groton Area School District School Board Election to be held on April 13, 2021 will close on March 29, 2021. Failure to register by this date will cause forfeiture of voting rights for this election. If you are in doubt about whether you are registered check the Voter Information Portal at www.sdsos.gov or call the Brown County Auditor at (605) 626-7110, the Clark County Auditor at (605) 532-5921, Day County Auditor at (605) 345-9500, Marshall County Auditor at (605) 448-2401, or Spink County Auditor at (605) 472-4580.

Registration may be completed during regular business hours at the county auditor's office, municipal finance office, secretary of state's office and those locations which provide driver's licenses, SNAP, TANF, WIC, military recruitment, and assistance to the disabled as provided by the Department of Human Services. You may contact your county auditor to request a mail-in registration form or access a mail-in form at www.sdsos.gov.

Voters with disabilities may contact the county auditor for information and special assistance in voter registration, absentee voting, or polling place accessibility.

Michael J. Weber, Business Official

Groton Area School District
Published twice at the total approximate cost of \$29.97. 19837
(2t. March 8 & 15, 2021)

**Groton City
Voter Registration
Notice**

NOTICE OF DEADLINE FOR VOTER REGISTRATION

Voter registration for the Municipal Election to be held on April 13th, 2021, will close on March 29th at 5:00 p.m. Failure to register by this date will cause forfeiture of voting rights for this election. If you are in doubt about whether you are registered, check the Voter Information Portal at www.sdsos.gov or call the county auditor at 605-626-7110.

Registration may be completed during regular business hours at the county auditor's office, municipal finance office, secretary of state's office, and those locations which provide driver's licenses, SNAP, TANF, WIC, military recruitment, and assistance to the disabled as provided by the Department of Human Services. You may contact the county auditor to request a mail-in registration form or access a mail-in form at (www.sdsos.gov or a county provided website with a link to a voter registration form - insert one option or the other).

Any voter who needs assistance, pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act, may contact the county auditor for information and special assistance in voter registration.

Hope Block – Finance Officer
City of Groton, South Dakota
(0310.0317)

Published twice at the total approximate cost of \$27.63. 19836

**State of S.D.
School Land
Lease Auction**

SCHOOL LAND
LEASE AUCTION

A school land lease auction will be held at the Brown County Courthouse Annex (Community Room) in Aberdeen, SD on April 7, 2021 at 10:00AM (CT).

A list of tracts available for lease may be obtained at the Brown County Auditor's Office or by contacting the Office of School & Public Lands, 500 E Capitol Avenue, Pierre, SD 57501-5070 or phone (605)773-3303. You may also visit the SPL website at www.sdpubliclands.com. Phone bidding will be allowed on a recorded conference line at 1-848-777-1212 with access code 18892020#. Disabled individuals needing assistance should contact the Office of School and Public Lands at least 48 hours in advance of the auction to make any necessary arrangements.
(0310.17.24.31)

Published four times at the total approximate cost of \$35.53. 19823

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The City of Harrisburg an "equal opportunity employer", is currently accepting applications for a full-time **Deputy Building Official**.

Duties will include a variety of office and field building services and planning work, including accepting building permit applications, permit research, issuing building, utility, and other permits, answering building related questions, building and site inspection, permit and code enforcement correspondence, record management, work with the Planning and Zoning Official to resolve violations of zoning and other municipal codes. Successful applicants must possess an associates or higher college degree; and have a valid driver's license. **Excellent benefit package.** Position description, information and applications are available at www.harrisburgsd.gov and the Harrisburg City Office, 301 E Willow Street, Harrisburg SD 57032. The full-time position will remain open until filled.

For more information contact Michael McMahon, Planning and Zoning Official at (605)767-5010 or michael.mcmahon@harrisburgsd.gov

41st Annual Meeting



BDM RURAL WATER SYSTEM, INC.

The Annual Meeting planned for Monday, March 29, 2021 at the BDM Office Building in Britton, SD will be a drive-thru format.

Drive up to the North Entrance from 3:00 - 5:00 p.m. for financial information and attendance gifts.

There will be a brief meeting at 6:00 p.m. at the BDM Shop. Masks and social distancing required. No dinner or election for 2021.

If anyone has any concerns, please call the BDM Office at 605-448-5417.

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* Free date changes anytime up to 45 days prior to departure for land tours, up to 95 days prior to departure for cruise tours. Deposits and final payments remain non-refundable. Prices are per person based on double occupancy plus \$299 in taxes & fees. Single supplement and seasonal surcharges may apply. Add-on airfare available. Offers apply to new bookings only, made by 6/30/21. Other terms & conditions may apply. Ask your Travel Consultant for details.

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**Groton School
March 8, 2021**

Meeting Minutes

UNOFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
OF BOARD OF EDUCATION
GROTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 06-6
REGULAR MEETING
March 8, 2021

President Smith called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm in the Elementary Commons Area. Members present: Flihs, Gengerke, Harder, Pharis, Rix, Smith and Weismantel. Others present were Supt. J. Schwan, Principals B. Schwan and Sombke, and Business Manager Weber.

Moved by Weismantel, second Gengerke Harder to approve the agenda with the following amendments: under New Business Item #9 remove executive session for student issue; under New Business Item #10 remove action on open enrollment applications #22-01 and #22-02; and under New Business Item #12 approve hiring Rachael Pederson. Motion carried.

Pursuant to SDCL 23-3, there was no potential conflict disclosure reported.

Moved by Rix, second Pharis to approve consent agenda items as presented: District minutes of February 8, 2021, bills, financial reports, custodial accounts, investments, transportation report, lunch reports and public-school exemption #20-16. Motion carried.

GENERAL FUND: Net Salary – 190,609.34; FIT – 16,321.85; Medicare – 7,116.18; FICA – 30,427.48; American Funds – 542.80; SDRS – 30,595.08; HSA – 100.00; Waddell & Reed – 1,390.00; Horace Mann – 1,306.51; Thrivent – 250.00; AFLAC – 3,282.62; Delta Dental – 4,012.83; SD Supplemental Retirement – 977.29; Wellmark – 58,902.72; Standard Life – 665.92; Avesis Vision – 256.24; Wage Works – 666.65; Aberdeen Awards – supplies, 487.20; Aberdeen Chrysler Center – repairs, 161.20; Advance Auto – parts, 69.86; Allied Climate Professionals – repairs, 1,688.78; Amazon – supplies, 55.30; ASBSD – webinar, 25.00; Avera – service contract, 1,630.28; Tyler Beck – services, 500.00; Cintas – rugs, 538.62; Cole Papers – supplies, 1,404.51; Connecting Point – computer parts, 386.74; Country Inn & Suites – rooms, 4,383.68; Custodial Fund – advanced pays, 29,403.23; Dependable Sanitation – garbage, 1,238.00; Roger Frank II – services, 500.00; Groton Area School – gloves, 632.26; Groton Area School – bank changes, 79.15; Groton Chiropractic Clinic – DOT physicals, 190.00; Groton Daily Independent – legal, 126.63; Hillyard – supplies, 1,127.81; JW Pepper – music, 402.31; Matheson Tri-Gas – supplies, 103.01; North Central Special Education – local share, 5,500.00; Northside Implement – repairs, 5,778.08; Northwestern Energy – natural gas, 5,382.35; Riley Bus Service – busing, 1,248.50; Molly Royals – services, 500.00; S-K Publication – supplies, 54.00; Stan Houston – supplies, 375.16; Taylor Music – repairs, 162.69; Training Room – supplies, 32.49; Michael Weber – supplies, 9.96. Total General Fund - \$411,600.31.

CAPITAL OUTLAY: Amazon – iPad parts, 159.73; Custodial Fund – advanced pays, 845.41; Fred J Miller – bell covers, 302.00; Interstate Battery Center – battery, 416.85; NSU Finance Office – textbooks, 84.42. Total Capital Outlay - \$1,808.41.

SPECIAL ED: Net Salary – 34,459.60; FIT – 2,832.63; Medicare – 1,274.18; FICA – 5,448.22; SDRS – 5,421.26; Waddell & Reed – 200.00; AFLAC – 830.11; Delta Dental – 707.34; SD Supplemental Retirement – 100.00; Wellmark – 11,054.00; Standard Life – 219.53; Avesis Vision – 60.64; Wage Works – 259.16; Avera St Luke's – OT/PT, 12,597.04; Custodial Fund – supplies, 71.02; Julianne Hanlon – mileage, 113.40; North Central Special Education – local shares, 31,868.67; Judy or Gene Williamson – mileage, 564.48. Total Special Ed - \$108,081.28.

ENTERPRISE: Food Service Net Salary – 6,080.21; FIT – 444.30; Medicare – 218.20; FICA – 933.08; SDRS – 849.46; AFLAC – 218.49; Wellmark – 1,526.00; Standard Life – 3.84; Avesis Vision – 33.44; Wage Works – 8.33; Ace Refrigeration – repairs, 449.31; Bimbo – food, 254.86; Cintas – services, 122.68; Custodial Fund – advanced pays, 184.02; CWD – food, 692.49; East Side Jersey Dairy – milk, 766.48; Reinhart Foodservice –

food, 4,814.51; SD DOE – food, 1,017.18; US Foods – food, 2,261.29; Wordware – software, 1,814.00. Total Food Service – \$22,692.17.

OST Net Salary – 2,346.96; FIT – 138.91; Medicare – 82.18; FICA – 351.42; SDRS – 220.18; AFLAC – 163.93; Wellmark – 671.00; Standard Life – 23.28; Custodial Fund – advanced pays, 220.14. Total OST – \$4,218.00. Total Enterprise Funds – \$26,910.17.

CUSTODIAL FUND: Total - \$62,627.91.

RECEIPTS: Local Sources, Taxes – 115,739.21; Other Local Sources – 145,809.74; County Sources – 2,502.14; State Sources – 122,156.19; Federal Sources – 114,108.32; Total Receipts – \$500,315.60.

Members of the public are allowed five minutes to address the board on any topic of their choice. Patrons Amy J. Krueger, Scott Thorson, Greg Kjellens and Jeremy Krueger spoke about the merits of maintaining a 4-day school week. Patrons Chad Locken, Amy K. Krueger, Kristen Gonsoir and Lynette Grieve spoke about the merits of returning to a 5-day school week. Board member and audience member questions and discussion continued until 9:10 pm.

There was no action taken on the 2021-2022 School District Calendar.

Tom Grimmond from Colliers Securities addressed the board about the benefits of refinancing the 2016 Elementary Project Bonds. The school district would see a cost savings of \$10,000-\$12,000 a year in their remaining payments through 2036. Moved by Weismantel, second Gengerke to have Mr. Grimmond begin the refinancing application process. Motion carried.

The board continued discussion and necessary action on District response to Covid-19 issues including Covid-19 active case updates for Groton Area School District, Brown County and the State of South Dakota and Abbott CinaxNOW rapid testing.

Moved by Rix, second Pharis to approve second reading and adoption of recommended change to Policy ABAA – Parent and Family Engagement. Motion carried.

Moved by Gengerke, second Pharis to remove tabled motions

from December, January and February for staff requesting early retirement/resignations. Motion carried.

Moved by Weismantel, second Harder to approve resignations/early retirements of Kristi Anderson, Jan Seibel, and Brian Schuring, effective at the end of the 2020-21 school year with summer checks paid in June. Motion carried.

The following topics were addressed in administrative reports: Collective Bargaining Training, potential Langford Area Cooperative, 2021 Legislative Updates, ASBSD health fund renewal meeting, KG Roundup, playground update, state testing, Track and Field Day, Planbook Online Lesson System, Dual Credit Registration, school board election timelines and 2020 District Audit.

Needed improvements to the Doney Field crow's nest were discussed. No action was taken.

Superintendent Schwan reported that the high school and elementary food service departments each received a rating of 100 from the SD Department of Health.

Moved by Weismantel, second Gengerke to leave 2021 Driver's Education Fees unchanged and issue Driver's Education Instructor Agreements to Shaun Wanner and Joel Guthmiller. Motion carried.

Moved by Gengerke, second Pharis to approve Memorandum of Agreement with SDSU for student teacher placement. Motion carried.

Moved by Rix, second Weismantel to approve resignation of K-12 School Counselor Ashley Seeklander, effective at the end of the 2020-21 school year. Motion carried.

Moved by Gengerke, second Flihs to approve resignation of JH Volleyball Coach Alexa Schuring, pending a suitable replacement. Motion carried.

Moved by Gengerke, second Rix to approve resignation of MS/HS Special Education Teacher Melissa Hill, effective at the end of the 2020-21 school year. Motion carried.

The board took a short recess at 10:21 pm and returned at 10:27 pm.

Moved by Gengerke, second Pharis to go into executive sessions pursuant to SDCL 1-25-

MONTHLY DISTRICT FINANCIAL REPORT FOR GROTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT 06-6

For the reporting period beginning July 1, 2020, and ending February 28, 2021

Description.....	General Fund	Assigned Gen Funds	Capital Outlay	Special Education	Bond Redemption	Enterprise Fund	Custodial Fund	Total for District
1. Beginning Balance	1,310,020.82	166,442.24	1,494,432.18	282,971.70	157,818.14	51,718.27	161,560.84	3,624,964.19
a. checking	1,310,020.82	166,442.24	1,494,432.18	282,971.70	157,818.14	51,718.27	161,560.84	3,624,964.19
b. petty cash.....	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2. Transfers in								
3. Revenue to date.....	3,006,904.29	20,765.79	921,181.24	454,903.47	99,247.46	178,899.32	488,437.50	5,170,339.07
4. Total accounted for.....	4,316,925.11	187,208.03	2,415,613.42	737,875.17	257,065.60	230,617.59	649,998.34	8,795,303.26
5. Transfers out								
6. Expenditures to date	2,922,809.11	41,225.47	1,294,893.42	475,844.34	207,086.25	165,345.89	564,374.96	5,671,579.44
a. encumbrances	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
b. disbursements.....	2,922,809.11	41,225.47	1,294,893.42	475,844.34	207,086.25	165,345.89	564,374.96	5,671,579.44
7. Ending Balance	1,394,116.00	145,982.56	1,120,720.00	262,030.83	49,979.35	65,271.70	85,623.38	3,123,723.82
a. checking	1,394,116.00	145,982.56	1,120,720.00	262,030.83	49,979.35	65,271.70	85,623.38	3,123,723.82
b. petty cash.....	(0.00)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	(0.00)
February Receipts	271,204.98	7,476.80	44,022.98	21,553.55	62.83	35,265.46	120,729.00	500,315.60
February Expenses	407,260.19	1,034.80	31,186.00	72,068.12	0.00	24,751.29	62,185.71	598,486.11
Custodial Checking							85,623.38	
District Checking.....								3,038,100.44
Certificate of Deposit								0.00
Total all Funds								3,123,723.82

2(1) for personnel issues. Motion carried.

Smith declared the board out of executive session at 11:27 pm.

Moved by Harder, second Rix to issue administrative contracts for 2021-22 with terms to be negotiated at a later date. Motion carried.

Moved by Weismantel, second Flihs to approve hiring of Rachael Pederson as MS Language Arts/Social Studies Teacher for the 2021-2022 school year. Motion carried.

Moved by Harder, second Gengerke to adjourn at 11:32 pm. Motion carried.

M. J. Weber, Business Manager
Steven R. Smith, President

The addition of signatures to this page verifies these minutes as official.

Published once at the total approximate cost of \$133.16. 19849

**Westport Town
March 1, 2021
Meeting Minutes**

Town of Westport General Meeting
March 1st, 2021

The Town of Westport met on March 1st, 2021 with Don & Deb Schlosser, Derek Schoenfelder, Shane Storm, Mitch Wilson and Doreen Hertel present.

The following expenses were presented:

City General NWPS (\$450.74), Groton Independent (\$257.77), Payroll – Derek Schoenfelder (\$150.00), Shane Storm (\$170.00), Mitch Wilson (\$170.00), & Doreen Hertel (\$900.00).

Sewer NWPS (\$40.12), NRW – loan repayment (\$210.13) & Payroll – Doreen Hertel (\$300.00).

Water WEB (\$1,557.54), Water Maintenance District (\$408.16), Rite-way forms (\$476.26), Dept. of health (\$15.00), Payroll- Doreen Hertel (\$300.00).

Shane Storm made motion to pay all bills; second by Derek Schoenfelder.

The following deposits were presented:

City General Brown County Collections (\$763.80), State of SD (\$369.25) & Interest (\$3.36).

Sewer Resident Payments - (\$2,000.00).

Water Resident Payments - (\$3,423.95).

NEW BUSINESS:
Don and Deb Schlosser came before the board and requested the city vacate the inaccessible alley on their property. This city voted in favor of this so the house could be sold.

Water maintenance contract was review and signed. Equalization meeting will be held on Monday March 15th from 6:00pm to 8:00pm. The city annual report for 2020 was presented and reviewed. Summer help was talked about and it was decided to raise the hourly rate to \$13.00 an hour.

Doreen Hertel, Finance Officer
Published once at the total approximate cost of \$19.10. 19848

**Stratford Town
Mowing/Weed
Trimming Bid**

Town of Stratford
Accepting Mowing/Weed Trimming Bids

Written/electronic bids to be received no later than: 5:00 PM, April 12, 2021 Submit directly to the Finance Officer or mail to:

Town of Stratford Attn: Mowing Bids 293 E Rondell Ave Stratford, SD 57474

1. Ball Park and picnic area
2. City Park
3. Lots West of the old fire hall

Bids will be opened at the meeting on April 12, 2021 at 7:00 PM at the Community Center.

Suzanne Moen, Finance Officer
stratford1906@gmail.com
(0317.0324)

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By Jordan Wright

After taking a look at the Minnesota Vikings' pending free agents on offense, we turn our attention to the defensive side of the ball. There's no sugar coating it, the Vikings' defense was atrocious in 2020. With a non-existent pass rush and an incredibly young secondary, opposing teams were able to move the ball against the Vikings in whichever manner they wanted. The reduced salary cap in 2021 makes it hard for teams to keep their players, and virtually impossible for teams to get better than they were last season. Luckily

for the Vikings, several key defensive pieces are coming back from either injury or the Covid-19 opt-out list.

Before we get into the defensive free agents, we have to pause and talk about the Vikings releasing starting left tackle Riley Reiff. While he was never great, Reiff has been good for many years and was the second-best offensive lineman the Vikings had. It's hard to figure out how the team will get better along the offensive line, but there are three possible options. If Mike Zimmer thinks Ezra Cleveland (or even Brian O'Neill) will be able to slide over to left tackle, that is the best option – even though the Vikings would need to fill two spots along the line, it is much easier to find competent guards than it is to find a new left tackle. The second option would be for the Vikings to draft a lineman who can start immediately – the problem with this option is there is no guarantee the lineman they covet will still be available with the 14th pick, or that whoever they choose will be able to play right away. The third option would be for the team to bring in a new offensive lineman either through free agency or a trade. Cutting Reiff presents a whole new challenge for the team to figure out, but the team now has an additional \$11.75 million cap space they can use.

Ok, now back to the defense (and special teams)!

The following players that were on the Vikings' roster last season are now free agents: Dan Bailey (K), Todd Davis (ILB), Anthony

Harris (FS), Tae Hayes (CB), George Iloka (FS), Jaleel Johnson (DT), Chris Jones (CB), Ifeadi Odenigbo (DE), Cordrea Tankersley (CB), Eric Wilson (OLB)

Out of those 10 players, three were starters (Bailey, Harris, Wilson) and two more saw plenty of playing time as a rotational player (Johnson, Odenigbo). There are four areas of concern that the Vikings must address before the 2021 season begins: defensive tackle, safety, linebacker, and kicker.

Even though the Vikings will hopefully be getting Danielle Hunter and Michael Pierce back, there is still some work that needs to be done on the defensive line. The defensive end spot across from Hunter is still a question mark, but it is far down the list of priorities because a rotation of DJ Wonnum, Stephen Weatherly, and Kenny Willekes would be serviceable. Instead, the Vikings should make finding a starting defensive tackle a huge priority. The Vikings already have a run-stuffing DT with Pierce coming back, but the team still needs to find a player who can rush the passer up the middle. The team will likely be outbid on the big-name defensive tackles like Kawann Short or Ndamukong Sue, so they'll need to look at the draft or a lower-priced free agent to fill that spot. Sheldon Rankins is a name to keep an eye on, as he might come cheap after dealing with an injury last season. If the team decides to use the draft, Christian Barmore would be the best option in the first round. Some later-round players to keep an eye on are Levi Onwuzurike from Washington and Osa Odighizuwa from UCLA.

With Anthony Harris likely headed to another team this offseason, the Vikings will need to find a running mate for Harrison Smith at safety. If the Vikings spend big on a safety, it will be to bring back Harris, so we can rule out the top safety free agents. However, there are some intriguing players who should come much cheaper, like Malik Hooker, Keanu Neal, and Karl Joseph. In the draft, Trevon Moehrig from TCU should go in the first round, while players like Richie Grant from UCF or Javon Holland from Oregon could be drafted in the middle rounds.

The Vikings will also need to find another linebacker with Eric Wilson likely leaving in free agency. The third linebacker spot isn't on the field the whole game, which is why this position is a lower priority, yet the Vikings will still need to bring in a couple of players to compete. Luckily the Vikings should be able to find a decent linebacker without having to shell

out a bunch of money. Players like Kwon Alexander, Lavonte David, and Haason Reddick are available in free agency, and if the team chooses to fill the spot through the draft, Micah Parsons from Penn State or Jeremiah Owusu-Koramoah from Notre Dame would be difference-makers in the Vikings' defense.

The final spot that needs to be addressed is the kicker position. The Vikings cut Dan Bailey because they needed salary cap space, so will look to bring in a cheaper replacement. Unfortunately, we all know how poorly the Vikings evaluate kickers, so who knows what is going to happen. Skol!

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Sandblasting of the new water tower continued last week as the tower is being prepped for painting. If all goes well, priming of the tower was also started on the inside. The actual painting will have to wait until air temperatures are at least 40 degrees, day and night. (Photos by Paul Kosel)



Come home, he said.

"Come home," he said and I knew he was right. It had been six months at least.

The visit was always next week or next time. I was too tired or had too much work to do.

But it wasn't like him to call. In all the years I've known him I only remember him calling me once before. So I listened.

"Come home," he said. "Come home and see my dad," he said. "Come home and see your dad."

A few weeks before I had called his father in that hospital room a prairie away. I called instead of employing florists, I kidded, because I was sure flowers would have offended his manhood.

So we talked about the weather, of hunting pheasants—of simple things. I told him to hang in there. I had no magic words to say. But it wasn't the substance of the call that mattered, it was that the call was made.

That meant a lot to him, his son told me, but now it was time to do more. So I packed my bags.

His father was always bigger than life. He blustered and snorted. He could be loud and ornery—and that's what we all loved about him. He was our John Wayne.

While his son was my best friend and our sisters were the same, our fathers held brawls in the streets. Fistfights.

But showing wisdom that adults rarely do, the children kept their friendship strong. We were welcomed in each others

homes. Silly fathers be damned. Eventually, they too came around. Harold would bring my father fresh vegetables in season and fish when the catch was good. And when Harold was sick, my father cheered him on.

I don't know—and I suppose I never will—how or why they managed to mend fences. But I know what they accomplished. They completed the bond between two families.

I wanted to get one more crazy haircut before I visited. It was a ritual. I would appear with my hair dyed, braided, permed or spiked, and Harold would unkindly critique each one—to my delight.

Even when I was in Alaska, at the other end of the continent, I would get a strange trim and think, "Harold would rally hate this." When I visited with an earring dangling from one ear, he remarked. "Yuh'damn pirate!"

When I got there, we visited for a while—Harold and me—about snow, pheasants...things like that. I almost felt like apologizing for my hair. But it wasn't the conversation that was important...

"Goodbye Harold," I said when it was time to go. "I don't know when I'll see you again..." Then I let go of his hand and bit my lip. And he bit his because we both knew I was saying more.

"Have you told your father that you love him?" my friend asked. We were cruising nighttime gravel roads at 10 mph. Therapy by the mile.

The question took me by surprise and I had to think. "Not lately," I said. "Not enough."

How do you tell a giant of a man that you love him, the big man's son wondered. He must know...maybe it isn't necessary...

"Just tell him," I counseled hypocritically. "But say it or you'll regret it forever. Tell him."

I got the news from an answering machine. Sometimes I really hate that blinking green light. I tried to call, but at times like that phones are busy. So I just sat down and tried to write. When he called me, I just

didn't want to hear him say it. Before he could say more that my name, I cut him off: "I know, Gary. Mom called."

Then I had to ask... "Did you get to talk to him?"

"Yes, I told him that I loved him," he said and then added in an I-told-you-so-manner, "He knew."

"I'm glad. I'm glad you got to tell him," I said lamely. This time I sent flowers from my family to his, and I hoped the giant would understand. Then I headed back for one more goodbye. Because there wasn't time for a haircut, I came with it slicked back. Harold would have hated it.



That's Life
by Tony Bender

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Glimpses From Greenfield 2021-Week 8

We buttoned things up last Thursday with a pretty solid body of work in 2021 for the people of South Dakota. In fact, one legislator who served in the 1990's and 2000's who is now back said, "I think this was the greatest session in history." While I haven't had the opportunity to fully analyze things, I would say it has to rank right up there!

In a rare occurrence, three bills that had been killed in committee were smoked out and ultimately passed on the floor last Monday, back-to-back-to-back. HB 1140 sought to codify what has been GF&P policy for the better part of the past decade. This goes back several years to a time when tensions were very high between landowners and state government, and landowners in the northwestern part of the state had locked out all hunters—even their closest friends and family—because they were making a statement that their private property rights had to be respected. Under the previous administration, Governor Dugaard directed the GF&P to operate under a new policy. Now, the Noem administration brought forth the language that would actually codify the Dugaard policy. It says conservation officers may enter private property with a warrant or with explicit or implied permission of the landowner. Further, they may enter the private property under three additional circumstances. These are 1) If they have reasonable suspicion or probable cause that a crime is being committed, 2) if an animal is crippled or distressed and needs to be put down, or 3) if an emergency, an accident, or other threats to safety are occurring. As I said, this has been the policy of the state government for most of the past decade, so the sky will not fall with the passage of this bill. Furthermore, I have spoken with officers and others within the GF&P who have told me 25% of their time is dedicated to landowner relations. Therefore, in many cases, they have wide-open lines of communication, and they have dialogued about what the landowners' expectations are when it comes to conservation officers performing their duties on individual pieces of ground. If you are concerned about the "new" law, I return to the beginning of the discussion. Early in my legislative journey, we had a real mess on our hands, and people were being denied access to lands they had hunted for years because their close friends or family members said under no circumstances would they subject their property to encroachments they felt were illegal. The Dugaard administration recognized the problem and changed departmental protocol to current policy, and relations improved almost immediately. This bill codifies the Dugaard administration policy that the Noem administration has continued. And even though some keyboard warriors were told by others to write us about the laws they now intended on breaking, nothing will have changed in function from that which has been in place for years.

The next bill that was smoked out and passed was HB 1212. This bill clarified our "stand your ground" law as it related to defending oneself and family against unlawful, violent invasion. If you have paid any attention to the world around us over the past year, you have seen law-abiding citizens who have come under attack for attempting to thwart attacks on their property. While South Dakota had a statute on the books, HB 1212 sought to update the language to be more appropriate and applicable. Current law stipulates that a person may use deadly force against a person committing a felony. This bill would change the standard to a person being able to use deadly force if he/she is in imminent danger of death or great bodily harm or if someone is committing a "forcible felony". This clarifying language was brought forth by the NRA and

was vehemently opposed by several lawyers in committee and on the floor despite the fact that it upheld a person's right to defend him-/herself against attack and further drew constraints around the circumstances. The opponents talked about how laws like this result in vigilante justice resulting in more violence and homicides, and one person even said now minorities are going to be killed. It was one of the most disingenuous and bizarre debates I have ever been part of in the legislature. Florida, who passed this very language in 2005 has seen a population boom, but a significant decrease in violent crime. As Ronald Reagan once said, "You are entitled to your own opinion but not your own facts." In the end, we passed the bill 21-14.

The final bill in the series of those smoked out and passed was HB 1217. This bill simply says biological boys shall play sports against biological boys. Many of you have followed this issue since the Obama administration changed the world we live in with an executive order stating that boys who identified as girls had to be given full access to female extracurricular and co-curricular activities, as well as showers, locker rooms, and restrooms. You have all followed the stories that have unfolded since, and many of you wonder how real this is in SD. Although we do not yet have the same situation as in Connecticut where two biological boys have rewritten the girls track and field record books, we have had at least one biological boy 1) be named to an All-Conference girls' basketball team, 2) break a girls' track and field meet record once held by a biological girl, 3) win a berth in the state cross country meet, thus precluding another individual from participating at state cross country, and 4) place at the state track meet, thus taking a medal from a girl who arguably earned it and keeping

another individual from participating at state track. Because "local" decisions regarding this issue affect more individuals than just those at the local level, it was argued that we need a uniform policy establishing our state's policy. And for the record, almost all proponent testimony came from female legislators who have identified this as an unfair policy that required legislative action. The bill passed, 20-15.

On the funding front, we had several triumphs! Some of the one-time amounts I mentioned last week were amended, but many of the priority requests remained in-place in the final fiscal package. As far as the FY22 budget, we achieved the 2.4% increase to the base budget for schools and state employees, while providing astronomical increases for our community support providers and long-term health care providers. These increases ranged from 11.8%-16.7%. I will try to provide a deeper look at final fiscal decisions next week. For now, just know that we worked extremely hard on targeting increases this year to our health care providers who work with some of the most vulnerable persons in South Dakota. They work for our loved ones who are elderly or who are dealing with disabilities, and their jobs are physically, mentally, and emotionally exhausting. I've said it before, and I'll say it again, "These people are angels among us. They do jobs that are extremely demanding. They are overworked, underpaid, and underappreciated." Well, we have now established a new level of base funding for our community-based support providers all across the gamut, and we look forward to better days ahead.

Be blessed, and thank you for reading and for providing feedback.

Brock

With A Little Help

As a primary care physician, I walk with my patients as they face many of life's challenges. Facing the diagnosis of dementia may be one of the hardest. Any chronic illness involves loss,

but dementia threatens the loss of not only ability and independence, but of the very self.

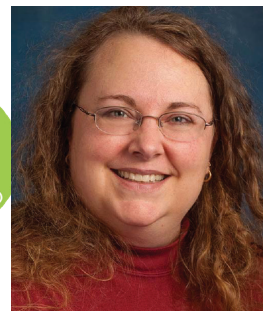
It is important to realize that people with dementia can have rich and rewarding lives. For most patients there is an initial period where their losses are mild. There is likely time to work on that bucket list, to enjoy hobbies new and old, and laugh with loved ones, even if you are eventually playing Hearts instead of Bridge. While we grieve the loss of what was and of what we expected for the future, we can lose sight of what remains. It is a very human and very understandable response, but it can also waste precious time.

The early stages of dementia provide an important opportunity for patients and the people who love them to consider the future. People with dementia face the near certainty that they will eventually be unable to make decisions for themselves, decisions in keeping with values and preferences they have held all their lives. Developing an advance directive is something many of us put off for some nebulous "later". Doing it now can ensure that our wishes are known and honored when we can no longer express them. It is also an incredible gift to give our loved ones. I've lost count of the number of times I have watched a grieving family clutch that piece of paper to remind themselves that "this is what mom wanted" as they make difficult decisions.

Early on after the diagnosis is also a time to nurture relationships that will provide support for the person diagnosed with dementia and their care partner going forward. Professional help is available and sometimes the best option, but community support is invaluable, and irreplaceable. Family and friends can offer support and social contact, be it a cup of coffee and a listening ear, or a friendly round of golf, just like the old days. As the disease progresses, the support might be more substantial, such as a ride to the grocery store for someone who can no longer safely drive or keeping an old friend company so their spouse can go to the doctor, or get a haircut, or just take break.

As we have seen during the pandemic, suffering from any disease in isolation is lonely and frightening. Regardless of the diagnosis we might face, we can take the time now to make our wishes known and build up our community of family and friends. Ask for, and offer, support. As the old Beatles' song suggests, we get by with a little help from our friends.

Debra Johnston, MD 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 streamed most Thursdays at 7 p.m. central.



By Debra Johnston, M.D ~ Prairie Doc® Perspectives

February & March Groton Robotics News

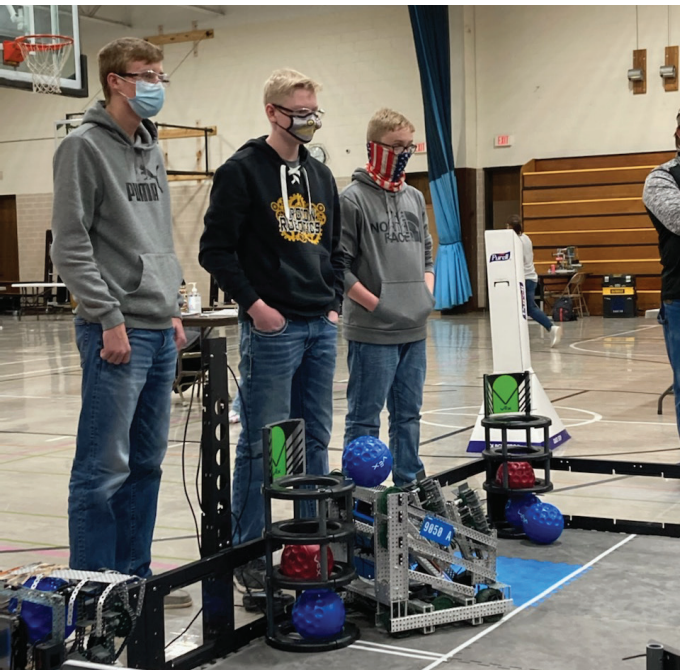


Geek Squad: Blake Lord, Charlie Frost, Brody Lord with their robot 9050D ready to drop a blue ball in and score a point (Photo by Britt Frost)

beat their opponents during the Round of 16. Thank you to the 3M judges, Kyle Weber and Scott Dunn. Thanks to Clint Fjelstad for being a referee and Jim Lane for being our EMCEE!

Saturday, February 27th the South Dakota Vex Robotics State Tournament was held in Harrisburg with 26 teams from South Dakota participating. Groton sent three teams: Galaxy-9050E (Jack Dinger, James Brooks and Axel Warrington), Gear Heads-9050B (Ethan Clark, River Pardnick-not present was Isaac Higgins), G-Force-9050A (Travis Townsend, Jace Kroll-not present was Garrett Schultz). G-Force was ranked 7th going into the semi-finals, Gear Heads-10th and Galaxy 18th. Galaxy lost during the round of 16. G-Force and Gear Heads made it to the semi-finals. Great job to all the teams!

Taking home the 1st place trophy from the state



G-Force: Jace Kroll, Travis Townsend, Garrett Schultz with their robot 9050A getting ready to start a match. (Photo by Melissa Schultz)

Saturday, February 6th Groton Area hosted a Vex robotics tournament welcoming 21 teams, including three from Valley City, ND. G-Force 9050A(Travis Townsend, Jace Kroll and Garrett Schultz) advanced to the finals, but unfortunately were not able to beat their opponents from Lead/Deadwood and Valley City. The alliance of Bob's Little Builders (Valley City) and Lead/Deadwood Robotics took home the 1st place trophy from Groton. Congratulations to those two teams! Galaxy 9050E(Jack Dinger, James Brooks and Axel Warrington) and Gear Heads 9050B (Ethan Clark, River Pardnick and Isaac Higgins) advanced to the semi-finals. Geek Squad (Charlie Frost, Brody Lord and Blake Lord) were unable to



GALAXY: Axel Warrington, Jack Dinger, James Brooks getting ready to start a match. (Photo by Shane Clark)



Left to right –3M Volunteer Judges (sitting: Scott Dunn, standing: Kyle Weber, GEAR HEADS: Isaac Higgins, Ethan Clark and River Pardick and G-FORCE: Travis Townsend, Jace Kroll, Garrett Schultz, getting ready for a match] Former Groton Robotics Coach, Jim Lane, graciously volunteered to EMCEE our tournament! Thank you Jim! (Photo by Shane Clark)

tournament was APEX PREDATORS and QUARIN-TEENS both from Harrisburg.

Saturday, March 6th-Three teams headed north to Valley City, ND to participate in their tournament even though it doesn't count towards any SD rankings, but due to how close it is and the teams just wanted to try their luck and have some robotic fun one more weekend! 13 teams participated in this tournament, unfortunately it was a tough day for the Groton teams, but they had fun and it's always interesting to see how different states and teams put on a tournament. North Dakota doesn't have their state competition until April.

Thanks to all those who supported Groton Robotics by purchasing raffle tickets for the pellet grill drawing! The drawing was held Friday, March 5th and livestreamed on the Groton Tigers Robotics facebook page. The grand prize winner of the pellet grill was Julie Sandness.

Our robotics year has come to an end, time to clean up the room and organize parts! The new game for the Vex Robotics 2021-2022 season will be released in April, this is always an exciting for the teams as they start to tear apart their robots and build one for the new season!

Groton Robotics is open to 6-12th grade kids if anyone has a child interested, they are welcome to contact Neil Warrington or Weston Dinger, space is limited to 20 kids.

- Submitted by: Shane Clark

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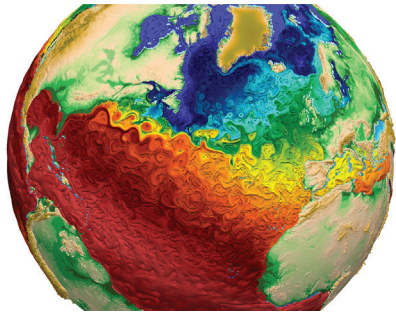
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Groton Independent ♦ Wed., Mar. 17, 2021 ♦ 7

EARTHTALK™

EarthTalk®
From the Editors of E - The Environmental Magazine



Dear EarthTalk: How does climate modeling work? What is the state-of-the-art in the field these days, and what do these most recent models tell us about our future?
— J.M., Austin, TX

Climate models are 3D figures of the Earth's surface that demonstrate the cycling of energy and materials through the atmosphere, oceans and land. They compile geography, physics, chemistry and biology to analyze historical data and predict future global conditions. Ultimately, these models allow researchers and the public to explore Earth's systems, climate change and the impacts of human activity on the planet.

The Coupled Model Intercomparison Projects (CMIP), conducted by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), are some of the most detailed and expansive climate models to date. They show that the warming predicted from this century may be 0.4 degrees C greater than what was deduced from the CMIP5 in 2013. This may not sound significant, but it takes an immense amount of heat and, in this case, trapped greenhouse gases to warm the atmosphere, oceans and land that much. In the 1700s, it only took a 1-2 degree drop in global temperature to plunge the Earth into the Little Ice Age.

The CMIPs have also been proven to be very accurate. Fourteen of the 17 models done between 1970 and 2007 made similar projections of temperature change through the next decade as found by UC Berkeley researchers. These findings have bolstered the support for and confidence in the use of climate models.

Climate models may be portrayed as alarmist or extreme by some skeptics, but they actually tend to be more conservative with their predictions since a net positive feedback—that is, an overloading of the system with greenhouse gases—skews toward a stronger climate response. One example is the recorded sea level rise from satellite data collected from 1993 to 2008. CMIP3 models predicted just 1.9 millimeters of sea level rise while the data collected in the following years showed 3.4 millimeters of sea level rise. CMIP models also underestimated sea ice melt-out rates. Between 2007 and 2009, the amount of sea ice that melted was 40 percent greater than the average predicted by CMIP4 models.

One aspect of the new CMIP6 models that will work toward addressing underestimations are their higher climate sensitivity in comparison to past assessments. Climate sensitivity is the amount of long-term warming expected after a doubling of carbon emissions that greatly affects the model's predictions. To eliminate more of the uncertainty from past models, scientists and mathematicians are constantly evolving climate models to improve their accuracy.

Though it is undeniable that models innately have uncertainties and the Earth encompasses a collection of complex systems, climate models have proven to be reliable predictors of climate change trends. Whether or not these most recent models will continue in that vein can only be determined over time, but climate action is not something that can wait any longer.

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

The paint-like swirls of this visualization from Los Alamos National Laboratory depict global water-surface temperatures, with the cooler temperatures designated by blues and warmer temperatures by reds, as delineated by recent climate modeling efforts. Credit: Los Alamos National Laboratory, FlickrCC.

AUCTIONS

INTERSTATE AUCTION CENTER, Brandon, SD; 3 miles east of Sioux Falls on I-90 exit 402. March 20th Consignment 10:00 AM. 605-331-4550 Jess Donkersloot, Auctioneer. bppagel@gmail.com, auctionzip.com.

EMPLOYMENT

MOBRIDGE-POLLOCK SCHOOL DISTRICT 2021-2022 Openings: K-12 Technology Coordinator/Integrationist; Elementary Teacher; CTE/Hospitality and Tourism Teacher; HS English/Social Science Teacher; K-12 Speech/Language Pathologist and K-12 School Psychologist. For more information contact Tim Frederick, Superintendent at 605-845-9204. Send resume and Certified Application to Tim Frederick at 1107 1st Avenue East, Mobridge, SD 57601. EOE. Open until filled. Certified Application can be found at mobridge-pollock.k12.sd.us

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Answers to last week's Fun Page

March Winds Blow!

Blowing in the Wind

1. calm day (0 up to 1 mph)
2. light breeze (4-7 mph)
3. near gale (32-38 mph)
4. violent storm (64-72 mph)
5. hurricane (72-82 mph)

A. leaves rustle
B. smoke rises straight up
C. widespread damage
D. extreme damage
E. whole trees in motion

1. in the wind
2. get wind of
3. take the wind out of one's sails
4. throw caution to the wind
5. gone with the wind

A. is gone forever
B. make a risky move
C. is about to happen
D. to find out about something secret
E. to surprise someone by doing better or by finding a mistake they made

Really? Again!!!

Strong gusts made this blow out of Chatter's hands:

UMBRELLA

The wind **ROARS** into March!

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April Fool's Day Surprises

The first day of April is April Fool's Day. It is a time for lots of fun. People like to play harmless jokes and pranks. One favorite trick is to point out something that's not really there!

April Fool's Day used to be called All Fool's Day. It is thought to have started in France. A long time ago, March 21st was the date of the New Year. A little over a week of parties and fun followed. On the last day of the festivities, April 1st, formal visits were paid and gifts exchanged.



I put "eyes" on all of the fruit to freak out my brother.

Jesters were people who would entertain crowds at marketplaces or festivals. **Read the clues below to learn about jesters and to fill in the puzzle:**

- _____ jesters entertained the king
- _____ jesters entertained crowds of people in marketplaces or at festivals
- some people thought jesters were "unlucky" and others thought they would bring good _____
- jesters might wear _____ to surprise people
- they told stories and _____

I love to make people laugh!

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

11. _____

12. _____

In the 16th century, the Gregorian calendar was introduced. March 21st was no longer New Year's Day and April 1st was no longer the right day to visit and give gifts. News traveled slowly in those early times, so many people continued to celebrate April 1st as the last big day of the holiday season. Many others did not like the change of date and refused to change their ways. People who clung to the old ways were called "April fools."

Today, on April 1st, you might hear someone call out, "Poisson d'Avril!" They have fooled someone and are calling them an "April fish." The person took the "bait" and was easily "caught." April Fool's Day is a day for tricks that hurt no one. It is a time for laughter.



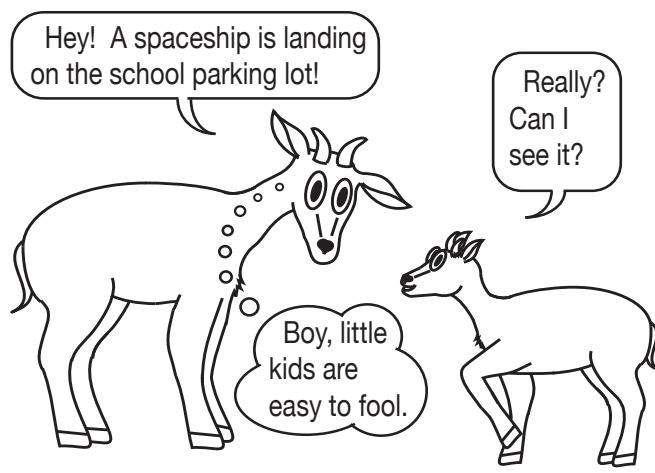
- some jesters used _____ or props
- sometimes they were allowed to _____ in ways that were not allowed for other people
- dressed in many kinds of _____
- sometimes they helped people or a king to _____ what was going on by telling stories
- a man or a _____ could be a jester
- the _____ day of April is April Fool's Day
- it is a day to play fun, harmless _____

Jester's Bag of Tricks

Help me find my bag of pranks. Then find and circle the words in the puzzle that describe jesters and some of the talents or skills they display.

- trickster
- clown
- magician
- jester
- fool
- joker
- prankster
- buffoon
- entertainer
- actor
- acrobat
- puppeteer
- juggler
- storyteller
- fire-eater
- contortionist
- tightrope walker
- animal trainer

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



All in Good Fun!

April Fool's Day is a lighthearted celebration. Many countries around the world have special days of fun, with people playing good-natured jokes on one another. These surprise-filled days almost always occur when the season of spring is coming. Do you think that the sunnier, warmer weather puts people in a lighter mood? Below are some things we like to use to fool or kid our friends. **Can you match each item to its description?**

- joke
 - riddle
 - hoax
 - wisecrack
 - pun
- a puzzling question or problem posed: the answer is hard to figure out
 - a "fresh" or "smart" remark
 - a false story told in such a way as to make people think it is real
 - something done for fun; a jest
 - clever use of a word to have more than one meaning

Answers next week

Newspaper Fun! Created by Annimills LLC © 2021

Robotic milking is latest high-tech tool on dairy farms in S.D.

Bart Pfankuch
South Dakota News Watch

Dairy farmer Rodney Elliott stands in a small room where part of his \$12 million robotic milking system is doing its job.

The robotic system is located inside a huge new barn on Elliott's farm northeast of Lake Norden and is one of only a handful of fully robotic milking operations in South Dakota.

As the system functions flawlessly around him — feeding, watering, bedding, washing and milking hundreds of cows day and night with nary a human touch — Elliott watches with a mix of excitement and awe.

"My mother milked cows with just a bucket and a stool," Elliott said, his Irish accent rising as in song. "We've sure come a long way, haven't we?"

Elliott, 57, is the owner of Drumgoon Dairy, one of the largest, most successful and now most technologically advanced dairy farms in South Dakota.

After years of study and hesitance, Elliott made the move into robotic milking in mid-2020 and his first robotic systems launched in late January 2021.

The system seeks to make milking easier and more efficient for farmers but also for cows.

In the system designed by Swedish agricultural manufacturing company DeLaval, about 75 cows are assigned to each milking machine.

Within each robotic system, cows are trained to move on their own through a large rectangular pen split into two sides and outfitted with a series of one-way gates separating areas where they are fed, watered and rested before entering a small gated area where milking takes place. They can be milked up to three times a day.

The system is similar to traditional milking operations except cows are housed very close to where they are milked, they move on their own through the process without human guidance, and sophisticated robots perform the actual milking.

Cows eat silage placed in reach of their pens and drink water until fully sated. The cows then walk around the end of the rectangle through one-way gates to resting areas where they bed down in sand until their udders are filled with milk. At that point, they feel the need to be milked and make their way one by one to a holding or "perching" area where they await their turn to enter a gated milking chamber known as the "box."

After a cow enters the "box," the robotic milking begins.

'The cow can milk herself'

Once secure in the box, a robotic arm affixed with a \$150,000 high-definition camera swings beneath the cow and its udder full of milk. The camera locates the cow's four teats, and the robot arm uses a device to wash and dry the teats one by one.

Now that the cow is ready for milking, the robot arm swings back to the milking machine, grabs a suction cup and, with the help of the camera, attaches it to a teat. Once all four cups are attached, milk begins to flow through flexible tubes that carry it to a nearby tank. To prevent any interruptions in the flow of milk, the robotic arm sweeps up the four tubes and holds them clear of the cow's feet



Dairy Farmer Rodney Elliott of Lake Norden, S.D., stands amid some of the support systems for the robotic milking operation he recently installed at his farm. Photo: Bart Pfankuch, South Dakota News Watch

during milking.

All the while, a sophisticated computer that has identified the cow by number records how much milk is being collected from each teat. The computer knows the age of the cow, how long she has been milking, whether she has been bred and a host of historical information about when she has been milked and how much milk she produced. It records the temperature and other characteristics of the milk.

When the cow runs dry, the robotic arm removes the cups and returns them to the milking machine, where they are washed clean. The robotic arm swings beneath the cow once again and uses the camera to locate each bare teat, which is then given a quick burst of blue disinfectant.

Just then, a gate in front of the cow opens and she walks forward, making room for another cow that soon enters. During this transition, the robotic arm moves the camera to a sponge and gives the screen a splash of water, a rub on the sponge and a blast of air to clean and dry it.

After a milked cow has left, a gate closes behind it. A gate at the entry to the box swings open to allow in another cow, and the milking process repeats.

During the six-minute milking process, neither Elliott nor any other farm worker has touched the cow or the milking machine. No one had to position the cow, move her in or out of the machine, pull her back to a pen for food and water, attach any milking cups or shovel any manure. Wastes from

the cows are scraped by an automatic mechanism that moves the wastes to a collection pipe that leads to a clay-lined earthen pit outside the barn.

After being milked, cows walk through a container of solution that cleans their hooves, and they can lean against a large vertical robotic brush that cleans their hides and scratches any itches.

"It's called a voluntary milking system and it basically means that the cow can milk herself," Elliott said. After milking, "she goes back to feed, back to her stall, back to water, then lounges around in a nice sand bed until she feels the need to be milked again."

*****Interest in automation rising

Dairy farming and milk collection have undergone a series of technological improvements and increased automation in recent years, said Marv Post, president of the South Dakota Dairy Producers Association.

In most modern dairy farms, for example, cows are backed into pens on a concrete platform that has a channel below it where workers handle the cows, cleaning their teats, attaching milking machines and monitoring the operation. The machines automatically collect the milk and carry it to holding tanks before it is loaded onto trucks. Most data collection on cows and milking is done through computers.

Post said he first learned about robotic milking 15 or 20 years ago at a dairy expo in Wisconsin, and was skeptical the process could catch on in South Dakota. He has been pleasantly surprised, he said, by its implementation and effectiveness so far in improving productivity and creating a better living environment for the animals.

"These barns are amazing," Post said. "I'm still amazed at how these cows will walk up, get milked, and the next one is ready to come in."

Post said he and other dairy industry leaders are trying to find funding to support educational programs at South Dakota State University that will train the next generation of farmers in robotics and further automation of dairies.



This cow is undergoing milking performed by a robotic arm and milking machine at the Drumgoon Dairy. The robotic arm contains a high-definition camera that locates each teat and cleans it before attaching milking cups. Photo: Bart Pfankuch, South Dakota News Watch



In a modern dairy farm, workers attach milking machines while working in a small channel situated beneath the cows, which are held in pens on both sides above them. Robotic milking operations all happen on the same level and do not require the use of employees to attach milking equipment or move cows into position. Photo: Bart Pfkanch, South Dakota News Watch

"We want to support research and get students trained in how the dairy industry is today, but also on what is coming in the next 10 years or more."

The dairy industry in South Dakota is in a mode of rapid expansion as existing dairies expand and new dairies have arisen to meet a growing need for milk by the burgeoning cheesemaking industry in the state.

Tom Peterson, director of the state dairy association, said the shift to robotic dairy farming is likely to be slow across the industry in South Dakota, mostly because of the large investment needed.

"It really has to fit their mode of farming and it's a significant investment, so it all has to pencil out for that to be the route," Peterson said.

Yet Peterson added that more farmers may start to consider adding robotics once they realize the production, efficiency and data-collection benefits. "With the amount of data mining available through robotic milking, it enhances milk quality, it enhances animal care and has just so much capability to identify any issues far in advance."

Robotics part of growth pattern at Drumgoon

Elliott is a native of Northern Ireland who moved to South Dakota to farm in 2006; his farm is named for the rural region of Northern Ireland where he grew up on a small farm and owned 140 cows before moving stateside.

The financial goals of the robotics are to reduce employee costs and improve milk production of each cow and his herd as a whole, which have in fact occurred since the robotics launched in January 2021. Elliott also sees robotics as a way to improve living conditions for his cows, which live in greater comfort, move about on their own and are handled less amid automation.

Cows in the robotic system have already shown an increase in milk production, he said. His goal was to increase per-cow daily milk production to 75 pounds per cow, and already he has seen 82 to 83 pounds per day from robotic milking. His robotic operation will eventually include about 1,400 cows, still a fraction of his overall operation that has about 6,000 milking cows.

The long-range wish for Elliott is that robotic milking will build a bridge to a brighter future in which his children and other young farmers in South Dakota can enter the dairy industry without the nearly 24/7/365 work and worry that Elliott and other dairy farmers have undergone for generations.

"I feel strongly that the future is going to be trying to find young people who want a better lifestyle than this industry has afforded them so far," Elliott said, "so they don't have to do the physical, overnight work because this facility never shuts down."

Elliott's cell phone, its ringer sounding like

a train whistle, is a constant companion that keeps him on his toes. The phone holds an application tied into the robotic system that alerts him immediately if any issues arise.

On a recent day, he awoke at 3 a.m. to help solve a problem in a dairy barn, then returned to bed before waking at 5:30 a.m. to start his actual workday. He sometimes stays engaged in dairying and running his other businesses until well after dark.

Elliott has a

quick wit, an unassuming appearance and a self-deprecating sense of humor that belie his farming and business acumen. He's known to baby talk his cows to encourage compliance, and in a light moment he jests that, "I once heard a dairy farmer in Ireland say the dairy industry is for the industrious in the world and not the intelligent, so I thought it was a perfect industry for me."

In fact, the entry into robotics is only the latest of Elliott's many ventures that have resulted in a truly vertical integration of his businesses, which he said has resulted in \$20 million in gross annual revenues and a bank valuation of his overall operation at \$40 million.

He grows feed for his cows on 1,200 acres of farmland, has part ownership of a large cow-breeding operation in Kansas that supplies him with milking stock, and recently sold a million pounds of gravel off land he bought that was not suitable for crop farming.

He took a step in a new direction last year with the purchase of the Alsville Crossing truck stop, convenience store and restaurant that sits on a busy intersection of U.S. 81 a couple of miles south of his farm. Elliott put his son and daughter-in-law in charge of the modern facility that just happens to be a few miles from Lake Norden, where the Agropur cheese plant tripled capacity in 2019 and is now supporting hundreds of truck trips daily.

Elliott is committed to running a high-quality operation with a strong focus on proper treatment of animals and people, including his roughly 50 employees.

He pays for travel and housing for many of his immigrant laborers who are given training in dairying and farming techniques. He promotes employees from within and has helped several start their own operations. Two years ago, he ended the use of all antibiotics in his animals.

He also takes great care in the cleanliness of his farm and how wastes are handled. Elliott said he considers his South Dakota Concentrated Animal Feeding Permit and water-use permit to be a privilege, not a right, that entrusts him with protecting the environment as much as possible.

Upon reflection, Elliott said he sometimes worries that his expansions have brought him to "the point where the dairy farm is running you instead of you running the dairy farm."

He hopes to buy a boat this summer to cruise nearby Lake Poinsett and will try to play more golf and make more visits to see his children and growing gaggle of grandchildren.

"I'm a crazy person; that's the best way to describe it," Elliott said. "I enjoy the people part of the operation and the strategizing, but what you could say is that 'this guy just really loves cows.'"

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VIDEO: In this video, dairy Farmer Rodney Elliott discusses the importance of caring for animals and proper waste removal procedures on his farm near Lake Norden. Photo/video: Bart Pfkanch, South

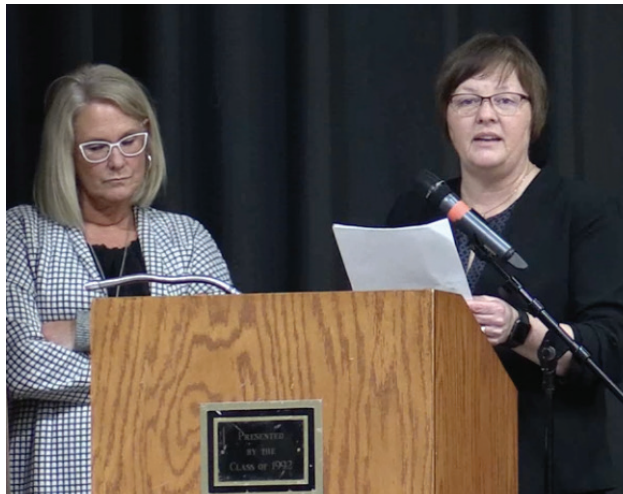
Dakota News Watch



Dr. Seven Smith gave a few remarks at the National Honor Society program held Monday in the GHS Gym. MS/HS Principal Kiersten Sombke announced the names as each recipient received their certificate and medal. (Photo lifted from GDILIVE.COM video)



The 2021 inductees into the Gold Key of the National Honor Society are Travis Townsend, Madeline Flihs, Regan Leicht, Kansas Kroll; and in front are Trista Keith, Alyssa Thaler and Allyssa Locke. (Photo by Carol Smith)



Brenda Madsen and Jan Seibel were the masters of ceremony for the event. (Photo lifted from GDILIVE.COM video)



The 2020 inductees into the Gold Key of the National Honor Society are Samantha Pappas, Erin Unzen, Alexis Hanten, Isaac Smith, Tanae Lipp and Tessa Erdmann. (Photo by Carol Smith)

Silver Skates Notice

Several board members have indicated this upcoming year will be their final year on the board, so we need some new parents and/or community members who are willing to do their part! If you would be willing to help in any way, please mark your calendar for our next meeting...tentatively set for June 1. We would love to see some new members serve in assistant positions; this way they would have an opportunity to learn about the position from the experienced members this year for a smooth transition the next year! Please consider giving some of your time and talents, and join in the fun! If you have any questions, check with any current board members!

Sunne resigns as electric superintendent

The Groton City Council accepted the resignation of Daniel Sunne as Electric Superintendent. Sunne has taken a new job at Watertown. With city hall moving to the Wells Fargo Building, the library will be expanded and the city will apply for a \$5,000 grant from Heartland Consumer Power Economic Development.

The Groton American Legion Post #39 raised the \$5,000 to add a flag to the water tower. Councilman Karyn Babcock said, "It all looks perfect."

The election board for the April 13 election was selected. The school picked Anita Lowary, Julie Hinds and Connie Stauch while the city picked Rebecca Hunter and Melanie Sombke. It will be joint election with the school board and Groton City Ward 1. The school will bill the city for half of the cost of the Ward 1 expense.

The summer help was hired as follows:
 Cemetery Maintenance: Brian Gravatt
 Lifeguards: Jackson Cogley, Tessa Erdmann, Madeline Flihs, Shallyn Foertsch, Carly Guthmiller, Kaycie Hawkins, Aspen Johnson, Trista Keith, Kaden Kurtz, Jacob Lewandowski, Allyssa Locke, Lydia Meier, Emma Schinkel, Jasmine Schinkel, Marlee Tollifson, Gracie Traphagen, Grace Wambach.

Lifeguard/WSI Instructor: Tanae Lipp, Cody Swanson.
 Lifeguard/Aerobics Instructor: Kelli Hanson.
 Lifeguard/Swim Lesson Instructor: Alexis Hanten
 Pool Manager/WSI Instructor/Lifeguard: Tricia Keith
 Pool Manager: Kami Lipp, Karla Pasteur
 Public Works: Aaron Severson
 Assistant Legion Baseball Coach: Seth Erickson
 U12 Softball Coach: Susan Fjeldheim
 Baseball Gatekeeper: Elizabeth Flihs
 Baseball Coach: Dalton Locke
 Baseball/Softball Coordinator/Legion Coach: Matt Locke
 Baseball Concession: Rebecca Padfield
 13/14 Baseball Coach: Aaron Severson
 Softball Coach: Allyssa Thayler

The Groton Independent

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Liquor
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Household
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Bakery
 Pumpernickel Bread **\$2.99** 1 Lb. Loaf

Deli
 Heat & Serve Stroganoff **\$5.99** Per Lb.

Pizza Corner 13" Pizza \$4.99

Best Choice Premium Ice Cream \$1.99 48 Oz. Tub

Taste Choice Chicken or Shrimp Entrees \$3.99 24 Oz. Pkg.

Fresh Halo Clementines \$3.99 3 Lb. Bag

Meat Hormel Pork Babyback Ribs \$3.99 Per Lb.

Gatorade Thirst Quencher Drinks 2/\$10 8 Pk. 20 Oz. Bottles

Kellogg's Frosted Flakes 2/\$4.00
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